



Terms and Conditions of Use of Digitised Theses from Trinity College Library Dublin

Copyright statement

All material supplied by Trinity College Library is protected by copyright (under the Copyright and Related Rights Act, 2000 as amended) and other relevant Intellectual Property Rights. By accessing and using a Digitised Thesis from Trinity College Library you acknowledge that all Intellectual Property Rights in any Works supplied are the sole and exclusive property of the copyright and/or other IPR holder. Specific copyright holders may not be explicitly identified. Use of materials from other sources within a thesis should not be construed as a claim over them.

A non-exclusive, non-transferable licence is hereby granted to those using or reproducing, in whole or in part, the material for valid purposes, providing the copyright owners are acknowledged using the normal conventions. Where specific permission to use material is required, this is identified and such permission must be sought from the copyright holder or agency cited.

Liability statement

By using a Digitised Thesis, I accept that Trinity College Dublin bears no legal responsibility for the accuracy, legality or comprehensiveness of materials contained within the thesis, and that Trinity College Dublin accepts no liability for indirect, consequential, or incidental, damages or losses arising from use of the thesis for whatever reason. Information located in a thesis may be subject to specific use constraints, details of which may not be explicitly described. It is the responsibility of potential and actual users to be aware of such constraints and to abide by them. By making use of material from a digitised thesis, you accept these copyright and disclaimer provisions. Where it is brought to the attention of Trinity College Library that there may be a breach of copyright or other restraint, it is the policy to withdraw or take down access to a thesis while the issue is being resolved.

Access Agreement

By using a Digitised Thesis from Trinity College Library you are bound by the following Terms & Conditions. Please read them carefully.

I have read and I understand the following statement: All material supplied via a Digitised Thesis from Trinity College Library is protected by copyright and other intellectual property rights, and duplication or sale of all or part of any of a thesis is not permitted, except that material may be duplicated by you for your research use or for educational purposes in electronic or print form providing the copyright owners are acknowledged using the normal conventions. You must obtain permission for any other use. Electronic or print copies may not be offered, whether for sale or otherwise to anyone. This copy has been supplied on the understanding that it is copyright material and that no quotation from the thesis may be published without proper acknowledgement.

Trinity College Library Dublin



University of Dublin

THIS THESIS MAY BE READ ONLY
IN THE LIBRARY

Trinity College Library College Street Dublin 2 Ireland

The Butlers in England and Ireland, 1405-1515

Thesis submitted for the degree of Ph.D.

by

David Beresford

Trinity College Dublin
Department of Medieval History
November 1998

The History of England and Ireland 1485-1512

Author: [illegible]

Editor: [illegible]

Printer: [illegible]

1999

1999



THESIS
5120

David [illegible]

Trinity College Dublin

Department of Medieval History

November 1998

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements.....	p. i
Declaration.....	p. ii
Summary.....	p. iii
Abbreviations.....	p. iv
Introduction.....	p. 1
Prologue: The Butlers in 1400.....	p. 15
Chapter 1: The Butlers in England 1405-1452.....	p. 38
Chapter 2: The Butlers in Ireland, c.1430-1461.....	p. 103
Chapter 3: The Butlers and the Wars of the Roses, 1452-1471.....	p. 144
Chapter 4: The Butlers in England, 1471-1515.....	p. 202
Chapter 5: The Butlers in Ireland, 1465-1515.....	p. 228
Conclusion.....	p. 264
Genealogies.....	p. 273
Maps.....	p. 279
Appendix 1: Butler lands in England.....	p. 284
Appendix 2: Butler lands in Ireland.....	p. 291
Appendix 3: The will of Thomas Butler.....	p. 298
Appendix 4: The creation charter of the earldom of Ormond.....	p. 305
Bibliography.....	p. 306

Acknowledgements

I would like to express my gratitude to all of the people that have helped me through the last six years and without whom this thesis could not have been completed. Firstly, I would like to express my extreme gratitude to Professor J. F. Lydon for his support, kindness and good humour throughout the seemingly endless production of this thesis. I would also like to thank the staff of the department of Medieval History at Trinity College, Dublin, for providing an extremely convivial atmosphere in which to work.

I also owe a tremendous debt to the staff and research librarians in the Berkeley library, the staff of the Public Record Office in London and the staff of the Manuscripts department in the British Library, without whose aid I certainly would have taken far longer to finish that I already have. I would like to express my gratitude to the Grace Lawless Lee Fund for the financial support that allowed me to undertake research in London. I also owe a debt of gratitude to Drs. G. Stevastopulo and J.A.N. Parnell for their generosity and understanding that allowed me to finish my thesis this year.

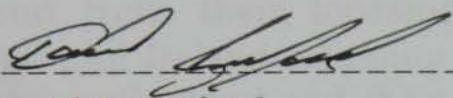
I am very grateful to the many people, including Dr. Philomena Connolly, Dr. Elizabeth Matthew, Dr. Katherine Simms who have contributed their time, knowledge and interest to the making of this thesis. I owe an enormous debt of gratitude to my fellow post graduate students, those who passed through and those who have been here throughout my stay in Dublin, for their encouragement, kindness and support over the years have helped to keep me sane. My most profound debt of gratitude goes to Dr. Cormac Ó Cléirigh and Dr. Brian Blacker for their ideas, for their friendship and for the many hours spent across the road doing nothing but talking.

Finally, I would like to thank my parents, without whom none of this would have been possible.

Declaration

I, David Beresford, declare that none of the material contained in this thesis has been submitted for another degree at any other institution, and that the research contained herein is entirely my own.

I hereby agree that the Library of Trinity College Dublin may lend or copy this thesis upon request.



David Beresford

Summary

The Butlers in England and Ireland, 1405-1515

David Beresford

This thesis is a study of the Butler family in England and Ireland in the fifteenth century and, as such, has two main aims. The first of these is to provide a coherent picture of the history of the Butler family over the period 1405 to 1515. To do this, it will consider the place of the Butlers within the lordship of Ireland, the role of the earls of Ormond within their family and the effects of the prolonged absence of the earls of Ormond from their lordship in Ireland. The work moves between England and Ireland assessing the actions and the activities of the earls of Ormond in England and their kinsmen in Ireland. Foremost among these actions was the continual support given by the earls to the Lancastrian dynasty and the price they paid for supporting Henry VI and their attempts to regain their position in England during the reign of Henry VII.

A second aim of this thesis is to use the experiences of the Butler family to provide material for the study of Anglo-Irish society in the later Middle Ages. Among the topics considered are the extent of the process of Gaelicisation, the bonds that held a great Anglo-Irish lineage together and the effects of long term absenteeism on those bonds.

Abbreviations

In general, all abbreviations follow the standard set out in the *New History of Ireland, 1169-1534*, pp xxxi-xlviii

A.F.M. *Annála rioghachta Eireann: Annals of the kingdom of Ireland by the Four Masters, from the earliest period to the year 1616*, J. Donovan (ed. and trans.), 7 vols, Dublin, 1851

A.U. *Annála Uladh, Annals of Ulster; otherwise Annála Senait, the annals of Senat: a chronicle of Irish affairs, 431-1131, 1155-1541*, W. M. Hennessy and B. MacCarthy (eds.), 4 vols., Dublin, 1887-1901

Ann. Conn. *Annála Connacht; The Annals of Connacht (A.D. 1224-1544)*, A. M. Freeman (ed.), Dublin, 1944

'Bale's chron.' 'Bale's Chronicle' in Flenley, R. (ed.), *Six Town Chronicles of England*, Oxford 1911

'Benet's chron.' 'John Benet's chronicle for the years 1400 to 1462', G. L. Harriss (ed.), *Camden Miscellany XXIV*, Camden fourth series, London, 1972

B.L. British Library

Cal. close rolls, 1413-16 *Calendar of close rolls, 1413-16*

Cal. fine rolls, 1416-1527 *Calendar of fine rolls, 1416-1527*

Cal. pat rolls, 1413-16 *Calendar of patent rolls, 1413-16*

- C.P. Cokayne, G. E. & Gibbs, V., *The complete peerage of England, Scotland, Ireland, Great Britain and the United Kingdom, extant, extinct or dormant*, London, 1910-59
- Engl. chron. Davies, J. S. (ed.), *An English chronicle of the reigns of Richard II, Henry IV, Henry V and Henry VI written before 1471*, Camden Society, London 1856
- 'French rolls' 'Calendar of the French Rolls', *Reports of the Deputy Keeper of the Public Records*, xlv (1883); xlviii (1887)
- 'Gregory's chron.' 'Gregory's chronicle' in Gairdner, J. (ed.), *The historical collections of a citizen of London in the fifteenth century*, Camden Society, London, 1876
- H.B.C. Handbook of British Chronology
- 'MacFirbis' O'Donovan, J. (ed.), 'The annals of Ireland from the year 1443 to 1468, translated from the Irish by Dudley Firbisse, or as he is more usually called, Duald Mac Firbis, for Sir James Ware in the year 1666', *Miscellany of the Irish Archaeological Society*, i, (Dublin, 1846)
- N.A.I. National Archive of Ireland
- N.L.I. National Library of Ireland
- P.R.O. Public Record Office, London

- Ormond deeds, 1413-1509* Curtis, E. (ed.), *Calendar of Ormond deeds, 1172-1603*, 6 vols, Dublin, 1932-43
- P.P.C.* Nicholas, Sir H. (ed.), *Proceedings and ordinances of the privy council of England, [1386-1542]*, 7 vols., London, 1834-7
- Rot. parl.* *Rotuli parliamentorum [1278-1503]*, 7 vols, London, 1783-1832
- 'Warkworth's chron.' Warkworth, J., 'A chronicle of the first thirteen years of the reign of King Edward IV', reprinted in *Three chronicles of the reign of Edward IV*, Gloucester, 1988
- 'Worcester's chron.' 'The chronicle of William Worcester' in Stevenson, J. (ed.), *Letters and papers illustrating the wars of the English in France during the reign of Henry VI*, 2 parts, Rolls Series, 1864

Introduction

'There is...thus no single political history to be written in Ireland at this period; much of Irish history is the record of fluctuating relationships between aristocratic local rulers, often influenced but rarely dominated by policies evolved in London or Dublin.'¹

D. B. Quinn's statement concerning the fragmented nature of the polity in late medieval Ireland is perhaps the most succinct description of the situation but it is far from the only one. Almost every history of the period written in the last three decades contains a similar statement concerning the limited nature of the authority of the Dublin administration. For example, Lydon noted that

'there was a shift in the centre of power from Dublin to the great lordships...a new equilibrium was being achieved that had little to do with the Dublin government.'²

Similarly, Cosgrove described the situation as follows

'Outside the Pale area the country was divided into a patchwork of individual supremacies with varying degrees of loyalty to the English crown. The Gaelic chieftains conducted affairs inside their own areas according to their own laws and customs, with little reference to the English administration.'³

His remarks about the Gaelic chieftains were equally applicable to most of the Anglo-Irish lords living outside the Pale. While these lords accepted the king as their lord and paid lip service to the ideal of a strong

¹ D. B. Quinn, 'Aristocratic autonomy, 1460-94', *N.H.I., 1169-1534*, ii, p. 593

² Lydon, *Ire. in later middle ages*, p. 143

³ A. Cosgrove, 'The Gaelic resurgence and the Geraldine supremacy, c. 1400-1534', in Moody & Martin, *Ir. hist.* (revised edition, 1994), p. 160

royal government in Ireland, they did little to bring that ideal into reality. Another description of the same process comes from Duffy, who says

'Effectively, central government had defaulted on its commitment and the rest of the colony beyond the Pale organised itself, for its own defence into large individual semi-autonomous lordships, under the leadership of local magnates.'⁴

This version of the state of affairs in late medieval Ireland follows the traditional version of history by blaming the central government of the lordship for not maintaining its control over the English colony. Frame, however, paints a different picture, saying

'Once we give a proper prominence to Anglo-Ireland's frontier character and fragmentation, the history of the lordship looks different. It is no longer sufficient to see as its main theme the Dublin government's failure to defend it against the Irish reconquest of its more lightly settled parts. Colonial Ireland was a collection of pockets of land separated by natural features and areas of Irish supremacy....its history is the sum total of many (mostly still unwritten) local histories.'⁵

Clearly the community of Irish historians is well aware of the fact that the political landscape of Ireland in the fifteenth century was almost as fragmented as it had been before the Norman conquest. However, one would be hard pressed to prove this in a survey of the written research done to date. With few exceptions, the historiography of the fifteenth century in Ireland has dealt with one of two main issues. The first of these issues is the cultural phenomenon of Gaelicisation, which has been pursued at a 'national' level, using examples from the lives of individuals to support a theory of merging cultures. Our understanding of the process of the interpenetration of Gaelic and English culture has evolved over the last century and has generated an awareness that this process and its results are far more complex than the simple replacement of one culture by another. Orpen's dismissal of Irish history after 1333 as a period of 'retrogression, stagnation and comparative

⁴ S. Duffy, *Ireland in the middle ages*, p. 168

⁵ R. Frame, 'Power and society in the lordship of Ireland, 1272-1377', *Past and Present*, no. 76 (August 1977), pp 17-18

anarchy' marked by the 'recrudescence of Gaelic tribalism and its spurious imitation by many of Anglo-Norman descent' is far too harsh and simplistic.⁶

The process of acculturation, or Gaelicisation as it is usually referred to in Ireland, is not a wholesale replacement of culture but rather a piecemeal adoption of certain cultural traits. Furthermore, the rate of adoption is not standard as it varies from place to place according to the interaction of several factors. These factors include the population balance between the cultures; the culture of the dominant political/social group; the distance from the dominant cultural metropolis, which for the Anglo-Irish was both Dublin and London, while Gaelic Ireland had no dominant cultural centre; local geography; and the incidence of reinforcement of one culture by outside influences.

While Anglo-Irish adoption of Gaelic custom started almost immediately after they arrived in Ireland, it took over a century for the effects to emerge at a 'national' level and for Anglo-Irish society to emerge as a distinct entity. The emergence of the Anglo-Irish as a 'middle nation', culturally distinct from both the English and the Gaelic Irish, has been well documented in recent years.⁷ However, there were definitely variations on the basic Anglo-Irish theme. There would seem to be a continuum of Anglo-Irishness, with the men of the Pale and cities such as Waterford at the 'English' end of the scale and families like the de Burghs of Lower Connacht and the le Poers of Waterford on the other. Clearly, it is far too simplistic to simply class them all as Anglo-Irish and be done with it. This is not to suggest that this is what actually happens as historians of medieval Ireland are obviously well aware of the great variations in Anglo-Irishness. Frequently, however, as one makes forays into the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the more non-English Anglo-Irish tend to get swept under the great carpet of Gaelic and Gaelicised Ireland and lost. As if to further underline the differences between the two faces of Ireland, those parts of the island outside

⁶ Orpen, *Normans*, iv, p. 249

⁷ See J. F. Lydon, 'The middle nation' in Lydon, *English in med. Ire.*, pp 1-26; A. Cosgrove, 'Hiberniores ipsis Hibernis', in A. Cosgrove & D. McCarthy (eds.), *Studies in Irish history presented to R. Dudley Edwards*, pp 1-13

the effective bounds of the English lordship are often treated in separate books in a series or in different chapters in a book.⁸

While this approach possibly makes sense if the two cultures were static or the flow of acculturation went only from Gaelic Ireland to Anglo-Irish Ireland but this is not the case. The Gaelic Irish also adopted ideas and traits from their Anglo-Irish neighbours. Perhaps the most significant pattern of importation by the great Gaelic lords was their tendency over time to drop the royal style and begin to see their political status in terms of lordships and tenants.⁹ Just as the Anglo-Irish adapted, so did their Gaelic neighbours, although there have been few discussions about the 'Anglicisation' of Gaelic Ireland. That the process of acculturation was at work on the Gaelic Irish as well can be seen in the actions of several lords: Art MacMorrough, An Calbach O'Connor Faly, and Henry O'Neill, each of whom showed an understanding of English law and custom in their dealing with the Anglo-Irish.¹⁰ However, most of the studies of the interaction between Gaelic and English culture have tended to be broadly based, taking examples to support points made from across the country of Ireland and from as much as centuries apart.¹¹ While it is accepted that the process of acculturation can vary greatly from region to region and from time to time, no regional study of the phenomenon has yet been undertaken.

Nevertheless, too much emphasis can be, and probably has been, placed on the distinct nature of the Anglo-Irish community. When compared directly to their Gaelic neighbours or to the English that come to Ireland, the Anglo-Irish, as a whole, do exhibit a distinct identity. However, as has been argued recently, when one considers the Anglo-Irish in the broader context of

⁸ see K. Nicholls, *Gaelic Ire. & Lydon, Ire. in later middle ages* in the Gill History of Ireland series or the chapters on 'Ireland beyond the Pale' and 'Irish Ireland and English Ireland' in the *N.H.I. 1169-1534*.

⁹ for a fuller discussion of this process, see M. K. Simms, *From kings to warlords*.

¹⁰ See C. Ó Cléirigh, 'The O'Connor Faly Lordship of Offaly, 1395-1513', *R.I.A. Proc.*, xcvi (1996), C, pp 87-102; K. Simms, "'The King's Friend": O'Neill, the crown and the earldom of Ulster' in Lydon, *Engl. & Ire.*, pp 214-36

¹¹ For example see K. Simms, 'Bards and Barons' in R. Bartlett & A. MacKay, *Medieval frontier societies*, pp 177-98

the British Isles, or even Western Europe, the differences between the Anglo-Irish and their English counterparts become blurred. When considered in relation to the other subjects of the king of England, the Anglo-Irish, as a whole, emerge as one variation on a basic theme of Englishness; one regional identity among several. Because of factors such as distance, a lack of land connection and the long convoluted border shared with the Gaelic-Irish, the inhabitants of the Anglo-Irish lordship of Ireland are probably the most divergent of the various regional identities found among the English nation but they are still recognisably English in their laws, customs, and, to a lesser extent, language. This fact is only underlined when one considers the fact that the Anglo-Irish, as we term them, called themselves 'the English of Ireland' and emphasised the fact that they were 'English by blood' if not by birth. Furthermore, the lordship of Ireland was neither seen nor treated as an independent political unit in the middle ages, but rather as an integral part of the dominions of the king of England, a fact that can be somewhat blurred by the tendency of historians to study Ireland as a separate entity.¹²

The second thrust of scholarly research in late medieval Irish history has been a preoccupation with Anglo-Irish relations at the national level, which, by its very nature, focuses one's attention on the Dublin administration and the region of the Pale. As the administration's area of authority shrank to the Pale, the study of Anglo-Irish relations and the constitutional and administrative relationship between Ireland and England could be replaced, in all but the most theoretical sense, by a study of Anglo-Pale relations. In some respects, the Pale can be seen simply as one lordship among many, with its own unique mixture of Gaelic and Anglo-Irish cultural traits and set of 'domestic' and 'foreign' relations with the other lordships in Ireland. It might be the single most important lordship in Ireland because it was the lordship controlled by the king's representative in Ireland but in practical terms it was only the *primus inter pares* of the various lordships in Ireland.

¹² For both sides of the historiographical argument surrounding this issue see S. Ellis, 'Nationalist historiography and the English and Gaelic worlds in the late middle ages' and B. Bradshaw, 'Nationalism and historical scholarship in modern Ireland'.

A note of caution should be inserted at this point about the nature of lordships in Ireland in this period. Unlike their counterparts in the Welsh marches or other examples, such as the French lordships of the tenth and eleventh centuries or the German statelets from the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries, Irish lordships tended not to be tightly defined in a territorial or legal sense. The only exceptions to this were the handful of liberties that survive into the fifteenth century as the liberties of Trim, Ulster, Tipperary and Wexford which gave their possessors defined legal rights over a specific geographic area and even in these legally defined regions the lord's authority was usually circumscribed at the extremities of the liberty. Rather than seeing the network of Irish lordships as a group of territories defined by borders, one can better understand the country if one sees an Irish lordship as something emanating from a single focus or group of foci, expanding outwards until circumscribed by regions of authority and influence emanating from other foci. Nicholls describes an Irish lordship as a 'complex of rights, tribute and authority', a definition that holds just as well for the Anglo-Irish lordships as it does for their Gaelic counterparts.¹³

Thus most Irish lordships were based on the ability of one family to protect and dominate the regions surrounding the centre of their power, using a mixture of laws, often both Gaelic and English, and military force, based on the head of the family's ability to use and control the extended branches of his family. The importance of clans or lineages in both Gaelic and Anglo-Irish society has long been understood. As early as 1310, legislation was passed ordering 'the head of each great lineage to take on himself to punish those of his own lineage'.¹⁴ Nicholls also notes the phenomenon of top-down expansion of the dominant lineage, which further entrenches the position of that lineage over time.¹⁵ This process was well established by the fifteenth century, and for most lordships the study of its political history means the study of the dominant family or lineage.

¹³ K. Nicholls, *Gaelic Ire.*, p. 22

¹⁴ *Stat. Ire. John-Hen. V*, p. 266; Lydon, 'The middle nation', p. 4

¹⁵ Nicholls, *Gaelic Ire.*, p. 10

When one combines the implications of the research into the fragmentation of authority and the process of acculturation, fifteenth century Ireland emerges as a very complex entity. The single geographic entity of Ireland was home to two interacting cultures and dozens of semi-autonomous lordships. Given the various factors governing the process of acculturation and the differing political histories of each lordship, it is possible to envision each lordship as a separate unit, with its own history and culture. In such a framework, a series of regional studies covering the late medieval period from the visitation of Richard II to the Kildare rebellion or the establishment of the kingdom of Ireland becomes even more essential. One particular lordship, the earldom and supremacy of Ormond, dominated by the Butler family, seems to lend itself to such a study.

In many respects, the Butler lordship in the late medieval period forms a microcosm of the lordship of Ireland as a whole. It had achieved its final form by the turn of the fifteenth century, dominating much of south-central Ireland and controlling most of the Nore-Suir-Barrow basin. It was a highly anglicised region, described by one modern historian as a 'second Pale'.¹⁶ Towns and manors, the basic structures of English culture, survived in the region under Butler protection, as did the basic structure of English law. However, there were also elements of Gaelic culture emerging in the lordship to which the Butlers had to adapt. For example, the use of coign and livery was accepted in the region but attempts were made to regulate its use through purely local legislation enacted during the life of James Butler IV, fourth earl of Ormond.¹⁷ The need for such local legislation also underlines the inability of the Dublin administration to enforce its own repeated injunctions against the practice outside the Pale. Clearly, this region had its own unique cultural balance between Anglo-Irish and Gaelic elements but that is not the subject of this thesis.¹⁸ This thesis will concern itself with the

¹⁶ C. A. Empey, 'The Butler lordship', p. 185

¹⁷ see C. A. Empey & K. Simms, 'The ordinances of the White Earl', *R.I.A. Proc.*, lxxv (1975), C, no. 8, pp 161-87

¹⁸ The history of the growth and development of the Butler lordship's underlying cultural and economic base have been studied in some depth by C. A. Empey in his thesis 'The Butler lordship in Ireland, 1185-1515' (unpublished thesis, University of Dublin, 1970)

dominant political family produced by this region in the century from the death of James Butler III, third earl of Ormond, in 1405 to the death of his grandson, Thomas, seventh earl, in 1515.

The history of the Butler family in this period can be roughly divided into two parts. The first part covers the life of James Butler IV, the White Earl of Ormond, until his death in 1452. During his lifetime, Ormond was one of the dominant political figures in Ireland and played a pivotal role in the growing factionalism that almost paralysed the Dublin administration from 1415-45.¹⁹ However Ormond's career touched more than the Dublin administration. He was the Anglo-Irish magnate most actively involved in English affairs, forming close ties with some members of the house of Lancaster. In addition, despite his long absences from his lordship, he managed to retain control there through a thorough understanding of the needs of his people and to protect them, by the sword or diplomacy as necessary. His lordship became the exemplar for later generations in the region.

The second phase of Butler history in this period covers the lifetime of the White Earl's sons, James V, John and Thomas from Ormond's death in 1452 to the death of his last son in 1515. This period is dominated by the effects of two of the White Earl's initiatives, both of which succeeded beyond his expectations but also had serious consequences for his lordship. The first initiative was to have his son and heir, James V, raised in England in an attempt to further their family's ties to their English peers, and especially with the royal family. This plan was extremely successful but it led to the earls of Ormond absenting themselves from their Irish lordship for a period of sixty-three years. The second initiative was to provide for the defence and governance of his Irish lordship by using the cadet branches of the Butler family as his subordinates, even going to the extent of 'formalising' their powers through the use of local legislation. Naturally, this long-term absenteeism affected the political balance within their Irish lordship. The removal of the earl of Ormond from the daily politics of the region removed the dominant political force in Kilkenny and Tipperary and allowed the cadet

¹⁹ see M. Griffith, 'The Talbot-Ormond struggle for control of the Anglo-Irish government, 1414-47', *I.H.S.*, ii (1940-1), pp 376-79

branches of the Butler family to assert themselves. The history of the Butler lordship in the second half of the fifteenth century is largely the story of the cadet branches of the Butler family attempting to find a new equilibrium in the region while dealing with residual authority possessed by the earls of Ormond in London. This process was not entirely peaceful, but a new balance had largely been achieved by the death of Earl Thomas in 1515.

To date there have been no attempts to produce a history of a specific Anglo-Irish lineage in the fifteenth century.²⁰ Simms' monumental doctoral thesis produced a coherent political history of Ulster but, by its very nature, this thesis was more concerned with the Gaelic polity than the Anglo-Irish.²¹ There have been regional studies of Anglo-Irish lordships but these have generally concentrated on the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, ending before the emergence of the complex equilibrium of the fifteenth century.²² A comparable study of the history of the Butler lordship in Ireland over the whole medieval period was produced by C. A. Empey.²³ This is a valuable work, and forms one of the main supports to this thesis but for the purpose of creating a history of the Butler family in the fifteenth century it does have some flaws. Firstly, it covers the entire period from 1185 to 1515, a long period which necessitates the reduction of detail in certain areas, most notably in the later fifteenth century. Secondly, it concerns itself largely with the acquisition of land and the legal structures with which the earls of Ormond administered that land. As such, it tends to ignore the political world in which the Butlers moved, preferring to deal with Butler family politics in terms of land transfers instead of in terms of political gain. Lastly, the thesis completely ignores the English dimension of the Butler lordship, a

²⁰ There have however been some studies of English lineages produced, for example, A. J. Pollard's study of the Talbot family, see A. Pollard, 'The family of Talbot, Lords Talbot and earls of Shrewsbury in the fifteenth century', (unpublished thesis, University of Bristol, 1968)

²¹ K. Simms, 'Gaelic lordships in Ulster in the later middle ages', (unpublished thesis, University of Dublin, 1976)

²² The two most recent studies have been B. Smith 'The English in Uriel', (unpublished thesis, University of Dublin, 1990) and C. Parker, 'The politics and society of county Waterford in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries', (unpublished thesis, University of Dublin, 1992)

²³ C.A. Empey, 'The Butler lordship in Ireland, 1185-1515'

factor which is crucial to the understanding of the Butlers in the fifteenth century.

There have been a few studies of individual magnates or English administrators produced recently by scholars such as Ó Cléirigh and Connolly but again these studies have tended to focus on figures of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.²⁴ Fifteenth century figures have been largely ignored since Bryan's book on the eighth earl of Kildare in 1933.²⁵ Those figures that have been studied recently, such as John Talbot, earl of Shrewsbury; Richard, duke of York; and Thomas, duke of Clarence, have mainly been studied in their English context with some reference to their Irish careers.²⁶ The one exception to this lack of work on fifteenth century Irish magnates is of great importance to this thesis. Recently, Matthew produced a study of James Butler, fourth earl of Ormond, which provides a detailed analysis of Ormond's political career with reference to his connections in England.²⁷ However, this thesis focuses on Ormond's career within the Dublin administration, giving little attention to his career as lord of the earldom and supremacy of Ormond. In addition, it ends, naturally enough, with the death of the White Earl in 1452, leaving the complex history of the Butler family in the latter half of the century entirely untouched.

As mentioned earlier, political histories, with few exceptions, focus on the Dublin administration and the emergence of the Kildare ascendancy almost to the exclusion of all other topics.²⁸ Because of this preoccupation with the Pale, and to a lesser extent the earldom of Kildare, we have developed a good understanding of the history of those two lordships.

²⁴ see C. Ó Cléirigh, 'John fitz Thomas, first earl of Kildare', (unpublished thesis, Dublin, 1996) and P. Connolly, 'Lionel of Clarence and Ireland, 1361-66', (unpublished thesis, Dublin, 1978)

²⁵ Bryan, *Great earl of Kildare*

²⁶ P. A. Johnson, *Duke Richard of York, 1411-60*, (Oxford, 1988); B. Blacker, 'Thomas of Lancaster, duke of Clarence, 1388-1421: The consolidation of the Lancastrian dynasty', (unpublished thesis, university of Dublin, 1996). For John Talbot, see above p., no. 20

²⁷ E. Matthew, 'Governing the Lancastrian lordship of Ireland in the time of James Butler, fourth earl of Ormond, c. 1420-1452', (unpublished thesis, University of Durham, 1994)

²⁸ A welcome exception to this trend is a recent article by Ó Cléirigh dealing with the O'Connor Faly lordship in this period: see C. Ó Cléirigh, 'The O'Connor Faly lordship'

However, our understanding of the history of the other lordships in Ireland is often quite one-sided because historians tend to study them from the perspective of the Pale. For example, the Butlers usually appear only as peripheral figures in the history of the second half of the fifteenth century because they had little or no presence in the Dublin administration. When they do appear, they are little more than one-dimensional Lancastrian supporters appearing as contrast to the Yorkist Geraldines of Kildare. The Butler support for the Lancastrians and the Tudors is usually tied into a portrayal of the Butler-Kildare feud despite the evidence that there were few serious disputes between these families before 1518. The assumption that the Butlers and the Kildare Geraldines were inveterate enemies seems to grow from the assumption that because the two families were serious rivals in the sixteenth century, they must also have been rivals in the fifteenth.

However, from 1400 to 1515, the Butlers and the Kildare Geraldines clashed on only two occasions. The first was in 1454 when Thomas fitz Maurice fought with the Butlers of Dunboyne to regain his ancestral manors in Kildare after the death of the White Earl. The second clash came during the 1490s when Sir James Ormond led the Butlers against the Geraldines and came close to ending the dominance of the Kildare. However, this action has to be seen in the context of the king's reaction to the threat of the pretender, Perkin Warbeck, and Henry VII's distrust of the earl of Kildare and not simply as a continuation of a Butler-Kildare feud. Apart from these two clashes the Butler-Kildare relationship was usually a peaceful one, completely dominated by one side or the other. Clearly, such a one-sided approach to the history of one of the most important Anglo-Irish families in this period is unacceptable.

Consequently, the primary aim of this thesis is to present a coherent history of the Butler family and its politics for the period 1405-1515. As such, it will consider topics such as the landed wealth of the family both in England and in Ireland; the political ambitions of the earls of Ormond under the Lancastrian regime; the effects of their steadfast support of Henry VI; the effects of the absentee period on the minor lineages of the family; and the relationship between the various lineages of the Butler family, especially between the earls of Ormond and the next most senior branch, the

MacRichard Butlers. A secondary aim of this thesis is to use the events of Butler history to provide a side-light on the traditional view of Anglo-Irish society and issues such as the process of Gaelicisation, the cohesiveness of the great lineages, such as the Butlers or the Fitzgeralds of Desmond and Kildare, and the connections between Anglo-Irish society and its English counterpart at the highest levels.

Broadly speaking, the primary sources used to prepare this thesis can be divided into three groups. The first group consists of the surviving official records of the period. Extensive use has been made of the calendared Chancery records, such as the Calendar of Patent Rolls and the Calendar of Close Rolls. The unpublished documentation kept in the Public Record Office in London proved to be an invaluable resource. The record classes that proved most useful were the Exchequer Accounts-Variou [E101], Chancery Miscellanea [C47], the Receipt Rolls [E401], the Issue Rolls [E403], Warrants for Issue [E404], the Teller's Rolls [E405], the classes collectively known as the Ancient Deeds [E40, E210, E326 and C146], Special Collections: Ancient Correspondence [SC1], Special Collections: Ancient Petitions [SC8], and Special Collections: Minister's Accounts [SC6], Special Collections: rentals and Surveys [SC11 and SC12], the Norman Rolls [C64] and the French Rolls/Treaty Rolls [C76]. In addition to the records in the Public Record Office, certain manuscripts retained in the British Library proved to be of great interest for the Butlers. The greatest problem with the official sources is that they only record the presence of individuals when they interact with the government. Despite this limitation a surprising amount of information concerning the Butlers came to light, albeit in a highly fragmentary fashion.

Unfortunately, the fragmentary nature of the official sources and information concerning the Butler family is even worse in Ireland. The wholesale destruction of records in the fire of 1922 has meant that the fifteenth century in Ireland is one of the most poorly documented periods of Irish history and the later into the century one goes, the worse the problem becomes. The printed statutes for the reigns of Henry VI and Edward IV do provide valuable information about the Butlers. Tresham's calendar of the Irish Patent and Close Rolls does prove useful for the lifetime of the fourth earl of Ormond but its value diminishes rapidly after the middle of the

century. Similarly, the Record Commission's calendars of the Memoranda Rolls [RC8] is valuable for the first half of the century but becomes so fragmented thereafter that virtually no information relating to the Butlers survives. The Harriss Collectanea in the National Library of Ireland [N.L.I. Ms 1-] does contain copies of valuable fifteenth century records but, once again, most are concerned with the central government and refer to the Butlers only occasionally.

However, the second group of sources more than makes up for the limited nature of the surviving official documentation. This group consists of the monumental collection of family records preserved by the earls of Ormond at Kilkenny Castle, which have since been transferred to the National Library of Ireland [N.L.I. D1-]. Most of the medieval documents in this collection have been calendared by Curtis and extensive use has been made of his *Calendar of Ormond Deeds*. However, there is a large amount of Butler-related material that has not been calendared but which has some relevance to the late fifteenth century. For example, N.L.I. Ms 2551 contains extents of Butler lands in Ireland from the 1520s as well as an almost indecipherable piece of local legislation from the 1470s. The collection of Ormond documents is mostly Irish in nature but a surprising amount of material related to the earls of Ormond survives in England in the Public Record Office in London in record classes of Chancery Miscellanea [C47] and Special Collections: Ancient Correspondence [SC1]. Many of these records, most of which relate directly to the period covered in this thesis, have been calendared, appearing in an appendix to the fourth volume of the *Calendar of Ormond Deeds*. Without the survival of this extensive source of family records, it would be impossible to produce a coherent history of the Butlers in this period.

The third group of primary sources is extremely miscellaneous in nature, comprising a wide variety of sources from which information about the Butler family can be gleaned. Contained within this group are the various Irish annals, especially the near contemporary *Annals of Connacht* and the shorter annals translated by Duaid MacFirbis. Also included in this group are the sixteenth century O'Clery genealogies and the collection of manuscripts preserved by the Carew family. Usually the information gleaned from these

sources is supplemental in nature but in many cases this information provides a valuable side light to the established picture and helps to flesh out the picture gained from other sources.

Before proceeding further, it might be useful to set out the terminological conventions that will be used throughout this thesis. Firstly, the term lineage, when used, will denote the whole of a family within Ireland, such as the Butlers of Ireland, who all descended from Theobald Walter. In this sense it will approximate the medieval usage of the term *natio*. When referring to families within the greater Butler lineage, the term junior branch will be used to denote one of the lesser families within the Butler *natio*, with the term senior branch being reserved for the direct family of the earls of Ormond.

For surnames, I will use the most common Anglicised form for the sake of simplicity, e.g. O'Connor Faly instead of Ua Conchobhair Failghe, and Butler instead of any of the other variant spellings. The largest single problem when dealing with a lineage is the repetition of personal names among the various sub-lineages, a problem that seems especially acute within the Butler lineage. To minimise confusion, I will refer to the earls of Ormond either as Earl Thomas or Ormond. Although technically incorrect, I will continue to refer to the sixth earl as Ormond, even in the period 1461-75 when his title had been removed by acts of attainder in Ireland and England. The fifth earl will be referred to by his English title, Wiltshire, because that appears to have been his preference. Although Ormond was used consistently as a family surname in England in this period, I will continue to use Butler as the family surname for the sake of internal consistency, the only exception being direct quotations and the surname of Sir James Ormond, the illegitimate son of John, sixth earl of Ormond. For the rest of the Butler family, identifiers will be used to denote the various members of the family. These identifiers can be nicknames, patronymics or geographical referents, e.g. Edmund MacRichard Butler, Piers fitz James Butler or Thomas Butler of Cahir. This may seem clumsy, but it is infinitely preferable to the confusion that would otherwise exist. Finally, Gaelic, Anglo-Irish and English will be used in the traditional fashions to denote the groups a Gaelic annalist would term *Gaedhil*, *Gaill* and *Saxain*, and Irish will be used only as a geographic term.

Prologue: The Butlers in 1400

To understand the choices and decisions made by the Butlers in the fifteenth century one must understand the position of the family within Anglo-Irish society at the beginning of the fifteenth century. That position rested on four pillars: their unchallenged position at the head of the Butler lineage; their possession of a noble title; their landed wealth, which allowed them to support their military retinue; and finally their possession of the liberty of Tipperary.

By the first quarter of the fifteenth century, the Butler family had been in Ireland for almost two and a half centuries. The lineage as a whole remained remarkably coherent over this period with lands, power and authority remaining firmly in the hands of the head of the senior branch of the family. This concentration of authority in one set of hands is largely the result of three factors. Firstly, the senior line of Butlers in Ireland managed to produce an almost unbroken succession from father to son from 1185 until 1405. In this period, covering nine generations, the succession passed from father to eldest surviving son, the only exception being the succession of Edmund Butler to his brother, the childless Theobald V, in 1299. This unbroken pattern of succession meant that any gains in land or wealth made by one generation passed as a unit to the next, allowing the senior branch of the Butlers to amass a sizeable landed estate over time.

The second factor contributing to the concentration of authority within the Butler lineage was that while the lineage as a whole did expand, it was largely untouched by the problem of cadet branches acting as a drain on the resources of the lineage. During the period 1185-1405, only one cadet branch of the Butler family, i.e. the Butlers of Dunboyne, emerged into the aristocracy as a viable lineage and even then they were incorporated into the Ormond lordship under the leadership of the earls.¹ Furthermore, the Butlers of Dunboyne tended not to be a drain on the

¹ see T. B. Butler, 'The Barony of Dunboyne'.

resources of the lineage as a whole because the majority of their landed wealth came from the marriage of their progenitor, Thomas, son of Theobald Butler IV, to Synolda, daughter and heir of Sir William Petit of Dunboyne. All other cadet branches either died out within two generations, returning their lands to the earls of Ormond, or faded out of the ranks of the gentry.

The third factor contributing to the power and authority of the head of the Butler family, both within the Butler *natio* and in Anglo-Irish society in general, was their possession of a title of nobility, in this case the earldom of Ormond. Possession of the earldom created a huge social gulf between the head of the senior branch and the rest of the Butler family and the earls were quick to capitalise on this gulf. The importance of a title in medieval English and Anglo-Irish society cannot be overemphasised. A man could be the wealthiest person in the kingdom but without a title that 'evoked a dignity beyond the men who carried them' he was still a commoner.² Simply having a title set a man apart from the common mass of people and propelled him into a community of no more than a hundred men in England and not more than a tenth of that in Ireland. The numbers become even smaller if one limits the discussion to the highest level of the peerage in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, that is earls, marquesses and dukes, who receive their titles by a formal charter or grant from the king. In this case, while the number of such peers in England fluctuated, it rarely rose above twenty and in Ireland it stabilised at three, four if one counts the earls of Ulster, who tended to be absentees from 1333 on. Such formalised patents set their holders apart from the larger group of titled barons, who rarely received formal grants of their title in either England or Ireland before 1450.³

The conceptions of who belonged in the aristocracy and who was noble were not constant in English society throughout the middle ages. These conceptions evolved from the looser definitions of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries through a transitional period during the fourteenth century until a very structured and ordered system emerged in the

² D. Crouch, *The image of aristocracy in Britain, 1100-1300*, p. 11

³ K. B. MacFarlane, *The nobility of later medieval England*, (Oxford, 1973), p. 142

fifteenth century.⁴ The end result of these changes was that the peerage emerged as a separate order in society, as distinct from the gentry and the knights as these were from the free tenant.⁵ MacFarlane sums up this pattern by saying 'during this period [1300-1450] the gentry did not rise so much as fall from the nobility, though others were rising to join the gentry.'⁶ By the succession of the fourth earl of Ormond in 1405, the head of the Butler had been firmly entrenched as part of the nobility for almost a century.

The title that concerns us when studying the Butlers is that of earl. Before the fourteenth century, the title of earl was the only hereditary position in the hierarchy of nobles. Only the king could create an earl but once created, the title had a life of its own, ending only through forfeiture or the death of the lineage. Understandably, kings tended to be cautious concerning the creation of earldoms.⁷ Who became an earl seems to have been largely dependent on circumstances and royal favour. However, there were certain vague criteria as to who should become an earl. A suitable candidate for an earldom was a man who had an 'established position' in society, where established meant that he came from a recognised lineage and had the wealth to support the dignity of an earl.⁸ The holders of the title of earl 'were an extremely select group at the top of English lay society, and their exclusivity was matched by their wealth, status and political influence.'⁹

Taking all of these factors; wealth, prestige, political status, royal favour and circumstances into account, it should not be surprising that there were few Anglo-Irish earls and that they rarely appeared before the second decade of the fourteenth century. The only Irish earldom of the

⁴ For the evolution of the titled peerage to 1300 see D. Crouch, *The image of aristocracy in Britain, 1100-1300*, pp 41-104. For the fourteenth century see C. Given-Wilson, *The English nobility in the later middle ages*, pp 29-68

⁵ see J. Rosenthal, *Nobles and the noble life, 1295-1500*, pp 22-40.

⁶ K. B. MacFarlane, *The nobility of later medieval England*, p. 142

⁷ C. Given-Wilson, *The English nobility in the later middle ages*, p. 29

⁸ R. Frame, *English lordship in Ireland, 1318-1361*, (London, 1982), p. 14. Although Frame is speaking of Anglo-Irish society in this section his point is equally valid for English society.

⁹ C. Given-Wilson, *The English nobility in the later middle ages*, p. 29

thirteenth century was the earldom of Ulster, created for Hugh de Lacy in 1205 and recreated for his nephew, Walter de Burgh, in 1264, when de Burgh was rewarded for his active support of the Lord Edward in the Barons' War.¹⁰ It should be equally unsurprising that when the right combination of events and circumstances did arise, the head of the Butler family was rewarded with an earldom. However, it was not until the Bruce invasion of Ireland in 1315 that the combination of a serious threat to the Irish lordship and a disorganised government in England caused the crown to consider the need to secure the loyalty of the great Anglo-Irish magnates.¹¹ Edmund Butler, who was serving as the justiciar when the Bruces invaded, was actually the first of the king's Anglo-Irish subjects to be rewarded with an earldom for over fifty years. This fact is often overlooked because the earldom created for him never became a reality, leaving his father-in-law, John fitz Thomas, to become the first earl of Ireland in 1316.¹²

Edmund Butler was created earl of Carrick in absentia by a royal charter dated 1 September, 1315.¹³ The act of granting the earldom of Carrick to Edmund Butler cost the government of England almost nothing. Butler was already one of the foremost magnates of Ireland, the head of a lineage that stretched back over a century as well as justiciar of Ireland and so was eminently suitable for the honour of an earldom. In fact, the leap to an earldom was not as great as it would have been for some of his peers as Edmund Butler already possessed a title. Edmund Butler's other title was chief butler of Ireland and he was the sixth of his family to hold the position. The original office had been granted to Theobald Walter by John, lord of Ireland, but the exact date of the grant is unknown. While the office of chief butler of Ireland was largely a sinecure, it is a good example of the prestige associated with titles during

¹⁰ R. Frame 'Ireland in the Barons' War'

¹¹ The details of the Bruce invasion can be found in various writings, see Orpen, *Normans*, iv, pp 160-206; Otway-Ruthven, *Med. Ire.*, pp 225-39; R. Frame, 'The Bruces in Ireland, 1315-18', pp 3-37; *N.H.I., 1169-1534*, pp 274-302

¹² *Red Bk Kildare*, no. 142; *Cal. chart. rolls, 1300-26*, p. 307. For the events surrounding John fitzThomas' rise to the earldom of Kildare, see C. Ó Cléirigh, 'John fitz Thomas, first earl of Kildare', unpublished thesis, Dublin 1996

¹³ *Cal. chart. rolls, 1300-26*, pp 284-5; The charter is printed in T. Carte, *Life of the duke of Ormond*, p. xxviii

the middle ages. Although they were rarely called upon to exercise their office, the descendants of Theobald Walter came to identify themselves with the office to the extent that it became their surname. The identification of the family with the office was not immediate but had become common by the middle of the thirteenth century. The first three Theobalds continued to use the surname Walter, but Theobald IV, who succeeded his father in 1248, appears to have been the first to use the name Butler regularly. Even then, usage distinguished between the head of the family who used the form 'le Botiller' and the rest of the family who used 'pincerna' or 'Botiller'.

Granted, the butlerage was profitable, as the Butler of Ireland received a prise of all the wine that came into Ireland, but this was less important than the possession of the title and its identification with the lineage. A threat to the butlerage was a threat to the very identity of the family as was shown by the request by the first earl of Ormond in 1335 that the prisage of wines, which had been revoked the year before, be restored to him. He petitioned for the return of the prisage saying that he,

'James le Bottiler Conte d'Oremound, que come ses auncestres, de temps dount memorie ne court, ount eu les prise de vin en Ireland, dount il portent le nom de Botiller.'¹⁴

Edmund Butler was a very suitable candidate for an earldom. He came from a family of undoubted lineage, was prominent in Irish affairs and was known to at least some of his English peers. He was also was the king's representative in Ireland when the Bruces invaded and his loyalty was generally unquestioned. The one area where he may not have been considered suitable is in his landed estate. Certainly he had a large estate in Ireland, and several manors in England but they probably did not produce the £1000 yearly that was considered to be the minimum amount needed to support the dignity of an earl in England.¹⁵

The new earl of Carrick was granted two manors, Roscrea and Carrick, as well as the franchise of return of writs in the cantreds of

¹⁴ *Rot. parl.*, ii, p. 90

¹⁵ C. Given-Wilson, *The English nobility in the later middle ages*, p. 37

Ormond, Eliogarty and Elyocarroll to support his new status.¹⁶ This grant and the similarly small grants made to the other Anglo-Irish earls upon their creation have usually been interpreted as being merely a token gesture by the crown, which had to accept the 'poverty of royal resources in Ireland' and find another way to reward its earls.¹⁷ Unfortunately, there has also been the tendency to believe that an 'Irish earldom was not comparable to an English one.'¹⁸ The first interpretation, that the crown had to compromise on the lands held by its new earls simply because it did not have the resources in Ireland to make suitable grants, is probably accurate, although it may underestimate the material resources enjoyed by the top rank of Anglo-Irish society. Any attempt to accurately gauge the landed wealth of men like Edmund Butler will fail because of the insufficiency of the surviving source materials. However, some records do survive and it is possible that Edmund Butler really only needed the grants of Roscrea and Carrick to bring him close to the £1000 mark.

The second point, that the Irish earldoms were somehow inferior to their English peers is not only erroneous but also unhelpful and perpetuates the distinctions made between England and Ireland in this period. The interaction between English and Anglo-Irish society did decrease during the fourteenth century as the aristocracy in both lands tended to focus their energies on one side of the Irish Sea or the other. The Anglo-Irish aristocracy focused their energies on retaining their position in Ireland while the English aristocracy focused more on the wars in France and Scotland. However, just because Irish earls were not summoned to the English parliament and tended to have a smaller landed estate does not mean that they were inferior to their English counterparts. To make this assumption diminishes the importance and the value of the creations of the five Irish earldoms from 1315-1329.¹⁹ It also misses the point of these creations. The most important action in the creation of these earldoms was not the grant of lands that accompanied the

¹⁶ *Cal. chart. rolls, 1300-26*, pp 284-5; *Ormond deeds, 1172-1350*, no. 511, pp 206-7

¹⁷ J. R. S. Phillips, 'The mission of John de Hotham to Ireland, 1315-6', p. 75; R. Frame, *English lordship in Ireland*, p. 14

¹⁸ J. R. S. Phillips, 'The mission of John de Hotham to Ireland, 1315-6', p. 118

¹⁹ Carrick (1315), Kildare (1316), Louth (1319), Ormond (1328), Desmond(1329)

title but the title itself. It was the title, not the lands, that set the recipient apart from other men.

When Edmund Butler was created earl of Carrick, he became only the second Anglo-Irish earl. He was already an important figure in Ireland, but now his position was recognised in a formal charter from the king. Actually, it is better to say that Edmund Butler potentially became the second Anglo-Irish earl because the earldom of Carrick never fully emerged into the light of day. The failure of the earldom of Carrick was largely due to the fact that during the reign of Edward II, the crown still enforced the need for an investiture before an earldom became official.²⁰ In 1315, the formal ceremony of the king belting an earl with his sword was apparently still needed for the grant of nobility to be recognised as a permanent addition to the honours held by a family. Edmund Butler was not free to travel to England before 1318 and by that time circumstances had changed. Nevertheless, Edmund Butler was occasionally referred to as the earl of Carrick in official documents until the end of 1317, but not after that.²¹ The best explanation for this is not that the grant of the earldom dissipated over time but that Butler was being quietly punished for his failure to deal with the Bruce invasion. He seems to have accepted that this was the king's right as he never claimed the earldom of Carrick himself at any time before his death in 1321.

Although the earldom vanished, the Butlers retained the manors of Roscrea and Carrick and they also retained the memory that the title of Carrick had existed at one point. In the late 1360s, Edmund's grandson, the second earl of Ormond, referred to himself as the earl of Ormond and Carrick when granting liberties to the town of Carrick on July 20, 1366.²² Oddly, the crown also referred to him as the earl of Ormond and Carrick in one document on November 12, 1367.²³ These are the only two instances of this claim to the earldom. The abortive claim was probably an attempt by Ormond to be recognised as the premier earl of Ireland but the claim

²⁰ D. Crouch, *The image of aristocracy in Britain, 1100-1300*, pp 72-5.

²¹ *Cal. pat. rolls*, 1313-7, p. 563; *Cal. pat. rolls*, 1317-21, p. 42; *Cal. close rolls*, 1313-8, pp 258,368; *Cal. fine rolls*, 1307-19, p. 305

²² *Ormond deeds*, 1350-1413, no. 123, pp 95-7

²³ *Cal. pat. rolls*, 1367-70, p. 30

was never pressed. Clearly, the memory of the earldom of Carrick remained, but the earldom itself was not needed because the Butlers already possessed the earldom of Ormond.

Although the earldom of Carrick failed, its existence had a significant effect on Anglo-Irish society. The effect can best be summed as follows:

'Although Butler's achievement did not endure, it undoubtedly set a precedent for his fellow Irish magnates, being the first occasion that one of their number had been so honoured since Walter de Burgh's success half a century earlier. At the risk of stating the obvious, after September 1315, all Irish magnates of Butler's rank were more likely to seek an earldom from the crown, in the knowledge that such a goal was attainable.'²⁴

The earldom created for Edmund Butler did not survive but the one created for his son did. The creation of the earldom of Ormond, like those of Carrick, Kildare and Desmond, was clearly an attempt to buy the loyalty of an Anglo-Irish magnate by a faction of the English nobility in a time of crisis. James Butler had done nothing to deserve an earldom in 1328 except having been born into a magnate family. He was, however, the head of an important Anglo-Irish family at the time when Roger Mortimer needed allies. Butler's marriage to the king's cousin, Eleanor de Bohun, and his elevation to the earldom of Ormond were clearly the price Mortimer had to pay for Butler's support.²⁵ Throughout the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the title of earl set the Butlers apart within Anglo-Irish society from all but the earls of Kildare, the earls of Desmond and the absentee earls of Ulster. It is impossible to gauge the extent to which the possession of the title affected the Butlers acquisition of land after 1328 but their status as resident earls almost certainly benefited them when acquiring lands, especially when dealing with absentees like the Despencers.

The creation of the earldom of Ormond was both a cause and effect of the landed wealth of the senior branch of the Butler family in Ireland. As mentioned above, the holdings of the Butler family passed in an

²⁴ C. Ó Cléirigh, 'John fitz Thomas, first earl of Kildare', p. 210

²⁵ Frame, *Eng. Lordship*, pp 185-6

unbroken line from 1185 to 1405, accumulating from generation to generation without having pieces split off to support cadet branches. Although the earls of Ormond held manors in almost every county of the Anglo-Irish lordship in 1400, the vast majority of their holdings lay in the basin formed by the Nore-Suir-Barrow river system. The Butlers were undoubtedly the dominant landholders in this region, roughly analogous to the modern counties of Kilkenny and Tipperary. This dominance came from the opportunistic acquisition of manors by the Butlers and a thorough understanding of the settlement patterns created by men like Theobald Walter, the ancestor of the Butlers of Ireland.

By his later actions, we can clearly see that Theobald Walter was not one of the 'entourage of mere youths' described by Giraldus Cambrensis.²⁶ It is quite likely that Theobald attached himself to John intending 'from the beginning to exploit the possibilities of the Irish frontier.'²⁷ Theobald Walter was a soldier who came prepared to fight for his land. The basis of the Butlers' later influence was the huge speculative grant made to him by John. During his expedition of 1185, Prince John started to fortify the northern frontier of his lordship of Waterford. He ordered castles to be built at Lismore, Ardfinnan and Tibberaghny.²⁸ He then proceeded to make speculative grants concerning the eastern half of the kingdom of Limerick to three men: William de Burgh, Philip de Worcester and Theobald Walter. Walter's grant was the largest, covering five and a half cantreds, mostly in northern Tipperary but also extending into the modern counties of Limerick, Clare and Offaly, which he was to hold for the service of twenty two knights.²⁹

These lands were held by Theobald Walter and his descendants as tenants-in-chief of the crown, with the exception of the period from 1201 to 1209 when they were held of William de Braose as part of his liberty of

²⁶ Giraldus, *Expugnatio*, p. 237

²⁷ C. A. Empey, 'Theobald Walter', p. 19

²⁸ Giraldus, *Expugnatio*, p. 235; C. A. Empey 'The Norman period, 1185-1500', p. 76

²⁹ For a more detailed discussion on the extent of this grant see C. A. Empey, 'The Butler Lordship in Ireland, 1185-1515', pp. 27-32. Carte cites the original grant in *The life of the duke of Ormond*, p. xix

Limerick.³⁰ Recently, extensive work reconstructing the administrative structure of Kilkenny and Tipperary has indicated that Theobald Walter organised his lordship so that each cantred was administered from a *caput*, rather than making a single centre for the whole lordship. This policy which made the cantred the central administrative unit of his lordship was also used by William de Burgh and Philip de Worcester in their cantreds in the southern part of Tipperary.³¹ Nenagh, Thurles, and the town of Tipperary all have their origins in the formation of these frontier lordships.³² Thus, the Butlers were in the forefront of Anglo-Irish society from the early stages of the English conquest of Ireland, overshadowed only by the great lords of Leinster, Meath and Ulster. Their prominence only increased in the next three centuries as these great lords vanished and the landed wealth of the Butlers increased.

Control of these great *caput* manors was central to the Butler dominance of the region. John's other grants to Theobald Walter were organised in the same fashion with Arklow, Tullow in Co. Carlow and Gowran in Co. Kilkenny functioning as a *caput* manor for their cantreds.³³ These grants to Theobald Walter completely ignored the rights of Isabel de Clare and her husband William Marshall, who later appealed to Richard I. John was forced to revoke these grants, but a settlement was reached whereby Theobald maintained possession but held the manors from Marshall. Arklow was to be held for one knight's service, with both Tullow and Gowran being held for four knights each.³⁴

The Butler lordship changed greatly in the two centuries between the death of Theobald Walter in 1205 and the death of his descendant, James, third earl of Ormond, in 1405. In some areas, notably in the county of Kilkenny, the Butler holdings expanded greatly, while in others,

³⁰ *Ormond deeds, 1172-1350*, nos. 26-7, pp 11-3. When the liberty of Limerick was revived for de Broase, Theobald Walter was forced to secure a re-grant of his lands from the new lords.

³¹ see C. A. Empey, 'Cantreds of medieval Tipperary', and C. A. Empey, 'Cantreds of the medieval county of Kilkenny'.

³² C. A. Empey, 'The Norman period, 1185-1500', pp 73, 78

³³ *Ormond deeds, 1172-1350*, no. 17, p. 8 (Arklow); *Red Bk Ormond*, p. 9-10 (Tullow). The original grant of Gowran has not survived but it would also date to this period.

³⁴ *Ormond deeds, 1172-1350*, no. 31, p. 17. In the grant Gowran is referred to as Machtalewi.

northern Tipperary and Connacht, they contracted under the force of the Gaelic resurgence in the middle years of the fourteenth century. The end result of these shifts in the Butler holdings was the creation of a highly anglicised lordship centred on Kilkenny. However, this process took over one hundred and fifty years to accomplish and was the result of a series of shrewd acquisitions by the descendants of Theobald Walter.

Central to this process was the acquisition of more *caput* manors as the opportunity arose. For example, the manor of Ardmayle entered Butler possession sometime before 1242 when Theobald Butler III received the manor from his father-in-law, Richard de Burgh.³⁵ Theobald III's grandson, Edmund, was responsible for the acquisition of several other manors in Tipperary, the most important of which were the manors of Roscrea and Carrickmagriffon.³⁶ While neither brought with them control of a whole cantred, both of these manors were important frontier posts, Roscrea in the north of the county and Carrick in the south, which were granted to Edmund Butler to help support his newly created earldom of Carrick.³⁷ Edmund Butler's position in the north of the county was further enhanced when he acquired the manors of Loughkeen and Kinnity from the bishop of Killaloe c.1309.³⁸

While the Tipperary acquisitions were useful in cementing and expanding the Butler's presence in Tipperary, they were minor compared to the territorial gains achieved by Edmund Butler in Kilkenny before his death in 1321. These gains were to make the Butlers the dominant landholder in Kilkenny, a position they retained until the twentieth century. The Butlers already had a significant presence in Kilkenny, holding the manor of Gowran, which was coterminous with the cantred of Oskelan.³⁹ Their first new acquisition of land in Kilkenny came in July 1298, when John Pippard granted the lordship of Rathdowney to

³⁵ *Ormond deeds, 1172-1350*, no. 99, p. 43

³⁶ modern day Carrick-on-Suir, Co. Tipperary.

³⁷ *Cal. chart. rolls, 1300-1326*, pp 284-5; a fuller version of this charter is printed in T. Carte, *Life of the duke of Ormond*, p. xxviii.

³⁸ *Ormond deeds, 1172-1350*, no. 428, p. 168-9 (Kinnity): *ibid.*, no. 447, pp 175-6 (Loughkeen)

³⁹ C. A. Empey, 'Cantreds of the medieval county of Kilkenny', p. 130

Edmund's elder brother, Theobald Butler V.⁴⁰ Pippard was the brother-in-law of Theobald V and Edmund and over time most of his lands came into Butler hands, forming a valuable addition to the Butler lordship.⁴¹ The Butler presence in this region was rounded out by the acquisition of the manors of Skirk and Lisnahowen from Patrick de Rocheford at about the same time.⁴²

The most impressive acquisitions in the county of Kilkenny came in two transactions made by Edmund Butler in 1314. In late February of that year, Fromund le Brun released all his rights in the manor and barony of Knocktopher in the southern part of the county and granted them to Butler.⁴³ With one stroke of a pen, the vast majority of a whole cantred passed into Butler hands but this was not the end of the acquisitions. In June 1314, Edmund Butler repeated the process of gaining control of a cantred when he was granted all of Roger fitz Milo's rights in the barony of Iverk, a grant which became hereditary five years later.⁴⁴ In both Iverk and Knocktopher some of the land of the cantred remained outside Butler hands, being assigned to Eleanor de Clare as part of the purparty assigned to her when the de Clare liberty of Kilkenny was divided among the sisters of Gilbert de Clare, earl of Gloucester. However, by the end of the century these lands had also come into Butler hands. Thus the expansion of the Butler lordship into Kilkenny was well underway by the death of Edmund Butler. In 1321, the Butlers held three of the cantreds of Kilkenny, and their stake in the county only increased as the century wore on.

The form of the Butler lordship changed radically in the century after the death of Edmund Butler in 1321. By the turn of the fifteenth century, much of Theobald Walter's lordship in northern Tipperary had been lost but in its place had risen the earldom of Ormond. In Tipperary this transformation consisted of the loss of most of Theobald Walter's

⁴⁰ *Ormond deeds, 1172-1350*, no. 333, pp 135-6

⁴¹ E. St. J. Brooks, *Knight's fees in cos. Wexford, Carlow and Kilkenny*, (Dublin, 1952), p. 209

⁴² *Ormond deeds, 1172-1350*, no. 501, p. 200

⁴³ *ibid.*, nos. 486-7, p. 195; C. A. Empey, 'The Butler lordship in Ireland, 1185-1515', p. 53b

⁴⁴ *Ormond deeds, 1172-1350*, nos. 496-8, pp 198-9; *ibid.*, nos. 537-9, pp 223-4

original grant, the annexation of the lands originally granted to Philip of Worcester in southern Tipperary and the creation of the liberty of Tipperary, which gave the earls of Ormond legal jurisdiction over almost the entire county. The Butler's jurisdiction of the liberty was limited by the crown's retention of the four traditional pleas of rape, arson, forstall and treasure trove. His jurisdiction was also limited by the fact that the lands of the church were exempted from his authority and were treated as a royal county, complete with their own sheriff. In Kilkenny, the Butlers profited from the division of the liberty among the heirs of the earl of Gloucester and established themselves as the pre-eminent family of the county. This pre-eminence was sealed in 1391 by the outright purchase of the Despencer purparty, which amounted to the lordship of one third of the county.⁴⁵

However, the expansion of Butler interests was not a foregone conclusion. The family endured two minorities during the fourteenth century. The first, the minority of James, the son of Edmund Butler, was fairly short, lasting no more than four years, ending on 2 December 1325, when James Butler was allowed to enter his father's lands and take possession without having to prove his age.⁴⁶ In any event, the potentially damaging effects of the minority were minimised by the presence of James' uncle, Thomas, lord of Dunboyne, who acted to protect his nephew's inheritance while he was at court in England. The Butlers were not so fortunate with the second minority. James Butler, who had been created the first earl of Ormond, died on 18 February 1338, leaving a child of no more than seven as his heir.⁴⁷ This time there was no elder Butler to protect the interests of the young earl, and the lordship suffered. The minority of James Butler II, the second earl of Ormond, also coincided with the most serious pressure of the Gaelic resurgence of the fourteenth century.⁴⁸ Upon reaching adulthood, the second earl proved very capable of both defending and expanding his lordship but the vast majority of new Butler land gains came during the lifetime of his son, James III.

⁴⁵ *Ormond deeds, 1350-1413*, no. 297, pp 213-9

⁴⁶ *Cal. fine rolls, 1319-27*, pp 367-8.

⁴⁷ Clyn, *Annals*, p. 28

⁴⁸ For a full discussion of the effects of the Gaelic resurgence on the Butler lordship see C. A. Empey, 'The Butler lordship in Ireland, 1185-1515', pp 143-232

In Tipperary, the Butlers were pushed out of the northern section of the county and lost control of the cantreds of Arra, Ormond and Elyocarroll. They retained the manors Thurles and Roscrea, which became the northern boundary of the Ormond lordship proper.⁴⁹ However, these losses were more than compensated for by the gradual acquisition of most of southern Tipperary. For example, the acquisition of the southernmost cantred, Offa, started in 1375, when the second earl was granted the manor of Cahir by William de Bermingham.⁵⁰ The rest of the cantred passed into Butler hands in 1393 when Thomas Butler, a son of the second earl, was granted all the lands of the cantred, with the exception of the baronies of Cahir and Dromloman because the lands and tenements of the cantred 'by the negligence and default of the owners thereof, are laid waste'.⁵¹ These lands had apparently been in royal hands for some time, as they had been forfeited by Eustace le Poer in 1345.⁵² The forfeiture of Eustace le Poer becomes important when one considers that all the manors set aside in 1346 for the dower of le Poer's widow, Matilda, eventually came into Butler hands. These manors included Granny [Dunbryn in Iverk in Kilkenny], Castlegrace, Oughterard and Castlewarning in co. Kildare. The council's decision to grant le Poer's lands in Offa to the brother of the earl of Ormond was an admission that they were simply too far from Dublin for the administration to effectively protect them, allowing another cantred to pass into Butler hands.

Of the remaining cantreds in southern Tipperary, four (Slievardagh, Comsey, Moctalyn and Moyenen) had been acquired by the Butlers by 1417, although not by the earls of Ormond. The four cantreds seem to have been encompassed by two great manors, Knockgraffon and Kiltinan. Originally granted to Philip of Worcester, these manors passed to the de Bermingham family in the latter half of the thirteenth century. By 1410, they were held by Thomas de Bermingham, who conveyed these manors to Thomas Butler, prior of Kilmainham, early in the second decade of the

⁴⁹ C. A. Empey, 'The Butler lordship in Ireland, 1185-1515', p. 70

⁵⁰ *Rot. pat. Hib.*, p. 93, no. 130

⁵¹ *Proc. king's council, Ire.*, 1392-3, p. 220.

⁵² C. A. Empey, 'The Butler lordship in Ireland', p. 72a.

fifteenth century.⁵³ The transaction took place in two steps, first from de Bermingham to two clerks, David de Valle and Maurice Cogan, and then from de Valle and Cogan to Butler.⁵⁴

Thus, the greater part of Tipperary was held by one segment or another of the Butler family by 1420. Although the earls of Ormond had lost the northern cantreds of Arra, Ormond and Elyocarroll, either they or their cousins held seven and a half of the remaining ten cantreds of the county.⁵⁵ In the regions not directly controlled by the earls of Ormond, the cantred of Okonagh, in the west of the county, on the Limerick border, was held by the de Burghs, while the cantred of Muscry and the western half of Iffowyn was held by the earls of Desmond. Although these cantreds were the possession of other families, the earls of Ormond still had a stake in them because of the grant of the liberty of Tipperary to the first earl of Ormond.

This massive expansion of the Butler landed interest in Tipperary was equalled in Kilkenny, although there was one major difference. While the expansion in Tipperary benefited more than one branch of the Butler family, the Kilkenny expansion was solely the province of the earls. The most important land acquisition the earls of Ormond ever made was the purchase of the Despencer purparty of the liberty of Kilkenny in 1391.⁵⁶ Kilkenny had originally been part of the great de Clare/Marshall lordship of Leinster, forming one of the smaller administrative units. It had passed into the hands of the de Clare earls of Gloucester when the lordship was divided among the five sisters and co-heirs of Earl Walter Marshall in 1247.⁵⁷ The liberty of Kilkenny was further sub-divided between the sisters of Gilbert de Clare, earl of Gloucester, who died at Bannockburn in 1314. The three heiresses were Elisabeth, widow of John de Burgh, wife of Roger

⁵³ C. A. Empey, 'The Butler lordship in Ireland', pp 20-22.

⁵⁴ *Ormond deeds, 1350-1413*, no. 406, pp 294; *Ormond deeds, 1413-1509*, no. 24, pp 24-5. The transfer from de Valle and Cogan to Thomas Butler does not survive, but it was in his possession when he made his will in July 1417.

⁵⁵ C. A. Empey, 'The Butler lordship in Ireland, 1185-1515', pp 18-19, 71

⁵⁶ *Ormond deeds, 1350-1413*, no. 297, pp 213-9

⁵⁷ Orpen, *Normans*, iii, pp 79-107. Earl Walter Marshall left a younger brother, Anselm when he died on November 24, 1245, but Anselm died twelve days later, and the lordship was divided among their five sisters on May 3, 1247

Damory, Margaret, wife of Hugh de Audeley and Eleanor, wife of Hugh Despencer. By the turn of the fifteenth centuries these purparties had passed into the hands of the Mortimer earls of March, the Stafford earls of Stafford and the Butler earls of Ormond, respectively. The actual division of the liberty was complex, but the most important fact was that all of the new lords of the liberty of Kilkenny were English absentees, which allowed the Butlers to further establish their position as the dominant resident lords of the county.⁵⁸

By 1391, the Despencer purparty had passed into the hands of Hugh Despencer, the brother of Richard II's earl of Gloucester. However, the lands probably showed little profit for Despencer, especially when faced with the new legislation against absentees. Accordingly, Hugh Despencer sold his portion of the lands and the administration of the Liberty of Kilkenny to James Butler, third earl of Ormond, for the sum of £1000.⁵⁹ With this purchase, the third earl gathered into his hands the vast majority of the lands in central and southern Kilkenny. He acquired all the lands in the cantred of Iverk and Knocktopher that had eluded his great-grandfather, and acquired an interest in the cantreds of Erley and Callan. The most important facet of this purchase, however, was the acquisition of Kilkenny castle and its demesne lands, which became the seat of the family until 1935.

This picture of the Butler dominance of the county becomes even stronger when one considers the other segments of the liberty of Kilkenny. Much of the value of the Damory/Mortimer purparty was lost when the northern cantreds of Aghaboe and Odagh were overrun by the Gaelic Irish in the fourteenth century. The remaining lands were surrounded by Butler territories. In time significant portions of the Mortimer lordship in Kilkenny came into Butler hands.⁶⁰ Of the Audeley/Stafford portion of the lordship, the Butlers already held the manor of Gowran, which covered the whole of the cantred of Oskelen, and other lesser manors. On occasion the earls of Ormond even acted as the farmers of the Stafford

⁵⁸ For the details of the division see C. A. Empey 'The lordship of Ireland, 1185-1515', pp 74-8; Brooks, *Knight's Fees*, pp 193-8; *Liber Primus Kilkenn.*, p. 54-6.

⁵⁹ *Ormond deeds, 1350-1413*, no. 297 (4), p. 214

⁶⁰ *ibid.*, no. 237, p. 214

lordship in Kilkenny.⁶¹ In addition, Thomas Butler, prior of Kilmainham, who had acquired a significant lordship in Tipperary with the purchase of the manors of Kiltinan and Knockgraffon, acquired the manor and lordship of Kells from the Staffords.⁶²

By 1430, the Butlers had acquired the vast majority of the counties of Kilkenny and Tipperary. The earls of Ormond were not the only lineage of the family to hold lands in the two counties, but they retained the dominant position. The central Ormond lordship had achieved its final form by the 1420s. Any further acquisitions were merely filling in the pieces of the lordship. The Ormond lordship had grown to dominate the Nore-Suir-Barrow basin and had expanded to its natural limits, bounded by the Barrow to the east, the Gaelic lordships of the midlands to the north and the earldom of Desmond to the west and south.⁶³ Any further expansion of the Butler's landed wealth had to occur outside of the central core of the earldom of Ormond.

The Butlers had already established a presence in the lordship of Ireland outside this central core of the earldom both in counties on the periphery of the Ormond lordship such as Cork, Waterford and Carlow but also in northern Leinster in counties Kildare, Meath and Dublin. These manors were acquired over more than two centuries and represent opportunism and luck on the Butler's part rather than any plan for expansion. Working around the periphery of the Ormond lordship, county by county, we find Butler manors in counties Limerick, Cork, Waterford and Carlow. In Limerick, the Butlers held the manor of Caherconlish, which was a holdover from the original grant of the five and a half cantreds to Theobald Walter and which was still in their possession c.1411.⁶⁴ In Cork, the earls acquired the barony of Imokilly, consisting of the manors of Youghal and Inchiquin, over the period 1367

⁶¹ *Ormond deeds, 1413-1509*, no. 6, pp 6-7

⁶² *ibid.*, no. 24, pp 16-17. The terms of this agreement are unknown but the lordship was in Butler's hands when he made his will in July 1417

⁶³ C. A. Empey, 'The Butler lordship in Ireland, 1185-1515', p. 90

⁶⁴ *Ormond deeds, 1509-1547*, no. 218, pp 176-9.

to 1420.⁶⁵ It is likely that the earls of Ormond found it difficult to realise the profits of this barony, which lay within the earldom of Desmond. However, their possession of the barony allowed them to use it to secure an alliance with Desmond, first by appointing James fitz Gerald, the sixth earl of Desmond, as the governor and supervisor of Ormond's lands within the barony, and then as Ormond's part of the marriage portion when he betrothed his daughter, Margaret, to Desmond's heir, Thomas.⁶⁶

The Butlers also came to own several manors in Waterford. Some of their possessions, for example the manor of Carrickbeg and the parishes of Fynwayth and Fymolyn, which became attached to the manor, are clearly extensions of the Butler lordship.⁶⁷ Other manors were certainly procured for purely strategic reasons, the best example being the castle and manor of Malur Island (Little Island). Little Island lies in the Suir, downstream from the city of Waterford and, as such, dominates the entire lower river Suir. The owner of the manor and castle had it within his power to bring extreme pressure to bear upon the city of Waterford, if he so chose, and from September 1360 that owner was the earl of Ormond.⁶⁸ While the city and eastern half of the county of Waterford never fully became part of the Ormond lordship, the earls were able to exert significant pressure on the inhabitants.⁶⁹ Of the remaining Butler manors in Waterford mentioned in the early fifteenth century list of Ormond properties, only some are identifiable. The earls held the manors of Ballyadam, Lisnakill and Pembrokestown which can be identified. However, they also held the manors Balmacloid, Burrinfinwagh and Moegrineston which are less open to identification.⁷⁰

⁶⁵ *Ormond deeds, 1350-1413*, no. 134, pp 101-2; *ibid.*, no. 145, p. 107; *Ormond deeds, 1413-1509*, no. 37, p. 26

⁶⁶ *Ormond deeds, 1413-1509*, no. 51, pp 38-9; *ibid.*, no. 88, pp 72-3

⁶⁷ *Red Bk Ormond*, p. 122

⁶⁸ *Ormond deeds, 1350-1413*, no. 68 (vi), pp 61-2

⁶⁹ For an exhaustive discussion of this region see C. Parker, 'The society and politics of county Waterford in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries', unpublished thesis, (Dublin, 1992)

⁷⁰ *Ormond deeds, 1509-1547*, no. 218, pp 176-9

In Carlow, the Butlers held the manor of Tullow from the time of Theobald Walter.⁷¹ Edmund Butler acquired two manors in the county, Castle Grace and Clonlaynan, but neither remained with the main comital family.⁷² Clonlaynan was apparently lost to the Gaelic Irish during the fourteenth century and Edmund Butler granted Castle Grace to his brother Thomas in 1307, after which the manor remained in the hands of the Butlers of Dunboyne.⁷³

The Butlers also came into possession of several manors in the counties of Dublin, Meath and Kildare. The largest concentration of manors was in north County Dublin where the earls of Ormond held several manors from the archbishops of Dublin. Theobald Butler IV had acquired the manors of Turvey, Corduff, Rush and Balscadden by April 1273 when he leased them to Fulk Maesoner.⁷⁴ Theobald IV also acquired half of the manor of Bray from Philip de Rochelle.⁷⁵ He was to hold this manor in chief by the accustomed service of providing an armoured horse at the gates of Dublin Castle when royal service was proclaimed.⁷⁶ Butler's acquisition of the de Rochelle interest in Bray was only part of a larger transaction between the two men. In addition, Butler acquired all of de Rochelle's lands in Connacht, which would have substantially added to his family's landed wealth if they had been able to hold onto this land. In return, de Rochelle was granted most of Butler's lands in co. Dublin to hold for the term of his life. In the short term, the terms of the arrangement may have favoured de Rochelle, but in the longer term, while the Butlers did lose their chance to expand into Connacht, they also gained a valuable manor close to Dublin. The Butlers also held a parcel of land close to the city called 'the Stone'. This had been originally granted to

⁷¹ *Red Bk Ormond*, p. 9-10

⁷² *Ormond deeds, 1172-1350*, no. 340, p. 138 (Castle Grace); *ibid.*, nos. 456-7, pp 178-9 (Clonleynan).

⁷³ *Red Bk Ormond*, p. 118

⁷⁴ *Ormond deeds, 1172-1350*, no. 183, p. 78

⁷⁵ *ibid.*, nos. 257-9, pp 101-3. The other half of the manor was held by the crown.

⁷⁶ *Cal. Doc. Ire., 1285-92*, p. 315; A. J. Otway-Ruthven, 'Knight service in Ireland', p. 8. In 1290 Theobald Butler IV requested that he be allowed to render the service in the traditional manner rather than paying the monetary equivalent demanded by the treasurer.

Theobald Walter by King John, when he was still lord of Ireland, and lay between the monastery of All Hallows and the river, and remained in the family throughout the medieval period.⁷⁷ Theobald Walter had also been granted the manor of Holywood but by the 1370s this had passed permanently into the hands of the Butlers of Dunboyne.

The earls of Ormond held only one manor in Meath, namely the castle and manor of Blakecastle in the modern barony of Lower Navan. This was granted to the second earl in July 1349 by John de Stanley.⁷⁸ However, there was an important Butler presence in Meath. The Butler lords of Dunboyne had their *caput* at Dunboyne on the Meath-Dublin border. Finally, the earls of Ormond held a few manors in Co. Kildare. Their first acquisition in the medieval county of Kildare was the manor of Arklow.⁷⁹ There were several later acquisitions, the largest of which was the barony of Cloncurry in the cantred of Offelen, near the Meath-Kildare border. This was originally a life grant by John Pippard to his brother-in-law, Theobald Butler V, but Edmund Butler retained possession and the manor became a hereditary Butler possession.⁸⁰ The tenement of Jagoestown (Jigginstown) and the manor of Clintonscourt were acquired at approximately the same time although the manner of conveyance is unknown. Theobald V also acquired the lordship of Imaal in the south east of the county from Geoffrey fitz Philip Ris in 1294.⁸¹ The final Butler acquisitions in Kildare before the 1430s were the manors of Oughterard and Castlewarning, which lay close to the Dublin-Kildare border. These manors had belonged to Eustace le Poer before his forfeiture in 1345 and like most of his lands they eventually came into Butler hands. In this case they were granted to the fourth earl in 1412 'for his good service in the wars'.⁸²

⁷⁷ *Red Bk Ormond*, pp 9-10

⁷⁸ *Ormond deeds, 1350-1413*, no. 68 (x-xii), pp. 62-3

⁷⁹ *Ormond deeds, 1172-1350*, no. 17, p. 8

⁸⁰ *ibid.* no. 335, p. 136

⁸¹ *ibid.* nos. 319-21, pp 130-1; A. J. Otway-Ruthven, 'Knight's fees in Kildare, Leix and Offaly', p. 171

⁸² *Rot. pat. Hib.*, p. 198; *ibid.*, p. 200, no. 76

Even such a cursory list of the lands of the earls of Ormond and their closest kinsmen shows the extent to which the Butlers dominated south-central Ireland and the fact that they had at least one manor in most of the counties of the Irish lordship. In terms of landed wealth alone, the Butlers were clearly at the forefront of Anglo-Irish society but their possession of the liberty of Tipperary gave them an additional authority lacked by most of their peers.

The liberty of Tipperary was the last of the pillars upon which the power and authority of the earls of Ormond rested. Where Edmund Butler had been granted the return of the king's writs in the three cantreds of northern Tipperary to support his newly granted earldom, his son was given a much more favourable franchise. On 9 November 1328, the newly created earl of Ormond was granted 'the regality and other liberties, with knights fees and all things else which the king has in county Tipperary.'⁸³ This grant was to become one of the cornerstones of Butler power in Ireland, but its early history was marked by lapses and forfeitures.

The liberty was revoked by Edward III after he seized control of his government in 1331 as a punishment for Ormond's collusion with the Mortimer regime.⁸⁴ However, while Ormond lost the prise of wines, the annuity of £10 from the fee farm of Waterford and the liberty of Tipperary, but the earldom was not revoked. The earl recovered the liberty on 15 September 1332 but held it only during pleasure.⁸⁵ He secured a life grant of the liberty on 23 April 1337 but it lapsed upon his death on 18 February 1338.⁸⁶ The liberty was recreated for Ormond's son on 1 January 1355, but was again limited to the lifetime of the earl.⁸⁷ The second earl eventually succeeded in making the liberty a hereditary possession on 5 June 1372.⁸⁸ With some lapses, the liberty of Tipperary was to remain in the Butler family until its final dissolution in 1716, and was the only palatine

⁸³ *Cal. pat. rolls*, 1327-30, p. 336

⁸⁴ R. Frame, *English lordship in Ireland*, p. 206-7.

⁸⁵ *Cal. pat. rolls*, 1330-4, p. 336

⁸⁶ *Ormond deeds, 1172-1350*, no. 693, pp 293-5; *Cal. pat. rolls*, 1334-8, p. 429

⁸⁷ *Cal. pat. rolls*, 1354-8, p. 328

⁸⁸ *Cal. pat. rolls*, 1494-1509, p. 26

jurisdiction granted to lay magnates in the medieval period to survive the reforms of the Tudor period with its privileges intact.

The creation of the liberty of Tipperary interposed the earls of Ormond between the king and his tenants-in-chief within the county, effectively making the earls of Ormond the sole tenants-in-chief in the county. At a stroke, the earls of March, Kildare and Desmond became the tenants of Ormond for their lands in Tipperary. All pleas, with the exception of the four reserved pleas, arson, rape, forstall and treasure trove, were dealt with in the earl's court and all writs were executed by the earl's officials. In effect, the earl of Ormond became the king's deputy in Tipperary.⁸⁹

The earls of Ormond gained several prerogatives from the grant of the liberty that solidified their authority over the county of Tipperary. In their capacity as lords of the liberty they or, more usually, their seneschals, heard all cases in their county court and could grant pardons for all offences except the four reserved pleas and crimes of treason. The earl's court levied fines and amercements for crimes and non attendance at the court of the liberty.⁹⁰ The earls could grant letters of safe conduct and even letters of denization to the Gaelic Irish.⁹¹ They could also grant charters of municipal liberties to towns, although this is not specifically a prerogative of the king.⁹² However, there were limitations on the earl's authority within his liberty which stem largely from the development of the common law in the previous centuries. The Irish liberties were always intended to interface with and be subordinate to the royal government rather than being entirely separate bodies, as happened in the case of the palatinates of Chester and Durham or the lordships of the Welsh Marches. For instance, with the exception of the first earl, the earls of Ormond did not have the right to possess the lands of a tenant-in-chief during a minority or as the result of a forfeiture. Nor did the lands of a bishop pass into his hands during a vacancy. Cases could be appealed out of the earl's

⁸⁹ C. A. Empey, 'The Butler lordship in Ireland, 1185-1515', p. 372

⁹⁰ *Ormond deeds, 1350-1413*, no. 345, pp 244-5. This is a list of people amerced by the liberty court c.1400 and probably represents amercements for non attendance at the court.

⁹¹ *Ormond deeds, 1509-1547*, no. 284, pp. 236-7

⁹² *Ormond deeds, 1350-1413*, no. 123, pp 95-7

court using a writ of error, and the seneschal of the liberty was always directly responsible for seeing that royal writs were carried out.

The administration of the liberty mirrored that of the Dublin administration, which should not be surprising as they both performed the same functions. The liberty had its own chancery, great seal, justices, sheriffs, coroners and escheators, in short, all the administrative posts needed to run a county.⁹³ The administrative structure of the liberty was generally kept separate from the administration of the earls' estates. The reason for this is probably that the liberty was a later addition to a pre-existing administrative structure. None of the offices of the liberty administration became hereditary, but by the fifteenth century there was a strong tendency for the office of seneschal to be occupied by one of the Butlers of Dunboyne.

This then, in brief, was the position of the earls of Ormond in the first quarter of the fifteenth century. They were the unchallenged heads of the Butler family in Ireland, set apart from the rest of their family by their title and their great landed wealth, which was in turn enhanced by their possession of the franchise of the liberty of Tipperary. Each of these factors was important in its own right, but they combined to make the earl of Ormond one of the most formidable and important men of his day. The rise of the Butlers in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries should not be seen as an inevitability. Their place in Anglo-Irish society came through a combination of effort, skill and not a little luck. However, there was nothing to suggest in the first quarter of the fifteenth century that their rise would not continue.

⁹³ For a very full discussion on the officers of the liberty see C. A. Empey, 'The Butler lordship in Ireland, 1185-1515', pp 427-60

Chapter 1: The Butlers and England, 1405-1452

When James, third earl of Ormond, died on 7 September 1405, his lands passed into royal hands during the minority of his heir, James.¹ The new earl was approximately fifteen years of age, which meant that possession of his lands would probably be granted to a royal favourite for a term of six years before he reached his majority.² On 2 October 1405, custody of Ormond's lands and his marriage were granted by Henry IV to his son, Thomas of Lancaster, then lieutenant of Ireland.³ This grant was to begin the "patron and protégé" relationship that would figure prominently in Ormond's life until the death of Lancaster in 1421, although this relationship was limited in the beginning because Thomas of Lancaster was only two years older than Ormond.⁴

The grant of Ormond's lands to Lancaster was intended to serve two purposes for the king. Firstly, it served to draw one of the foremost Anglo-Irish magnates into a closer and more personal relationship with the house of Lancaster. Secondly, it had the potential to provide the king's son with a source of money that did not rely on the over-stressed exchequer in England, from which he could finance his lieutenancy in Ireland. Ormond's activities in the year after his father's death are unknown but he almost certainly entered the household of Lancaster's deputy, Sir Stephen le Scrope, who returned to Ireland in the autumn of 1406.⁵ Ormond's education in the arts of governance, which had been started by his father, were probably rounded out in the months following le Scrope's return to Ireland. For Ormond, the relationship with Lancaster had already borne fruit as he was introduced to the mechanics of government at a far younger age than would have otherwise been the case.

¹ *Cal. inq. post mortem*, 7-14 Henry IV (1405-13), p. 7

² *Ormond deeds, 1350-1413*, no. 413, p. 297

³ *ibid.*, no. 386, pp 277-8

⁴ E. Matthew, 'Governing the lordship', p. 111

⁵ *N.H.I., Maps genealogies and lists*, p. 476

For Thomas of Lancaster, the immediate benefits of the arrangement were less clear. Lancaster had been away from Ireland since 8 November 1403 and would not return before 2 August 1408.⁶ Clearly, there could be no personal connection between the two men until Thomas of Lancaster returned to Ireland. Furthermore, the second possible aim of the grant, which was to provide Lancaster with a source of money for his lieutenancy, seems to have been abandoned as his absence from Ireland dragged on. The consequences of draining money out of Ireland to support Lancaster in England were far too serious for an experienced administrator like le Scrope to ignore. Any significant flow of money out of the Ormond lordship would impair the earl's ability to defend it from incursions by its neighbours, both Gaelic and Anglo-Irish. Such a state of affairs could not be allowed to continue for long.

At Ormond's request, le Scrope authorised a grant of all the lands and manors formerly held by the third earl of Ormond to Robert Haubryk and Nicholas Stokes for the use and profit of James, earl of Ormond.⁷ As a result, Ormond effectively had control of his lands from 10 January 1407 but was also expected to defend them himself. The need to defend the Ormond lordship was underlined less than three months later, in March 1407, when Ormond joined with his half brother, Thomas, prior of Kilmainham, le Scrope, the earl of Desmond and a force of men from Meath to repel a serious raid by the Clanricard de Burghs and the O'Nolans into Kilkenny.⁸ Clearly, Ormond benefited from his connection to Lancaster, or at least le Scrope, which allowed him to regain a certain amount of control over his lands four years before his majority. It is unclear whether the English lands belonging to the third earl of Ormond were included in the grant of January 1407. The grant does stipulate 'all lands...which belonged to James le Botiller, late earl of Ormond...which he held of us in chief', but the list of lands named are all in Ireland and the grant is made over the Great Seal of Ireland. It seems very possible that the earl's English lands, which would not affect the defence of the Irish lordship, remained with Lancaster until Ormond reached his majority.

⁶ Otway-Ruthven, *Med. Ire.*, pp 343, 345

⁷ *Ormond deeds, 1350-1413*, no. 389, pp 280-1

⁸ *A.F.M.*, s.a. 1407; *Ann. Conn.*, s.a. 1407; Holinshed, *Chronicles*, p. 237; K. Nicholls, 'Late Medieval Irish annals: two fragments', p. 91

Ormond's lessons in the art of governance were put to the test in the months after December 1408 as he divided his time between his own lordship and Dublin, where he acted as le Scrope's deputy from 8 December 1407.⁹ Ormond's tenure of office was to be no more than a caretaker administration while preparations for Lancaster's return expedition to Ireland were made but the young earl's abilities were impressive enough that he was entrusted to govern rather than a more experienced man such as Thomas Cranley, archbishop of Dublin. The division of Ormond's time and energy between his own lordship and external duties would become a recurring pattern in his life.

Ormond served as chief governor for almost nine months, his period of office ending when Thomas of Lancaster returned to Ireland on 2 August 1408. It is at this point that the personal connection between Ormond and Thomas of Lancaster was formed. Perhaps at Ormond's suggestion, Lancaster made his base at Kilmainham, where Ormond's half-brother, Thomas, was prior. Marlborough's chronicle mentions a battle at Kilmainham in which the lieutenant was injured, but this injury did not stop Lancaster's campaign in Leinster.¹⁰ On 13 September 1408, Ormond was ordered to bring all 'his power both of horsemen and footmen' to serve with Lancaster on this campaign and the lieutenant then spent much of the winter at Ormond's castle in Kilkenny.¹¹ Lancaster remained in Ireland for less than a year, returning to England in March 1409 on hearing rumours of his father's ill health, leaving Thomas Butler, prior of Kilmainham, as his deputy.¹²

Lancaster's appointment of the prior of Kilmainham as his deputy was perhaps unusual, although he may not have had much choice in the matter. The situation in the lordship demanded an active military response to the threats of the Gaelic Irish but Stephen le Scrope had died in September 1408, and Thomas Butler, for all of his faults, was a capable soldier. One can also see Ormond's hand in the appointment of the new deputy. It is possible that Ormond returned to England with Thomas of

⁹ *Ormond deeds, 1350-1413*, no. 391, pp 282-3

¹⁰ Marlborough, *Chronicles*, p. 22; Otway-Ruthven, *Med. Ire.*, p. 345

¹¹ *Ormond deeds, 1350-1413*, no. 396, p. 285;

¹² Otway Ruthven, *Med. Ire.*, p. 346; *Ormond deeds, 1350-1413*, no. 403, p. 288.

Lancaster and having his half-brother as the deputy of the lieutenant would certainly suit Ormond if he was not in Ireland to do the job himself. The prior would remain Lancaster's deputy in Ireland until the end of the reign, despite complaints made against him by sections of the Anglo-Irish community.¹³

If Ormond did go to England with Lancaster, he was back in Ireland by the summer of 1411. On 8 August 1411, he was formally granted livery of his lands.¹⁴ As this grant was attested by the prior of Kilmainham, who presumably was well aware of the date of his brother's birth, we can only accept its accuracy. However, in the English inquisitions *post mortem* made after his father's death his age is given as '13 years and more'. This discrepancy may have caused some problems for Ormond when he came to reclaim his father's lands in England. Ormond seems to have been well aware of the discrepancy between this grant and the returns of the inquisitions *post mortem* taken after his father's death and had this grant exemplified in case his rights were challenged. His caution seems to have been warranted as he eventually had to secure a pardon for entering his Irish lands without royal permission.¹⁵ This pardon provides one of the best lists of the holdings of the earls of Ormond in Ireland in the fifteenth century. The pardon is undated but can be placed in the period between 1 June 1409, because the prior of Kilmainham is mentioned as the lieutenant, and 16 February 1412, because the manors of Oughterard and Castlewarning, which were granted to Ormond on that date are not mentioned in the list of lands. By all available evidence, the only reason Ormond would have to seek a pardon for entering his lands would be to mitigate the confusion over his age.

Ormond spent much of the next decade shuttling between Ireland, England and Normandy. He almost certainly followed Thomas of Lancaster to England in the hopes of advancing his fortune through the prince's patronage, especially when Lancaster was created duke of Clarence by his father in 1412. Ormond was one of three earls to serve in Lancaster's personal retinue when the newly created duke of Clarence embarked on

¹³ for Thomas Butler's career see. T. B. Butler, 'Thomas le Botiller, prior of Kilmainham, 1403-19'; C. L. Tipton, 'The Irish Hospitallers during the Great Schism'

¹⁴ *Ormond deeds, 1350-1413*, no. 413, p. 297

¹⁵ *Ormond deeds, 1509-47*, no. 218, pp 176-9

his campaign in France in the summer of 1412.¹⁶ Although the campaign was originally meant to bolster Henry IV's claims in Aquitaine in a period of crisis within the French nobility it soon turned into a very profitable chevauchée that took the duke and his companions from Normandy to Bordeaux.¹⁷

Ormond returned to England with Clarence after the news of Henry IV's death reached Bordeaux but did not remain at court for more than a few months. However, these months would prove to be very important for the future of the Butler family. In the summer of 1413, Ormond married Joan Beauchamp, the daughter of William, Lord Bergavenny, and his wife, Joan. The actual date of the marriage is unknown. All that can be said for certain is that the couple were married before 28 August 1413, but the marriage probably took place in the summer of 1413. Ormond was in France from July 1412 to April 1413. Before that he was in Ireland until at least 16 February 1412, when he received a grant of the manors of Castlewarning and Oughterard.¹⁸ While this marriage did continue the Ormond tradition of marrying into the English nobility, the choice of bride indicates that the house of Lancaster was probably an active participant in the arrangement of the marriage.

As noted above, Thomas of Lancaster had been granted Ormond's wardship and marriage in October 1405. The grant of Ormond's lands to Robert Haubryk and Nicholas Stokes in January 1407 made no mention of the wardship or Ormond's marriage, so it can only be assumed that Thomas of Lancaster retained these for himself. Negotiations for this marriage could possibly have started as early as 1410, while Ormond was still technically a ward of Lancaster but it is more likely that the negotiations began in earnest after the death of Lord Bergavenny in August 1411.¹⁹ In either case, the fact that Ormond was close to his age of majority meant that this marriage was almost certainly a collaborative

¹⁶ J. H. Wylie, *A History of England under the Henry IV*, iv, p. 73. The other earls were Thomas Montague, earl of Salisbury and Richard de Vere, earl of Oxford

¹⁷ for Clarence's expedition see B. Blacker, 'Thomas of Lancaster, duke of Clarence, 1388-1421', (unpublished thesis, University of Dublin, 1996), pp 97-100, 130-40

¹⁸ *Cal. pat. rolls, 1413-16*, p. 93; *Rot. pat. Hib*, p. 198, no. 26c

¹⁹ *Cal. inq. post mortem, 7-14 Henry IV (1405-13)*, p. 301

effort between Ormond and Thomas of Lancaster rather than a marriage imposed upon the earl.

Ormond's new bride, who was certainly several years younger than him when they married, does not seem to have brought any lands into Ormond's possession at the time of the marriage. The most likely reason for the marriage was to forge even closer ties to the house of Lancaster, especially the new generation represented by the future Henry V. The idea for the marriage probably came from one of two directions. The bride's nearest adult male relative was her cousin, Richard Beauchamp, earl of Warwick, who was one of Henry V's closest companions. Equally possible is that the idea of the marriage came from Thomas of Lancaster's new wife, Margaret Beaufort, marchioness of Somerset, who was a first cousin of Joan, lady Bergavenny, Joan Beauchamp's mother. Joan, Lady Bergavenny, was to play an important role in the development of the Butler fortunes in the future and it is difficult to imagine that she was not an active participant in the negotiations surrounding her daughter's marriage. Wherever the idea for the marriage originated, it was clearly beneficial to Ormond, who gained close familial ties to one of the most important peers of the realm and forged new links to the court of the new king, Henry V.

Ormond was ordered back to Ireland on 21 August 1413 with a force of 40 men-at-arms and 160 archers.²⁰ He was almost certainly sent to prepare the way for the new lieutenant, John Stanley, who had been appointed by the king on 8 June 1413.²¹ Ormond was a logical choice for this task. He had experience in the Dublin administration, had proven his capacity as a military figure under Clarence and could be expected to work well with the prior of Kilmainham to ensure that all was ready for Stanley when he arrived. Ormond may also have had secondary instructions to render what aid he could to the earl of Desmond, who was returning to Ireland with a substantial force in an attempt to recover his earldom.²²

²⁰ *Cal. pat. rolls, 1413-16*, p. 117

²¹ *N.H.I., Maps genealogies and lists*, 476

²² *Ann. Conn., s.a. 1414, A.F.M., s.a. 1414.*

Stanley arrived in Ireland in September 1413 and was sworn into office on 25 September 1413.²³

Stanley had a great deal of experience in Ireland, having previously served as lieutenant of Ireland from December 1399 to November 1401 before being replaced by Thomas of Lancaster.²⁴ He had also been put forth as a potential replacement for Thomas of Lancaster in the summer of 1409 by the prince of Wales, although nothing came of this plan. In Stanley, the new king had an experienced administrator who could take control of the Irish lordship at a time when his own attention was increasingly focused on the continent. Unfortunately, Stanley's sudden death on 14 January 1414 forced the king to choose another lieutenant for Ireland.²⁵ The king's choice to replace Stanley with John Talbot, Lord Furnival, set in motion a chain of events that would dominate the Dublin administration for decades and the Butler lordship for the better part of a century.

From an English perspective, Furnival seemed a logical choice to send to Ireland. He had proven himself a more than capable soldier serving under the future Henry V in Wales.²⁶ His family also had Irish connections as his wife had inherited some of the de Verdon lands in Westmeath and his brother, Gilbert, Lord Talbot, was one of the claimants of the liberty of Wexford.²⁷ Furnival proved to be an extremely active and capable lieutenant but his six year term of office was continually dogged by poor finances and poorer relations with the Anglo-Irish community, especially the earl of Ormond.

Both of Furnival's problems stemmed from the same source. When Henry V drew up John Stanley's indenture for service as lieutenant of Ireland, he dramatically lowered the salary paid to the lieutenant at the English exchequer with any shortfall in expenditures to be made up from

²³ Otway-Ruthven, *Med. Ire.*, p. 349

²⁴ N.H.I., *Maps genealogies and lists*, p.476

²⁵ N.H.I., *Maps genealogies and lists*, p. 476; Otway Ruthven, *Med. Ire.*, p. 347

²⁶ For Furnival's background see H. Talbot, *The English Achilles*; A. Pollard, 'The Family of Talbot, Lords Talbot and earls of Shrewsbury'

²⁷ N.H.I., *Maps genealogies and lists*, pp 173-4; Otway-Ruthven, *Med. Ire.*, p. 348

the revenues of the lordship of Ireland.²⁸ This change in policy caused problems in Ireland, not because the English exchequer could not pay the salary owed to the lieutenant but because the delays in payment and the lower salary forced Furnival to use whatever methods were necessary to raise needed operating revenue.²⁹ He was forced to resort to forced billeting of troops and draconian measures of debt collection in an attempt to function as chief governor. These measures served to infuriate the Anglo-Irish community who complained bitterly about the lieutenant's indebtedness and their inability to collect on those debts. Ormond was far from the only person to complain about Furnival's actions. A petition from the Irish parliament in 1421 asked that the king 'send deputies attorneys and officers...to make amends for his extortions and oppressions'.³⁰ While this petition could be seen as an attack on Furnival orchestrated by Ormond, it echoes an earlier complaint sent by the commons to the king in 1417 in which they complained that '*la dicte terre est graundement destruycte par extorciones dez pourveiors les houstieux des lieuxtenantz et autre gouvernors de mesme la terre.*'³¹ However, Ormond became central to the Anglo-Irish community's antipathy to Furnival, if only because he was the magnate most affected by the lieutenant's actions.

Ormond's relations with Furnival seem to have started well enough. Ormond remained in Ireland after Stanley's death. On 2 February 1415, he indented to serve the new lieutenant for a year for the fee of £100.³² However, their relationship soon soured. Less than three weeks after sealing the indenture, Ormond was summoned to account for the

²⁸ see E. Matthew, 'Financing the lordship of Ireland under Henry V and Henry VI'

²⁹ Despite delays in payment, Furnival actually received 86% of the money due to him from the English Exchequer. (E. Matthew, 'Financing the lordship under Henry V and Henry VI', p. 98)

³⁰ *Stat. Ire. John-Henry V*, p. 571. Both John Stanley and John Talbot ran up large debts while in Ireland. As neither man had significant holdings in Ireland, it could take years for debts to be recovered, as shown by the fact that seven years after John Stanley's death, the Irish parliament was still petitioning the king to compel his heirs to pay his debts. (*ibid.*, p. 569)

³¹ *P.P.C.*, 1416-22, pp. 43-52

³² East Riding Yorkshire Record Office, DDx 152/50

arrears of his relief.³³ Ormond presented letters patent absolving himself and when this failed to appease the lieutenant, he obtained a formal pardon for his non-payment of arrears under the Great Seal of England.³⁴ While the case against Ormond proceeded, he went on campaign with Furnival. The new lieutenant's first year in Ireland was remarkably active, with campaigns both in Leinster and Ulster.³⁵ Presumably, Ormond was present for these campaigns but he was to complain of his treatment in a series of charges levelled against Furnival in 1422. One of his complaints was that 'he had lost of men and horses and of other costs that he bore, the sum of £300' in addition to furnishing the lieutenant's men with lodging at his own expense.³⁶ Ormond obviously felt his contributions to Furnival's campaigns had been above and beyond the bounds set by the indenture of February 1415. Ormond's relations with the lieutenant worsened when Furnival started to pursue an ancestral debt owed by Ormond. The debt, calculated at £3018 14s. had originally been accrued by Ormond's ancestors in the service of Edward I and Edward II, and while this debt had been tacitly ignored for a century, it had never been formally pardoned.

Furnival's attempt to resurrect this debt was as much an attempt to cow Ormond as it was to gain money for his administration. The proceedings against Ormond for this debt dragged on for over two years, long after Ormond himself had left Ireland to serve the king in the Normandy campaigns. While Ormond was the focal point of the growing dispute with Furnival, the real leader of the anti-Furnival faction in Ireland at this time was Ormond's half-brother, Thomas Butler, the prior of Kilmainham. When Ormond was absent from Ireland he entrusted his lands to the prior for safekeeping. The prior, in addition to being Ormond's half-brother, was one of the leading magnates in Kilkenny and Tipperary and was well positioned to follow the activities of Furnival's administration from his base at Kilmainham.

³³ N.A.I., RC 8/36, pp 102-4. Transcribed by C. A. Empey in 'The Butler Lordship in Ireland, 1185-1515', app. V

³⁴ N.A.I., RC 8/36, p. 46

³⁵ Otway-Ruthven, *Med. Ire.*, p. 349; Sir H. Ellis, *Original Letters*, 2nd ser, i, no. 19

³⁶ M. Griffith, 'The Talbot-Ormond struggle for control of the Anglo-Irish Government, 1414-47', *I.H.S.*, ii (1940-1), p. 392.

Furnival finally moved against Ormond and the Butlers in the summer of 1417. On 18 July 1417, Furnival ordered that all of Ormond's lands be seized for non-payment of the ancestral debt of £3018 14s.³⁷ Seizure of the outlying Butler manors around Dublin was easily accomplished, but the Butlers, led by the prior of Kilmainham, resisted all attempts to confiscate the central territories of the earldom. Furnival's activities in this matter led to another of Ormond's complaints in 1422. Ormond claimed that Furnival had pardoned Walter de Burgh, one of the Clanwilliam de Burghs who controlled a bloc of territory on the Limerick-Tipperary border and were a perennial threat to the safety and security of the liberty, and then 'taken him to peace'. The lieutenant then ordered the prior of Kilmainham to 'put away his soldiers' because de Burgh had come into the king's peace. According to Ormond, Furnival then allowed, or even encouraged, de Burgh to ally with Tadhg O'Brien and William (Uilleag) de Burgh of Clanricard and raid into Tipperary, burning and destroying 'the said earl his county to the damage of £5000'.³⁸

Furnival proved to be able to damage the Ormond lordship but could neither seize it nor control it. His failure in this region only serves to underline the growing weakness of the king's administration in Ireland beyond the region directly adjacent to Dublin. If the Butlers did not cooperate, all of south central Ireland passed out of Furnival's control. Furthermore, Furnival's actions against Ormond clearly worried the Anglo-Irish community and opposition to his activities began to grow in areas closer to Dublin and, once again, the prior of Kilmainham was a pivotal figure. On 18 June 1418, Gerald, earl of Kildare, and Sir Christopher Preston were arrested 'for attempting to commune with the prior of Kilmainham' by Furnival's brother, Thomas, who was acting as deputy lieutenant while his brother was in England.³⁹ While it is unlikely that Kildare, Preston and the prior were working together in a 'conspiracy' against Furnival, it is clear that the tensions between the lieutenant and

³⁷ N.A.I., RC 8/37, pp 170-3. Transcribed by C. A. Empey in 'The Butler Lordship in Ireland, 1185-1515', app. V

³⁸ M. Griffith, 'The Talbot-Ormond struggle for control of the Anglo-Irish government, 1417-47', p. 393; Otway-Ruthven, *Med. Ire.*, pp 357-8.

³⁹ Marleborough, *Chronicles*, p. 27; Otway-Ruthven, *Med. Ire.*, pp 353-4; for fuller details on the events surrounding the arrest see A. J. Otway-Ruthven, 'The background to the arrest of Sir Christopher Preston in 1418'

the Anglo-Irish community had reached intolerable levels and by October 1418 the king was forced to intervene in an attempt to settle the situation. He took the expedient measure of separating the leaders of the two factions by summoning the prior of Kilmainham to serve in France with Ormond. Orders were sent for ships to be seized and ready to transport the prior on 27 October 1418.⁴⁰ The prior gathered a force of about 1,500 troops of mixed Gaelic and Anglo-Irish stock and joined the king at the siege of Rouen.⁴¹ The prior and his troops were almost certainly used to raid and harass the countryside around Rouen and certainly made an impression on the French chronicler, Enguerrard de Monstrelet, who wrote that

‘although the Irish were miserably accoutred...and possessed no weapons that could hurt the French...these Irish did frequent excursions...and did infinite mischiefs.’⁴²

The prior remained on campaign with the king until his death in November 1419, when he is said to have died of an illness ‘that came upon the Irishmen in the strange land.’⁴³

Ormond was already in France when his brother arrived and had been away from Ireland for the better part of three years. He was in London in August 1415 and tradition places him among those who took part in Henry V’s campaign in Normandy of that year, although there is no conclusive evidence to support this tradition.⁴⁴ A Jaques d’Ormond is reported to have been knighted by the king at Pont St. Maxine but whether this was Ormond or not is unknown.⁴⁵ If he did go on the campaign, it is possible that he returned to England with the duke of Clarence after the siege of Harfleur. Ormond was in Ireland from March to June 1416, but then returned to England.⁴⁶ He certainly took part in the king’s campaigns

⁴⁰ *Cal. pat. rolls, 1416-22*, p. 202

⁴¹ J. Gairdner, *Historical collections of a citizen of London in the fifteenth century*, p. 12

⁴² E. de Monstrelet, *The chronicles of Enguerrard de Monstrelet*, p. 404

⁴³ *Ann. Conn., s.a. 1419*

⁴⁴ *Proc. king’s council Ireland*, p. xxx; Otway-Ruthven, *Med. Ire.* p. 357; C. L. Kingsford, *The first English life of king Henry V*, p. xvii.

⁴⁵ E. Matthew, ‘Governing the lordship’, p. 112

⁴⁶ N.A.I., RC 8/36, pp 543-4

to conquer Normandy from 1417-20 but his presence in the early stages of the campaign is somewhat uncertain. He was in England on 28 March 1418, when he appointed an attorney, but he travelled to France soon after and was present at the siege of Rouen, which began in 1418.⁴⁷ Ormond also took part in the raid that captured Pontoise in July 1419.⁴⁸

Having Ormond in France probably suited the king very well. Henry V kept himself abreast of events in Ireland and certainly had plans to re-shape the administration of his lordship to make it more self-sufficient.⁴⁹ While the financial structure set up for Stanley and Furnival was an improvement on the earlier structure, their financial problems highlighted some important flaws in the new system. However, those flaws could be overcome if the right person was appointed to the office of lieutenant. If the new lieutenant had sufficient personal resources to supplement his salary as chief governor, then the poor relations with the Anglo-Irish community that plagued Furnival's lieutenancy could possibly be avoided.

As Ormond was an obvious choice for the position, having him serve in France gave the king an opportunity to gauge the character and abilities of this most important Anglo-Irish magnate in much the same way as he came to know Furnival during his wars in Wales. This is not to say that Ormond was previously unknown to the king. He had been at court from at least 1412 with his patron Clarence, and had been sent by the king to prepare the way for Stanley in 1413. In fact, Ormond, directly or indirectly, is the source for several anecdotes about the reigns of Henry IV and Henry V that were later incorporated into the *First English Life*. These anecdotes include, among others, the reconciliation of Henry IV and his son, the arrival of the emperor Sigismund in England, a story of the youth of Henry V, and the distribution of the booty from Caen. Ormond could not have witnessed all of these events but he certainly knew the people who had. Whether the anecdotes were told by Ormond directly to a writer

⁴⁷ 'Calendar of the Norman Rolls', p. 604; J. Gairdner, *Historical collections of a citizen of London in the fifteenth century*, p. 7; F. W. Brie, *The Brut or the chronicles of England*, pp 353-4

⁴⁸ M. Griffith, 'The Talbot-Ormond struggle for control of the Anglo-Irish government, 1417-47', p. 394. In his accusations against Furnival, Ormond mentioned that one of his men, James, FitzWilliam, died at Pontoise.

⁴⁹ E. Matthew, 'Financing the lordship under Henry V and Henry VI', pp. 97-100

of an intermediary Latin biography or indirectly through his son, Thomas, to the writer of the *First English Life* is uncertain but it is clear that Ormond was the sources of the stories.⁵⁰ The nature of these anecdotes show that Ormond was intimately familiar with the court and the court with him. The loyal service of both Ormond and the prior of Kilmainham sufficiently impressed the king that when the time came to replace Furnival at the end of his six year term of office, Ormond was the logical choice.

Ormond's appointment suited both king and earl and his lieutenancy can be clearly seen as an extension of Henry V's policies of reform in the lordship of Ireland. If Furnival's administration had been plagued by poor finances and poorer relations with the Anglo-Irish, then these problems should be solved by appointing an Anglo-Irish magnate like Ormond to the office of chief governor. Ormond agreed to a further reduction in the salary of the lieutenant and the bulk of his yearly salary of 2500 marks was to be found from Irish sources of revenue. Ormond did receive a lump sum of 1250 marks from the exchequer in England, and if he could prove that Irish revenues were insufficient to meet his payments he could have a warrant for payment from England.⁵¹ Furthermore, Ormond was to account for his use of the revenues of the lordship rather than simply having them as a grant as had been the custom since 1379.⁵² Henry V's policy for Ireland seems to have been to bring the lieutenancy more into line with the wardenships of the marches towards Scotland, with the lieutenant of Ireland being paid an amount somewhat less than the warden of the East March but more than the warden of the West March as set down in the indentures granted to the wardens in January 1411.⁵³

For Ormond, the appointment was an opportunity to redress the effects of Furnival's period in office. This opportunity was probably the main reason he was willing to settle for the king's terms. Ormond was

⁵⁰ C. L. Kingsford, *The first English life of king Henry V*, p. ; J. H. Wylie and W. T. Waugh, *The reign of Henry V*, app. Z², pp 445-8; C. T. Allmand, *Henry V*, p. 432-3

⁵¹ *Ormond deeds, 1413-1509*, no. 84 (2), p. 69; P.R.O. E101/246/13, no. 5

⁵² Richardson and Sayles, *Ir. Parl. in middle ages*, p. 155

⁵³ E. Matthews, 'Financing the lordship', p. 13; R.L. Storey, 'The Wardens of the Marches of England towards Scotland, 1377-1489', p. 604

perhaps the first Anglo-Irish magnate in decades to see the office of chief governor in terms of opportunity rather than merely focusing on the financial costs associated with the office. In this respect, as in several others, Ormond can be seen as a fore-runner to the earls of Kildare later in the century. Ormond's desire for office can be seen in the speed with which he reached Ireland after his indentures were sealed. He was in London on 15 February 1420 and was ready to sail from Bristol with a small party on 20 March, as stipulated in the indenture.⁵⁴ He was delayed in Bristol until at least 7 April 1420, but sailed soon after. He landed at Waterford on 10 April, marched north through his own lordship to Dublin and was sworn in before the council on 22 April 1420.⁵⁵ The speed with which Ormond took office is made more impressive when one considers that the other lieutenants coming from England in this period took anywhere from four months to two years to arrive in Ireland to take up their duties in Ireland.⁵⁶ Clearly, he had a strong desire to be in Ireland and in the office of lieutenant.

Presumably one of Ormond's first actions after taking up his position in Ireland was to reverse the seizure of his lands and overturn the order to pay the ancestral debt. Ormond also replaced Furnival's younger brother, Richard, archbishop of Dublin since 1417, who had been elected justiciar by the council on 6 March 1420 after the news of Ormond's appointment reached Ireland.⁵⁷ Archbishop Talbot proved himself to be an implacable enemy of the White Earl and was to become Ormond's leading opponent in Ireland, taking the lead in the anti-Ormond faction. With the exception of the period from 1424-5, Furnival himself became peripheral to the Talbot-Ormond disputes, as he spent most of the rest of his career in France. However, he remained the head of the Talbot family and re-emerged as an important figure for the next generation of the Butlers in the 1440s.

Most of Ormond's two year term of office was taken up with the protection of the emerging region of the Pale from external threats and

⁵⁴ P.R.O. E101/247/13, nos. 3,5

⁵⁵ P.R.O. E101/247/8, m. 1

⁵⁶ E. Matthew, 'Governing the lordship', p. 46

⁵⁷ P.R.O. E101/247/8, m. 1.

factional in-fighting between his supporters and those of the archbishop. The intricate details of this factional in-fighting have been well documented elsewhere and do not impinge on the development of the Ormond lordship except in so far as they forced Ormond to be a semi-absentee figure in his own lordship in a period where he seems not to have had a competent deputy to look after his interests there.⁵⁸ During this period, the administrative structures of the Dublin administration became increasingly divided between the factions supporting the earl and the archbishop. The principles dividing the two factions are hard to discern from the surviving official documentation, but what does survive indicates that one important difference lay in the more conciliatory attitude shown by Ormond to the Gaelic Irish.⁵⁹

When one considers Ormond's own lordship in this period, the most important development was his increasingly good relations with the earl of Desmond. The death of the prior of Kilmainham in France removed Ormond's most important baron and his most capable deputy, leaving his lordship somewhat unprotected while Ormond was in Dublin. However, both Ormond and Desmond saw that they would benefit more from a period of cooperation than by a continuation of the traditional antagonism between their families. Ormond traded peace for support and recognition.

As long as Thomas, fifth earl of Desmond, was alive and serving with the king in France, his uncle's position in the Desmond lordship was precarious but this state of affairs ended when Desmond died in August 1420. Thomas, earl of Desmond had been ousted from his earldom by his uncle in 1411, but was recognised as the rightful heir by Henry V, who sent him back to Ireland with a force of 60 men-at-arms and 300 archers in 1414, but this was not enough to regain his earldom. He was imprisoned by his uncle until released through the intervention of Furnival and returned to England, joining the king's campaign in Normandy, where he died

⁵⁸ The standard text on the subject is M. Griffith, 'The Talbot-Ormond struggle for control of the Anglo-Irish government, 1417-47', *I.H.S.*, ii (1940-1), pp 376-97. A more recent and exceedingly thorough assessment of Ormond's career is provided by E. Matthew, in her thesis 'The governing of the Lancastrian lordship of Ireland in the time of James Butler, fourth earl of Ormond, c.1420-1452', while a more general history of the period can be found in chapter XI of Otway-Ruthven, *Med. Ire.*.

⁵⁹ K. Simms, 'Bards and barons', p. 188

without legitimate heirs in 1420.⁶⁰ The only potential problem with James fitz Gerald's claim to the earldom of Desmond was the existence of earl Thomas' son, Maurice, but the inquisitions held after the death of earl Thomas largely side stepped this issue by declaring that James fitz Gerald was the rightful heir, not of the fifth earl, Thomas fitz John, but to John fitz Gerald, the fourth earl who had died in 1399.

This gave James fitz Gerald a legitimate claim to the earldom and partially absolved him of the usurpation of 1411, although his nephew had always been accepted as the legitimate earl by the crown. The inquisitions only noted that the lands of the earldom had been in the possession of Thomas fitz John and Maurice fitz Gerald since 29 May 1401 by virtue of a royal commission.⁶¹ It seems clear that Ormond supported James fitz Gerald's claims to the earldom of Desmond over those of Earl Thomas' son, preferring to legitimise the existing situation rather than deal with a minority in Desmond or a second usurpation. This support ushered in a period of unusually peaceful relations between the Ormond and Desmond lordships that was to last for almost a quarter of a century. The good relations between the two earls were further strengthened when they sealed an indenture on 31 January 1422.

In this indenture, Ormond effectively handed over his lordships of Imokilly and Inchiquin in eastern Cork to Desmond. Ormond had recently acquired the other half of these lordships, but because they were peripheral to his own lordship and encircled by Desmond territory, he seems to have decided that they had more value as a gesture of friendship. In the indenture, Ormond appointed Desmond as the 'keeper, governor and supervisor' of the lordships of Imokilly and Inchiquin for the term of Desmond's life.⁶² In return for carrying the burden of defending these lordships, Desmond received 240 acres of demesne land and half the profits of the two lordships. This agreement formed the basis for a decade of good relations that saw Desmond playing a more active role in the

⁶⁰ *A.F.M., s.a.* 1411, 1414; *Cal. pat. rolls, 1413-16*, p. 117; Sir H. Ellis, *Original Letters*, 2nd ser., i, p. 61; Otway-Ruthven, *Med. Ire.*, pp. 352-3

⁶¹ *Rot. pat. Hib.*, p. 157b, no. 92

⁶² *Ormond deeds, 1413-1509*, no. 51, pp 38-9

affairs of the lordship that had been common in recent decades.⁶³ For Desmond, the alliance allowed him to effectively enlarge his lordship and gained the support of the most prominent lord in Ireland in his attempts to legitimise his position. Ormond, for his part, gained peace on the southern border of his lordship and an ally against both the Gaelic Irish and the Talbot faction, especially at a time when he needed allies most. Clearly, this agreement worked to the benefit of both men and was extended seven years later.

Ormond had worked to establish a positive relationship with the house of Lancaster in the decade before he became lieutenant of Ireland. However, those ties, and the patronage they brought with them were destroyed by the untimely death not only of Thomas, duke of Clarence, at the battle of Baugé on 22 March 1421, but also Henry V less than a year and a half later on 31 August 1422.⁶⁴ The death of his royal patrons left Ormond bereft of his most important connections at court. While Ormond certainly knew the dukes of Bedford and Gloucester and their uncle, Henry Beaufort, bishop of Winchester, he had not formed the same personal relations with them as he had with Clarence. Events in England after the death of Henry V clearly showed the limitations faced by an Irish earl in England.

It is almost certain that Ormond did not know of the death of Henry V when he left Ireland on 8 September 1422, possibly to render his account at the English exchequer.⁶⁵ When he heard the news, he immediately made his way to Windsor to do homage to his new king.⁶⁶ Ormond was in Windsor by 28 September when he was one of the witnesses to the surrender of the Great Seal by Henry V's chancellor, Thomas Langley, bishop of Durham. Ormond was actually the highest ranking layman present, after the duke of Gloucester. However, he was very much the

⁶³ Otway-Ruthven, *Med. Ire.*, p. 362-3; M. Griffith, 'The Talbot-Ormond struggle for control of the Anglo-Irish government, 1417-47', p. 392; *Ann. Conn. s.a. 1422*; *Rot. pat. Hib.*, p.225, no. 22

⁶⁴ C. T. Allmand, *Henry V*, pp 158-9; *H.B.C.*, pp 41, 456

⁶⁵ N.A.I., RC8/40, pp 20, 44; E. Matthew, 'Governing the lordship', p. 157.

⁶⁶ *Cal. close rolls, 1422-9*, p. 46; R. Griffiths, *Reign of Henry VI*, pp 13-14.

outsider in this group. His own 'political instincts' had drawn him to Windsor, he had not been summoned.⁶⁷

However, Ormond's presence at Windsor gave the assembled magnates an opportunity to settle the growing dispute between Ormond and Furnival, as Furnival also happened to be at Windsor. Furnival, now Lord Talbot since the death of his niece in 1421, had inherited his family's ancestral lands and renewed his connections at court after he left Ireland.⁶⁸ He had served in France from May 1420, probably attended the king's marriage and witnessed the sealing of Treaty of Troyes in June 1420, and then took part in the siege of Meulun from June to November 1420. He then returned to England where he was one of the lords who arranged the coronation of Queen Catherine and accompanied the king on his progress through England, returning to France in June 1421. He was with the army that besieged Meux until May 1422, when he returned to England after the death of his wife.⁶⁹ Talbot's position, with respect to the king and the council was probably not much better than Ormond's, but he had served Henry V since 1402, and he had a place among those deliberating the future of the realm, by right, whereas Ormond was only there as a courtesy. Talbot's presence at a meeting of magnates and clergy in Westminster on 5 November 1422 to discuss the form and conduct of the forthcoming parliament only serves to underline his status as an 'insider', while Ormond's absence from the parliament entirely, because he was an Irish earl, serves to reinforce his status as an 'outsider'.⁷⁰ Initially, these factors seemed to tip the balance in Talbot's favour when the council came to formulate a policy for Ireland.

Talbot's initial influence on the council's Irish policy can be clearly seen in the appointments made on 4 October 1422. Archbishop Talbot was appointed justiciar, holding office during pleasure, as an interim measure until a new lieutenant could be appointed. At the same time William Tynbegh was confirmed as treasurer and Lawrence Merbury's previously

⁶⁷ E. Matthew, 'Governing the lordship', p. 156

⁶⁸ His elder brother, Gilbert, had died in 1418, leaving as his heir his daughter, Ankaret, who died in 1421. *C. P.*, xii, pt. 1, p. 619-20

⁶⁹ A. Pollard, *John Talbot and the war in France, 1427-53*, p. 17

⁷⁰ *P.P.C.*, iii, pp 6-7; J. S. Roskell, 'Office and dignity of Protector of England, with special reference to its origins', *E.H.R.*, lxxvii (1953), p.197

ineffective appointment as chancellor was enforced.⁷¹ The appointments shifted the balance between the factions in Dublin against Ormond and archbishop Talbot exploited the opportunity to remove Ormond's supporters from the administration with great efficiency. However, the council stopped short of appointing either Talbot or his brother lieutenant as it tried to sort out the storm of accusation and counter-accusation that surrounded Talbot and Ormond.

Talbot levelled several accusations against Ormond, all of which dated to his period as lieutenant and culminated in a charge of treason. Ormond was accused of harbouring men who had attacked Talbot supporters; of unlawfully arresting Talbot's cousin, Sir Thomas Talbot; of protecting the constable of his lordship of Arklow after the constable had harboured Gaelic Irish and murdered John Liverpool, the constable of Wicklow; of leaving his lordship of Oughterard, Co. Kildare, undefended and open to attack by the Gaelic Irish; and finally, of purposely leaving the lordship knowing that the prior of Kilmainham 'proposed misgovernance against John, the lord Talbot'.⁷² Ormond then unleashed his own set of detailed accusations against Talbot, again dating to the period from 1414 to 1417.⁷³ Ormond's complaints detail a pattern of abuse by the then lieutenant against Ormond and his supporters in Ireland. These charges and counter-charges came before the council, which then had the unenviable task of attempting to sift fact from fiction. The council's task was made more difficult by the fact that it needed both men and could not afford to alienate either. It also had to promulgate a policy for Ireland for the duration of the king's minority, so clearly, the dispute between Talbot and Ormond had to be settled quickly and finally.

To this end, pressure was brought to bear on both men to end their disputes. On 11 February 1423, Ormond and Talbot undertook to do no harm to each other or to their servants on pain of a 10,000 mark fine.⁷⁴ The council also seems to have realised the financial burden placed on

⁷¹ *Cal. pat. rolls, 1422-9*, p. 3; E. Matthew, 'Governing the lordship', p. 159-60

⁷² *Rot. parl.*, iv, p. 198-9

⁷³ M. Griffith, 'The Talbot-Ormond struggle for control of the Anglo-Irish government, 1417-47', p. 393-5

⁷⁴ *Cal. close rolls, 1422-9*, pp 58-9

Ormond by the absentee legislation while he was in England awaiting the decisions of the council, so he was granted a two-year leave of absence from Ireland on 11 July 1423.⁷⁵ As the case dragged on, the members of the council seem to have been aware that both Ormond and Talbot had legitimate grievances, but that Ormond may have suffered more. Ormond was almost certainly helped in this case by the fact that his wife was a cousin of Richard Beauchamp, earl of Warwick, one of the most prominent members of the council at this point and that his mother-in-law, Joan, Lady Bergavenny, was one of Warwick's most prominent political allies.⁷⁶ It seems clear that Ormond used his wife's connections with Warwick to get his point of view across to the council.

An additional problem was that while Ormond's complaints and views probably represented the feelings of the Anglo-Irish community more accurately, it has been noted that every petition generated by the Talbot-Ormond controversy was directed at only one audience, the king and council in England and tells us more of the orthodox views held in London than the policies and aims of either Talbot or Ormond. Neither man had many compunctions about going to war with the Gaelic lords in defence of the Irish lordship, however their actions do indicate that Ormond was prepared to deal fairly with the Gaelic lords if they kept faith with him, which is a significantly different policy than simply lumping them all under the title of 'the king's Irish enemies'.⁷⁷ This pragmatic approach to relations with the Gaelic-Irish did not sit well with the orthodoxy of the English court. The council was faced with a difficult decision and in the end chose not to decide but to demand that the two men simply set aside their differences. Talbot's accusations were answered in November 1423 at the parliament held in Westminster, but the command that both men put aside their quarrel for the good of the realm, stressing their kinship, could not have satisfied either party.⁷⁸ However,

⁷⁵ *Cal. pat. rolls, 1422-9*, p. 128

⁷⁶ C. Carpenter, 'The Beauchamp affinity' p. 517; C. Carpenter, *Locality and Polity*, pp 372-3

⁷⁷ See K. Simms, 'Bards and Barons', p. 187

⁷⁸ *Rot. Parl.*, iv, p. 199. Ormond and Talbot were second cousins. Petronilla, a daughter of James, first earl of Ormond, married Gilbert, Lord Talbot, John Talbot's grandfather. *C.P.*, xii, pt. 1, p. 615

Ormond had some reasons to be pleased with the council's decision for the office of lieutenant of Ireland.

Clearly, the council did not want a partisan of either Talbot or Ormond to become chief governor of Ireland, lest the factionalism break out again, but they had also learned the value of having a magnate with Irish connections as lieutenant. Fortunately, a candidate that met both of these criteria, neutrality and 'Irishness', was available in the form of Edmund Mortimer, earl of March and Ulster, who sealed his indentures of service as lieutenant of Ireland on 9 May 1423.⁷⁹ March was a logical candidate for the office. Both his father and grandfather had served as lieutenant and he was technically one of the greatest magnates of Ireland. He had proven himself to be a loyal follower of Henry V and if his appointment owed more to politics than any other cause, the council in England still expected him to use his influence and his family's prestige to repair the factionally divided administration in Dublin. However the new lieutenant showed no signs of going to Ireland and held the office by deputy from 4 August 1423, when he appointed Edward Dauntsey, bishop of Meath as his deputy.⁸⁰

When Dauntsey returned to Dublin from England, his appointment as deputy was resisted by Archbishop Talbot, on the grounds that an appointment under March's personal seal was insufficient for the Irish council to give credence to Dauntsey's letters patent. The archbishop had served as justiciar from 4 October 1422 but his appointment lapsed when March's term as lieutenant began on 9 May 1423. Ten days later he was appointed chancellor of Ireland and while there is no record of his re-election as justiciar during the absence of March or his appointed deputy, there is little doubt that the archbishop still retained control of the council when Dauntsey arrived in September 1423, having apparently ignored two writs, dated 20 June 1423 and 26 June 1423, that underlined his position as 'the late justiciar' and ordered him to inform the people of the change in administration and order obedience to the earl or his deputy.⁸¹ Archbishop Talbot's opposition to Dauntsey's appointment probably was

⁷⁹ Rhymer, *Foedera*, x, 282-5

⁸⁰ Richardson and Sayles, *Ir. Parl. in middle ages*, p. 314

⁸¹ *ibid.*, p. 311-5

based on fears that March would not be a neutral party in Dublin, but would more likely favour Ormond's faction. However, Talbot was forced to acquiesce to the appointment of Dauntsey as deputy lieutenant and his credentials were accepted by the council on 2 October 1423.⁸² Talbot's treatment of March's deputy may have created the very atmosphere he feared, as Dauntsey was replaced by Ormond as deputy lieutenant. Ormond and March clearly became more acquainted with each other while Ormond resided in England facing the charges of treason levelled against him by John, Lord Talbot, and once the charges had been dropped, Ormond was ready to return to Ireland.⁸³ When Ormond returned to the lordship in May 1424, he returned with a substantial force, indicating that his task was to secure the region around Dublin in preparation for the arrival of the lieutenant.⁸⁴

What emerges clearly from Ormond's sojourn in England from September 1422 to May 1424 is his ability to hold his own against the Talbots. While Talbot's influence can be clearly seen in the council's policies for Ireland in the immediate aftermath of the death of Henry V, Ormond's use of his personal connections in England, most notably the earls of Warwick and March, allowed him to overcome the treason charges levelled against him and to recover much of his position. In the summer of 1424 he looked to become an important advisor to the new lieutenant of Ireland. It is quite possible that had March served his full nine year term as lieutenant the Talbot-Ormond feud might have faded away, but this was not to be the case. March's sudden death on 18 January 1425 opened the gates of factionalism again.⁸⁵

In the end, Ormond's second term as chief governor lasted over two years, slightly longer than his first term as lieutenant. Talbot served in this capacity from 22 January 1425 until he was replaced by Ormond on 28 April. Ormond's initial indenture was to serve as lieutenant for one year from 1 March 1425 but also he served an additional fifteen months as

⁸² *Rot. pat. Hib.*, p. 233

⁸³ For Ormond's connection to March see E. Matthews, 'Governing the lordship', pp 169-70

⁸⁴ N. L. I., Ms 4, f. 275; *A.F.M.*, s.a. 1424. For Ormond's activities in this period see E. Matthews, 'Governing the lordship', pp 170-2

⁸⁵ *N.H.I., Maps genealogies and lists*, p. 476

justiciar from 15 April 1426 to 31 July 1427.⁸⁶ In the areas of finance and defence, Ormond's tenure can be considered a success. Once again Ormond showed his ability to manipulate Irish sources of revenue to the fullest and he campaigned actively against the Gaelic Irish. However, his practical policies for dealing with the neighbouring Gaelic lords almost certainly further alienated the Talbot faction in the Dublin administration. Ormond further exacerbated the tension during his period as justiciar when he replaced Archbishop Talbot as chancellor with one of his own supporters, William fitz Thomas, prior of Kilmainham, soon after his election as justiciar, although Talbot was subsequently restored to his office of chancellor in January 1427 on the strength of an English patent dated 23 October 1426.⁸⁷

It seems clear that the English council were well aware of the potential for problems in Ireland. Ormond's indenture in 1425 was hardly a ringing endorsement of his suitability for office. The limited nature of his indenture and the powers granted to him indicate that his was to be a caretaker administration, holding office only until a more suitable candidate could be found. However, the search for that candidate was disturbed by the emergence of factional disputes within the English council as the duke of Gloucester and Cardinal Beaufort struggled for control of the English government.⁸⁸ This division within the English council was to continue until the duke of Bedford returned to England from France and used his authority to end the quarrel. Bedford's intervention in England allowed the council to agree on a new lieutenant for Ireland. Ormond probably hoped that his good service since the death of the earl of March would entice the English council to re-appoint him but he was to be disappointed.

By 1427, Ormond had few supporters in England. Henry V, Thomas, duke of Clarence, and the earl of March had all died and the earl of Warwick who had probably supported Ormond in 1423, could no longer be counted on for support. Warwick had two interconnected reasons to oppose Ormond by 1427. Firstly, his good relations with his aunt, Joan,

⁸⁶ *ibid.*, p. 476; *Cal. pat. rolls, 1422-9*, p. 273

⁸⁷ E. Matthews, 'Governing the lordship', p. 493; *Cal. close rolls, 1422-9*, p. 379

⁸⁸ R. Griffiths, *Reign of Henry VI*, pp 73-9; B. Wollfe, *Henry VI*, pp 39-43; E. Matthews, 'Governing the lordship', pp 198-9

Lady Bergavenny, had deteriorated significantly in the intervening years, and secondly, Warwick's daughter, Margaret, had married John, Lord Talbot. The Warwick-Bergavenny dispute fed into the Talbot-Ormond feud and Talbot took part in the armed attack on Lady Bergavenny's manor at Snitterfield, Warwickshire in November 1425. Clearly, Warwick's sympathies lay with his son-in-law rather than his cousin's husband.⁸⁹

The English council attempted to follow a neutral course with respect to Ireland, although the new council seemed to be somewhat more pro-Talbot. On 23 October 1426, Ormond's long-term supporter, Hugh Bavent, was removed as treasurer and replaced by the somewhat more neutral Edmund Dauntsey, bishop of Meath, while Archbishop Talbot was re-instated as chancellor.⁹⁰ Ormond, himself, was replaced by John, Lord Grey of Wilton, on 1 August 1427.⁹¹ Grey proved to be an unfortunate choice for the position of lieutenant. He was neither neutral enough nor of sufficient status to quell the factional dispute. Nor did he have a landed base in Ireland from which to draw funds and support. He also exacerbated the factionalism and encouraged future problems by dismissing five of Ormond's supporters from the council and appointing pro-Talbot partisans in their place.⁹²

However, Grey's lieutenancy was only the first of many to fail to resolve the problems posed by the earl of Ormond. Ormond had proven himself to be the most capable candidate for the office of lieutenant but his inability to work with the Talbots and their supporters also made him the worst choice for the position. His autocratic and occasionally vindictive tendencies were acceptable as long as there was a strong effective monarch to provide a controlling influence, as happened during Ormond's first lieutenancy under Henry V. However, the divisions within the minority council of Henry VI left it incapable of effectively supervising Ormond's activities in Ireland. As the divisions in Ireland worsened during and after

⁸⁹ C. P., xi, p. 703; C. Carpenter, 'The Beauchamp affinity', p. 527; C. Carpenter, *Locality and Polity*, pp 379-80

⁹⁰ *Cal. pat. rolls, 1422-9*, p. 379

⁹¹ *ibid.*, pp 397-8; E. Matthews, 'Governing the lordship', p. 479

⁹² E. Matthews, 'Governing the lordship', p. 215-6

Ormond's period as justiciar, the English council apparently decided that peace in Ireland would be better served by removing Ormond from government and, if the opportunity arose, from Ireland as well.⁹³ However, Ormond's removal from authority had to be accomplished in such a way that it did not alienate the most important magnate in Ireland. To do this the council made a peace offering to Ormond and summoned his son and heir to court to live in the household of the young king. This meant little to Ormond himself but he was certainly aware of the potential benefits for his family that could accrue from his son's connections to the royal household. Furthermore, Ormond had already sent his son to England to live in his grandmother's household.

It seems clear that Ormond made the decision to send his son and heir to be raised in England early in the 1420s. The child, James Butler V, was born during Ormond's first lieutenancy, on 24 November 1420.⁹⁴ The child was certainly in England in May 1426, when a summons was sent to Edward Neville, Lord Bergavenny, ordering him to present the young James Butler to be knighted the following Pentecost.⁹⁵ The exact timing of the child's arrival in England is unclear but the winter of 1422/3 appears to be the most likely time. Ormond was still in England and his inability to influence the council after Henry V's death was fresh in his mind. It is quite probable that he discussed the situation with his mother-in-law, Joan Beauchamp, Lady Bergavenny, and then sent for his family to join him in England.

Lady Bergavenny was to become an important part of the younger James Butler's life. She was a daughter and sister of successive earls of Arundel and Surrey and had married William Beauchamp, the younger brother of Thomas Beauchamp, earl of Warwick.⁹⁶ Lady Bergavenny proved herself to be an able politician and administrator of her husband's lands after his death in 1411 and had become a minor power in the north midlands. She administered a significant estate, valued at just under £2000 *per annum* in 1427, which was comprised of her dower lands, the majority

⁹³ *ibid.*, p. 217

⁹⁴ Marlborough, *Chronicle*, p. 30-31

⁹⁵ Rhymer, *Foedera*, x, 357

⁹⁶ *C. P.*, i, p. 26; *H.B.C.*, pp 450, 486

of her husband's lands which she held in jointure, and the lands she purchased from Sir Hugh Burnell in 1421.⁹⁷ She also had very good reasons to be interested in the future of Ormond's son and heir. The death of her own son, Richard, earl of Worcester, on 16 April 1422, left Lady Bergavenny with two heirs.⁹⁸ The first was Worcester's daughter, Elisabeth, who would inherit the Bergavenny lands but the second was James Butler V, who became her closest male relative and stood to inherit his grandmother's personal lands. Lady Bergavenny's hand can be seen in some of the future developments of her grandson's life, but most clearly in his early education and his marriage to Avise Stafford.

As Ormond remained in England during 1423 because of the treason charges levelled against him by Talbot, it seems likely that he summoned his family to join him. His youngest son, Thomas, was born no later than 1424, which indicates that if Ormond's wife did not accompany him to England in September 1422, she followed soon after. The family almost certainly stayed with Lady Bergavenny and the younger James remained with his grandmother when Ormond returned to Ireland in 1424. The plan to introduce Ormond's heir into English society apparently worked well. The council was aware of the child's presence in England and a summons to the Leicester parliament of 1426, where James Butler V was inducted into the Order of the Bath by the king, was sent to Edward Neville, Lord Bergavenny.⁹⁹ This summons seems to have been part of an overarching attempt by the duke of Bedford and the council to end several simmering magnate quarrels, among them the Talbot-Ormond feud. While the meeting provided the minority council with an opportunity to reward those who had supported the regime in its early days of Henry VI's reign, it also brought Butler into contact with several people who would become important to his life in the future. Also present at the ceremony were Richard of York, the earl of Oxford, Lord Mautravers, Lord Roos, John Talbot, the son and heir of John, Lord Talbot, and not least, the young king, Henry VI.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁷ P.R.O. SC11/25, 813

⁹⁸ *H.B.C.*, p. 488

⁹⁹ Rhymer, *Foedera*, x, 357

¹⁰⁰ C. L. Kingsford, *Chronicles of London*, pp 95, 130

Butler was one of the few young magnates specifically summoned to the parliament. It had previously been decided that all heirs of magnates presently in the king's ward were to reside in the royal household during their minorities. However, all the lords so summoned were several years older than the king.¹⁰¹ While these men were clearly suitable company for the king, they were obviously too old to serve as his companions. Butler, on the other hand, was only a year older than the king and was living with his grandmother. For all intents and purposes, he was an orphan in England and was summoned to live at court with the king. To have the younger James Butler at court would serve two purposes. It gave the king a companion of his own age and, in addition, his transfer to the royal household provided a way to honour and placate the earl of Ormond in 1427. As has been recently noted 'it was a chance that few noblemen of the generation that had served and revered the king's father would have spurned for their heirs.'¹⁰²

While the earl of Ormond was probably unaware of the honour done to his son at the Leicester parliament until well after the fact, it seems almost certain that he had a hand in his son's transfer to the royal court. The actual timing of the transfer is uncertain but late in the autumn or early winter of 1427 seems to be the most likely date. Ormond had just been passed over for the lieutenancy of Ireland and had taken up residence in London by February 1428, having left Ireland shortly after his successor took office. Negotiations to have his son moved to the royal household probably began soon after he left Ireland and in November 1427, his son's nurse was pensioned off.¹⁰³ The young king bestowed several gifts between Christmas 1427 and early February 1428, among which was a silver collar of the royal livery given to a Philip Cowerly *demourant ovec del fitz del Conte Dormonde*. Clearly, Ormond's heir was present in the royal Household in the winter of 1427-8.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰¹ *P.P.C.*, iii, p. 170. Among those brought to the royal household in this period were Richard of York (b. 1411), Lord Roos (b. 1406) and the earl of Oxford (b. 1408). For details of the royal household in this period see R. Griffiths, *Reign of Henry VI*, pp 51-7; Wolffe, *Henry VI*, pp 35-8

¹⁰² E. Matthews, 'Governing the Lordship', p. 219

¹⁰³ *ibid.*, p. 219

¹⁰⁴ Rhymer, *Foedera*, x, 387.

Little more is known of the childhood of James Butler V. As a companion to the king he was presumably given an education befitting a young magnate, although he never was to show the interest in learning evidenced by his father. He accompanied the king on his coronation expedition to France in 1430, indenting to serve with a nominal force of three men-at-arms and six archers. It must be remembered that Butler was only nine years of age when the expedition set out. He could not command his own forces but it is an indication of the standing he held as a member of the royal household.¹⁰⁵

Ormond also accompanied the royal expedition, serving with a force of forty men-at-arms and 120 archers.¹⁰⁶ Ormond's presence on the expedition was little more than happenstance and opportunism and no summons to join the king were sent to any of the other Anglo-Irish earls. He had arrived in England in the winter of 1429/30 just as preparations for the expedition were under way. He had been included in the expedition in an attempt to calm the situation in Dublin by having Ormond absent himself from Ireland for a while.¹⁰⁷ Ormond became one of eight earls and dukes that accompanied the king to France but he was the only Anglo-Irish magnate to make the journey. He was given aid to bring men from Ireland and an eighteen month licence of absence from the lordship, although he seems to have been encouraged not to return to Ireland himself.¹⁰⁸ In the end, Ormond served much less than a year in France. His wife, who had travelled to England with him, died at his manor of Shere, co. Surrey, on 3 August 1430.¹⁰⁹ Ormond was sent back with Cardinal Beaufort and John, Lord Tiptoft, the steward of the king's household to recruit further reinforcements and was at Canterbury at

¹⁰⁵ P.R.O. E404/46/253

¹⁰⁶ P.R.O. E404/46/252. The first payment, covering half a year, for the retinues of Ormond and his son were made on 17 April 1430 for £586 17s 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ d and £27 3s 10d, respectively [P.R.O. E403/691, m. 23 & 27]. Payments for the second half of the contract followed on 9 May 1430 amounting to £569 13s 5d and £27 3s 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ d, respectively [P.R.O. E403/692 m. 5 & 4].

¹⁰⁷ For Ormond's relationship with the administration in Dublin in this period see E. Matthews, 'Governing the lordship', pp 229-47. For the king's expedition to France see. R. Griffiths, *Reign of Henry VI*, pp 191-3.

¹⁰⁸ *Cal. pat. rolls, 1429-36*, pp 48, 72

¹⁰⁹ 'Gregory's chron.', p. 171

Christmas 1430.¹¹⁰ His heir seems to have travelled with him as he lent £40 to two men, William Hanbury, of Benhall, co. Worcester, and Simon Newhall, hosier, on 26 January 1431.¹¹¹ Ormond's activities in 1431 are unclear but he returned to Ireland in 1432. His son's whereabouts are even more uncertain and he drops from the record until he appears in the retinue of John, duke of Bedford, in 1435.¹¹² The most probable explanation is that he remained in England in the household of his grandmother and then returned to the royal household when the king returned to England in February 1432.

Butler's appearance in Bedford's retinue was both a logical step for a young magnate with royal connections and an indication that Lady Bergavenny had been working behind the scenes to further integrate him into English society. Lady Bergavenny certainly had a hand in the early negotiations concerning her grandson's marriage and these tie into Butler's presence in Bedford's retinue. Sometime before 4 July 1438, James Butler married Avice Stafford, the daughter of Sir Richard Stafford and his wife, Maud Lovel.¹¹³ After Stafford's death, Lovel married John Fitz Alan, Lord Mautravers, before 28 April 1429.¹¹⁴ Mautravers had emerged in the early 1430s as one of the leading magnates in Bedford's attempts to retain the conquered portion of France for Henry VI. His claim to the earldom of Arundel was recognised in November 1433 and in 1434 he was created duke of Touraine.¹¹⁵ The fact that he was also Lady Bergavenny's cousin was probably also a consideration in the marriage negotiations. The arrangements for the Butler-Stafford marriage probably took some time and it is unlikely that the two were married in 1435, but the negotiations almost certainly led to Butler's joining his prospective step father-in-law in Bedford's retinue.

¹¹⁰ H. T. Riley, (ed.), *Annales Monasterii Sancti Albani*, pt. i, p. 56

¹¹¹ *Cal. Anc. Deeds*, ii, p. 557

¹¹² J. Stevenson (ed.), *Letters and papers illustrating the wars of the English in France during the reign of Henry VI*, ii, pt. 2, p. 435

¹¹³ *C. P.*, x, p.128

¹¹⁴ *C. P.*, i, p. 248; *Cal. Pap. Reg.*, 1427-47, p. 136

¹¹⁵ *H.B.C.*, p. 450

The period 1435 to 1438 is extremely important in the history of the Butler family and the earldom of Ormond, not so much for actions done by the Butlers but because of a series of events over which they had no control whatsoever. Avice was born on 4 December 1423, making her some three years younger than her future husband and still somewhat young for marriage in 1435. It seems most likely that the marriage took place in early 1438, after her fourteenth birthday but before 4 July 1438, when a writ attesting to her age was sworn out.¹¹⁶ In 1435, Ormond's plan to have his son reared in England and make contacts with his English counterparts from a young age was well under way. Although the younger Butler was probably more English in his outlook than his father, the fact that the bulk of the family's lands and influence still lay in Ireland would eventually draw him back to the Irish lordship. Ormond's plan began to unravel in November 1435 when Joan, Lady Bergavenny, died. In that year, the Butler family had approximately eighteen manors scattered across ten counties in England. While some of these were of some strategic value, they did not provide Ormond with a power base in any given locality. Nor were they of exceptional value. A list of receipts for these lands in 1435/6 shows a revenue of less than £140.¹¹⁷ It seems clear that the Butler's English manors were a luxury, providing extra revenue for the earls of Ormond, but were useful only as an adjunct to their Irish lands and revenues.

This pattern began to change with the death of Lady Bergavenny on 14 November 1435. Lady Bergavenny left a will, dated 10 January 1435, in which she left bequests for her family and servants.¹¹⁸ Four of her grandchildren are mentioned in her will; James, John, Thomas, and Elizabeth Butler. John and Thomas Butler were given 700 marks each 'in defence of their livelihood' and their sister, Elizabeth, was given 100 marks. £500 was set aside for her eldest grandson, James, 'for the defence of the lands I give and assign him...in case they be challenged or impugned wrongfully'. The children were also given various beddings, tapestries and other household goods. Two of Lady Bergavenny's grandchildren were not

¹¹⁶ C. P., x, p. 128

¹¹⁷ P.R.O. SC6/1250/4

¹¹⁸ E. F. Jacob (ed.), *The Register of Henry Chichele, archbishop of Canterbury, 1414-35*, pp. 535-9

mentioned in her will; Ormond's second daughter, Anne, and Elizabeth, the daughter of Richard, earl of Worcester. The reason for Elizabeth Beauchamp's exclusion is lost to us, but the fact that Anne Butler is not mentioned suggests that she had died by the time her grandmother made her will.¹¹⁹

The most important legacy left by Lady Bergavenny to her grandchildren is barely mentioned in her will, only mentioned in passing as the lands given and assigned to her 'son, James Ormond'. Lady Bergavenny's estate had three executors, Bartholomew Brokesby, Walter Kebell and Robert Darcy, each of whom were left bequests in the will, and these men were to act as trustees of the lands granted to James Butler V until he reached his majority.¹²⁰ These lands effectively quadrupled the value of the Butler holdings in England, which as mentioned above, provided an income of approximately £140 *per annum*. James Butler's inheritance appears to have been worth significantly more than this. After her husband's death in 1411, Lady Bergavenny managed a large estate consisting of her own dower lands and lands she held in jointure, which amounted to the majority of the Beauchamp of Bergavenny lands. In addition to the Beauchamp lands, which she held for her lifetime, she held an extensive grouping of manors purchased from Sir Hugh Burnell in 1419, which formed the core of her legacy to her grandson.

The nature of Burnell's relationship with Lady Bergavenny is open to some question. He was over seventy years of age in the second decade of the fifteenth century but seems to have developed a genuine attachment to the younger woman¹²¹. It has been suggested that he was 'infatuated' with her and that 'to benefit her [Lady Bergavenny] was the main preoccupation of the last years of his life.'¹²² Whether this is the case or not, he was also held in some regard by Lady Bergavenny, who asked that prayers be said for his soul in her will, in much the same way that she asked for prayers for her husband and son. Burnell made some provisions for his own heirs but he also actively worked to transfer the majority of

¹¹⁹ Lodge, *Peerage*, ii, p. 11. In the text Anne Butler is said to have died in 1435.

¹²⁰ E. Matthew, 'Governing the Lordship', p. 259

¹²¹ *C. P.*, ii, p. 435

¹²² *The Ancestor*, no. 8 (1904), p. 178

his second wife's lands to Lady Bergavenny. As part of the marriage settlement with Joyce, the daughter and heiress of John, Lord Botetourt, on 22 May 1386, Burnell was granted joint possession of Weoley Castle and manor, the manors of Oldswynford, Northfield, Cradley and Haggely in Worcestershire, the manors of Clent, Mere and Hondesworth in Staffordshire, Bordesley in Warwickshire and the manors of Little Linford and Newport Pagnell in Buckinghamshire.¹²³ In addition, three more manors; Ashby la Zouche in Leicestershire and Fulbourne and Swavesey in Cambridgeshire passed to Joyce Burnell and were granted to Hugh after her death in January 1407.¹²⁴ Burnell then purchased the rights of Robert Zouche to these manors on 15 February 1412.¹²⁵ He started the process of transferring these manors to Lady Bergavenny on 29 October 1417 and she took possession on 5 February 1421, two months after Burnell's death on 27 November 1420.¹²⁶

He also worked to have the lands he held jointly with his wife transferred to Lady Bergavenny's possession. By 1415, Joyce Burnell had three heirs, two of which sold their reversions to Weoley, Clent, Mere, Hondesworth, Cradley and Oldswynford to Lady Bergavenny for some 1300 marks.¹²⁷ The third heir, Maurice Berkeley, challenged the validity of these transfers and arbitration later divided the holdings, giving Weoley Castle and the manors of Cradley and Northfield to Berkeley but allowing Lady Bergavenny to retain the remainder. Berkeley was not entirely satisfied with this arrangement and emerged to challenge James Butler's possession of these lands at a later date.

In addition to these manors, Lady Bergavenny came into possession of a group of manors in Essex, centred around Rocheford. The provenance of these manors is not clear but they were clearly a Butler possession later in the century and there is no other path for them to reach the Butlers

¹²³ *Cal. pat. rolls, 1385-9*, p. 149-50. Also part of the settlement was the clause that Little Linford and Newport Pagnell were to revert to Burnell in fee simple if any of Joyce's heirs disturbed or challenged his possession of any of the jointure lands.

¹²⁴ *Cal. fine rolls, 1405-13*, p. 79; *Cal. close rolls, 1405-9*, pp 244-5

¹²⁵ *Hist. Mss Comm. 78, Hastings i*, p. 282-3

¹²⁶ *Cal. close rolls, 1419-22*, p. 86-7

¹²⁷ *Warwickshire Feet of Fines*, Dugdale Society, xviii (1943), nos. 2504, 2505, 2516

except through Lady Bergavenny. Two other factors tie Lady Bergavenny to Essex. The first is a clause in her will that mentions the church at Rocheford and the second is that some of her servants come from Essex and have little or no other connection to the north midlands except through her. The Bergavenny lands were of considerable value. A valor of her estates in 1427/8, with the exception of Rocheford, shows Lady Bergavenny enjoying a yearly income of just under £2000. Most of this came for her husband's lands but a significant amount certainly came from her own purchases. When the income tax of 1436 was announced, James Butler V, although he was still a minor, was assessed at £100 in Leicestershire and £200 in Essex.¹²⁸ Even when one considers the uncertainty of these returns, this is still a significant figure for a knight who was still a minor, worth approximately twice that of the revenue earned by his father from the other Butler lands in England.

The acquisition of the legacy left by Lady Bergavenny certainly altered the balance of Butler interests in England and Ireland but did not change the long-term plans of the earl of Ormond. His son now held significant lands in England and had the potential for a personal power base in the midlands but the centre of the family interests still remained in Ireland, where the earl spent much of the 1430s securing his lordship and attempting to regain the office of lieutenant of Ireland.¹²⁹ The balance of the Butlers interests began to tilt towards England in the spring of 1438, when Humphrey fitz Alan, duke of Touraine, died on 24 April 1438.¹³⁰ Touraine's death allowed an impressive inheritance pass to his half-sister, Avice, who by this time had married James Butler V.¹³¹

The lands in question were the lands inherited by Maud Lovel from her grandfather, Guy de Bryan, Lord Bryan.¹³² Lovel had two children, a daughter, Avice, by her first husband, Sir Richard Stafford, and a son,

¹²⁸ H. L. Gray, 'Incomes from land in England in 1436', p. 634; T. B. Pugh & C. D. Ross, 'The English Baronage and the income tax of 1436', p. 21

¹²⁹ For Ormond's efforts to secure his lordship see below, Ch. 2; For his efforts to regain the office of lieutenant, see E. Matthews, 'Governing the lordship', chs. 7 & 8.

¹³⁰ *H.B.C.*, p. 450

¹³¹ *C. P.*, x, p. 128

¹³² see genealogies

Humphrey, by her second husband, John fitz Alan, Lord Mautravers and earl of Arundel, who was created duke of Touraine in 1435. When she died in May 1436 her lands passed to her young son, Humphrey, now duke of Touraine since his father's death in June 1435.¹³³ After the death of duke Humphrey on 24 April 1438 his lands were divided. His paternal inheritance passed to his uncle, William, while his maternal inheritance passed to his sister, Avice. There was always a possibility that Avice Stafford could come into possession of the Bryan inheritance and this was almost certainly one of the factors that made Lady Bergavenny and the earl of Ormond favour the marriage. However, it took three untimely deaths to make this possibility into a reality. Moreover, from Ormond's point of view the inheritance was a two edged sword. While the inheritance added some forty manors to the Butler holdings in England and created a second potential power base in the west country, it also fundamentally altered the balance of the Butler's interests in Ireland and England.

James Butler V and his wife received possession of her lands in Essex on 15 July 1438.¹³⁴ In the following year Butler's receiver for his wife's lands collected over £460.¹³⁵ This addition to the Butler's pre-existing English holdings gave James Butler V an income of at least £1000 *per annum*, which was enough to support the earldom that was created for him in 1449. For the first time the Butler family's holdings in England were more valuable than those in Ireland, both in purely financial value as well as in potential political influence. From 1438, the Anglicisation of James Butler V's interests was complete, and his father recognised this fact. Ormond seems to have started to transfer his own English manors to his son's care and started to adapt his own policies within the Ormond lordship in Ireland to accommodate the possibility that his son was likely to join the ranks of absentee English lords with lands in Ireland.

Like most young magnates of his age, James Butler's career shows a mixture of military service in France, forays into local politics in England, and connections to the government of the day, in his case, the king's household. The military element is by far the least important part of his

¹³³ *C. P.*, i, p. 248

¹³⁴ *Cal. close rolls, 1435-41*, pp 154-5

¹³⁵ *B. L.*, Egerton Roll 8793

career and it is likely that his service in France came about more because it was expected than because it was desired. However, Butler did serve in Normandy twice and if his service was undistinguished and unremarkable, it did not give rise to complaints or condemnation.

His period of service overseas came in the early 1440s, when Richard, duke of York, was re-appointed lieutenant of France on 2 June 1440 to replace the earl of Warwick, who had died in April 1439.¹³⁶ In many ways York's re-appointment marked the arrival of a new generation of leaders and he himself was set to take the place of the duke of Bedford. The similarities become stronger when the powers granted to York are compared to those held by Bedford before his death. In addition, many of Bedford's experienced retainers had transferred their allegiance to York by 1440.¹³⁷

For Butler, an attachment to York was an obvious route to further advancement. He started to recruit his force of forty men-at-arms and 120 archers for the French expedition in the autumn of 1440. York showed no urgent desire to take up his duties and the muster was set for 1 April 1441, a fact shown in the indentures and bonds made by Butler.¹³⁸ One of the indentures for service in France sealed by Butler is printed in full in the *Calendar of Ormond Deeds*, but the rest of Butler's recruitments are attested by approximately two dozen bonds signed by Butler and his retainers.¹³⁹ The majority of the documents were sealed in December 1440 and January 1441 but two were sealed in late March 1441. These two bonds were for men from Yorkshire, a county with which Butler had little or no contact, which indicates that the men in these bonds were included in Butler's retinue after the muster at Portsdown, perhaps as a favour to

¹³⁶ Rymer, *Foedera*, x, 786-7; For York's period as lieutenant see R. Griffiths, *Reign of Henry VI*, pp 459-73 and P. A Johnson, *Duke Richard of York*, pp 35-50

¹³⁷ T. B. Pugh, 'Richard Plantagenet (1411-1460), duke of York as lieutenant of France and Ireland', p. 116

¹³⁸ Johnston, *Duke Richard*, p. 35; A. Curry, 'English armies in the fifteenth century', p. 44. The actual muster seems to have taken place at Portsdown on 26 March 1441.

¹³⁹ *Ormond deeds, 1413-1509*, no. 140, pp 126-8; *Cal. ancient deeds*, i, C1137 and C1190, pp 499, 504; *Cal. ancient deeds*, vi, C4734 and C6114, pp 124, 303; P.R.O. C47/26/1, ms 1-16; P.R.O. C146/8947, 10648, 10707, 10752

another magnate.¹⁴⁰ The composition of the retinue shows Butler sealing indentures with men from London, Cambridgeshire, Essex, Suffolk, Yorkshire, Worcester, Hereford, Wales and Ireland.¹⁴¹ A quick comparison of the origins of these men with the Butler and Bergavenny lands indicates that Butler used his father's and grandmother's lands as bases from which to recruit. The recruitment seems to have been done in England and the Irish contingent could have been gathered there or some of them may have had ties to the Butler family in Ireland although there is no conclusive evidence from which to draw a conclusion. Although the expedition was mustered on time, it did not set sail for France for several months as Butler was still in England on 22 May 1441 when he appointed attorneys in England.¹⁴² York and his retinue, Butler among them, finally arrived in Rouen on 25 June 1441.¹⁴³ York had in his army, two earls, four barons and thirteen knights, one of which was James Butler.¹⁴⁴ Butler was made a knight banneret by the king on 25 October 1441 with a salary for the year of 1500 livres tournois.¹⁴⁵ In France he was entrusted with command of the fortress at Gourney from Michaelmas 1441 and held that position for approximately one year, having relinquished command sometime before 5 October 1442.¹⁴⁶

Unfortunately, little more can be discerned about Butler's service in York's army. However, it seems clear that his time in France was not wasted. Events later in the decade indicate that Butler used his time in France to make useful connections with his peers. That he made connections with the duke of York is not surprising, but there are indications that he also made contact with his father's old rival, John

¹⁴⁰ P.R.O. C47/26/1, ms 15, 16.

¹⁴¹ London (1), Cambridgeshire (4), Essex (1), Suffolk (2), Yorkshire (2), Worcester (1), Hereford (1), Wales (1), Ireland (10). In addition there were six more men whose origin was not mentioned

¹⁴² 'French Rolls', p. 347

¹⁴³ R. Griffiths, *Reign of Henry VI*, p. 459-60

¹⁴⁴ A. Curry, 'English armies in the fifteenth century', p. 47

¹⁴⁵ BL Add. Ch. 3920

¹⁴⁶ *ibid.*; A. Curry, 'Military organisation in Lancastrian Normandy, 1422-1450', pp xii-xiii, lxxxvii

Talbot, Lord Talbot and earl of Shrewsbury from 20 May 1442.¹⁴⁷ If Butler's first period of service in France left little evidence, his second period of overseas service is positively obscure. All that is known is that he served as captain of Pont l'Evesque from 2 November 1446 to sometime before 21 September 1448, with one Otis Armour serving as his lieutenant.¹⁴⁸ Whether he actually went to France or what the composition of his retinue was is completely unknown.

While Butler did serve in the king's overseas campaigns in the period from 1439 to 1452, the main thrust of his activities was to establish himself in England. In this desire, he was no different from any other up and coming magnate. However, his history in the various regions of England does indicate that he had both advantages and disadvantages in his quest to establish himself. He had a position at court, connections in the royal household, the friendship of the king, a network of allies and servants inherited from his grandmother and an extensive landed estate. Set against this however, was the level of local politics at which he wished to act. In terms of wealth and social status, Butler can be equated to a major baron or an earl but all of his wealth was recently acquired and his family had no real connections to any of the regions in which they held lands. In addition, he usually found himself in opposition to a pre-existing network led by another magnate who resisted the inroads made by this young upstart. All of these factors can be seen at work during Butler's first foray into local affairs in Cambridgeshire in 1439.

The first overt sign of trouble in Cambridgeshire came when the sheriff of the county was summoned to parliament on 16 November, 1439 to explain the failure of the county to elect its representatives.¹⁴⁹ Behind this failure lay the attempt of James Butler V to intrude his presence into Cambridgeshire and make it a base of power. The dominant figure in the county since the end of Henry V's reign was John Tiptoft, Lord Tiptoft since 1426. Tiptoft was a prominent supporter of the Lancastrian dynasty who had served as the Speaker for the Commons in 1406, as treasurer of the king's household and treasurer of England for Henry VI, seneschal of

¹⁴⁷ *H.B.C.*, p. 482

¹⁴⁸ A. Curry, 'Military organisation in Lancastrian Normandy, 1422-1450', p. cxv

¹⁴⁹ *R. P.*, v, pp 7-8

Aquitaine, member of Henry VI's council and steward of the Household from 1426-32.¹⁵⁰ Tiptoft had been well rewarded for his support of the Lancastrians and was again rewarded on 8 December 1437 with a life-grant of the lands of the honour of Richmond in Cambridgeshire, most notably the manor of Bassingbourne.¹⁵¹ Unfortunately, in what was becoming a common problem, the king had already granted these lands to the steward of his household, William Philip, Lord Bardolf, for a ten year period on 19 November 1439.¹⁵² These conflicting grants led to a dispute between Bardolf and Tiptoft and Butler became a major figure in the dispute in 1439.

Butler almost certainly saw the dispute as a way to become, if not the dominant figure in the county, then, at least, a pivotal secondary player. Among the lands given to him by his grandmother were two manors in Cambridgeshire, Fulbourne and Swavesy. While these manors seem to have been assigned to his brothers, John and Thomas, respectively, James Butler apparently retained control of them and used them as his base in the county while his brothers were both still minors.¹⁵³ Butler's reason for involvement in the dispute over the possession of Bassingbourne is not clear but it has been speculated that he either leased the manor from Bardolf, or served as Bardolf's steward.¹⁵⁴ It seems most probable that he became involved after Tiptoft acted to override Bardolf's claim by securing a grant of the lands ante-dated to 13 November 1437 on 5 May 1439.¹⁵⁵ Butler probably saw an opportunity and was willing to take more direct action than Bardolf and the two entered into an arrangement. It appears that Butler found willing associates among the gentry of Cambridgeshire and the election of 1439 was seen as the perfect opportunity to challenge Tiptoft's dominance in the county. Our knowledge of the dispute and Butler's actions come from two

¹⁵⁰ See *C. P.*, xii, pt. 1, pp 746-9; J. Roskell, *The Commons and their speakers in the English parliament, 1376-1529*, Manchester, 1965, pp 367-8

¹⁵¹ *Cal. pat. rolls, 1436-41*, pp 120-1

¹⁵² *Cal. fine rolls, 1437-45*, pp 4-5

¹⁵³ *V.C.H., Cambridgeshire*, ix, p. 382; *Cal. close rolls, 1447-51*, p. 266; *Cal. ancient deeds*, ii, p. 383, B3250

¹⁵⁴ R. Virgoe, 'The Cambridgeshire election of 1439', p. 98

¹⁵⁵ *ibid.*, p. 98

documents that have been preserved in the British Library. The first, BL Egerton Roll 8971, is a reply made by Butler to charges laid by Tiptoft, and the second, BL Egerton Roll 8972, is an account of Butler's actions during the election, which clearly has a pro-Tiptoft bias. In this clash, Tiptoft had legal right, the support of the sheriff and a long-term position of authority within the county on his side. Butler, for his part, had the support of an important segment of the local gentry and a willingness to resort to intimidation and violence to get his way.

In the complaints made against Butler his main supporters were named as Sir Robert Cromwell, Laurence Cheyne, esquire, William Allington, esquire., and William Cotton. Cromwell almost certainly had lands in Cambridgeshire, but it was not his main area of operations. The others, however, were prominent members of the Cambridgeshire local hierarchy. Each was important in their own right, but taken as a group, their support was invaluable for Butler. Cheyne had been assessed at £106 for the income tax of 1436, had served as the escheator for Bedfordshire and Buckinghamshire, as sheriff of Cambridgeshire in 1430 and 1435/6, as a J.P. for both the town and county of Cambridge, and as M. P. for the county in 1432 and 1435.¹⁵⁶ Allington, for his part, was a member of one of the most prominent gentry families in the county. He was personally assessed at £110 in 1436, but his father and brother were assessed at another £86. He had previously served as the escheator of Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire in 1436/7, sheriff of Cambridgeshire in 1438, and M. P. for the county in 1437.¹⁵⁷ Cotton was the son of a London merchant who had moved into the country. He had been assessed at £66 in 1436, and was a lawyer with connection to the court and the duchy of Lancaster, and had also served as J. P. for Cambridgeshire.¹⁵⁸ The support of men like this for the eighteen year old Butler indicated a growing dissatisfaction with the

¹⁵⁶ H. L. Gray, 'Incomes from land in England in 1436', p. 632; J. Wedgwood, *History of Parliament: Biographies*, p. 183

¹⁵⁷ H. L. Gray, 'Incomes from land in England in 1436', p. 631-2; J. Wedgwood, *History of Parliament: Biographies*, p. 8; For his family see two articles by J. S. Roskell, both entitled 'William Allington of Horseheath' in *Proceedings of the Cambridgeshire Antiquaries Society*, lii (1959), pp 30-42, 42-50

¹⁵⁸ H. L. Gray, 'Incomes from land in England in 1436', p. 632; J. Wedgwood, *History of Parliament: Biographies*, p. 227-8. Gray's list names Walter Cotton under the section dealing with men of no title holding more than £40 worth of land, but in a footnote mentions William Cotton as J.P. in 1439. It seems most likely that Walter and William Cotton were the same person.

lordship of Tiptoft, who, while still a prominent courtier, was of a much older generation than the king. Butler, on the other hand, was known to be a close confidant of the king and was potentially a much greater source of reward and patronage.

Butler and his men were accused of intimidating and obstructing the election in 1439 in a biased account presented by Tiptoft and the sheriff of Cambridgeshire, Gilbert Hore. If the account is at all accurate, Butler and Sir Robert Cromwell went around the county intimidating the electorate and then whipped the crowd gathered for the election into such a frenzy that the sheriff refused to hold the election for fear of violence and bloodshed. The sheriff then left the town preparing to notify the king of the activities of Butler and Cromwell, who by his account had no right to be present because they were not regularly resident in the county. Undeterred, Butler held the election anyway, ignoring the absence of the sheriff and the writ ordering the election.¹⁵⁹ What emerges clearly from this account is that Butler had support and was prepared to use it to sway the election in his own favour, while Tiptoft and the sheriff were prepared to use their positions of authority to block the election when it looked like it would not go their way. However, they were unsuccessful in the long run. Parliament ordered a new election, which was held on 19 November 1439, and Butler's men, Allington and Cotton, were duly returned by the new sheriff, Henry Langley.¹⁶⁰ Butler was clearly a new power to be reckoned with in the county, and his position was recognised and further enhanced when he was appointed J.P. for Cambridgeshire on 28 November 1439.¹⁶¹

Butler may have won the battle, but he did not emerge unscathed, and in the end he lost the war. It seems that he was recognised as the aggressor in the dispute with Tiptoft because when the two men were summoned on 20 January 1440 to account for the actions of their men, Butler was summoned on pain of a £2000 fine, while Tiptoft was merely

¹⁵⁹ BL Egerton Roll 8972. Printed in R. Virgoe, 'The Cambridgeshire election of 1439', pp 100-1

¹⁶⁰ *ibid.*, p. 99

¹⁶¹ *Cal. pat. rolls, 1436-41*, p. 579

summoned.¹⁶² Furthermore, Tiptoft levelled a series of charges concerning Butler's activities. Butler's reply was directed to the council and was probably dealt with on an informal basis by Cardinal Beaufort.¹⁶³ The most likely outcome of Beaufort's involvement was Butler's inclusion in York's expedition to France, which effectively removed a contentious, aggressive and ambitious young magnate and solved the problem in Tiptoft's favour. Butler's interest in the manor of Bassingbourne ended with Bardolf's death in January 1441. Tiptoft secured a new grant of the manor on 23 August 1441 and held it until his death in January 1443.¹⁶⁴ Although Butler failed to secure his position of dominance in Cambridgeshire in the long run, his attempts clearly showed that he had the ability to attract men of substance to his side and effectively challenge the existing power structures in a county like Cambridge. Perhaps his greatest mistake here was to base his bid for power on tenure of a manor held by somebody else rather than on his own lands, in a county where his family had few connections. If so, he learned from his mistakes when he returned from France in 1442.

When he did return from France, he spent most of the following decade, which ended with the death of his father in August 1452, creating an increasingly prominent presence for himself within the English polity. However, he owed his place not to his dominance of any given locality but rather to his prominent place at the court of Henry VI. This is not to say that he did not attempt to use his landed position in the midlands and the west country to develop connections with the gentry and magnates of these regions, but his prominence at court allowed him to develop a presence somewhat greater than one would expect from his landed wealth alone.

The first example of the benefits derived by Butler from a place at court was the life grant of the shrievalty of Cardigan and Carmarthen on 10 July 1442.¹⁶⁵ This grant is a good example of the wholly gratuitous sort of grant that could be made by Henry VI to one of his favourites. With the

¹⁶² *Cal. close rolls, 1436-41*, p. 304

¹⁶³ BL Egerton Roll 8971; R. Virgoe, 'The Cambridgeshire election of 1439', p. 99

¹⁶⁴ *Cal. pat. rolls, 1436-41*, p. 559

¹⁶⁵ *Cal. pat. rolls, 1441-6*, p. 94

exception of his wife's possession of Walwyn Castle and the lordship of Lugharn, Butler had no previous connection with either the Principality of Wales or the Welsh Marches, so the only logical explanation for the grant is that he was in the right place at the right time. With no connections to Wales, Butler apparently saw little reason to attend to his new offices in person, and entrusted his shrievalties to members of the local gentry to hold as his deputies.¹⁶⁶ The grant of the Welsh shrievalties was of little use to Butler, so he tended to ignore them, but he was far more active in areas where he had connections, such as Leicestershire and Warwickshire, although even here he tended to act through allies and subordinates, while he remained at court. However, he was quite successful in creating a place for himself in the midlands. The reasons for this success were threefold; his pre-existing connections within the region, his place at court, and the power vacuum left by the death of Richard Beauchamp, earl of Warwick.

Unlike his experience in Cambridgeshire, Butler had a ready made affinity and connections into the network of gentry and magnates that stretched across northern Warwickshire and Leicestershire. In the first forty years of the fifteenth century, Warwickshire and the counties surrounding it can be seen as a region divided by geography but welded together politically by the determination of Richard, Beauchamp, earl of Warwick. His solution was to dominate the region from his base in the area where Warwickshire, Worcestershire and Gloucestershire meet, and to use dominant local figures to secure his interests in regions beyond his personal control.¹⁶⁷ The only magnate that could challenge his authority in the region was the king as duke of Lancaster, and none of the Lancastrian kings were willing or able to devote the time and energy to do so.

One of the magnates that Warwick used as his lieutenants in outlying regions was his aunt, Joan, Lady Bergavenny. Her control of her husband's lands and, from 1421, the lands she purchased from Hugh Burnell made her a formidable force in the politics of the region.¹⁶⁸

¹⁶⁶ R. Griffiths, *The Principality of Wales in the later middle ages*, i, pp 271, 276

¹⁶⁷ C. Carpenter, 'The Beauchamp affinity', p. 517

¹⁶⁸ C. Carpenter, *Locality and Polity*, p. 373

Several of the Burnell manors were located in a group around Birmingham and just over the border in Staffordshire. Her cooperation was needed if Warwick was to expand his interests into Staffordshire. However, it was through her manor of Ashby la Zouche in Leicestershire that her influence, and later that of her grandson, was felt. North-eastern Warwickshire was very open to connections to Leicestershire and as the influence of the Duchy of Lancaster receded in the region, the local networks of magnates and gentry became more and more important.¹⁶⁹ Several of Lady Bergavenny's most prominent associates had ties to these networks and through them she was able to exert a great deal of influence in the region. After her death, several of her supporters and servants transferred their allegiance directly to her grandson, James Butler. Warwick's policy of relying on magnate lieutenants had its drawbacks, as can be seen in the 1420s, when he and his aunt increasingly found themselves as opponents as her interests and ambitions started to diverge from his from about 1424 onwards.

Warwick was successful in maintaining his dominance in the region until his death in April 1439 but his death caused a fundamental shift in the power structure of the region. The question facing the crown after his death was whether it was better to allow a single magnate to attempt to re-create Warwick's dominance or to divide the region between the duchy of Lancaster lands to the north and the centre of the Warwick lands to the south. Unfortunately, either option would require a concerted effort by the crown to ensure stability and security. As this effort was not forthcoming, the region faced the situation where one magnate, Humphrey Stafford, earl of Stafford and duke of Buckingham from 14 September 1444, attempted to re-create Warwick's dominance, only to find himself opposed by a group of several lesser magnates, Butler included, who came to control most of Warwick's old affinity. The pattern was further clouded by the minority and short majority of Henry Beauchamp, earl and duke of Warwick, who died on 11 June 1446, leaving as his heir, his sister, Anne, who married Richard Neville, son of Richard Neville, earl of Salisbury.¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁹ C. Carpenter, *Locality and Polity*, p. 313

¹⁷⁰ For a fuller discussion of this period see C. Carpenter, *Locality and Polity*, pp 399-436.

When Butler returned to England after his service in France he started to re-create his grandmother's ties with the network of magnates and gentry in northern Warwickshire and Leicestershire. Of vital importance to this effort were the associates and servants he inherited from his grandmother. Three men stand out among Butler's associates as men of great experience who had previously served his grandmother in her dealings, and now served his. The three were Bartholomew Brokesby, Robert Darcy and Walter Kebbell, and they were joined by a fourth, Henry Filongly, who was somewhat younger, but became a close associate of Butler. Individually, these men were of the same calibre as the men of Cambridgeshire who had supported Butler in 1439, and collectively they provided the young magnate with an invaluable set of connections and experience upon which he could draw.

Brokesby, for example, was the younger son of a Leicestershire gentry family who took up the law as his profession. In the course of his career he served as sheriff for Warwickshire and Leicestershire in 1411/2 and 1419/20, J.P. in Leicestershire from 1422 to his death in 1448, and was M.P. for Leicestershire six times between 1410 and 1432. He seems to have become associated with Lady Bergavenny through his service to her uncle, Thomas Arundel, archbishop of Canterbury. He served as one of the executors for the will of Hugh Burnell and emerged as one of Lady Bergavenny's closest associates. He also married into the gentry of Leicestershire in 1433 and became a further link into the gentry networks of the region.¹⁷¹ Robert Darcy had a broadly similar range of experiences to Brokesby. He was a lawyer, originally from Northumberland, who settled in Essex. He too served as an M. P., J. P., sheriff and escheator and in addition held offices within the government such as clerk of the court of chancery and clerk of the Common pleas. He also served as a trustee of Hugh Burnell's lands and it was probably in this capacity that he came to Lady Bergavenny's attention. However, he does not appear in Lady Bergavenny's service until 1427, when her disputes with Warwick reached their sharpest point, which could indicate that his connections at court were what made him valuable to Lady Bergavenny.¹⁷² Kebbell seems to be a self-made man, a lawyer of unspecified origins who had a long

¹⁷¹ J. S. Roskell *et al.*, *The house of Commons, 1386-1421*, ii, pp 371-3

¹⁷² *ibid.*, pp 749-51

period of service under Lady Bergavenny. He was another of Hugh Burnell's executors and served as seneschal of the lordship of Bergavenny from about 1412.¹⁷³ The fourth man, Henry Filongly, was almost two decades younger than the others but he emerged as a servant of Lady Bergavenny around 1428. He was of a Warwickshire gentry family, with court connections, and was also a nephew of Robert Darcy. Filongly, a younger man, was more active in his support of James Butler, and was one of the men named in the complaints made about Butler's conduct in Cambridgeshire in 1439. Filongly, although a member of the Warwickshire gentry, increasingly became more of a member of court but his connections certainly served Butler's purposes.¹⁷⁴

These men were all close associates of Lady Bergavenny and as early as 1430 they began to show associations with the Butlers as well, indicating that Lady Bergavenny was taking steps to ensure a connection and that their expertise would be available for her grandson. On 1 March 1430, Brokesby and Darcy were among the feoffees of Ormond's manors in Somerset, Buckinghamshire, Warwickshire and Herefordshire.¹⁷⁵ Brokesby, Darcy and Kebbell all received substantial bequests in Lady Bergavenny's will and were co-executors of her estate, with much of the effort involved falling on Brokesby's shoulders. They were also nominated as the trustees of her lands and possessions during the minority of James Butler V.¹⁷⁶ It was in this capacity that Brokesby and Kebbell, with another of Lady Bergavenny's executors, John Bathe, clerk, conveyed the manor of Ashby la Zouche, Leicestershire, to the duke of Gloucester on 24 September 1436.¹⁷⁷ That they retained a connection to Butler is attested by Kebbell's possession of Butler's manor of Haggeley in

¹⁷³ E. W. Ives, *The Common Lawyers of pre-Reformation England*, pp 24-6

¹⁷⁴ J. S. Roskell *et al.*, *The house of Commons, 1386-1421*, iii, p. 74; J. Wedgwood, *History of Parliament: Biographies*, p. 325. BL Egerton Roll 8971. Another man implicated with Filongly was William Tyrell, Darcy's son-in-law.

¹⁷⁵ *Cal. pat. rolls, 1429-36*, p. 27.

¹⁷⁶ E. F. Jacob (ed.), *The Register of Henry Chichele, archbishop of Canterbury, 1414-35*, pp. 535-9

¹⁷⁷ HMC, *Hastings*, i, p. 1

Worcestershire until 20 November 1445 and Brokesby's possession of the manors of Newport Pagnell and Little Linford until the same day.¹⁷⁸

In the five years following Warwick's death in Normandy in 1439, the most aggressive magnate in the midlands was Edward Grey of Groby. Grey had married the daughter of Thomas Ferrers of Groby, had inherited lands in Leicestershire from his mother and was also a member of the same gentry network that had included Lady Bergavenny and now her grandson, James Butler. However, his efforts to secure a more prominent place in the Warwickshire-Leicestershire region led him into conflict with these men and into the camp of Humphrey Stafford, earl of Stafford and duke of Buckingham.¹⁷⁹ For a few years it seemed that Stafford, with the support of Grey would be able to forge a dominant position in the region formerly controlled by Warwick. However, by the end of 1443, opposition to Stafford and Grey had emerged and one of the central figures in this opposition was James Butler.

Butler became involved in this opposition when Buckingham lent support to the attempts of Maurice Berkeley of Weoley to re-open the settlements of the Burnell lands. Some of Buckingham's retainers were implicated in Berkeley's attacks on John Holt, one of Butler's retainers.¹⁸⁰ Although Berkeley's attempts to forcibly redistribute the lands Butler had inherited from his grandmother failed and he was later indicted before J.P.'s of all factions, including Buckingham's, this attempt probably made Butler more aware of the dangers of letting Buckingham and Grey have their own way in the region. In 1444, a series of alliances among the lesser magnates of the various regions of Warwickshire and neighbouring counties emerged to oppose the growth of Buckingham and Grey. Butler and William Ferrers of Chartley emerged as the leaders of the network that stretched across northern Warwickshire and into Leicestershire and they allied themselves with Ralph Boteller, Lord Sudeley, and John Beauchamp of Powicke, later Lord Beauchamp, who led a similar network

¹⁷⁸ TCD Ms 1208/450 (1); TCD Ms 4431/2; *Cal. ancient deeds*, ii, p. 337, B2805

¹⁷⁹ C. Carpenter, *Locality and Polity*, pp 401-4

¹⁸⁰ *ibid.*, p. 410

in southern Warwickshire and Worcestershire, the heartland of the Warwick affinity.¹⁸¹

These four magnates formed the core of opposition to Buckingham and Grey and were in a good position to become the lieutenants of Henry Beauchamp, earl and duke of Warwick, when he started to play a role in the politics of the region at the end of his minority. These men controlled the core of the old Warwick affinity and the new duke of Warwick needed their support if he was to re-establish the same dominant position in the region that his father had created. Butler, Sudeley and their allies were prepared to perform as Warwick's lieutenants during his short adult career and were perfectly placed to step into his place when he died in 1446, leaving his daughter, Anne, as his only heir. The coalition of lesser magnates effectively took over Warwick's affinity and emerged as the dominant political force in the region during the lifetime of the infant duchess of Warwick. They acted to prevent a resurgence of Grey's ambitions and generally limited Buckingham's influence to the north-west of Warwickshire, the region bordering his main areas of influence in Staffordshire.

Control of the Warwick affinity was augmented by the fact that Butler and his allies all had connections to the court of Henry VI and even with the king's household. Sudeley, for instance, was the king's chamberlain from 1441-7, and while Butler held no formal place in the government or the household, he was a regular presence at court and his influence grew steadily during the 1440s. Butler and his allies were able to use their influence at court to augment their local standing and draw in other members of the local gentry into their collective affinity. Butler, for example, was able to gain the support of important local gentry such as Humphrey Stafford of Grafton and Thomas Littleton, drawing them into his network.¹⁸² Whether such an alliance of courtiers was stable in the long term and could replace the crown's dependence on individual magnates is uncertain but Butler and his allies had established themselves to such an extent by 1449 that when Richard Neville was recognised as the earl of Warwick, he found that he needed their support to function effectively in the midlands. However, as could be expected, Warwick's

¹⁸¹ C. Carpenter, *Locality and Polity*, pp 330-2, 411-13

¹⁸² *ibid.*, p 683-4;

relations with Butler and his group deteriorated in the early 1450s, although an open breach did not occur until after 1452.

As mentioned above, Butler's increasing prominence was closely tied to his ability to use his position at court to his own advantage. With the exception of his service in France in 1441/2, Butler was rarely to be found far from the person of Henry VI. The one notable exception to this pattern serves only to emphasise his connection to the court. In November 1444, he was included in the retinue of John de la Pole, marquis of Suffolk, when Suffolk was sent to France to act in the king's behalf at the proxy wedding of Margaret of Anjou. Butler, with Lord Clifford and Lord Greystoke, were the leading members of Suffolk's retinue after John Talbot, earl of Shrewsbury. His inclusion in the expedition certainly owed much to his position at court and his friendship with the king but two other reasons for his inclusion have been suggested. The first is that he was included mainly because of his age and that his purpose was to serve as a companion for the young Margaret of Anjou.¹⁸³ Butler was only twenty-four during the expedition and a close friend of the king. It is known that the king had taken a close interest in the arrangements surrounding the marriage and it is quite possible that he sent Butler as his own unofficial envoy to his new queen. Whether this supposition is valid or not, Butler did become a close associate of the queen in later years and this expedition was only the start of their relationship. Recently, a second reason for his inclusion in Suffolk's expedition has been put forward, namely that his presence, coupled with that of Shrewsbury and Butler's sister, Elizabeth, was a measure to show that unstinting royal support for the official ending of the Talbot-Ormond feud.¹⁸⁴

It is important to stress, however, that the marriage between John Talbot II and Elizabeth Butler only marked the ending of one aspect of the Talbot-Ormond feud. There were two interrelated but profoundly dissimilar aspects to the confrontations that marred the relations between Ormond and the Talbots in the first half of the fifteenth century. The first element can be seen as the larger policy difference regarding relations with the Gaelic Irish that emerged from the differing experiences of the Anglo-

¹⁸³ R. Griffiths, *The reign of Henry VI*, p. 486

¹⁸⁴ E. Matthew, 'Governing the Lordship', p. 379-80

Irish and the English involved in the administration of the lordship of Ireland. The other element, the intense personal disregard in which Ormond and the Talbots held each other, both fostered and was fostered by the larger issue but was essentially a separate issue. This can be seen in the years before and after 1425, when John Talbot ceased to be an element in Irish affairs.

Ormond's relations with John Talbot before 1425 were a fairly standard magnate feud. The two men apparently disliked each other and were more than prepared to use their authority as lieutenant to punish each other and any supporters of their opponents. Their quarrels waxed and waned up to 1425 and became entangled with the disputes between Richard Beauchamp, earl of Warwick, and his aunt, Joan Beauchamp, lady Bergavenny, but after Talbot's departure from Ireland in 1425, the two men did not meet again for two decades. Once Talbot returned to France in 1427, he became peripheral to the dispute with Ormond. However, his place as Ormond's foremost opponent was quickly filled by his brother, Richard, the archbishop of Dublin. Relations between Ormond and the archbishop became increasingly bitter and eventually led to charges of treason being levelled at Ormond. Thus the Talbot-Ormond feud ended in two stages. The symbolic settlement of the familial disputes happened with royal blessing in 1444 and involved John Talbot. The real settlement took years longer to achieve, through the intervention of two generally disinterested lieutenants, Shrewsbury and his successor, Richard, duke of York.

The symbolic ending of the Talbot-Ormond feud came through the traditional method of a marriage alliance between the families of the earls of Ormond and Shrewsbury. Shrewsbury's eldest son, John, was married to Ormond's only surviving daughter, Elizabeth. This marriage, which occurred sometime before 8 June 1445, took place against the backdrop of the final stages of the Talbot-Ormond feud in Ireland.¹⁸⁵ Ormond's third lieutenancy had been marked with increasingly poor relations with his opponents within the Dublin administration.¹⁸⁶ Ormond was finally

¹⁸⁵ P.R.O. E404/61/227

¹⁸⁶ see E. Matthews, 'Governing the Lordship', pp 309-71

summoned to England to account for his actions on 23 March 1444.¹⁸⁷ The lieutenant was well aware of the potential problems he faced in England and went so far as to call an afforced council to meet in Drogheda on 26 June 1444 to procure a testimonial of his good conduct as chief governor.¹⁸⁸ Ormond delayed his departure from Ireland for several months, pleading the need to protect the lordship against the threat of the Gaelic Irish. He also had to gather support from the Anglo-Irish of Meath and Leinster to gather enough forces to retaliate against the earl of Desmond, who had raided into Ormond's lordship on hearing of the marriage between Ormond's daughter and Shrewsbury's son.¹⁸⁹ Ormond remained in Ireland until at least 28 November 1444, when he sealed indenture with Richard Nugent, Lord Delvin, to act as his deputy but then went to England to face charges of treason and necromancy.¹⁹⁰

The charge of treason was laid against Ormond by Thomas fitz Gerald, prior of Kilmainham in the early spring of 1444 and it seems quite likely that the marriage of John Talbot II and Elizabeth Butler was broached at about this time as a formal means of ending the Talbot-Ormond feud. As Shrewsbury was in France in the spring of 1444, and in any case had little reason to suggest the marriage, the most likely instigator of the marriage alliance was James Butler V. For Butler, the marriage was a means to end a long-running feud, cement his friendship with the younger generation of the Talbot family and possibly circumvent the serious charges laid against his father by playing on the king's desire for peace among his magnates. Another, more indirect piece of evidence that James Butler V instigated this marriage is that it completely ignored the fact that by an indenture of 1429, his sister, Elizabeth, was already betrothed to the eldest son of the earl of Desmond. That her marriage to the Talbot heir solved an English problem but created a serious problem in Ireland, indicates that Ormond himself may have been initially unaware of the negotiations, but later approved of them for his own reasons.

¹⁸⁷ E. Matthews, 'Governing the Lordship', p. 356; *Proc. king's council, Ire., 1392-3*, p. 304

¹⁸⁸ *ibid.*, p. 306-8

¹⁸⁹ 'MacFirbis', *s.a.* 1444

¹⁹⁰ *Ormond deeds, 1413-1509*, no. 161, p. 157-9; For details of the charges laid against Ormond, see Matthew, 'Governing the lordship', pp 373-9.

The actual date of the marriage is uncertain. All that is definitely known is that the couple were married before 8 June 1445, when Shrewsbury accepted £300 worth of Ormond's unpaid tallies from his period as lieutenant as partial payment of the dowry.¹⁹¹ A mention of 'la dame Talbot la jeune' at the proxy marriage of Margaret of Anjou at Nancy on 2 February 1445 indicates that the marriage had taken place by then, which probably means that the couple were married before Suffolk's expedition left England in November 1444.¹⁹² It has been suggested that the marriage took place before 21 June 1444 on the grounds that Thomas Talbot, a hospitaller, was revealed to be a cousin of Ormond's.¹⁹³ This would indicate that the marriage was set in train after the Irish parliament of January 1444 and that the impetus for the charges levelled against Ormond came not from the Talbot faction *per se* but from the treasurer, Giles Thorndon and Thomas fitz Gerald, prior of Kilmainham. This suggestion is not incompatible with the idea that James Butler V was the driving force behind the marriage but cannot be proven with any certainty. All that can be said is that the marriage most likely took place in the summer of 1444, some months before Ormond went to England to face his treason charges.

That the king was happy with this marriage and the possibility of ending a decades long dispute can be seen by the inclusion of Butler in Suffolk's expedition of 1444/5. Throughout the expedition, Butler was in close and public contact with Shrewsbury and Elizabeth Talbot was included as one of the ladies in waiting for the new queen.¹⁹⁴ After the expedition returned, Ormond and Shrewsbury were again seen together in public on 15 July 1445, when they were among the magnates present when the king welcomed a French embassy to Westminster.¹⁹⁵ These public actions were meant to show that the enmity between Shrewsbury and Ormond was over and that the dissolution of their feud had the blessing

¹⁹¹ P.R.O. E404/61/227

¹⁹² 'Chronique de Mattieu d'Escouchy', p. 90

¹⁹³ Richardson and Sayles, *Ir. parl. in middle ages*, p. 202, no. 33

¹⁹⁴ She was almost certainly even closer in age to the new queen than her brother was, as she was probably born c. 1425.

¹⁹⁵ J. Stevenson, *Letters and Papers illustrative of the wars of the English in France*, i, pp 156, 158

and backing of the king. The public show of cooperation continued in the next year when Shrewsbury went to Ireland as lieutenant and in his retinue was Ormond's second son, John.¹⁹⁶ The marriage alliance between Talbot and Ormond was clearly a significant step in ending the disputes between the families, and ironically, in the next generation, James Butler V and John Talbot II became firm political allies, reversing the trend of the previous thirty years.

After Butler's return to England with the queen's party, he began to appear more often on official commissions in England, not just in areas where his family had previous connections but also in the west country, in Devon, Dorset and Somerset, where the bulk of his wife's lands lay. He and his wife also took steps to secure his hold on her lands, even to the extent of cutting off her potential heirs. In 1445, the majority of her lands were entailed on the heirs of their bodies, then on the heirs of her body, and failing those, the heirs of James Butler, completely circumventing the normal rules of inheritance.¹⁹⁷ It seems clear that Butler was taking steps to ensure that his family's new power base in the west country would remain intact, even if his wife died without children.

In the same period, Butler also became a figure of increasing importance at court. He seems to have been well thought of by Suffolk and his regime but failed to break into the first rank of courtiers and administrators during Suffolk's lifetime. As noted above, he used this prominence to bolster his position in Warwickshire and ally with other lesser magnates to form an effective group that first blocked the expansion of the earl of Stafford and Edward Grey into the region and then after a short period as lieutenants of Henry, duke of Warwick, effectively took control of the region after Warwick's death in 1446.

Despite these successes, Butler comes to be identified with Dorset and Somerset in the years between 1445 and the death of his father in 1452. He continued to serve on commissions of the peace for Cambridgeshire throughout this period, indicating a sustained contact with that county.¹⁹⁸

¹⁹⁶ 'MacFirbis', s.a. 1446

¹⁹⁷ J. M. W. Bean, *The estates of the Percy family, 1416-1537*, p. 120

¹⁹⁸ *Cal. pat. rolls, 1436-41*, p. 579; *Cal. pat. rolls, 1441-6*, p. 468; *Cal. pat. rolls, 1446-52*, p. 587

In addition, his continuing influence in Warwickshire and Leicestershire is supported by his inclusion in the Leicestershire commission of 23 June 1448.¹⁹⁹ He begins to appear in the commissions for Dorset and Somerset in 1443 and was regularly appointed to new commissions as they were formed.²⁰⁰ Finally, he appears on commissions for Wiltshire from 1450 on but his inclusion there probably owes more to his creation as earl of Wiltshire than to any influence he had in that county.²⁰¹ This spread of appointments reflects the areas in which Butler had influence among the local gentry communities, but when he begins to appear on other commissions, such as the commission to negotiate a loan for the king in 1446 or the commission to negotiate a loan for the war in France in 1449, he sat on the commissions for Dorset and Somerset, not Leicestershire and Warwickshire.²⁰² He also begins to appear on legal commissions for Dorset, Somerset and Wiltshire, such as the commission to inquire into royal prerogatives in those counties and commissions of *oyer et terminer*, at this time.²⁰³ The one exception to the pattern of Butler's inclusion on commissions came when he was appointed to the commission of *oyer et terminer* in Kent, London, Sussex, Surrey and Southampton in the aftermath of Cade's rebellion but this change can be seen as a reflection of his increased standing at court after the death of the Duke of Suffolk.²⁰⁴

Butler's increasing importance in the south-west is also attested in his dealing with Richard, duke of York. On 24 March 1446, he was made seneschal of York's manors in Dorset. Two months later, on 22 June 1446, York granted him the manors of Tarrent, Grenville, Wareham, Steeple and Creek for life at an unspecified rent.²⁰⁵ Clearly, York saw Butler as an up and coming magnate and saw the value of having him as an ally and for the next five years, Butler served on York's personal council until their

¹⁹⁹ *Cal. pat. rolls, 1446-52*, p. 590

²⁰⁰ *Cal. pat. rolls, 1441-6*, pp 469-70; *Cal. pat. rolls, 1446-52*, pp 588-9, 594

²⁰¹ *Cal. pat. rolls, 1446-52*, pp 596-7

²⁰² *Cal. pat. rolls, 1441-6*, p. 430; *Cal. pat. rolls, 1446-52*, pp 288-9

²⁰³ *Cal. pat. rolls, 1446-52*, pp 139-40, 433, 478, 535, 580, 583, 584, 589

²⁰⁴ *Cal. pat. rolls, 1446-52*, pp 438, 442, 477. For Cade's rebellion and the aftermath see R. Griffiths, *The reign of Henry VI*, pp 610-49

²⁰⁵ P. A. Johnson, *Duke Richard of York*, p. 235

relationship soured in the early 1450s.²⁰⁶ Butler's identification with the south-west was completed in June 1449 when he was raised to the English peerage and created earl of Wiltshire. Butler had only a minor interest in Wiltshire, but this was really the only available title in the region. Given his interests in and identification with Dorset and Somerset, his creation as earl of one of these counties would have been more sensible but the creation of Edmund Beaufort, marquis of Dorset, as duke of Somerset, on 31 March 1448 had eliminated that possibility.²⁰⁷ Whatever his title, for Butler the important fact was that he was now a member of the English nobility in his own right, who would eventually inherit his father's earldom as well. This combination made him unique among the magnates of England, as the only one with an effective lordship in both England and Ireland. He was not the only English magnate to have an Irish title. York and Shrewsbury were the earls of Ulster and Waterford, respectively, and had lands in other parts of the country but neither could claim effective control of their Irish lordships in the way that Wiltshire could.

Another indication of Butler's growing interest in the south-west of England, as well as his ability to gain favours from the king, can be seen in the marriage of his brother, Thomas, to Anne Hankeford in 1445. This marriage shows Butler working to further his interests in the region but it also provided a device whereby he could provide his younger brother with a sizeable landed estate without diminishing his own wealth in the process. The events of Thomas' life after the death of his mother in 1431 are extremely unclear. He was granted a bequest by his grandmother in her will in 1435, but much of that seems to have remained in the hands of Bartholomew Brokesby until his death in 1448. For example, on 28 April 1452, Thomas Butler received 200 marks of his bequest from Brokesby's executors and on 22 May 1452, he received £177 9s. 6d. of his own money that had been in Brokesby's possession.²⁰⁸ At some point he followed his brothers to England and may even have entered royal service, although this is somewhat unclear, and even if he did, his influence was probably insufficient to secure a marriage to someone like Anne Hankeford.

²⁰⁶ P. A. Johnson, *Duke Richard of York*, p. 17

²⁰⁷ H. B. C., p. 482

²⁰⁸ *Cal. close rolls, 1447-54*, p. 358

Anne Hankeford was one of the co-heiresses of Sir Richard Hankeford, the grandson of Henry IV's chief justice, William Hankeford. Sir Richard had inherited an extensive estate, centred in the south-west but with outlying manors in several counties. He had served in France in the 1420s in the retinue of Thomas Montague, earl of Salisbury, and had made two good marriages for himself. His first marriage was to Elizabeth, sister and heir of Fulk fitz Warin, Lord Fitzwarin, and left two daughters, Thomasina and Elizabeth. The second was to Salisbury's sister, Anne, and Thomas Butler's wife, Anne, was the heir of that marriage, born only a few months before her father's death. Anne's mother re-married twice, first to Sir Louis John, and secondly, to John Holland, duke of Exeter.

The value of Anne's inheritance was somewhat less than that of her sisters because she did not share in the Fitzwarin lands but her own portion of the Hankeford lands was impressive enough, especially after the death of her sister, Elizabeth, in 1433. On 14 March 1433, Louis John paid £200 for her marriage but her marriage reverted to the king on his death on 27 October 1442.²⁰⁹ While she was not a first rank heiress on the order of her cousin, Anne Montagu, who married Richard Neville, Anne Hankeford's landed wealth would have been a welcome addition to any family and was more than enough to create a living for Thomas Butler. There was some seven years difference in age between Thomas, who was born c. 1424, and Anne who was born shortly before her father's death in 1431. She would have reached her majority in the early spring of 1445 and the couple were married sometime before 18 July 1445, when Thomas sued for seisin of his wife's lands.²¹⁰ Thomas Butler seems to have settled into the life of a prosperous member of the local gentry, acting as an ally and a supporter of his more ambitious brother but showed little inclination to follow him onto the national stage.

Wiltshire's attempts to establish himself in the in the south-west of England inevitable drew him into the divided and increasingly violent politics of the region. Traditionally the counties of Devon, Dorset and Somerset, and to a lesser extent, Cornwall, were dominated by the Courtenay earls of Devon. However, the long minority of Thomas Courtenay, twelfth earl of Devon, coupled with the unusual amount of

²⁰⁹ *Cal. pat. rolls, 1429-36*, p. 261

²¹⁰ *Cal. pat. rolls, 1441-6*, p. 354

Devon lands tied up in dower portions allowed much of that dominance to slip away. The main beneficiary of this decline was Sir William Bonville, created Lord Bonville in 1449. Bonville was from an old, if largely undistinguished Devon family, but had risen through his own ability. He served in France under Henry V, had made good marriages for himself, one of which was to Devon's aunt and was well aware of the need for connections at court if he was to advance himself further and proceeded to cultivate Suffolk and his regime.²¹¹ Devon, on the other hand, was of an old and distinguished family but had less influence than his rank would suggest. To compound his problems he tended to remain aloof from the court and generally refused to serve in France.

The quarrels between Devon, who sought to regain his family's traditional leadership of the region, and Bonville, allied with Sir Philip Courtenay of Powderham, degenerated into open warfare as early as 1443. The conflict intensified in the summer of 1441 when Devon was made the steward of the Duchy of Cornwall lands in Cornwall, a post Bonville had held since 1437. A more settled period came about when first Bonville and then Devon agreed to serve in France but disputes between the two magnates flared up again towards the end of the 1440s and by 1451 the two magnates were moving towards open warfare again.

Bonville owed his elevation to the peerage in 1449 as much to his connections to the Suffolk regime as to his service in France and his landed wealth and influence in the west country. His connections at court almost certainly brought him into contact with James Butler before his own creation as earl of Wiltshire. After Suffolk's death, Bonville turned to Wiltshire as a new source of patronage and connection to the court. For Wiltshire, this created a situation similar to his experiences in the midlands. By himself, he did not have the power or connections to recreate the balance of power in the south-west in a way that would favour his ambitions but, working with Bonville, that situation could change swiftly. If the alliance worked, Wiltshire could have become the dominant figure in an alliance that controlled Devon, Dorset and Somerset, recreating the traditional dominance formerly held by the earls of Devon. It is possible that Wiltshire could have allied himself with Devon. Previously the two men had good relations and Devon had acted as a

²¹¹ R. L. Storey, *The end of the house of Lancaster*, pp 85-7

feoffee of one of Butler's manors in 1447, with Suffolk.²¹² However an alliance with Devon, while potentially beneficial would not have allowed Wiltshire the possibility of building a dominant position in the region.

Unfortunately for Wiltshire, he did not have the luxury of forming his alliances in this region during the minority of a local magnate family as he had in the midlands. The earl of Devon was very much present and aware of the potential damage that a Wiltshire-Bonville alliance could do to his own interests in the region. Although Devon was in danger of losing his dominance in Dorset and Somerset, he still remained the dominant figure in his own county. He also began to fight back on two fronts. Locally, he allied himself with Edward Brook, Lord Cobham, a magnate whose lands were centred in Somerset, and who was willing to challenge Wiltshire's presence in that county.²¹³ On the national stage, Devon began to ally himself with Richard, duke of York and was one of York's supporters when he attempted to gain control of the government in the winter of 1450/1 following the death of Suffolk and Cade's rebellion. York's failure to establish his control of the king's government and the establishment of a regime led by the duke of Somerset left Devon without any effective allies at court, and lacking any hope of 'justice' from Somerset's faction, Devon took matters into his own hands.

In August 1451, Devon assembled his supporters and their forces, and it appears that Wiltshire did the same as both earls were ordered to appear before the council to account for themselves.²¹⁴ Devon, at least, ignored the summons, mustered his forces and marched forth to overwhelm his enemies in Devon on 25 September 1451. Devon and his supporters, most notably Lords Cobham and Moylens, marched behind protestations of working for the common good but the main goal was to kill Wiltshire and Bonville, thereby removing them as a threat to Devon. He marched from Taunton to Bath and then headed for Wiltshire's manor of Lackham in Somerset. Wiltshire was warned of Devon's approach and prudently fled to the king at Coventry, so that when Devon's army reached Lackham they found nobody there and proceeded

²¹² HMC, Hastings, i, p. 1

²¹³ Cobham was implicated in an attack on one of Wiltshire's retainers in January 1451.

²¹⁴ R. L. Storey, *The end of the house of Lancaster*, p.89. Storey's description of the events of this period is still the most comprehensive.

to burn and loot the manor. On his way back to Taunton, Devon dispersed his men sending them to loot Wiltshire's lands but found that Bonville had captured Taunton castle in his absence. He then recalled his troops and prepared to lay siege to Bonville.

The siege was ended prematurely by the intervention of Richard, duke of York. York convinced Devon to end the siege and Bonville to turn the castle over to him. However well intentioned York's intervention was, it was entirely beyond his authority. It seems likely that he was trying to show that he could act in a decisive manner and promote peace between warring magnates but the actual result was to infuriate the king and show that York far from acting as a neutral peacemaker instead proved to be extremely partisan in his actions. York let Devon leave the scene of the siege without any authority to do so and according to one chronicle he was responsible for arresting Wiltshire.²¹⁵ The king appears to have taken a dim view of the whole matter, both the private war between Wiltshire and Devon, but also York's usurpation of royal authority and proceeded to take action against all involved. Wiltshire and Bonville were imprisoned for a month in Berkhamsted Castle, while Moylens and Cobham were held at Wallingford.²¹⁶ Devon and York refused to answer the summons and while little seems to have been officially said, Devon was removed from the commission of the peace for the counties of Devon and Cornwall, little else was done before 11 January 1452.²¹⁷

Wiltshire and Bonville, although initially imprisoned by the king, were pardoned on 19 February 1452.²¹⁸ That this pardon was not extended to Cobham, Moylens or Devon indicates that the political divisions within the court were beginning to harden, as Somerset's group began to strengthen its hold on the government. The end result of this period of fighting and Devon's refusal to submit to the king was to give Bonville an almost unchallenged authority in the south west and to force Devon into the political wilderness and further into York's camp. For Wiltshire, the

²¹⁵ *Six Town Chronicles*, p. 139

²¹⁶ 'Benet's chron.', p. 205

²¹⁷ R. Griffiths, *The reign of Henry VI*, pp 576-7

²¹⁸ *Cal. pat. rolls, 1446-52*, p. 525

episode had clear repercussions. His alliance with Bonville had resulted in an increased presence in Devon, Somerset and Dorset, especially after Devon surrendered to the king in March 1452, in the wake of the Dartford incident. However, this came at the cost of seriously damaging his relations with Richard, duke of York.

While York's actions in the autumn of 1451 may well have been motivated by a desire to promote peace and order, they also had the effect of driving Wiltshire firmly into the faction led by Somerset. Wiltshire was already leaning in that direction but York hastened the move by his actions at Taunton. A decade earlier, Wiltshire had been a 'prominent member' of York's expedition to France.²¹⁹ Later, York seemed to actively cultivate him as an ally in south-west England, in the same way as he cultivated Wiltshire's father as an ally in Ireland. As mentioned above, Wiltshire had been a recipient of offices and several manors from York in 1446 and by 3 September 1446, he had relinquished the potentially lucrative office of justice and warden of the king's forest south of the Trent in favour of York.²²⁰ He also seems to have served on York's personal council and when York was appointed lieutenant of Ireland on 9 December 1447, he cultivated the earl of Ormond, who was still in England, and sent him back to Ireland as his deputy.²²¹

Ormond was clearly a suitable choice for the position of deputy. He had the experience and ability needed for the position and had just been effectively cleared of the charges of treason and necromancy that had been laid against him, when the king called off his trial by combat against the prior of Kilmainham.²²² The earl had been in England for almost three years before he was officially pardoned by the king on 15 September 1447, but he was still the most capable and powerful magnate in Ireland.²²³ If his contentious nature could be kept in check by York in order to avoid a new

²¹⁹ R. Griffiths, *The reign of Henry VI*, p. 672

²²⁰ *Cal. pat. rolls, 1446-52*, p. 83

²²¹ York sealed indentures of the office on 30 July 1447 but the patent granting him the office was not sealed until 9 December 1447. [E. Matthews, 'Governing the lordship', p. 481; *N.H.I.*, ix, p. 476]

²²² For Ormond's stay in England see, E. Matthews, 'Governing the lordship', pp 373-7, 400-5

²²³ *Stat. Ire. Hen. VI*, p 241

flare up of hostilities between himself and Archbishop Talbot, Ormond would serve York well. York clearly accepted Ormond's pragmatic approach to relations between the Anglo-Irish and their Gaelic neighbours, and in many ways York's lieutenancy can be seen as the final triumph of the policies of the pro-Ormond faction in Dublin. However, York's authority, coupled with Ormond's prudence and the death of Archbishop Talbot, allowed this triumph to pass without factional infighting. York developed a good working relationship with Ormond as he had previously with Wiltshire, but his good relations with Wiltshire were not to last.

However important were the connections between York and Wiltshire, they developed in the period before York's return to England in September 1450.²²⁴ In the year following his return political events began to wear away at the Wiltshire-York relationship. During York's absence in Ireland, the fortunes of James Butler V had improved dramatically and he was beginning to emerge as a new power. Butler had probably been summoned to the Winchester session of the parliament of 1449, indicating that he had been raised to the nobility and on 8 July 1449 he received the charter creating him earl of Wiltshire.²²⁵

He had also begun to emerge as a trusted, if minor, figure in the Suffolk regime during York's absence. For example, he was appointed to the commission to enquire into all treasons in Kent and Southampton on 2 February 1450 and 10 March 1450, respectively.²²⁶ Furthermore, he begins to attend council meetings at this time as he began to become more identified with the Suffolk regime that effectively ran the government.²²⁷ Wiltshire's position was actually enhanced by the fall of Suffolk and his subsequent murder. When Suffolk's offices were handed out, Wiltshire was one of five men who were appointed to become the guardians of Calais for a period of five years from 2 April 1450.²²⁸ His position was further enhanced by the fact that his allies in the midlands also benefited

²²⁴ P. A. Johnson, *Duke Richard of York*, p. 78

²²⁵ W. Dunham, 'Notes from the parliament at Winchester, 1449', p. 408

²²⁶ *Cal. pat. rolls, 1446-52*, pp 377-8

²²⁷ J. Watts, *Henry VI and the politics of kingship*, p. 211

²²⁸ 'French Rolls', p. 382

from the largesse after Suffolk's fall.²²⁹ Wiltshire was emerging as an important figure with friends in powerful places and had started the move from prominent member of the court to member of the faction that actually controlled the government. For him, the re-shaping of the order that ruled the court was an opportunity. There is even evidence that he was willing to play both sides of the emerging factional divide to better his own interests. On 3 December 1450, during York's brief ascendancy at court, Wiltshire was one of the lords who joined York and the king on a procession in London, tacitly supporting York's ambitions.²³⁰ Like many other lords, Wiltshire was at least willing to let York form an effective regime but he drifted away from York during the winter of 1450/1.

His failure to support York was the first step in souring the relations between the two men. By the summer of 1451, Wiltshire had emerged as a prominent figure in his own right, with allies and ambitions that apparently fitted better with Somerset's faction than with York. Wiltshire's growing presence in the midlands and the west country gained him enemies in these regions such as the earls of Devon and Warwick and Lord Cobham. Each of these men had reasons of their own to be less than satisfied with Suffolk's regime, which would have driven them to support York but Wiltshire's growing estrangement from York and his identification with Somerset almost certainly was a further inducement for them to ally themselves with York's faction. York's actions at Taunton only hastened the speed at which Wiltshire moved towards Somerset's faction. The Dartford incident was the point at which Wiltshire's ambitions and interests began to diverge from and come into open conflict with York's, especially as Wiltshire became more identified with the court than he had been previously.

For another member of the Butler family, Wiltshire's rise at court came at just the right time. While Wiltshire moved towards the centre of affairs in England, his brother, John, languished as a hostage in France. One of the unanticipated side-effects of the end of the Talbot-Ormond feud had been the attachment of Ormond's second son, John, to the retinue of John Talbot, earl of Shrewsbury. As mentioned above members of the

²²⁹ Lord Sudeley received several valuable offices, while Lord Beauchamp of Powicke was appointed Treasurer.

²³⁰ 'Benet's chronicle', p. 203

Butler and Talbot families had appeared in public together in England and France in 1445. No such public rapprochement had occurred in Ireland but Shrewsbury's appointment as lieutenant of Ireland on 12 March 1445, provided an opportunity for just such a symbolic gesture. Shrewsbury's appointment cut short Ormond's lieutenancy just over three years into a seven year term.²³¹ Shrewsbury indented to serve on 14 February 1445, four days before Ormond's judicial duel was to take place. Clearly Ormond was not going to be allowed back to Ireland as lieutenant, even if he won the duel.

Shrewsbury's appointment was clearly meant to entice him to commit to a long term in Ireland when it looked like the war in France was entering a period of truce. The terms of his indenture, sealed on 21 May 1445, abandoned many of the limitations placed on the lieutenants of Ireland since 1425 and returned the lieutenant's salary to a level not seen since his previous lieutenancy of 1414.²³² Furthermore, his creation as earl of Waterford on 17 July 1446 was clearly another effort to interest him in Ireland without settling the ongoing dispute between Shrewsbury and Lord Grey of Ruthven over the possession of the liberty of Wexford.²³³ His creation as earl of Waterford was entirely in the nature of a speculative grant. For it to be worth anything, Shrewsbury would have to take the honour of Dungarvan away from the earls of Desmond but if he was successful he would effectively return another county to English obedience and potentially create another strong lordship in the south-east of the lordship, to balance the Butlers and the Geraldines of Desmond.

Shrewsbury did not take up his position in Ireland until 20 October 1446 but when he came preparations were made to include Ormond's second son in his retinue.²³⁴ By 1446, Ormond was certainly well aware that his eldest son was unlikely to ever take up permanent residency in his Irish lordship. The inclusion of John Butler in Shrewsbury's retinue thus served two purposes. Firstly, his presence and presumably the

²³¹ P.R.O. E404/61/138

²³² *Cal. pat. rolls, 1441-6*, p. 359. For a fuller discussion of the variations in the financial arrangements of the lieutenants of Ireland see E. Matthews, 'Financing the lordship of Ireland in the time of Henry V and Henry VI'

²³³ *C. P.*, xi, p. 701

²³⁴ E. Matthews, 'Governing the lordship', p. 489

presence of his sister, in Shrewsbury's party was the first public sign within the lordship that the Talbot-Ormond feud had formally ended and that it was time that the factional disputes in Ireland ended as well. The second purpose, and perhaps the more important one in Ormond's estimation, was the attempt to interest his second son in the family's Irish lordship. John Butler had followed his brother to England and had joined the royal household, but he had far less to show for his years in England than did either of his brothers. Apart from one manor willed to him by his grandmother, he had no lands in England, nor did he marry a suitable heiress. If John Butler could be convinced to stay in Ireland, he would be a suitable lieutenant to his brother in Ireland after Ormond's death. This plan would thereby avoid the potential dangers of having one of the heads of the minor Butler families act as Wiltshire's deputy.

If this was Ormond's plan, then it failed, as John Butler chose to follow Shrewsbury back to France, rather than stay in Ireland. Shrewsbury left Ireland after 6 November 1447, little more than a year after his arrival, leaving his brother as his deputy.²³⁵ While Shrewsbury had been in Ireland the truce in France had failed and he was recalled to join an expedition to France led by Somerset. It seems clear that rather than stay in a country he was unfamiliar with, John Butler chose to accompany Shrewsbury to France. Butler was given command of the fortress at Vernon during the campaign.²³⁶ When Somerset was forced to surrender Rouen on 1449, Shrewsbury, Butler and five other men were held as hostages until his ransom, which was set at 50,000 salutes (2500 nobles) was paid.²³⁷ Butler's ransom, in comparison, was set at 15,000 salutes (750 nobles), which indicates that he was seen as an important figure in his own right.

However, that amount of money was not easily raised, even by a relatively wealthy family such as the Butlers, and John Butler remained in France for at least three years. On 3 March 1451, his brother, Thomas, and two of Wiltshire's midland affinity, Humphrey Stafford and Henry Filongly, sealed a bond with Sir John Wenlok for £2500, on the condition

²³⁵ *Stat. Ire. Hen. VI*, p. 151-2

²³⁶ J. Stevenson, *Letters and Papers illustrative of the wars of the English in France*, ii, p. 621

²³⁷ *ibid.*, p. 611

that they provide an acquittance of 8,000 salutes within nine months and the remaining 7,000 within eighteen months. This bond was cancelled the following day, when a similar one was sealed with Lord Scales.²³⁸ Even with this money Butler still had to find a way to repay his creditors and it seems that Wiltshire used his influence with the king to persuade him to grant John Butler licences to trade. On 18 March 1451, John Butler received a licence to trade with France to defray the costs of his ransom and on 18 November 1451 he received another licence to trade in England for the same reason. Similar licences followed on 23 June 1452 and 28 September 1452, when he was still noted as a prisoner in France.²³⁹ He was released shortly afterward but the repayment of his ransom was to be a major part of his life for several years. On 17 March 1454 a commission was ordered to inquire into the piracy of goods Butler was shipping to France in partial payment of his ransom, an inquisition that was to drag on for over four years.²⁴⁰ John Butler returned to England and maintained his ties to the royal household, but thereafter seemed to be content living his life in his brother's shadow.²⁴¹

The period from 1405 to 1452 can be seen as a formative period for the Butlers in the fifteenth century. The career of the fourth earl of Ormond clearly shows that an Anglo-Irish earl was not limited to service in Ireland. At the highest reaches of society there seem to have been no impediments for a man of Ireland to serve the king in England or in France. However, as Ormond learned after the death of Henry V, without royal patronage, an Anglo-Irish magnate was largely an outsider in the politics of England. In an attempt to give his son advantages he did not have himself, Ormond had his eldest son raised in England, first with his grandmother, and then at the royal court. Ormond's plan to have his son gain contacts and allies in England worked better than he could have expected. The younger Butler's position changed greatly from 1435 to 1438 when he and his wife were the recipients of two large inheritances that changed the balance of the Butler lands in England and Ireland. During the 1440s, James Butler V acted as an average English magnate, serving in

²³⁸ *Cal. close rolls, 1447-54*, p. 266-7

²³⁹ 'French Rolls', pp 386, 389

²⁴⁰ *Cal. pat. rolls, 1452-61*, pp 179, 435-6

²⁴¹ *ibid.*, 1452-61, p. 553

France and attempting to create bases of power and authority for himself in England. He retained a connection to the court of Henry VI and used his position there to ally with other minor magnates in the midlands and the west country to form groups that acted to destabilise the traditional patterns of magnate power in those regions. By the end of the decade, he had been raised to the English peerage and had become a minor figure in the court faction that actually governed the country and his actions served to alienate him from his former patron, Richard, duke of York. While his father was alive, he did not have to worry about his Irish lordship but this changed after the death of Ormond on 23 August 1452.

Even the most cursory appraisal of the career of James Butler, fourth earl of Ormond, will show that he spent a good deal of his life away from the centre of his Irish lordship. His involvement in the administration of the lordship of Ireland in Dublin, his connections of land and patronage in England and his service in the French wars of Henry V all made him no more than a semi-resident lord in his ancestral lordship before 1430. During Ormond's minority and the period before his first lieutenancy, the potential problems that could be caused by long-term absenteeism were largely mitigated by the presence of his half-brother, Thomas, prior of Kilmainham, who acted as Ormond's deputy before his death in France in 1419.¹ In the 1420s, the benefits Ormond gained from his periods of service as lieutenant and justiciar generally served to counter the difficulties his absences could cause at home. However, after the end of his third period as chief governor on 31 July 1427, Ormond could no longer depend on the advantages of office to off-set potential problems within his own lordship. While he did retain influence among a section of the administration in Dublin and with some of the lieutenants of the period, this influence was second-hand at best and could not be depended upon to defend his lordship.

As earl, Ormond had several functions within his 'country'. As the head of the Butler family, he was expected to provide a living for his family and relatives, while as lord of the liberty of Tipperary and as the foremost magnate in Kilkenny, Ormond was expected to provide protection and order for his people. Ormond's actions in the last two decades of his life make it clear that he was well aware of his duties in this respect. To provide the peace, order and good government expected from him, Ormond used his extended family in many ways, making marriage alliances with his neighbours, planting them on the borders of his lordship and using them

¹ *Ann. Conn., s.a. 1419*

within the government of his lordship. Ormond also realised that the best way to avoid local unrest arising from the cost of defending his lordship was to gain the support of the local populace for the necessary measures before implementing them. To do this Ormond took the unusual step of calling local councils, almost parliaments of his own lordship, to agree to local legislation. In this way, Ormond achieved local agreement to measures which were almost unthinkable in the region around Dublin. Furthermore, by the mid-1440s, it was clear to Ormond that his eldest son was unlikely to return to Ireland as a resident lord, and that he needed to make plans that would allow his lordship to survive the coming period of absenteeism.

One of Ormond's most important tasks was to protect his lordship from external threats and he had found that these threats could come from Anglo-Irish sources more readily than from any of the Gaelic lordships. As recently as 1417, the then lieutenant, John Talbot, Lord Furnival, had ordered the seizure of all his lands and Ormond knew the possibility still existed that an administration dominated by Talbot's brother, Richard, archbishop of Dublin, could attempt to repeat this action.² Ormond had to find a way to defuse the ability of the Dublin administration to attack him without resorting to open violence. The other serious threat from the outside of his lordship came from the Desmond lordship. Although Ormond and Desmond had enjoyed good relations in the years before 1429, there was no guarantee that this unusual state of affairs would continue.

Fortunately for Ormond, both of these problems had a single solution, namely a marriage alliance between Ormond and Desmond. Forging a strong alliance with the earl of Desmond would allow Ormond to rely on a peaceful neighbour to the south and would also allow him to present himself as the unquestioned leader of the Anglo-Irish community in his dealing with the Dublin administration. Ormond had enjoyed favourable relations with Desmond since the beginning of the decade when he supported the claims of James fitz Gerald to the earldom of Desmond after the death of his nephew in exile in 1420. This relationship was further strengthened by the effective grant

² See above, p. 47

of Ormond's barony of Inchiquin to Desmond on 31 January 1422.³ Ormond worked to build even stronger ties with Desmond and proposed a marriage alliance between the two comital families, which was agreed in an indenture on 10 May 1429.⁴

The terms of the indenture show that Ormond was willing to give much to gain much. They also indicate that he saw this alliance not as a simple arrangement of convenience but as the basis for a longer term settlement. The basis of the agreement was the marriage of Desmond's heir, Thomas fitz James, to Ormond's daughter, Anne. In the indenture, Ormond, who had already effectively surrendered possession of his lordship of Inchiquin to Desmond in January 1422, went a step further and granted the manor to the couple and their progeny. He also agreed to the remission of a debt of £1000 owed to him by Desmond. In return for these tangible short and long term assets, Ormond gained more intangible short and long term assets. In the short term, he gained peace on the southern borders of his lordship. In the longer term he gained the chance to bind the next generation of Butler and Geraldine together in bonds of kinship and fosterage. Under the terms of the indenture, Desmond's heir was to reside with the countess of Ormond, who would oversee his education. As both children were several years from marriageable age, this bond would have several years to mature. Furthermore, if either child died, another suitable partner was to be substituted under the same conditions. Once again Ormond's actions show his ability and willingness to make plans for his family that would not come to fruition for decades.

As useful as the alliance with Desmond was, it covered a region far from the control of the royal government in Dublin and probably gave Ormond little tangible aid in his struggles with a Talbot dominated administration. Ormond left Ireland shortly after sealing the indenture with Desmond to press his case for reappointment as lieutenant in England and then was drawn into the king's coronation expedition to France.⁵ Personal

³ *Ormond deeds, 1413-1509*, no. 51, pp 38-9

⁴ *ibid.*, no. 88, pp 72-3

⁵ see above, p. 65

tragedy hit Ormond's family while he was on the expedition, when his wife, who had accompanied him to England, died at his manor of Shere, in Surrey, on 3 August 1430.⁶ As distressing as this was for Ormond, it opened up a startling new possibility for the White Earl when he returned to Ireland in the winter of 1431/2. One of the more serious issues facing the Anglo-Irish lordship in Ireland in 1431 was the expected death of Gerald fitz Maurice, fifth earl of Kildare, an octogenarian who had never proven to be one of his family's more able members. Although Kildare had been earl since 1390, he had never shown himself to be an effective bulwark for the Anglo-Irish lordship as a whole. During his lifetime, the Gaelic lordships surrounding Kildare had been pushing slowly towards the heartland of the Kildare lordship around Maynooth.⁷

To complicate the matter further, Kildare's heir was his thirty four year old daughter, Elizabeth, the only child of his second marriage. Nor could the family resort to the Anglo-Irish quasi-tradition of ignoring the female heir's claims to the land because there was no effective male heir available. Earl Gerald's direct male heir was his brother, John, who was almost eighty years old. To complicate matters, John's heir was his grandson, Thomas, the future seventh earl of Kildare, who was some years away from his majority.⁸ There was a very real possibility that the earldom of Kildare could fracture under the pressure of Gaelic lords like An Calbach O'Connor Faly, and that there would be no earldom for Thomas 'fitz Maurice' to inherit when he came of age.⁹ This was not a comforting thought for either of the factions in the Dublin administration and the Kildare lordship became another battleground for the Ormond and Talbot factions to compete in. In the winter of 1432, a way appeared for Ormond to secure the Kildare lordship, confirm himself as

⁶ 'Gregory's chron', p. 171

⁷ C. Ó Cléirigh, 'The O'Connor Faly Lordship', pp 93-4

⁸ For the relationship between Gerald fitz Maurice, John fitz Maurice, and Thomas fitz Maurice, the fifth, sixth and seventh earls of Kildare see *A.F.M. s.a.* 1454; S. Pender (ed.), 'The O'Clery book of genealogies', § 2171, §2174, §2175, §2198, §2221, pp 171, 179, 182-3; Hayman, 'The Geraldines of Desmond', pp 419, 427.

⁹ Although called Thomas fitz Maurice throughout his life, the seventh earl of Kildare's father was named John. His use of the patronymic 'fitz Maurice' served to draw attention to his descent from Maurice fitz Thomas, fourth earl of Kildare.

the undisputed leader of the Anglo-Irish community and at the same time turn a gambit of the Talbot faction against them.

Five years earlier, the Talbot faction had foreseen the potential problems in the Kildare lordship and Archbishop Talbot seized upon the fact that the then lieutenant John, Lord Grey of Codnor, had proven himself to be no friend of Ormond. Archbishop Talbot proposed the marriage of Grey and Kildare's daughter. This marriage would give Grey the landed wealth a fifteenth century lieutenant needed to be effective in Ireland. It would also provide a temporary solution to the problem of the Kildare lordship by providing a capable adult to manage the lands of the earldom. Grey apparently saw the wisdom in this arrangement, as did the earl, although Earl Gerald had never shown himself to be a supporter of the Talbot faction, and the couple were married during Grey's six month sojourn in Ireland.¹⁰ Unfortunately for the archbishop's plans, the marriage did little to further the position of his faction as Grey left Ireland, presumably with his new wife, in December 1427 and was replaced by a more pro-Ormond lieutenant. In the end, little came of the marriage, as Grey died 14 September 1430, leaving no children by his wife to further complicate the Kildare succession.¹¹

However, this also left the Kildare problem unsolved. Throughout his career, Ormond worked to protect the Anglo-Irish lordship as a whole, and the prospect of the Kildare earldom fracturing under Gaelic pressure was as unpalatable for him as it had been for the archbishop. Archbishop Talbot's plan had been feasible; it simply had failed to succeed. In 1432, Ormond proposed to repeat it, but this time by marrying Elizabeth of Kildare himself. In this case, personal gain and the defence of the lordship of Ireland marched hand in hand for Ormond. The earl was also careful to ensure that all the proper forms were followed in order to shield his new gains from future challenges, especially those emanating from the archbishop of Dublin. Accordingly, he secured a papal dispensation to marry, as both he and his wife were direct descendants of the first earl of Kildare, on 29 April 1432.¹²

¹⁰ *C. P.*, x, p. 125

¹¹ *ibid.*, vi, p. 129

¹² *Cal. papal reg.*, 1427-47, p. 442

Once he had received this, he secured royal permission to marry on 18 July 1432.¹³

It also follows that Ormond had the agreement of the earl of Kildare and that an arrangement had been made between the two men. Kildare was as aware as any that his heir male would die soon after he did and that the next male heir was still a minor, leaving the Kildare lordship without an effective protector. The marriage of Ormond to his daughter ensured that protection and made certain that the earldom would stay within his family, one way or another. If a child resulted from the marriage, then Ormond would ensure that the lands of the earldom, if not necessarily the earldom itself, passed to Gerald fitz Maurice's grandchild and his own immediate family would prosper.¹⁴ If not, Ormond would protect the earldom during his wife's lifetime and then it would pass to the Geraldine heir male, Thomas, and the lineage as a whole would benefit, without the complications of sundering the lands from the earldom. In either case, the education of Thomas fitz Maurice needed to be provided for and where better than in the household of the White Earl. Ormond also had the potential of repeating the Desmond alliance by fostering Thomas fitz Maurice and then marrying him to his second daughter, Elizabeth. Once again Ormond can be seen to be making plans for the next generation. However, like his other plans, the potentials of this situation never emerged.

Earl Gerald of Kildare died on 13 October 1432, less than three months after his daughter's marriage, and on 14 December 1432 the escheator of Ireland restored two-thirds of the late earl's lands to his daughter and her new husband.¹⁵ The remaining third was granted as dower to the widowed countess of Kildare, who retained it until her death on 29 September 1439.¹⁶ These lands included the important manors of Maynooth, Rathmore,

¹³ *Ormond deeds, 1413-1509*, no. 99, p. 82

¹⁴ The earldom was created in tail male, but very little of the lands were so entailed. For the creation charter of the earldom of Kildare see *Rd. bk. Kildare*, no. 142

¹⁵ *Ormond deeds, 1413-1509*, no. 101, pp 83-9. Ormond and his wife paid 100s. into the hanaper for a year's grace concerning the relief owed on the inheritance.

¹⁶ *C.P.*, vii, p. 227

Rathangan, Lea, Geashill and Naas, which were all held directly of the crown, as well as other scattered manors held by the earls of Kildare or the earls of Ormond, the duke of York and others.¹⁷ However, it is clear that some of these manors were held by Kildare in name only. The county of Kildare and the Pale had come under increasing pressure in the previous decade from the O'Connor Faly, led by An Calbach Mór, who used the weakness of the earl of Kildare and the divisions within the Dublin to aggrandise his lordship.¹⁸ By 1433, the manor of Rathangan had passed out of Kildare's hands and into the possession of An Calbach Mór, whose wife hosted one of her two 'general summons of hospitality' at Rathangan in August 1433.¹⁹ Clearly, Ormond's possession of the Kildare lands was not to be a sinecure. His newly found wealth had to be protected, whether it was temporary or not, if he was to retain the leadership and good will of his peers.

The White Earl also showed a clear understanding of the needs of his own lordship by 1435, when he called what amounted to a local parliament to meet at Fethard. While the record of the ordinances agreed at this meeting is incomplete, the surviving record does list one 'law' and the list of people who attended the meeting at Ormond's behest.²⁰ The composition of those attending the meeting is in itself an indictment of the gap that had opened between reality and legal theory in fifteenth century Ireland. At the meeting in Fethard were the archbishop of Cashel, the bishop of Waterford and Lismore, representatives from the communities of Tipperary and Kilkenny and the crosslands of those counties. While the crosslands of Tipperary and the county of Kilkenny were legally royal counties, the collapse of the power of the central government in the region left Ormond as the only effective source of government there. Ormond took his responsibilities as lord of the liberty of Tipperary seriously and was not afraid to extend his protection into Kilkenny, where he was 'merely' the foremost magnate of the county. The

¹⁷ *Ormond deeds, 1413-1509*, no. 101, pp 83-9

¹⁸ C. Ó Cléirigh, 'The O'Connor Faly Lordship', pp. 93-4

¹⁹ *A.F.M., s.a. 1433; A.U., s.a. 1433; MacFirbis, s.a. 1451*

²⁰ B.L. Add. Ms 4797, f. 123v, printed in C. A. Empey and K. Simms, 'The ordinances of the White Earl', pp 185-6

presence of representatives from the church and the community of Kilkenny shows that this expansion of protection was accepted by the people of the Butler lordship.

The one surviving ordinance from Fethard is that none of the earl's *natio*, the Butler family, was to billet kern and galloglas on the people of the counties unless they were of the earl's retinue. The purpose was not to eliminate the 'abuse' of coign in the Butler lordship, as had been attempted in the Irish parliament in 1410, but to limit its use and preserve control of this military force for the earl alone.²¹ Both Ormond and the people of his 'country' recognised the need for defence of the lordship and that this defence needed to be paid for in some fashion. By securing the cooperation of the commons of Tipperary and Kilkenny, Ormond limited the potential for complaint and unrest which could arise when the cost of the defence was passed on to the people. In theory, at least, the commons now knew what their portion of the costs would be and was protected from the imposition of levies from other sources. Although the rest of the ordinances passed at Fethard have been lost, it is extremely likely that they were similar in content to the 'statutes and corrections' passed by Ormond in the liberty court of Tipperary when he returned from England in 1448.²² In these 'statutes and corrections', Ormond forbade 'any man to break the peace....or to ride with banners unfurled' without his permission. He forbade the imposition of coign and livery in the county without his express permission, and then only 'under his seal'. To ensure the power of the legitimate authority, the only kern allowed in the country were the Earl's own kern. Ormond also promised to hold yearly session of his court 'as well as the king may hold his parliament' in return for a subsidy of thirty or forty marks.

In these ordinances, statutes and corrections Ormond was attempting to foster the stability of his lordship by negotiating some of the limits of that government with the commons of his lordship in advance. The parallels to parliament were intentional and necessary but they were also rudimentary. The system had its limitations, namely that the yearly sessions promised by

²¹ *Stat. Ire. John-Hen. V*, pp 520-1

²² *Ormond deeds, 1413-1509*, no. 102, p. 97

Ormond were there solely to 'advise and consent' to Ormond's decisions and that the local 'parliament' had no way to enforce its wishes on the earl.²³ Furthermore, for this system to function properly, it required a capable and conscientious earl to be present to act as the government for the lordship, especially to keep the cadet branches of the Butler family under control. Ormond was well aware of these potential problems but he was also supremely confident of his abilities to control any situation that arose. In 1435, he could still expect to govern his lordship for several more years before turning it over to one of his sons. Furthermore he had just begun to endow the cadet branches with landed wealth and saw them as valuable assets, present to assist him in the task of governing and protecting his lordship.

In the fourth decade of the fifteenth century, Ormond had an abundance of brothers, cousins and nephews that needed to be supported within the lordship. In addition to Ormond and his own family, four other distinct branches of the Butler family were in evidence by 1440 and Ormond needed to find a way to fulfil their expectations without disrupting his lordship or diluting his own authority within that lordship. For the rest of his life, Ormond was careful to keep the cadet branches of his family in balance, not letting any one branch become too powerful. This was not a 'divide and rule' policy aimed at keeping the various Butlers at each other's throats, which would cause an unacceptable amount of turmoil within the lordship, but rather a skilful manipulation of the assets of the Ormond lordship so that each branch of the family held a certain amount of land and responsibility within the government of the region. Ormond also had to achieve this balance when the assets of each branch differed greatly, largely due to the circumstances of their emergence.

Ormond's preponderance of Butler relations was generally a new element in the constitution of the Butler lordship. Unlike some other Anglo-Irish families, the Butler family had been generally untroubled by cadet branches until the second quarter of the fifteenth century. The senior branch passed its lands from father to son in an almost unbroken succession, and slowly accumulated its position of dominance in the region of Kilkenny and

²³ C. A. Empey and K. Simms, 'The ordinances of the White Earl', p. 175

Tipperary. Cadet branches of the family did exist, supported by the senior branch but not to the extent that it damaged the landed wealth of the senior branch. In addition, these cadet branches tended to either fail in the third generation or fade into obscurity. The Butlers of Dunboyne, who split from the main family in the early fourteenth century, were the one exception to this rule and even then their most important manors came from outside the Butler family.²⁴ Throughout the fourteenth century, the pattern of the Butler family was to have three or four sons in both the Ormond line and the Dunboyne line, but only have one, or possibly two, of them survive in each family to marry and have children. Either by accident or by design the size of the noble Butler families remained fairly constant.

The legacy of the White Earl's father was to change this pattern irrevocably. In the fifteenth century the senior branch and the Butlers of Dunboyne were joined by three other families, each of which placed their own demands on the resources of the lordship. The third earl was apparently a vital and prolific man who left no fewer than seven sons and at least one daughter by three different women.²⁵ His eldest son, Thomas, prior of Kilmainham, has been mentioned before. The prior served as deputy within the Ormond lordship to the White Earl and as deputy lieutenant to Thomas of Lancaster from March 1409 to April 1413.²⁶ The identity of the prior's mother is unknown, although on one occasion Catherine of Desmond is referred to as his aunt which, if taken literally, would make his mother another of the daughters of Gerald fitz Maurice, third earl of Desmond.²⁷ In addition to serving as his brother's deputy in the Ormond lordship, the prior also became one of the foremost magnates of that lordship when he acquired much of the de Bermingham lordship in the second decade of the fifteenth century.²⁸ By this acquisition Thomas became lord of the great cantredal manors of Kells in Kilkenny, Knockgraffon and Kiltinan in Tipperary without placing a drain on

²⁴ see genealogies

²⁵ see genealogies

²⁶ see T. B. Butler, 'Thomas le Botiller, prior of Kilmainham'

²⁷ *Ormond deeds, 1413-1509*, no. 1, pp 1-2

²⁸ see above, pp 28-29

the resources of the senior line of the Butler family. The prior passed these manors to his eldest son, Edmund, in his will but they were later divided with Knockgraffon passing to the prior's second son, Richard.²⁹ The brothers later exchanged the manors of Kiltinan and Knockgraffon on 20 January 1446, possibly as the first step in the process of ending the controversy between Edmund fitz Thomas Butler and the Butlers of Dunboyne over the possession of the manor of Kiltinan.³⁰

The Butlers of Dunboyne claimed the manor of Kiltinan on the basis of the marriage of Peter Butler to Catherine, daughter of John de Birmingham in the middle of the fourteenth century.³¹ As mentioned above, the Butlers of Dunboyne emerged as a separate unit within the Butler family after the marriage of Thomas Butler to Synolda, the daughter and heir of William le Petit of Dunboyne in 1320.³² This marriage gave Thomas possession of the manors of Dunboyne and Moymett in Meath, which became the main patrimony of the Butlers of Dunboyne. His son, Peter, proved that he held Dunboyne and Moymett in chief in 1358/9, although this would remain a sore point between the Butlers of Dunboyne and the earls of March well until the 1390s.³³ Peter Butler was the first of his family to serve the earls of Ormond as seneschal of the liberty of Tipperary and his importance in the family's history is marked by the fact that his descendants were referred to as Mac Piarais in the Gaelic Annals and by the end of the fifteenth century his grandson, Edmund, regularly referred to himself as Edmund Pierson in letters to the earl of Ormond.³⁴ The Butlers of Dunboyne pressed their claim to Kiltinan after it was acquired by Thomas, prior of Kilmainham, and this eventually led to a duel between Edmund fitz Thomas and Edmund fitz William Butler of Dunboyne.

²⁹ *Ormond deeds, 1413-1509*, no. 24, pp 16-17

³⁰ *ibid.*, no. 166, pp 162-3

³¹ T. B. Butler, 'The barony of Dunboyne', p. 75

³² *ibid.*, p. 70

³³ *Ormond deeds, 1413-1509*, no. 342, pp 348-63

³⁴ e.g. *Ormond deeds, 1509-47*, app. no. 12, p. 318

Although Edmund fitz Thomas Butler retained the manor, the friction between the two branches of the family did not go away. It seems clear that the earl of Ormond stepped in to mediate the quarrel after his return from England in the late 1440s. On an unspecified date, Richard fitz Thomas Butler, who had come into possession of the manor in 1446, had agreed to hold the manor of Edmund fitz James Butler of Dunboyne. On 2 February 1452, he went a step further and sealed an agreement with Ormond and Edmund fitz James wherein he conditionally released all of his claims to the manor of Kiltinan to the earl and Edmund. The condition was that if Richard or Edmund fitz Thomas presented Ormond or Edmund fitz James with 228 cows, each worth half a mark, or the cash equivalent, then they could reclaim the manor.³⁵

Ormond's intervention in the dispute over the manor of Kiltinan allowed him to balance the landed interests of the two branches of the family within his lordship more evenly. From the middle of the century, the fitz Thomas Butlers controlled the cantreds of Moyennen and Moctalyn in Tipperary as well as Kells in Kilkenny while the Dunboyne Butlers controlled the cantreds of Slievardagh, Comsey and Eoghanacht Cashel in Tipperary. Eoghanacht Cashel was largely co-terminous with its *caput* manor of Ardmayle which passed into the hands the Dunboyne family probably during the 1420s, when John fitz William Butler, a younger brother of the Edmund Butler who died in 1420.³⁶ John fitz William served the earl as seneschal of the liberty from 1429 to 1433 and almost certainly received the manor of Ardmayle at this time.³⁷ Ardmayle remained within the family, passing to John's son, Thomas, who held it during the exile of John, sixth earl of Ormond, and then to his cousin, Edmund fitz James Butler, who acted as the seneschal of the liberty from 1457 to his death in 1499.³⁸

³⁵ *Ormond deeds, 1509-47*, no. 180, p. 169

³⁶ see genealogies

³⁷ T. B. Butler, 'Seneschals of the liberty' p. 371

³⁸ *Ormond deeds, 1413-1509*, no. 232, p. 212; *Ormond deeds, 1509-47*, app. no. 53, p. 344

Like the sons of Thomas, prior of Kilmainham, the third branch of the Butler family to emerge in the mid fifteenth century was also descended from the third earl of Ormond. In addition to his marriage to Joan, the daughter of John, Lord Welles, the third earl also maintained a long standing relationship with his niece, Catherine, the daughter of Gerald fitz Maurice, third earl of Desmond, a relationship that lasted until Ormond's death in 1405. Ormond's relationship with Catherine of Desmond resulted in four sons and at least one daughter and it seems clear that the earl was prepared to support his paramour and her children to the best of his ability. Sometime before 3 December 1399, Ormond granted Catherine of Desmond an annuity of £200 to be levied from all his lands in Ireland.³⁹ Beyond this annuity, Ormond granted Catherine his manor of Blakecastle in Meath on 1 August 1402, with a reversion to their sons James, Edmund, Gerald and Theobald.⁴⁰ Although the terms of the grant were changed so that the manor was held jointly by Earl James and Catherine of Desmond, with a reversion to their children on 6 August 1405, shortly before the earl's death, Blakecastle does not appear among the lands held by the Butlers of Cahir.⁴¹

Nor does Blakecastle seem to have been the only manor granted by the third earl to Catherine and her family. One possible grant that had repercussions throughout the century is a grant of part of the manor of Carrick-on-Suir. An extent of the manor in 1415 mentions that Menourstown was laid waste because of dissensions between the earl and Catherine of Desmond.⁴² The manor of Carrick would prove to be a point of tension between the Butlers of Cahir and other branches of the Butler family for the rest of the century. Another possible grant made by the third earl which was later ignored by the White Earl was the grant of the manor of Little Island, an island in the Suir below the city of Waterford. Early in the sixteenth century, Edmund fitz Thomas Butler of Cahir claimed this manor on the strength of

³⁹ *Ormond deeds, 1350-1413*, no. 344, pp 243-4

⁴⁰ *ibid.*, no. 368, p. 266

⁴¹ *ibid.*, nos. 384-5, pp 276-7

⁴² *Red bk. Ormond*, no. 69, p. 121

documents sealed by the third earl.⁴³ Perhaps the most interesting thing to arise from this claim is that Thomas, earl of Ormond, had to write to his seneschal in Ireland, Sir Piers Butler, to ask who Catherine of Desmond was and what relationship she had to his grandfather. It seems clear that Ormond recognised that there was a relationship between himself and the Butlers of Cahir, but was not entirely certain what that relationship was.

It appears that all the grants made by the third earl to Catherine of Desmond and her family were simply ignored during the minority of the White Earl and restored to him with his other manors when he reached his majority in 1411.⁴⁴ The most logical reason for this was to prevent the dilution of the landed wealth of the senior branch by endowing the illegitimate children of the third earl with sufficient lands to support the son of an earl. However, when land became available to endow the family of Catherine of Desmond that did not significantly reduce the landed position of the senior branch of the family, the White Earl was prepared to grant those lands to his half-brother, James Gallda. On 10 March 1433, Ormond acquired all the lands and services held by his cousins, Edmund and Richard fitz Thomas Butler, in Thurles, Ogteragh, Ely, Gracecastle and the barony of Offa.⁴⁵ These men have often been identified as the sons of the White Earl's brother, Thomas, prior of Kilmainham but this identification is clearly an error.⁴⁶ When the government granted the barony of Offa to Thomas Butler in 1392, the Thomas Butler in question was the third earl's brother, not his son.⁴⁷

This being the case, the Edmund and Richard Butler that granted the lands to the White Earl were his cousins not his nephews. The grant also infers two other points. The first is that the Thomas Butler of 1392 was given lands on the periphery of the liberty of Tipperary in addition to his grant of

⁴³ *Ormond deeds, 1509-47*, no. 318, pp 309-10

⁴⁴ *ibid.*, no. 218, pp 176-9

⁴⁵ *Ormond deeds, 1413-1509*, no. 103, pp 99-100

⁴⁶ C. A. Empey, 'The Butler lordship in Ireland, 1185-1515', pp 71, 315-16; T. B. Butler, 'Thomas le Botiller, prior of Kilmainham', p. 368

⁴⁷ *Proc. king's council, Ire., 1392-3*, p. 220-2

Offa, which indicates that he was placed there to defend the liberty from possible attacks from Gaelic lords in the north and Desmond to the south. The second point that emerges from the grant is that neither Edmund fitz Thomas nor his brother had children of their own to inherit their lands and were prepared to see them pass to the senior line of the family. The White Earl obviously saw the value of continuing to plant younger members of his family on the peripheries of his lordship to act as the first line of defence and shortly after gaining the barony of Offa, he granted it to his half-brother, James Gallda. The exact date of the grant is uncertain but it was probably close to the time that he granted James Gallda the manor of Ballycullenan on 1 June 1434.⁴⁸ In addition to the barony, or cantred, of Offa, Ormond also granted his brother the castle and manor of Cahir, which he had acquired in 1375, and this became the seat of this branch of the family, with James Gallda's grandson, Thomas fitz Peter, holding it in the 1460s.⁴⁹ His great grandson, Edmund, is not mentioned as holding the manor in a list of the earls lands in 1499 but he certainly held it when he concluded a peace with Piers Butler in 1515.⁵⁰

The settlement of James Gallda's family in Cahir was another of the White Earl's gambits that had unforeseen consequences. It is certain that Ormond hoped to capitalise on his brother's connections to the house of Desmond by placing him in the southernmost cantred of Tipperary but whether Ormond actually gained any advantage because James Gallda was a nephew of James fitz Gerald, sixth earl of Desmond, is far from certain. What is certain is that the Butlers of Cahir pursued a path of independence during the absentee period. Their allegiance to the earls of Ormond is clear and attested by the support given to John, earl of Ormond, by Peter fitz James Butler of Cahir and his subsequent attainder by the Irish parliament in 1463.⁵¹ However, this loyalty was limited to the earls of Ormond and the Butlers of Cahir generally refused to cooperate with any of the other branches of the

⁴⁸ *Ormond deeds, 1413-1509*, no. 116, p. 107

⁴⁹ *ibid.*, no. 234, p. 211-12

⁵⁰ *Ormond deeds, 1509-47*, app. no. 53, p. 344; *ibid.*, no. 40, pp. 43-51

⁵¹ *Stat. Ire., 1-12 Edw. IV*, p. 27

Butler family during the absentee period. Their greatest conflicts came against the MacRichard Butlers as the two branches of the family clashed as both tried to extend their interests in the cantred of Iffowyn.

The MacRichard Butlers emerged from the shadows in the early 1440s, just as the White Earl's plans for his immediate family and lordship began to break down. Like the fitz Thomas Butlers and the Butlers of Cahir, the MacRichard Butlers were descendants of the third Earl, but unlike them, this branch of the family was a product of the earl's marriage to Anne de Welles. This marriage resulted in two children, James, the future earl, and his younger brother, Richard, who was born in 1395 and named for his godfather, Richard II. Almost nothing is known of Richard Butler beyond the fact of his existence. He was assigned 28s. 4d. from the chief rent of Kynder in November 1405.⁵² It is unlikely that he was the Richard Butler that held 'the lord's messuage towards the castle of Knocktopher', if only because he was still a minor in 1411.⁵³ Later tradition states that he married one of the O'Reillys of Breifne but this is not confirmed in any extant contemporary record.⁵⁴ The most likely reason for his almost complete invisibility in the historical record is that he died at a young age, probably c.1420, barely living long enough to father a son and two daughters.⁵⁵

His son and heir, Edmund, who was invariably called Edmund MacRichard, was probably born in 1419, a date suggested by the fact that his first appearance in the historical record was when his uncle, the earl of Ormond, granted him possession of the manor of Polestown, now Paulstown, in northern Kilkenny on 1 November 1440.⁵⁶ It seems clear that Ormond was careful to arrange a suitable upbringing for his nephew and had Edmund fostered in the household of Richard O'Hedian, archbishop of Cashel from

⁵² *Ormond deeds, 1350-1413*, no. 388, p. 280

⁵³ *ibid.*, no. 415, p. 304

⁵⁴ Lodge, *Peerage*, ii, p. 13-14

⁵⁵ see genealogies

⁵⁶ *Ormond deeds, 1413-1509*, no. 133, pp 125-6

1406 to 1440.⁵⁷ Ormond continued his policy of planting his family in sensitive manors on the periphery of the Ormond lordship as a first line of defence. Polestown was an important manor because it lay at the junction of the roads from Gowran and Kilkenny to Carlow and it was always important to the Irish lordship as a whole that this road be kept open. Edmund MacRichard was generally entrusted with the defences of the Ormond lordship towards the Gaelic lords to the north.

As time passed, Edmund MacRichard was also granted other manors, Pottlerath in south western Kilkenny and Buolick in the cantred of Slieveardagh in Tipperary.⁵⁸ He was also granted the manor of Dunmore in Waterford on 19 June 1452, which he retained although he later faced legal challenges to his possession.⁵⁹ There are other lands held by his sons during the exile of the sixth earl of Ormond which were probably granted to Edmund MacRichard by his uncle. According to the rental compiled for the earl of Ormond in 1472, MacRichard's eldest son, James, held the manors of Tibberaghny on the border of Kilkenny and Tipperary and the manor of Carrickbeg, across the river from Carrick-on-Suir, while another son, Richard, held the manors of Thurles and Killenaul in Tipperary, Cahirconlish in Limerick and Youghal in Cork. Finally, James fitz Edmund Butler, also received the 'kine of Ormond', an unspecified levy on the minor Gaelic lords of northern Tipperary.⁶⁰ If Edmund MacRichard Butler held all of these manors, his landed wealth was largely on a par with that of the other branches of the family, perhaps greater in extent, but also more scattered around the peripheries of the Ormond lordship.

In the early 1440s, most of Edmund MacRichard's attention seems to have been turned towards the Gaelic lordships of the midlands. The two most important Gaelic lordships bordering the Ormond lordship were the O'Carrolls of Ely in northern Tipperary and the MacGillapatricks in northern

⁵⁷ M. Dillon, 'Laud Mss 610', no. xc, p. 151

⁵⁸ *ibid.*, nos. x, lxx, pp 137, 147

⁵⁹ *Ormond deeds, 1413-1509*, no. 182, p. 170; *ibid.*, no. 206, pp. 186-7

⁶⁰ *ibid.*, no. 234, p. 212

Kilkenny, and these were always a potential threat. As recently as 1431, Ormond had found it necessary to lead an army into Elyocarroll and destroy two of O'Carroll's castles in order to reassert his supremacy in the region.⁶¹ However, in 1440, Ormond took two very different approaches to relations with these lordships. He attempted to neutralise the potential threat from Ely O'Carroll by contracting a double marriage alliance with that lordship. Edmund MacRichard was married to Gyllys, a daughter of Maolruinaidh O'Carroll probably c. 1440, while his sister, Mary, was married to a John O'Carroll.⁶² The arrangement with the O'Carrolls was apparently stable and beneficial to both sides as a Sean O'Carroll, possibly the same man that married the sister of Edmund MacRichard, received money from the representatives of the exiled earl of Ormond in the 1460s.⁶³

The Butlers' relations with the MacGillapatricks could not have been more different. Raids by the MacGillapatricks into the Ormond lordship in Kilkenny were probably a common occurrence but in 1443 Edmund MacRichard escalated the tensions by summoning Diarmait and Finghin MacGillapatrik to Kilkenny and then having them beaten to death.⁶⁴ This resulted in an alliance between MacGillapatrik, Conn O'Connor Faly and the son of O'More of Laois and a raid that stretched across northern Kilkenny until they were caught and defeated by Edmund MacRichard in Slieveardagh. The result was a serious defeat for the Gaelic lords with numerous fatalities, including the son of Cathaoir O'Connor Faly, Mael Sechlainn Ruadh MacGillapatrik and William fitz Gerald, a great-grandson of Maurice, fourth earl of Kildare.⁶⁵ The presence of two members of the Geraldine family of Leinster in a host of Gaelic lords is also indicative of the growing problems faced by Ormond in the 1440s, when the Geraldines of Leinster began to mount a guerrilla campaign against him.

⁶¹ *A.F.M. s.a.* 1432

⁶² *Ormond deeds, 1413-1509*, no. 191, pp 175-6; S. Pender (ed.), 'O'Clery genealogies', §2117, p. 167

⁶³ *Ormond deeds, 1413-1509*, no. 234, p. 212

⁶⁴ *A.F.M., s.a.* 1443; 'MacFirbis', *s.a.*, 1443

⁶⁵ 'MacFirbis', *s.a.*, 1443

As seen above, the White Earl had worked to create a network of alliances to protect his lordship from external threats and establish himself as the unquestioned leader of the Anglo-Irish community in the early 1430s. These alliances were successful for several years but proved to be fragile under the press of events. The breakdown of these alliances with Desmond and Kildare coincided with growing unrest among the Gaelic lordships in the midlands, the absence of the earl of Ormond when he was summoned to face charges of treason in England and the realisation that the next earl of Ormond was not going to return to Ireland to take his father's place. The result was a period of chaos and disruption in Ormond's lordship that would be remembered a century later and forced Ormond to reconsider the plans that he had made for the future of his lordship.

The first blow to Ormond's potential plans of a marriage alliance between his family and the future Geraldine earl of Kildare came with the death of Ormond's daughter, Anne, who had been betrothed to Thomas fitz James of Desmond, in 1434. Anne Butler was the only one of Ormond's children not mentioned in the will of Joan, Lady Bergavenny, when it was written on 18 January 1435.⁶⁶ Under the terms of the arrangement with Desmond, Ormond's second daughter, Elizabeth, was to be substituted for her sister and there is no evidence to suggest that Ormond was not prepared to comply with this. The arrangement had already been damaged somewhat by the death of the countess of Ormond in August 1430 and Ormond needed to maintain the peace with Desmond.

However, securing the peace with Desmond meant losing the chance to bind Thomas fitz Maurice of Kildare to him by marriage, a prospect that did not seem to alarm fitz Maurice at all. The problem faced by the Geraldine heir was that although he was legally entitled to the title of earl of Kildare, Ormond's control of the lands of the earldom made the title a hollow victory. Indeed, fitz Maurice was not even recognised as earl until he had secured control of his patrimony in 1453. Faced with decades of waiting for his patrimony, the Geraldine heir apparently decided to pursue a path of opposition to Ormond. His opposition to Ormond was supported by his

⁶⁶ E. F. Jacob (ed.), *The Register of Henry Chichele, archbishop of Canterbury, 1414-35*, pp. 535-9

extended family, led by fitz Maurice's cousin, Thomas fitz Gerald, prior of Kilmainham. Two of the prior's brothers were involved in the kidnapping of Ormond's cousin, Leo, Lord Welles, during his period as lieutenant.⁶⁷ Another Geraldine, James fitz William fitz Thomas, was accused of treason in November 1440 and then sheltered by Ormond's enemy, Archbishop Talbot.⁶⁸

The prior of Kilmainham emerged as one of Ormond's most bitter enemies in the 1440s and he later accused Ormond of having conspired against him by fostering opposition to him in the chapter at Kilmainham, and eventually succeeded in having him stripped of his office.⁶⁹ Ormond eventually imprisoned the prior in 1443 'under suspicion of felony and treason' but the prior was freed by Thomas fitz Maurice a 'notorious traitor...with a multitude of Irish enemies and English rebels.'⁷⁰ Once freed, the prior fled to England and levelled charges of treason and necromancy against Ormond.⁷¹ Fitz Maurice had already been outlawed by the courts on 6 September 1440 for his associations with the O'Byrnes and the order of outlawry was exemplified by Ormond's government on 8 July 1444.⁷² Thomas fitz Maurice's activities in this period are not clear but they warranted charges of treason in the parliament of January 1447 and he only avoided the penalties by securing a royal writ to have his name removed from the statute five years later.⁷³ Despite these challenges to the system, the Kildare Geraldines failed to make a lasting impression until the restoration of the lands of the Kildare earldom to Thomas fitz Maurice. Ormond retained control of the lands of the Kildare earldom until the death of his wife on 6 August 1452.⁷⁴ The prospect

⁶⁷ *Rot. pat. Hib.*, no. 11, p. 262

⁶⁸ *Proc. king's council, Ire.*, 1392-3, p. 302

⁶⁹ *ibid.*, pp 303-4

⁷⁰ *Ormond deeds, 1413-1509*, no. 159, p. 142

⁷¹ see above, p. 87

⁷² *Ormond deeds, 1413-1509*, no. 135, pp 119-21

⁷³ *Stat. Ire. Hen. VI*, p. 94

⁷⁴ BL Add. Ms. 4789, f. 12d.

of conflict between the White Earl, who would presumably hold the lands of the Kildare earldom until his own death by the custom of England, and Thomas fitz Maurice was removed by Ormond's death on 23 August 1452.⁷⁵

While the attacks of the Geraldines of Leinster were more of a nuisance than anything else during the 1440s, the same cannot be said of the attacks by the Geraldines of Munster. The agreement between Ormond and Desmond survived the death of Ormond's daughter, Anne, in 1434 but collapsed in the summer of 1444 when the news of the betrothal of Ormond's second daughter, Elizabeth, to the son and heir of John Talbot, earl of Shrewsbury, reached Ireland. Ormond's son and heir, James Butler V, had arranged this marriage to help his father fend off the charges laid by the prior of Kilmainham in England. By using the king's clear desire for peace among his nobles, Butler gained more of the king's good will by arranging the marriage to make a formal end to the decades old Talbot-Ormond feud. Ormond was in Ireland at the time and may not even have known of the arrangement until the news came to the lordship. He had been summoned to England on 13 March 1444 to face the charges laid by the prior but did not go immediately.⁷⁶ Despite a second summons on 6 June, Ormond was still in Ireland on 28 August 1444, when he appointed Richard Nugent as his deputy.⁷⁷

The main reason Ormond didn't go to England on time was that he had to deal with the repercussions of the new marriage alliance on his own lordship. When news of the Ormond-Talbot alliance reached Munster, Desmond's reaction was both swift and violent. There had been no real tensions between Ormond and Desmond for over twenty years but Desmond launched a raid that swept across southern Tipperary and into southern Kilkenny. Ormond retaliated by gathering support from the Anglo-Irish of Meath and Leinster and led his forces in an invasion of the eastern part of Desmond's lordship, burning Power's country before negotiating a one year's

⁷⁵ BL Royal 2.B.xv., f. 2

⁷⁶ *Proc. king's council, Ire., 1392-3*, p. 304

⁷⁷ *ibid.*, p. 305; *Ormond deeds, 1413-1509*, no. 161, pp 257-9

truce.⁷⁸ Ormond needed the truce to go to England to deal with the charges laid against him. He also had to set up the defences of his lordship. The liberty of Tipperary was left in the hands of its seneschal, Thomas Comyn, while Ormond made his nephew, Edmund MacRichard his personal deputy and *alter ego* within the Ormond lordship.⁷⁹

The appointment of Edmund Butler may not have been the most prudent move, given that he was involved in a personal battle with the Tobin family of the cantred of Comsey, but it also underlines that Ormond felt that the most reasonable person to whom he could entrust his lordship was a member of his own family.⁸⁰ No indenture survives to mark Edmund MacRichard's appointment as the earl's deputy as happened with his appointment by the sixth earl in 1462 but it is clear that he did act as the earl's *alter ego*. The memory of Edmund MacRichard's time as deputy survived in November 1516, when James Grant testified that his father said 'as often as the White Earl went to England, he was wont to appoint Edmund...to rule in his place'.⁸¹ Furthermore, when the White Earl's son, John, made Edmund MacRichard his deputy in January 1462, Edmund was granted 'all our power and authority...according to the form which he had from James, our father.'⁸² Edmund MacRichard also seems to be acting as the deputy of the earl during the transfer of the manor of Kiltinan between the brothers, Edmund and Richard fitz Thomas Butler on 20 January 1446.⁸³

Although the White Earl had made his nephew his representative within his lordship, Edmund MacRichard was unable to withstand the onslaught made by the earl of Desmond in the summer of 1446 and his own actions in 1443 came back to haunt him. Desmond had agreed to a one year truce with Ormond in 1444 and used that year to make alliances with the

⁷⁸ 'MacFirbis', *s.a.* 1444

⁷⁹ T. B. Butler, 'Seneschals of Tipperary', p. 374

⁸⁰ 'MacFirbis', *s.a.* 1444

⁸¹ *Ormond deeds, 1509-1547*, no. 33, p. 29

⁸² *Ormond deeds, 1413-1509*, no. 211, p. 189

⁸³ *ibid.*, no. 166, pp 162-3

MacGillapatrik of Ossory, O'More of Laois and Domhnall Riabach Kavanagh. The alliance launched raids that cut across Tipperary from the cantred of Offa to Slieveardagh and destroyed churches and towns in Kilkenny. The commons of the two counties took it upon themselves to write to the king and his council in January 1447 and they were quick to lay the blame for their problems.⁸⁴ The commons of both counties informed

'our lord the duke of York, our lord the duke of Buckingham and our lord the earl of Ormond, for since the conquest of our said sovereign lord his land of Ireland to this day the said county took none such rebuke of none of our said sovereign lord his Irish enemies as by the said earl of Desmond'

It is interesting to note that while the commons took pride in the fact that

'the counties of Kilkenny and Tipperary have withstood our sovereign lord the king his Irish enemies and English rebels at our own proper cost these many winters without any cost or help of our sovereign lord his lieutenant'

they placed no blame on the shoulders of the lieutenant, John Talbot, earl of Shrewsbury, who they credit with having

'rebuked and chastised many of our said sovereign lord his Irish enemies since his coming into his said land of Ireland...and he put much of our sovereign his land at peace and ease.'

Shrewsbury's presence in Ireland seems to have put an end to Desmond's campaigns, but the commons of Ormond's lordship still asked that the king 'do such correction here that it may be an example to all others in time to come'. The commons' petition clearly shows the problems faced in the Butler lordship without the strong leadership of the earl of Ormond. Although Shrewsbury's presence and his campaigns of that year were enough to pacify the Gaelic lords surrounding the Pale, the ability of his administration to affect the affairs of the Ormond lordship was severely circumscribed. Clearly, the best way to restore some form of order within Munster was to return the earl of Ormond to Ireland, although the king did

⁸⁴ P.R.O. E101/248/15

not take this route until after Shrewsbury was recalled to England. Ormond was pardoned on 20 September 1447 but was slow in concluding his business in England and did not return to Ireland until the winter of 1448/9.⁸⁵

There can be no doubt that Ormond's tardiness in returning to his lordship resulted in increased unrest within his lordship in Ireland. His absence from September 1444, coupled with the devastation of Desmond's attacks in 1444 and 1446, left his lordship in a state of chaos. Indeed, his own family seems to have been responsible for a part of the chaos as Edmund MacRichard pursued his private war with the Tobins of Comsey, a war which expanded to include other branches of the Butler family. In 1447, Edmund MacRichard Butler and Art Kavanagh apparently attacked the Tobins and were captured by Walter Tobin and Piers fitz James Butler of Cahir.⁸⁶ Art Kavanagh died while in custody but Edmund MacRichard was eventually ransomed. Faced with this alliance between the Tobins and the Butlers of Cahir, Edmund MacRichard may have then sought allies of his own.

In 1448, Walter Tobin and Piers fitz James Butler were defeated by Richard Butler.⁸⁷ This indicates that Richard fitz Thomas Butler, who was lord of Kiltinan at this time and whose lordship encompassed the cantred of Comsey, entered into the conflict showing that the scope of the dispute was widening. In 1450, the town of Carrick-on-Suir claimed that it had been burnt twice and pillaged four times by English rebels in the previous fourteen years.⁸⁸ While some of this damage was undoubtedly done by the earl of Desmond, it seems extremely likely that some of the damage done to the town happened during the disputes between the branches of the Butler family. However, it has also been suggested that Edmund MacRichard's feud with the Tobins and the Butlers of Cahir may not have been solely a private war but that Edmund MacRichard was acting in his capacity as deputy of the earl and acting to punish the Tobins and the Butlers of Cahir for complicity in

⁸⁵ E. Matthew, 'Governing the Lordship', pp 408-9

⁸⁶ 'MacFirbis', *s.a.* 1447

⁸⁷ *ibid.*, *s.a.* 1448

⁸⁸ *Stat. Ire. Hen. VI*, p. 243

Desmond's attacks in 1444 and 1446.⁸⁹ While this remains purely conjecture, it does suggest that Edmund MacRichard, acting as the deputy to the earl, tried to extend his authority beyond the earl's personal holdings into the liberty of Kilkenny with mixed success. If this was indeed the case, the pattern would be repeated several times over the next fifty years.

The details of these disputes have been lost but a century later this period was remembered by the commons of Tipperary as one where the earl's kinsmen

'were entered into such a wrongful inordinate pride and malicious division and rancour between themselves that they fell suddenly out of their good obedience to be murderers and manslayers of either other. Whereof followed depredations robberies and taking of prisoners and of unmeasurable redemptions among themselves.'⁹⁰

The most important fact to emerge from the internecine disputes of the Butler family in the late 1440s is not that they happened, or even that they happened because the earl of Ormond was absent from his lordship, but that they were instigated by Edmund MacRichard Butler. MacRichard Butler was emerging as a central figure in the Ormond lordship in the 1440s. He was the legitimate nephew of the earl, the next male claimant to the earldom after the White Earl's sons, a fact recognised by the earl who, according to testimony in 1516, told MacRichard to 'keep well my lordships for they shall all be thine from the days of my sons'.⁹¹ He was trusted with a great deal of authority over the earl's lands during Ormond's absences. However, it must be underlined that while Edmund MacRichard shared many of his uncle's traits, he did not think like him in one important area.

Throughout his life, the White Earl was prepared to accept the existence of Gaelic culture and political institutions in Ireland. Where it suited him to do so, he even used pieces of Gaelic culture, such as patronage of

⁸⁹ C.A. Empey and K. Simms, 'The ordinances of the White Earl', p. 166

⁹⁰ *Ormond deeds, 1509-47*, no. 267, p. 210

⁹¹ *ibid.*, no. 33, p. 29

bardic poets and brehon jurists, within his own lordship, provided it was on his own terms.⁹² His indentures with Gaelic magnates show his willingness to accept the fact that they had a place in Ireland but his loyalty was always to the Anglo-Irish lordship and he was always prepared to confront the Gaelic magnates where necessary. For Ormond, acceptance of the Gaelic in Ireland did not extend to military alliances with them for the purpose of attacking others among the Anglo-Irish community. This was clearly not the case with his nephew. As noted above, Edmund MacRichard allied with Art Kavanagh to attack the Tobins. MacRichard Butler's alliance with the Kavanaghs was a logical extension of his uncle's willingness to make marriage alliances with a Gaelic magnate, as when his half-sister married Donnchadh Kavanagh, king of Leinster.⁹³ It is also the logical result of the breakdown of the authority of the central government in England and the emergence of the Irish lordship as a patchwork of interconnected lordships.

Edmund MacRichard can be seen as a good example of the next generation of the Butler family, a magnate who would make whatever alliances were needed to protect his lordship. Edmund MacRichard's ally in 1447 was Art Kavanagh, a son of Gerald Kavanagh, brother of Domhnall Riabach Kavanagh, and a nephew of Donnchadh MacMorrough, king of Leinster. This branch of the family was emerging as the dominant branch of the Kavanaghs in the late 1440s and by 1455, Donnchadh MacMorrough would abdicate in favour of his nephew, Domhnall Riabach.⁹⁴ Despite being part of Desmond's raids into the Ormond lordship, Domhnall Riabach Kavanagh emerged in the 1450s as one of Edmund's MacRichard's allies. In the following decade, a double marriage alliance was made between the MacRichard Butlers and the Kavanaghs, further cementing ties between these two families.

While the White Earl may have been worried by the willingness of his kinsmen to fight among themselves in his absence, this did not stop him from using them when he returned to Ireland in 1448. On his return, Ormond had

⁹² K. Simms, 'Bards and Barons', p. 186

⁹³ *A.F.M.*, s.a. 1452

⁹⁴ *N.H.I.*, *Maps genealogies lists*, p. 147

two tasks to perform within his lordship. The first was to restore order within his lordship, especially by curbing the excesses of his kinsmen. The second was to prepare the government of his lordship for the forthcoming absentee period, as it was abundantly clear in 1448 that his son and heir was not going to be a resident lord. It was equally clear that none of his other sons were going to come to Ireland to act as the *alter ego* of their brother in England. In 1542, the people of Tipperary described the process of restoring order in the Ormond lordship as follows;

'the said earl in his return out of...England...came among his said kinsfolk and with much difficulty plucked from them such authority and power as he before his repair into England committed unto them in hope they would have governed the country well in his absence...and brought them again to such reclaim and obedience as the country was as well ordered and reformed by the seneschal justice and other officers by him appointed in the said liberty as it was in the prestynate estate.⁹⁵

This seems clear and straightforward: the earl returned to his lordship, stripped his kinsmen of all powers and authority and restored his lordship to order using newly appointed officials of the liberty. The 'statutes and corrections' agreed by representatives of the liberty of Tipperary in the liberty court in 1448 are also a part of this process. These local laws were probably a reformulation of similar ordinances passed at Fethard twelve years earlier and taken as a group their main purpose was to organise the protection of the liberty against the repeat of Desmond's attacks and to ensure that the organisation that was established remained under the direct control of the earl of Ormond.⁹⁶ By regulating the provision of support for kern and galloglas and declaring that nobody could keep troops without the permission of the earl, Ormond set out guidelines that could be supported by the people of his country. These ordinances were adopted for the liberty, but it is clear that similar legislation was agreed to by the commons of the royal county of Kilkenny.

⁹⁵ *Ormond deeds, 1509-47*, no. 267, p. 210

⁹⁶ *Ormond deeds, 1413-1509*, no. 102, p. 97; C. A. Empey, 'The Butler lordship in Ireland', pp 285-7

While it clear that the White Earl restored order to his lordship, one can not overlook the fact that this restoration came not by Ormond stripping his kinsmen of all authority but by using them under his own authority. Indeed, the problem faced by the Butler lordship during Ormond's absence was not that there was chaos and anarchy, but that there was no single recognised figure to act as the head of the lordship. Once the earl of Ormond returned, all of his kinsmen submitted to his authority and he was able to restore his lordship to order. His problem, however, was that he could foresee a time in the near future when a similar situation would arise and he had to make preparations for it.

Ormond had to make two decisions with respect to the future governance of his lordship, knowing that whatever decisions he made were unlikely to be overturned by the next earl of Ormond. The first decision was whether to appoint a single omni-competent deputy or to delegate the authority of the earl to more than one person. The second was whether to depend on the various members of the Butler family or to appoint 'outsiders' to govern his lordship. Each of these decisions had dangerous repercussions attached. A single deputy, Butler or not, had the potential to become a real threat to the position of an absentee earl. Furthermore, a single deputy who was not a member of the Butler family would have to be able to deal with the various branches of the Butler family, a task that could be difficult even for a resident earl. On the other hand, if Ormond delegated divided authorities, there was the potential for conflict between the various appointees.

Ormond's task would have been immensely simplified if either of his younger sons had shown an interest in Ireland as he could have appointed one omni-competent deputy to act as his representative in the Ormond lordship. A single deputy who could act as a true *alter ego* for the absent earl, would be responsible for the governance of the liberty of Tipperary, the earl's own demesne lands and the protection of the Ormond lordship as a whole, both Kilkenny and Tipperary. There is evidence that Ormond did indeed try to get his second son, John, to come to Ireland in 1446, but that experiment failed when John Butler left Ireland with Shrewsbury in 1447. As it was obvious that none of his sons were going to return to Ireland, Ormond decided to use his kinsmen as his representatives in the various functions of lordship. Ormond's decision therefore was to retain the *status quo* within his lordship, attempting to separate

the governance of the liberty from the supervision of his demesne lands and, to a lesser extent, from the protection of his lordship from external threats.

Roles were found for the heads of each of the junior branches of the Butler family in this picture, but the roles were clearly unequal, representing real divisions within the lordship and the place of each junior branch within the Butler family as a whole. In the 'statutes and corrections' promulgated by Ormond in the liberty court of Tipperary in late 1448, the earl organised a system of support for his kern and galloglas. Ormond's military forces were organised on a system in which the earl's troops were commanded by a marshal and two captains from each county. None of these offices were originally hereditary, but the captaincies were usually held by important members of local gentry families like the Keatings, the Purcells or the Comyns.⁹⁷ Edmund fitz James Butler of Dunboyne was appointed to half of the office of the marshal on 7 June 1463 and over time the other half of the office came to be claimed by the Butlers of Cahir.⁹⁸ The basis of this claim probably came from the appointment of James Gallda Butler of Cahir as 'keeper of all the country' with a special force of twenty four men.⁹⁹

However, while Ormond was willing to allow the Butlers of Cahir a role in the protection of the Ormond lordship, he delegated the governmental and administration functions of his lordship to other branches of the family although he kept the division between the government of the liberty of Tipperary and the administration of his own lands intact. The end result of this division was to give control of the county of Kilkenny to the MacRichard Butlers and the administration of the liberty of Tipperary to the Butlers of Dunboyne. This creation of two spheres of influence, roughly dividing the lordship in half, was the result of a fundamental difference in the basis of the earl's authority in Kilkenny from that in Tipperary.

In Kilkenny, the earl's authority rested on the traditional landed influence of a great magnate, land. The earls of Ormond were unquestionably the

⁹⁷ C.A. Empey and K. Simms, 'The ordinances of the White Earl', p. 171

⁹⁸ *Cal. Carew Mss, Book of Howth*, p. 445; *Ormond deeds, 1509-47*, no. 318, p. 264

⁹⁹ *Ormond deeds, 1413-1509*, no. 102, p. 97

dominant landholders in the county but they had no official position in the governance in what had become a royal county by the second quarter of the fifteenth century. The White Earl's father had purchased one-third of the liberty of Kilkenny with the Stafford lands in 1392 but the other two thirds of the liberty remained in the hands of the dukes of Buckingham and York, leaving the liberty of Kilkenny to quietly expire in the first quarter of the fifteenth century.¹⁰⁰ Nevertheless, the withdrawal of the Dublin administration from the region left the earls of Ormond as the only viable 'government' for Kilkenny, and this dominance was passed intact to the MacRichard Butlers.

The situation in Tipperary was more complex. The earls of Ormond had exercised regalian authority in Tipperary since 1328, but in terms of landed wealth they were no more than first among equals by the 1440s. The original grant of five and a half cantreds to Theobald Walter in the 1180s had given him a lordship that had covered half of the modern county Tipperary but the earls of Ormond did not benefit greatly from the acquisition of the other lordships in southern Tipperary, apart from the acquisition of the manors of Ardmayle and Carrick. As seen above, the Fitz Thomas Butlers, the Butlers of Cahir and the Butlers of Dunboyne each acquired lordship over approximately two cantreds in southern Tipperary. In the early fifteenth century, this would have compared to control of four cantreds held by the earl of Ormond but the grant of the manors of Ardmayle to John fitz William Butler of Dunboyne and Thurles to Edmund MacRichard Butler had reduced the earl's direct landed stake in the county to a level where all of the branches of the Butler family were almost on a par in Tipperary.

The earls of Ormond were the unquestioned lords of the liberty and the dominant landholder in the whole Ormond lordship, but in Tipperary much of their actual authority rested on their control of the liberty administration. The Butlers of Dunboyne had benefited from the tendency of the earls of Ormond to entrust the office of seneschal of the liberty to a member of the Butler family but the White Earl had used other men of the local gentry such as Walter Shirlock, John White, Peter Hedian and Thomas Comyn in the period from 1433 to 1447.¹⁰¹

¹⁰⁰ *Ormond deeds, 1350-1413*, no. 297, pp 213-19

¹⁰¹ T. B. Butler, 'The seneschals of the liberty of Tipperary', pp 371-5

However, the policy of using local gentry as the highest official of the liberty had its limitations, as seen by Comyn's inability to contain the private war between Edmund MacRichard and the Tobins of Comsey during the earl's absence. Recognising this, Ormond returned to the 'traditional' organisation in late 1448 when he granted the office of seneschal to William fitz James Butler of Dunboyne.¹⁰²

Ormond also negotiated a marriage between William fitz James and the daughter of Richard Nugent, Lord of Delvin, one of his closest political allies.¹⁰³ William fitz James Butler was replaced as seneschal by his brother, Edmund, in 1456. Edmund fitz James apparently acted as seneschal until his death in 1499, cementing his family's hold on the office until his son was replaced by Piers Butler in 1505.¹⁰⁴ Possession of the office of seneschal and control of the cantreds of Slieveardagh, Comsey and Ardmayle, gave the Butlers of Dunboyne a dominant position within the liberty and they were undoubtedly responsible, in large part, for the continuation of the organisation of the liberty throughout the absentee period. Nevertheless they proved unable to control the activities of Edmund MacRichard Butler when the earls of Ormond were not present.

In his division of authority, the White Earl gave the Butlers of Cahir and Edmund fitz Thomas Butler of Knockgraffon a role to play in the defence of the Ormond lordship and placed the Butlers of Dunboyne in the office of seneschal of the liberty of Tipperary. What remained was the administration of his own demesne lands and this he granted to his nephew, Edmund MacRichard Butler. This grant was a tacit admission of the place of the MacRichard Butlers within the greater Butler family. By the terms of the creation charter of the earldom of Ormond, the earldom was created in tail male, making Edmund MacRichard Butler the heir to the earldom after the sons of the White Earl.¹⁰⁵ The likelihood that he would inherit the earldom was remote in 1450, but the possibility existed. Ormond did not grant his demesne lands to his nephew, who was only to

¹⁰² T. B. Butler, 'The seneschals of the liberty of Tipperary', p. 376

¹⁰³ *Stat. Ire. Hen. VI*, p. 517

¹⁰⁴ *Ormond deeds, 1413-1509*, no. 320, pp 312-14

¹⁰⁵ N.L.I. Ms 11044, printed in C. A. Empey, 'The Butler lordship in Ireland', app. IV

administer them for the existing earl of Ormond, but the distinction was largely theoretical. In practice, Edmund MacRichard controlled both his own lands and the demesne lands of the earl of Ormond from the White Earl's death on 23 August 1452. It does appear that Ormond's son, the earl of Wiltshire, intended to stay in regular contact with his lordship in Ireland as witnessed by his grant of a minor office in Kilkenny on 15 November 1452.¹⁰⁶ Wiltshire also appeared ready to come to Ireland to act as lieutenant in 1453 but the king's illness diverted his attention. The end result of Wiltshire's involvement in English politics was that he generally left his Irish lordship to its own devices. This in turn allowed Edmund MacRichard to act as the effective leader of the Butler family throughout the 1450s. There can be no doubt of his loyalty to his cousin, but Wiltshire was in England and Edmund MacRichard was in Ireland, where his control of the earl's demesne lands in Kilkenny, Tipperary and the outlying manors that made up the Ormond lordship allowed him to emerge as his uncle's political heir and the *de facto* lord of the Butlers.

Glimpses of Edmund MacRichard's activities within the Ormond lordship can be seen in the marginalia of his psalter, which he was forced to surrender after the Battle of Pilltown and now rests in the Bodleian library. MacRichard's psalter was compiled around the core of a book left to him by his uncle, to which were added pieces of the *Psalter of Cashel*, the *Book of Rathau* and the *Book of the Prebend* by MacRichard's scribes. A glimpse of MacRichard's movements can be seen as the scribe noted that work was done on the book in Pottlerath, Kilkenny, Gowran, Carrick, and Dunmore.¹⁰⁷ Pottlerath and Dunmore were manors held by Edmund MacRichard but the other were manors of the earl of Ormond, clearly indicating that Edmund MacRichard was moving about Kilkenny using both his own manors and the comital manors interchangeably. There are several references to Edmund MacRichard's activities in defence of the Ormond lordship. One says only that MacRichard felt it a high price to be without his scribe while defending his country while another was more specific, noting that he made raids into Ossory, while a third notes a raid into Uí Peilme in Leinster

¹⁰⁶ *Ormond deeds, 1413-1509*, no. 183, p. 170

¹⁰⁷ M. Dillon, 'Laud Mss 610', no. li, p. 145

(Offaly?) before Christmas 1454.¹⁰⁸ MacRichard's psalter also fleshes out our knowledge of his holdings, mentioning the terms on which he held Pottlerath and that he was responsible for building or extending castles at Thurles, Buolick and Dunmore in 1452.¹⁰⁹ Finally, the psalter's marginalia allow us a glimpse into the household of an Anglo-Irish magnate in the fifteenth century. It is clear that Edmund MacRichard's household was bi-cultural to a great extent. All the scribes named in the marginalia have Gaelic names and MacRichard's wife was Gaelic.¹¹⁰ It is also clear that Edmund MacRichard was held in great esteem by his scribes, who worried about his health and prayed for him during his absences, although this did not stop them from complaining that he made them work on Sundays.¹¹¹

Edmund MacRichard's activities within the Ormond lordship appear to have conformed to his uncle's expectations to a large extent. Although the evidence needed to make a detailed picture of the relations between the various branches of the Butler family is decidedly lacking, there appears to have been little conflict between the branches of the family. However, his activities with respect to the rest of the Anglo-Irish lordship in the decade after the White Earl's death clearly show that Edmund MacRichard was not afraid to make difficult and controversial decisions that had the effect of seriously upsetting the peace of the lordship of Ireland. Furthermore, it is also clear that Edmund MacRichard was supported in his actions by the other branches of the Butler family. The first example of this came in the year after the White Earl's death when the Geraldine heir, Thomas fitz Maurice emerged to begin his recovery of his patrimony.

Thomas fitz Maurice had lived on the edge of Anglo-Irish society since the early 1440s and had been outlawed on more than one occasion. However, he began to rehabilitate himself after the White Earl's death in August 1452. Presumably the first step was to acquire a writ to remove his name from the act

¹⁰⁸ *ibid.*, nos. xxxv, lii, lvi, pp 141, 145

¹⁰⁹ M. Dillon, 'Laud Mss 610', nos. x, lxx, pp 137, 147

¹¹⁰ *ibid.*, nos. xvii, xxii, xlii, lix, lxi, lxii, lxxxv, xcvi, pp 139, 143, 147, 149, 153

¹¹¹ *ibid.*, nos. xxvii, xxxvi, xxxix, xlii, lxvi, xc, pp 141, 143, 147, 151

that had outlawed him in 1447.¹¹² He then began the process of recovering his patrimony in Kildare. Without those lands, fitz Maurice could not hope to reclaim the title of earl of Kildare. However, his plans to restore the earldom of Kildare were opposed by Edmund MacRichard. It is unclear whether Edmund MacRichard was acting with the knowledge and support of his cousin, the earl of Wiltshire and Ormond, whose term of office as lieutenant began on 6 March 1453.¹¹³ Wiltshire had no legal claims to the Kildare lands, but as his actions with respect to his wife's lands would show, he did not always allow legalities to stop him. Nevertheless, there was no real reason for Wiltshire to wish to antagonise the sensibilities of the Anglo-Irish community just as he was coming to take up his post as lieutenant. It is most likely that Edmund MacRichard's opposition to Thomas fitz Maurice was an attempt to prevent a man who had shown himself to be an enemy of the White Earl from gaining any power within the lordship of Ireland.

Nor was Edmund MacRichard the only one to oppose the restoration of fitz Maurice. He was joined by William and Edmund fitz James Butler of Dunboyne and a mixed force of Anglo-Irish and Gaelic troops, possibly including Domhnall Riabach Kavanagh. Fitz Maurice, for his part, appears to have been supported by the people of Kildare, who later recruited aid from Dublin.¹¹⁴ The disputes centred on the Geraldine manors of Rathmore and Maynooth and the fighting appears to have devastated the countryside. The commons of Kildare wrote to Wiltshire's deputy, Archbishop Mey, for aid claiming that 'the land of Ireland was never on the point to be so finally destroyed' as it was then and that

'the trew liege people in this parties dar ne may not appier to the King our soverayn lordes courtes in the said land, ne non other of the trew liege people ther, to go ne ride to market tounes, ne other places for dred to be slayn, take other spouled of their goods'.¹¹⁵

¹¹² *Stat. Ire. Hen. VI*, p. 94

¹¹³ *Cal. pat. rolls, 1452-61*, p. 102

¹¹⁴ Gilbert, *Viceroy*, pp 366-7

¹¹⁵ Sir. H. Ellis, *Original letters illustrative of English history*, second series, i, pp 117-21

Reports of this conflict filtered back to England and Archbishop Mey's inability to end the hostilities was seen as an indication of Wiltshire's poor record as lieutenant. Fitz Maurice emerged from the conflicts with the Butlers in possession of his patrimony and began to restore the position of the earldom of Kildare within the lordship of Ireland.

The destructiveness of the Butler-Geraldine conflict in Kildare had important repercussions in the politics of the lordship and led to the reversal of the roles played by the Butlers and the Geraldines for the rest of the decade as the men of the Pale appeared to lay the blame for the conflict on the Butlers. Thomas fitz Maurice, who had spent a decade as an outlaw on the fringes of society, was elected justiciar after the death of Edward FitzEustace and was acting as chief governor by 6 November 1454 and served as deputy lieutenant to the duke of York from April 1455 until York's return to Ireland in the autumn of 1459.¹¹⁶ He also secured a marriage alliance with the earls of Desmond, when he married Joan, a daughter of James fitz Gerald, sixth earl of Desmond. Much of the future success of the earls of Kildare can be dated to this period when Thomas fitz Maurice re-invented himself and his place within the Anglo-Irish community.

In the same period, Edmund MacRichard moved further and further into the fringes of the Anglo-Irish community and proved to be something of a random element as far as the Anglo-Irish were concerned. It is absolutely clear that Edmund MacRichard's first loyalty was to the Ormond lordship and the absentee earl of Ormond and not to the king's government in Dublin. For the rest of his life, Edmund MacRichard's relations with the Dublin administration were largely limited to a series of attainders passed against him for his actions in this period. The first of these attainders arose from Edmund MacRichard's involvement in an attack on the liberty of Wexford in 1454. This attack was part of a series of attacks orchestrated on the liberty of Wexford by Domhnall Riabach Kavanagh as he emerged as his uncle's successor. In one attack, described by the seneschal of Wexford, he enlisted the aid of Thomas, son of the earl of Desmond,

¹¹⁶ E. Matthew, 'Governing the lordship', pp 490-1

MacGillpatrick and the chief justice Devereaux to attack the seneschal.¹¹⁷ A second attack, which occurred sometime before 18 October 1454, was made by Domhnall Riabach in conjunction with Edmund MacRichard Butler, where the offenders 'with banners displayed...burned and destroyed the county of Wexford, by time and space of four days and four nights continually.'¹¹⁸

Edmund MacRichard's involvement in the attack on the liberty of Wexford almost certainly arose from his failure to retain the Kildare patrimony in Butler hands after the death of the White Earl. Faced with a resurgent Kildare, Edmund MacRichard appears to have sought an ally and began to strengthen pre-existing ties with the Kavanaghs in general and Domhnall Riabach Kavanagh in particular. While Edmund MacRichard controlled the demesne lands of the earl of Ormond and stood as first among equals among the junior branches of the Butler family, he did not possess enough political authority to counter-balance Kildare and the Dublin administration. Butler contacts and alliances with the Kavanaghs were nothing new as the White Earl had married his sister to Donnchadh MacMorrough decades earlier and had used his niece, Gormlaith, to secure the submission of Énri O'Neill.¹¹⁹ By 1454, it was clear to all observers that Donnchadh's nephew, Domhnall Riabach, would eventually succeed him as king of Leinster and Edmund MacRichard had already made a connection with that branch of the Kavanagh family, as witnessed by his alliance with Art Kavanagh against the Tobins of Comsey in 1447.

This new alliance with the Kavanaghs shows two things about Edmund MacRichard. The first is that he was willing to make decisions and take actions that were different from those previously undertaken by the White Earl. Edmund MacRichard's alliance with the Kavanaghs was similar to that made by the White Earl with the earl of Desmond but, in this case, it was an alliance between one of the king's 'loyal subjects' and one of the king's Irish enemies. It also differed from the White Earl's alliances with the Geraldines of Leinster and Munster in that it actually worked and bound the two families together for several decades.

¹¹⁷ *Ormond deeds, 1413-1509*, no. 190, pp 173-5; E. Curtis, 'Richard, duke of York, as viceroy of Ireland, 1447-60', p. 178-9

¹¹⁸ *Stat. Ire. Hen. VI*, p. 361

¹¹⁹ K. Simms, 'The legal position of Irishwomen in the later middle ages', p. 109

The most visible sign of the alliance between the families was the marriage of Edmund MacRichard's son, James, to Sadhbh Kavanagh, a daughter of Domhnall Riabach, which resulted in the eventual heir to the earldom of Ormond, Piers Butler. The connection between the MacRichard Butlers and the Kavanaghs was further strengthened by the marriage of Joan, a daughter of Edmund MacRichard, to Murchadh Ballach, a grandson of Donnchadh Kavanagh, and Domhnall Riabach's successor as king of Leinster.¹²⁰ A third marriage connection between the families occurred sometime in the second half of the fifteenth century when a Catherine Butler married Gearalt, a younger son of Domhnall Riabach Kavanagh.¹²¹ While the identity of this Catherine Butler is unclear, she is likely to be either a daughter or a granddaughter of Edmund MacRichard, further strengthening the connections between the MacRichard Butlers and the Kavanaghs. The connections between the two families can be seen in the lifetime of Piers Butler. The son of the abbot of Duiske, Cathaoir Kavanagh, is referred to as 'close kin' to Piers Butler, earl of Ormond, in 1525.¹²² Piers Butler also maintained good relations with his uncle, Muiris Kavanagh, king of Leinster, who restored the manor of Arklow to his nephew in 1525, as can be seen in the favourable terms negotiated in the indenture between the two men.¹²³

The second fact to arise from Edmund MacRichard's alliance with Domhnall Riabach Kavanagh is that MacRichard had enough authority within the Butler lordship to summon the support of the heads of the other branches of the Butler family if it was necessary. Edmund MacRichard Butler was joined in the raid on Wexford by his sons, James and Richard, Piers fitz James Butler of Cahir, Theobald fitz James Butler of Tipperary, William fitz James of Dunboyne, his brother, Edmund, and 'diverse others of the said nation, whose names were too long to report'.¹²⁴ This unity of action within the Butler family indicates that all of the branches of the family saw the alliance with the Kavanaghs as necessary for the protection of the Ormond lordship and, as such, more important than any

¹²⁰ K. Nicholls, 'Late medieval Irish annals', p. 99

¹²¹ *Ormond deeds, 1509-47*, no. 187, pp 157-8

¹²² *Cal. Carew Mss, 1515-74*, p. 33

¹²³ *Ormond deeds, 1509-47*, no. 118, pp 102-6

¹²⁴ *Stat. Ire. Hen. VI*, p. 361

internal division within the family. Their agreement also indicates that in matters pertaining to the whole of the Ormond lordship they were willing to follow Edmund MacRichard as the first among equals of the Butlers in Ireland.

Their willingness to follow Edmund MacRichard is all the more striking as it led directly to attainders for all of the heads of the junior branches of the Butler family. Edmund MacRichard and the heads of the other branches of the family were summoned to account for themselves by the quinzaine of Easter 1455 (20 April) or face attainder and confiscation of their lands. None of the Butlers appear to have come before the justices on the appointed date and were all duly attainted. In a later parliament, on 26 January 1458, all of the Butlers claimed that they had been too ill to come to Dublin before 20 April 1455 and their excuse was accepted and the attainder reversed on the condition that the bishop of Ossory and the abbot of St. Thomas', Dublin, reported in the next parliament that they had been of 'good rule and government in the meantime'.¹²⁵ Apparently even this minor condition was too much for Edmund MacRichard and his sons to abide by as the bishop reported in the next parliament that Edmund MacRichard and his sons had 'ridden with banners displayed upon the king's subjects of the county of Tipperary...burned the towns thereof, and despoiled the said subjects of the same'. Accordingly the Butlers were again summoned to account for themselves by the quinzaine of Easter 1460 (27 April) by the parliament held before Richard, duke of York.¹²⁶ The details of why Edmund MacRichard rode through Tipperary 'with banners displayed' are lost to modern historians but one can speculate that it was an attempt to further bolster his position within the Ormond lordship, which was opposed by the commons of the liberty of Tipperary.

The only one of the Butlers that seems to have obeyed the injunction to appear before the quinzaine of Easter 1460 was the seneschal of the liberty of Tipperary, Edmund fitz James Butler of Dunboyne. Edmund fitz James was not mentioned in the list of Butlers summoned to appear before the justices by 27 April 1460 and it is unclear whether he was part of the group led by Edmund MacRichard in Tipperary or whether he opposed MacRichard in his role as

¹²⁵ *Stat. Ire. Hen. VI*, p. 739

¹²⁶ *ibid.*, p. 741

seneschal. However, he did have his own reasons for wanting to mend his relations with the Dublin administration. His brother, William, lord of Dunboyne, had died in the previous year while still under the attainder that he had incurred in the Dublin parliament held in October 1455 and the ancestral lands of the Butlers of Dunboyne, including the manors of Dunboyne and Moymett, were close enough to Dublin that the government could seize the manors.¹²⁷ Edmund fitz James petitioned Parliament for a pardon so that he could secure his interests in his patrimony against the claims made by his brother's widow.

The Dunboyne patrimony had been granted to Richard Nugent, lord Delvin, in January 1458 so that he could recoup £100 from the manors after William fitz James Butler had secured his separation from Nugent's daughter, Margaret.¹²⁸ Delvin's possession of the Dunboyne manors ended in January 1460 but by then William fitz James Butler had died while riding with the O'Connors and his wife sued for her dower, which was granted in the first session of the parliament of 1460.¹²⁹ Her brother-in-law petitioned for a pardon of past offences and a confirmation of his claim to his brother's lands, which was granted on 21 July 1460.¹³⁰ In the statute, Edmund fitz James was pardoned all offences that occurred before 20 July 1460 and confirmed in his possession of his brother's lands, less the dower lands granted to his sister-in-law. The proximity of his ancestral lands to the Dublin administration and his position as seneschal of the liberty of Tipperary made Edmund fitz James Butler of Dunboyne by far the most amenable of the Butlers to the dictates of the king's government in Ireland. Nevertheless, Edmund fitz James' loyalties clearly lay with the Butler family, as shown by his whole hearted support of John Butler, sixth earl of Ormond, when he came to Ireland in the winter of 1461/2.

While Edmund fitz James Butler of Dunboyne was making overtures of peace to the Dublin administration, Edmund MacRichard Butler was becoming

¹²⁷ *Stat. Ire. Hen. VI*, p. 717

¹²⁸ *ibid.*, p. 517

¹²⁹ *ibid.*, p. 717

¹³⁰ *ibid.*, p. 761

more of a problem. He seems to have ignored the attainder passed against him by the Irish parliament in January 1460 and embarked on a campaign against the Dublin administration in alliance with the O'Connor Falys. The new lord of the O'Connor Falys, Conn son of An Calbach, was attempting to build on the successes of his father and could be counted upon to oppose any growth in the influence held by the earl of Kildare. He had been captured by Kildare in 1459 but had returned the following year to lead raids in which he killed the baron of Galtrim.¹³¹ In 1461, Conn O'Connor Faly was joined by Edmund MacRichard and they led a large force of troops into Westmeath. The annalist noted that they were generally unopposed, staying in the region 'without fear or dread' and then after 'shoeing their horses' they 'plundered and burned Meath in every direction'.¹³²

In a twist of Irish politics, Edmund MacRichard now played for Thomas fitz Maurice the same role that fitz Maurice had played for the White Earl, namely a discontented Anglo-Irish magnate who was prepared to ally with Gaelic magnates to further his own ambitions. The difference between them was that, whereas Fitz Maurice had only been a nuisance to the White Earl, Edmund MacRichard effectively controlled the county of Kilkenny, had strong allies and posed a potentially serious threat to the earldom of Kildare. Kildare retained authority as deputy lieutenant and the support of Richard, duke of York, but Edmund MacRichard's opposition threatened that position. By the end of 1461, the growing challenge to Kildare's ability to govern was emerging as a serious problem. It also fed neatly into the factionalism of the Wars of the Roses in England, which once again spilled over into Ireland in the winter of 1461/2.

The Ormond lordship in Ireland in the period 1430 to 1460 was dominated by the use of family ties to control and defend the lordship. The attempts by the White Earl in the late 1420s and early 1430s to forge marriage ties with both the earls of Desmond and the earls of Kildare had the dual purpose of affirming his place as the foremost Anglo-Irish magnate of his day and protecting his lordship from external threats from either the Dublin administration or his Geraldine neighbours. The fact that these marriage alliances failed to emerge was due

¹³¹ *A.F.M., s.a.* 1459, 1460

¹³² *ibid., s.a.* 1461; 'MacFirbis', *s.a.* 1461

largely to facts beyond Ormond's control but the attempts do serve to underline the fact that there was not necessarily an inveterate hostility between Butler and Desmond, although it must be said that hostility could flare up at any time.

Ormond's willingness to provide lands for the junior branches of the Butler family is clear, although he was extremely careful to provide new lands from recent acquisitions outside of his own patrimony and made attempts to balance the landed wealth of the junior branches in a way that would lessen potential tensions. Ormond's action with respect to the lordship when he accepted the fact that his eldest son was unlikely to return to Ireland as a permanent resident also highlight the importance Ormond placed upon his familial connections in Ireland. His organisation of his lordship in the late 1440s shows that he preferred to turn to the other Butlers to govern the lordship in the case of permanent absence by the earl of Ormond. Furthermore the unequal division of the earls' authority within the lordship indicates that Ormond was well aware of the differences in status, ability and prestige among the various branches of his family. The appointment of his nephew, Edmund MacRichard Butler, as his deputy in Ireland was a logical choice given MacRichard's position as the earls closest legitimate male relative in Ireland but it also served to affirm the relative importance of MacRichard Butler and his family in the Ormond lordship. The activities of MacRichard Butler in the 1450s clearly shows that he was regarded as the foremost representative of the family and could call upon the other Butlers and expect their support and compliance as long as he was acting in what was perceived as the best interest of the Butler lordship as a whole. His leadership was less readily accepted when he acted outside of the parameters erected by the White Earl and his efforts to increase his authority in Tipperary led to fractures within the Butler lordship, a pattern that became more common in the 1460s and 1470s.

Chapter 3: The Butlers and the Wars of the Roses, 1452-1471

As Richard, duke of York, broke the aristocratic consensus that had allowed England to function in the 1440s and emerged as the self-appointed voice of populist reform in the 1450s, James Butler V, earl of Wiltshire, became ever more associated with the court and the courtiers opposed by York. Wiltshire had always been a favourite of the king, but during the 1450s he emerged as one of the central players in English politics. By 1461, Wiltshire's meteoric rise made him one of the three most important members of the courtly faction and had earned him the special enmity of the Yorkist camp. This enmity was underlined by the fact that Wiltshire was later executed by Edward IV without even a token attempt at reconciliation. His fall also eclipsed the position of the Butlers in Ireland and led directly to their wholesale attainder. His brothers were forced into exile in France and the Butler fortunes only began to mend during the short return of Henry VI to the throne in the winter of 1470-1.

As seen above, the crucial break between Wiltshire and his former patron, the duke of York, came in the wake of York's intervention in the disputes between the earl of Devon and Lord Bonville in September 1451. In acting to quell the dispute, York had exceeded his authority and offended the king. His actions did not even have the benefit of being unbiased as he let the earl of Devon go free because he saw in Devon a political ally. Alternatively, York's treatment of Wiltshire, who had formerly been something of a client of York's, was much harsher, as according to one chronicler, York arrested Wiltshire on 12 October 1451.¹ Wiltshire was later imprisoned for a month in Berkhamsted castle for his part in the disturbances in Devon, while York and Devon refused to answer summonses to account for themselves.²

¹ Flenley, *Six Town Chronicles*, p. 139

² 'Benet's Chronicle', p. 205

Nevertheless, Wiltshire was soon rehabilitated and restored to the king's good graces, gaining a pardon for his activities on 19 February 1452.³ The pardon came after he was sent, on 28 January, with Shrewsbury, Lords Moylens and Lisle, and 400 men to remove York's lieutenant, Sir William Oldhall, from the sanctuary of St. Martin-le-Grand, where he had fled in November 1451 after his attainder.⁴ Soon afterwards, on 16 February, Wiltshire joined the nobles who were gathering troops in London in preparation to meet York, whose protests had now reached the level of open rebellion, and was present when York submitted to the king at Dartford on 2 March.⁵ Wiltshire's loyalty to the king in this instance should not be taken as an example of his growing enmity with York. It is clear that the entire nobility of England, with the exception of York, Devon and Lord Cobham, was prepared to accept the leadership of the king's favourite, the duke of Somerset. The nobility of England obviously preferred a lord who would work within the political system as they knew it to one who was effectively prepared to raise rebellion against the king for his own gains. Wiltshire seems to have shared this preference and his actions throughout the decade reinforce this view, that he always sought to work within the system rather than taking matters into his own hands.

This preference led him to actively take part in the judicial commissions and the royal perambulation that took the king on a progress through the West Country, the Welsh Marches and the midlands from 23 June to 6 September 1452.⁶ Wiltshire was one of fifteen lords and six judges appointed to the commission of *oyer et terminer* on 6 July 1452.⁷ Not all of the lords named actually took part in the proceedings but Wiltshire seems to have been both active and aggressive. He was the only lord willing to sit with the judges in York's stronghold of Shropshire, even going so far as to hold sessions at Ludlow from 10 to 12 August 1452,

³ *Cal. pat. rolls*, p. 525

⁴ 'Bale's Chronicle', p. 139; 'Benet's Chronicle', pp 205-6

⁵ Kingsford, *Chronicles of London*, p. 163; Kingsford, *English Historical Literature*, pp 372-3

⁶ B. Wolffe, *Henry VI*, p. 260

⁷ *Cal. pat. rolls*, 1446-52, pp 580-1

with the duke of York in residence at Ludlow castle.⁸ When the king set out on a second perambulation of counties where York had extensive support, this time in eastern England, Wiltshire was again named to the commission of *oyer et terminer* on 28 September 1452.⁹ Once again he played an active role, with Somerset and Lord Beaumont, while the participation of other lords, such as the dukes of Exeter and Norfolk and the earls of Oxford and Worcester, was much less in evidence.

What emerges clearly from the judicial perambulations of 1452 is that the commissions were meant to be a show of strength for the king's government, now led by the duke of Somerset. Any potential supporters for another attempt by York to overthrow Somerset were to be overawed by the weight and majesty of the king's authority. However, Somerset appears to have been careful not to push too hard. Prosecutions appear to have been fairly selective, mainly concerned with local ringleaders, while many of York's main supporters were exempted from the proceedings entirely.¹⁰ The only prominent victim of the proceedings was York's chamberlain, Sir William Oldhall, where Somerset felt free to vent his spleen. Wiltshire was part of this piece of judicial vindictiveness as he sat in judgement over Oldhall at Peterborough on 4 November 1452.¹¹ It seems clear that while Wiltshire was probably genuinely concerned with the restoration of order in England, he was not above exacting some minor revenges on York and his supporters in support of his new patron, Somerset. Nor did his good services go unnoticed by Somerset. On 10 October 1452, Wiltshire shared a grant of £115 with Lord Moylens, which was

levied from fines imposed on one of York's retainers, Sir Theobald Georges.¹² Six weeks later, on 28 November, he received another grant, of £200, for his 'good and agreeable service'.¹³ For Wiltshire, service to

⁸ B. Wolffe, *Henry VI*, p. 260; J. Watts, *Henry VI and the politics of kingship*, note. 156, pp 296-7

⁹ *Cal. pat. rolls, 1452-61*, p. 94

¹⁰ P. A. Johnson, *Duke Richard of York*, p. 118

¹¹ *ibid.*, p. 119

¹² P.R.O. E403/791, m.1; P.R.O. E404/69/30

¹³ P.R.O. E404/69/71

Somerset was both agreeable and profitable, and any remaining allegiance to York appears to have vanished by the end of 1452.

Throughout 1453, Wiltshire remained in close proximity to the court and the regime led by the Duke of Somerset. Although references to his activities are few and far between, he can be found among the witnesses to the creation of the king's half-brothers, Edmund and Jasper Tudor, as the earls of Richmond and Pembroke, respectively.¹⁴ His value to the regime as a leader in the west country was recognised when he was appointed to a commission to treat with the people of Wiltshire, Somerset and Dorset to raise money for the defence of Bordeaux in the final stages of the war with France.¹⁵ In March 1453, he can be seen working with Somerset to assess and pay the debts of Kymern abbey in Wales.¹⁶ His proximity to the royal family is attested by the fact that he appears as one of the witnesses to a charter granted to Queen Margaret by Henry VI on 21 July 1453.¹⁷ Finally, that he remained active in commissions of *oyer et terminer* is indicated by his presence in Stamford on 23 October 1453, when he presided over a case of treason.¹⁸ Clearly, Wiltshire was a useful participant in Somerset's regime, but his activities in England were not what made him so potentially valuable to Somerset.

What enhanced Wiltshire's value to Somerset was his new status as earl of Ormond, since his father died on 23 August 1452.¹⁹ Ormond's death did not go unnoticed in England and the escheators of Essex, Buckingham, Oxford, Warwick, Gloucester, Somerset, Surrey, Suffolk, Southampton and Devon were ordered to assess his holdings in England on 1 October 1452.²⁰ The inquisitions *post mortem* were duly held and a list of

¹⁴ *Rot. parl.*, v, 251-3

¹⁵ *Cal. pat. rolls*, 1452-61, p. 53

¹⁶ *ibid.* p. 65

¹⁷ *ibid.*, pp 114-6

¹⁸ *ibid.*, p. 23

¹⁹ *H.B.C.*, p. 496

²⁰ *Cal. fine rolls*, 1452-61, p. 1

Ormond's English lands was created.²¹ Wiltshire, who was over thirty years of age at the time of his father's death, experienced no difficulties gaining seisin of his patrimony and received a grant of the livery of his father's lands on 3 May 1453.²²

As the new earl of Ormond, Wiltshire was an obvious candidate for the position of lieutenant of Ireland. His father had served as lieutenant on three occasions and had served the duke of York as advisor and deputy since 1449. It was only logical to expect that the son would take over where the father left off, but not as York's deputy, rather as his replacement. Accordingly, Wiltshire was appointed lieutenant of Ireland on 12 May 1453 for a ten year term to run from 6 March 1453.²³ His father had never achieved a grant of ten years and the remuneration agreed was on a par with the fees granted to Shrewsbury in 1445 and York in 1447, namely 4,000 marks in the first year and £2,000 *per annum* afterwards.²⁴ The length of the indenture and the level of payment indicate that Somerset took the appointment seriously and was prepared to make 'exile' to Ireland palatable for Wiltshire. It is almost certain that Wiltshire was to be sent to Ireland in an attempt to balance the connections that York had made in the lordship during his own period as lieutenant.

York's tenure as lieutenant, as agreed in the 1447 indenture, still had over four years left to run. While it was far from unusual for a lieutenant of Ireland to be supplanted before the end of his indented term of office, the fact that he was being supplanted at the behest of Somerset was apparently enough reason for York to challenge the new appointment. Nor was the lieutenancy of Ireland the only office stripped from York in this period. He was removed from his office as justice of the forests south of the Trent, in favour of Somerset on 1453.²⁵ York was being removed from any offices that could give him either a source of income or a base of influence. For the moment, York's appeals fell on deaf ears but

²¹ P.R.O. C139/148/11; P.R.O. E149/193/5; *Calendarium inquisitionum post mortem sive escaetarum*, iv, p. 253

²² *Cal. pat. rolls, 1452-61*, p. 75

²³ *ibid.*, p. 102

²⁴ P.R.O. E404/69/168

²⁵ *Cal. pat. rolls, 1452-61*, p. 88

within a year he would be in a position to do something about his grievance.

Wiltshire's first term as lieutenant of Ireland is generally regarded as a failure, a momentary lapse in the undivided pro-Yorkist sentiments in Ireland. However, this is definitely a case of reading history backward, viewing his first lieutenancy in the light of his second in 1459. In 1453, there was absolutely no reason why Wiltshire could not come to Ireland and be an effective lieutenant. He had the land, the wealth, and the connections at court to be a successful lieutenant. Wiltshire appointed the archbishop of Armagh, John Mey, to serve as his deputy on 25 June 1453 and Mey had replaced York's deputy, Sir Edward FitzEustace by 14 September.²⁶ The appointment of Archbishop Mey was perhaps an odd decision, given that the archbishops of Armagh were traditionally less involved with the administration of the lordship of Ireland than their counterparts in Dublin. However, it does make some sense if viewed as a temporary appointment, perhaps solicited by the archbishop himself.

During his time as archbishop, Mey had developed a good working relationship with Wiltshire's father in the previous decade, using Ormond's support to balance the growing power of the O'Neills.²⁷ Indeed, one of Ormond's last actions as deputy lieutenant was to march into Ulster to force Eoghan O'Neill to put aside his mistress and return to his wife.²⁸ Clearly, Ormond was not afraid to intervene in Ulster if he thought it necessary. His death in 1452 left the archbishop without a powerful ally and it seems very likely that Archbishop Mey would desire to recreate that alliance with Wiltshire. In the meantime, his appointment as Wiltshire's deputy allowed him to attempt to use the resources of the Dublin administration to mobilise some support if the O'Neills began to press again.

For Wiltshire's part, there is no reason to believe that the appointment was meant as anything but a temporary measure to hold his place in Ireland until his arrival. The expectation for lieutenants of Ireland in the first half of the fifteenth century was that they went to Ireland to

²⁶ *Cal. pat. rolls, 1452-61*, pp 82-3; *Registrum Johannis Mey*, pp 424-5

²⁷ K. Simms, 'The archbishops of Armagh and the O'Neills', p. 52

²⁸ *A. F. M.*, iv, pp 979-81

serve their terms of office in person, usually backed by a force of troops from England and preparations for transport of an army to Ireland were made in July 1453.²⁹ This would indicate that Wiltshire intended to take up his post in the early autumn of that year, some four months after his appointment, well within the average time taken by English lieutenants arriving in Ireland since 1413.³⁰

Comments on Wiltshire's short term as lieutenant tend to be limited to the fact that it happened and that he was an absentee Lancastrian who was replaced by Richard of York after less than a year.³¹ However, there is nothing to suggest that he did not intend to go to Ireland. He was clearly aware of his Irish lordship and his officials in Ireland, but given that these offices were largely filled by the same men in 1461 as had held them in 1452, it seems clear that Wiltshire was initially prepared to continue with the men trusted by his father. That there was communication between Wiltshire in England and his Irish lordship is attested by his grant of the office of town clerk of Kilkenny to a petitioner on 15 November 1452.³² It would be extremely unusual if Wiltshire did not want to go to Ireland to make his mark on his ancestral lordship.

Nor is there any good reason to expect that his arrival in Dublin would have been marked by open hostility among the Anglo-Irish. While he may not have been a member of the royal family, he was close to the king and he was the scion of one of the three Anglo-Irish comital houses. He was the son of the most effective lieutenant in living memory and there were almost certainly hopes that he could be as effective as his father, although without the confrontational politics that divided the administration in previous decades. Furthermore, he was the only Anglo-Irish magnate of any stature available to take the job. Desmond was still largely in isolation in the south west and the heir to the earldom of Kildare was only beginning to appear on the scene. Wiltshire was a natural choice for lieutenant and the Anglo-Irish community were extremely pragmatic when it came to dealing with 'English' lieutenants. If

²⁹ Otway-Ruthven, *Med. Ire.*, p. 385

³⁰ E. Matthews, 'Governing the lordship', pp 45-6

³¹ for example, see *N.H.I.*, ii, p. 562

³² *Ormond deeds*, 1413-1509, no. 183, p. 170

they were successful, the Anglo-Irish supported them, if not, they demanded their recall and replacement. It seems unlikely that they would have opposed Wiltshire's sight unseen simply because their present absentee lieutenant was the out of favour duke of York.

However, Wiltshire's plans to take up personal tenure of his post in Ireland were overshadowed by an ominous development, the 'severe mental collapse' and 'crippling physical disablement' of the king in the first week of August 1453.³³ Although no public announcement regarding the king's health was made, the depth and severity of his illness was apparent to those around him from an early stage. What was equally apparent was that the difficulties in replacing an incapacitated adult king were enormous and that they would inevitably lead to a clash between the dukes of York and Somerset. There were no precedents upon which the magnates of England could draw and to further complicate matters, the king's long awaited heir was born on 13 October 1453, the feast of St. Edward the Confessor.³⁴

Any decisions made by the magnates had to skirt the dubious legality of removing a king from authority, even temporarily, without deposing him. In such a delicate atmosphere, the dissensions between Somerset and York had to be settled in one way or another and the settlement needed the consensual support of a majority of the magnates. The issue was settled in York's favour because Somerset's ability to command the respect of the lords had been fatally weakened in the summer of 1453. The defeat at Chastillon and the inevitable loss of the English lands in Aquitaine put him in the same position the duke of Suffolk had been in 1450. In addition, his regime was clearly unable to settle the open warfare in northern England between the Nevilles and the Percies. As long as the king remained lucid and pliable, Somerset might have been able to brave out the storm, but the king's incapacity removed that possibility. The magnates were unconvinced that Somerset could rule without favouritism and there were few, if any, protests when Somerset was arrested and committed to the Tower of London on 23 November

³³ R. Griffiths, *Reign of Henry VI*, pp 715, 758

³⁴ 'Benet's Chron', p. 210

1453, two days after charges of treason concerning the loss of France were levelled by the duke of Norfolk.³⁵

Despite Somerset's fall from grace, York's rise to dominance was far from easy. On one hand, he was still the foremost magnate of the realm, and perhaps the most viable heir to the throne, after the king's son, Edward, which made it extremely difficult to exclude him from the counsels of the realm. On the other hand, he was still the man who had raised rebellion against the king the previous year. The furthest the assembled magnates of the realm were prepared to go was a communal assumption of 'their responsibility to uphold the law and the king's authority' on 30 November 1453.³⁶ Nevertheless, York and his associates managed to push the council into accepting the responsibility of the day to day governance of the realm on 5 December 1453, over the silent objections of the king's household.³⁷ The community of magnates appeared to be willing to leave matters like this over Christmas until the postponed parliamentary session began on 11 February 1454. However, a new force emerged in January 1454, namely a bid for regency powers by Queen Margaret, probably backed by the royal household.³⁸ While allowing the Queen to govern on behalf of her husband and son was a valid tradition in France, the concept was rejected in England. Interestingly, the queen's gambit does not appear to have been tied to an effort to free Somerset, indicating that she saw him as much of a potential threat to her son as York was.³⁹

By all accounts, the parliament opened on 11 February in a very tense atmosphere, with the queen's claims competing with York's, and the king's condition unchanged. Cardinal Kemp, the chancellor and archbishop of Canterbury, apparently opposed York's ambitions, striving to avoid a polarisation of faction by retaining authority for the council, rather than let York become regent in all but name. York made modest gains in the parliamentary session but it was Kemp's death on 22 March

³⁵ 'Benet's Chron', p. 210; *English Chronicles*, p. 78

³⁶ R. Griffiths, 'King's council', p. 309

³⁷ *ibid.*, p. 311

³⁸ Davis, *Paston Letters*, ii, 290-2

³⁹ P. A. Johnson, *Duke Richard of York*, p. 129

1454 that forced a resolution of the political crisis. The office of chancellor could not be left vacant and after a delegation of magnates to the king found him completely unresponsive, York was elected Protector on 27 March 1454.⁴⁰ York's first protectorate lasted until the king regained his senses around Christmas 1454 and was by no means an unyielding dictatorship. York governed by the sufferance of the magnates because there was no better candidate. There was an 'unmistakable reluctance on all sides, lay and clerical' to serve on York's council, which in turn forced him to govern by consensus, not fiat.⁴¹

How then was Wiltshire affected by these events? The surviving evidence for Wiltshire's actions indicates that he consistently pursued a policy of maintaining the *status quo* throughout the king's illness but when that policy failed, he distanced himself from the new regime. For Wiltshire, the *status quo* meant that constitutional initiatives were to be avoided until there was no other recourse, leaving the day-to-day elements of the government under the control of the king's household and the previously appointed officers of state. This policy is unsurprising as it favoured the very people with whom Wiltshire was most identified.

Wiltshire continued to sit on commissions of *oyer et terminer* until at least 11 November 1453, when he presided over a case in Lincolnshire.⁴² However, he was also careful to keep abreast of movements in London and was in regular attendance at council meetings in the fall and early winter of 1453. He was present at the meeting of 21 November 1453, where Somerset was accused of treason by the duke of Norfolk and was apparently willing to see Somerset arrested two days later.⁴³ He was also present at the meeting on 30 November and was one of the large group of magnates to swear an oath to collectively uphold the law and the king's authority.⁴⁴ While the *status quo* was served by this communal agreement to restrain lawlessness, it was not served by the decision on 5 December 1453 where the council assumed responsibility for the 'rule and

⁴⁰ P. A. Johnson, *Duke Richard of York*, pp. 129-34

⁴¹ R. Griffith, 'King's council', p. 313

⁴² *Cal. pat. rolls, 1452-61*, p. 23

⁴³ *ibid.*, p. 143

⁴⁴ R. Griffith, 'King's council', p. 316

governance' of the land during the king's 'infirmity'.⁴⁵ Wiltshire was present at this meeting and was one of those who refused to sign the declaration, no matter how necessary it may have been. The ecclesiastics present seem to have accepted the need for the measure but the lay lords were clearly divided between household magnates like Wiltshire, Pembroke, Lord Stourton and the treasurer, Worcester, on one hand, and York's supporters, Norfolk, Warwick, Salisbury, who desired this change, on the other.

Over the Christmas period of 1453, the household faction seems to have rethought its position and determined that preserving the *status quo* was not enough or even possible. Action had to be taken to prevent the reins of government falling into York's hands. In a development that foreshadowed events later in the decade, the household turned to the queen as an acceptable leader in the absence of the duke of Somerset. The queen's bid for a regency can be seen as another attempt to maintain the *status quo* on the part of the household. Although it was a radical notion in certain respects, it avoided the drastic step of appointing an outsider to run the government during the king's absence. However, this claim was incompatible with York's and the month before the opening of the parliamentary session on 11 February 1454 was marked by the retention of armies of retainers by all the lords involved. Wiltshire, for example, recruited in Somerset in early January 1454. After gathering their troops, paid at the rate of 6d. *per diem*, Wiltshire, and Lords Bonville, Egremont and Clifford prepared to take 'all the puissance they can' to London.⁴⁶ Despite this aura of tension, the council still functioned as a relatively unbiased organ under the leadership of Cardinal Kemp and Wiltshire was able to secure a significant grant of lands on 5 February 1454.⁴⁷

However, almost as if to compensate for this grant, the process whereby Wiltshire lost the lieutenancy of Ireland began the next day. Although York's supersession by Wiltshire as lieutenant of Ireland followed a not uncommon precedent, York never accepted his replacement and was one of the few with the ability and power to

⁴⁵ R. Griffith, 'King's council, p. 317

⁴⁶ J. Gairdner, *Paston Letters*, i, p. 264

⁴⁷ *Cal. fines rolls, 1452-61*, p. 73

challenge his dismissal. On 6 February 1454 the issue of who was actually lieutenant of Ireland came before the council. Wiltshire's term as lieutenant had not gone well, largely because he was preoccupied in England with the existing crisis. However his deputy in Ireland, Archbishop Mey, proved incapable of effectively governing the lordship and reports of growing conflicts between Wiltshire's cousins the Butlers of Dunboyne and Thomas fitz Maurice, the future earl of Kildare, were beginning to filter back to England.⁴⁸ At the same time complaints were circulating from Wexford about attacks on the liberty by Domhnall Riabach Kavanagh, Thomas of Desmond and Edmund Butler.⁴⁹ This was enough to allow York to bring up the matter and petition the council to decide who was the rightful lieutenant of Ireland. It is probably a measure of York's support that the council decided not to make a decision, deciding rather to suspend all grants to Ireland until the issue was settled.⁵⁰ The issue was decided on 15 April, after York had become protector, when Wiltshire was forced to surrender all claims to the lieutenancy.⁵¹

Wiltshire's removal from the office of lieutenant of Ireland was one of the few overtly partisan actions of York's first protectorate, although the participation of members of the household in his council declined considerably. Wiltshire had attended five council meetings in March 1454, probably as part of Cardinal Kemp's attempts to deny York the protectorship but his last recorded presence was on 16 April 1454, the day after York stripped him of the lieutenancy of Ireland.⁵² Wiltshire's identification with the household and Somerset made it unlikely that York would seek his participation in the council, despite York's urgent need to show an inclusive government in the face of the general unwillingness of the lay magnates to serve on his protectorate council. The only exceptions to this were summonses requiring attendance at great

⁴⁸ Sir H. Ellis, *Original letters illustrative of English history*, 1st series, i, pp 18-19

⁴⁹ *Ormond deeds, 1413-1509*, no. 190, pp 173-5,

⁵⁰ R. Griffiths, *Reign of King Henry VI*, p 734

⁵¹ Sir H. Nicolas, *Proceedings and ordinances of the privy council*, vi, p. 172; Otway-Ruthven, *Med. Ire.*, p. 386

⁵² J. Watts, *Henry VI and the practice of kingship*, p. 308, n. 206; Sir H. Nicolas, *Proceedings and ordinances of the privy council*, vi, p. 174

councils which were sent on 28 May and 24 July 1454.⁵³ One can only suppose that his answer, if asked, would have followed Lord Beaumont's example, who refused to serve because he was a queen's man and had no intention of compromising his loyalty.⁵⁴

Despite this loyalty, there was one area in which Wiltshire was willing to work with the new regime. In the aftermath of the English expulsion from Aquitaine, there were fears that the French could turn the tables and invade England. Preparations were made, going as far as to prepare beacons along the south coast, just in case.⁵⁵ The central part of this defence against the French and the perennial problem of piracy, was to be a 'great navy' commanded by a group of lords who were entrusted with the keeping of the sea for a period of three years from 3 April 1454.⁵⁶ The lords entrusted with this task were a well balanced group, consisting of York's supporters, such as the new chancellor, Salisbury, the equally new treasurer, Worcester, and William Bourghier, Lord FitzWarin, balanced by men whose loyalties lay with the household, men like Wiltshire, his brother-in-law, Shrewsbury, and Lord Stourton. The great navy was to be financed by subsidies and revenues from customs.⁵⁷ Wiltshire was apparently entrusted with the keeping of the seas to the west and it is in this capacity that he was appointed to treat with the merchants of Devon for a loan to ship an army to France for the protection of Calais.⁵⁸ Although this effort was only of marginal success as the only season of campaigning was the summer of 1454, it serves to underline two points. Firstly, that York could act in an unbiased fashion, if necessary, and secondly, that the factionally divided magnates could work together if it was in the national interest.

Beyond his service as keeper of the sea, Wiltshire's only connection with the protectorate was that he attended the great council meetings in 25

⁵³ Sir H. Nicolas, *Proceedings and ordinances of the privy council*, vi, pp. 184-7, 214-8

⁵⁴ R. Griffiths, 'King's council', p. 314

⁵⁵ *Cal. pat. rolls, 1452-61*, pp 170, 177

⁵⁶ *Rot. parl.*, v, 244

⁵⁷ P.R.O. E404/70/1/68-9

⁵⁸ J. Gairdner, *Paston Letters*, ii, p. 324; *Cal. pat. rolls, 1452-61*, p. 148

June 1454 and 21 October 1454. Like many magnates, he preferred a policy of aloofness and was content to watch York's efforts to restrain growing magnate quarrels in the north and in Devon while at the same time attempting to secure the frontiers of the kingdom, without making any moves to help. One may question how long this policy of standing apart from the government would have continued had the protectorate lasted longer but this question was rendered moot as the king began to regain his senses shortly after Christmas 1454.⁵⁹ The king's recovery overturned the political balance and served to galvanise the household faction. Wiltshire emerged as one of the central figures in the creation of the new order in the spring of 1455.

The most pressing matter was to secure the freedom of the duke of Somerset. The rate at which the king recovered is uncertain, as is the exact day York surrendered the reins of power, but Wiltshire and his group were ready to move by the end of January 1455. Perhaps the greatest failure of York's first protectorate was his inability to convince the magnates of the realm that Somerset was a threat. As he could not arrange the conviction of Somerset he pursued a policy of delay. He was eventually forced to set a date for the trial during the great council of July 1454. On 28 July the trial was set for 28 October, eleven months after Somerset's arrest, but by October, York had managed to postpone the trial again.⁶⁰ In the end Wiltshire and his allies moved on their own. On 26 January 1455, Wiltshire, Buckingham and Lord Roos went to the Tower and freed Somerset.⁶¹ The duke was formally set free on 5 February, when the three lords agreed to stand surety for him until he answered the charges against him.⁶² However, it is clear the Somerset and his allies had little intention of abiding by any agreement that prohibited Somerset from coming within twenty miles of the king or participating in any part of the government.⁶³

⁵⁹ J. Gairdner, *Paston letters*, ii, no. 108; 'Benet's chron.', p. 212

⁶⁰ Sir H. Nicolas, *Proceedings and ordinances of the privy council*, vi, p. 218-9

⁶¹ C. A. J. Armstrong, 'Politics and the battle of St. Alban's', p. 8; R. Griffiths, *Reign of King Henry VI*, pp 739, 765

⁶² Rhymer, *Foedera*, xi, 361; *Cal. close rolls, 1454-61*, pp 9, 41

⁶³ *Engl. Chron.*, p. 78

The events surrounding Somerset's final rehabilitation served to end whatever slim hope existed of reconciling York and Somerset. The household men began to attend council meetings in February 1455, altering the balance against York. Wiltshire, for example, returned on 21 February 1455.⁶⁴ Others followed, and by early March 1455 the balance had altered enough for a Lancastrian backlash to begin. On 4 March, the council, in the presence of the king, dropped all charges against Somerset and dismissed his sureties.⁶⁵ Three days later the process of removing York's appointees to the great offices of state began with the replacement of Salisbury as chancellor by Thomas Bourghier, archbishop of Canterbury.⁶⁶ Wiltshire's loyalty to the household was rewarded on 15 March 1455, when he was appointed to succeed Worcester as treasurer.⁶⁷ For Wiltshire, this new turn of events was a vindication of his loyalty over the previous decade. While nothing was said about restoring him to the lieutenancy of Ireland, this was more than compensated by the grant of the office of treasurer. With questions lingering over the extent of the king's recovery, Wiltshire had emerged as one of the most important lay magnates in England. Unfortunately, this new found power did not last, ending just over two months later in the wake of the first battle of St. Albans.

St. Albans was, to a certain extent, an unavoidable accident. The extent of the household backlash after the end of York's protectorate was such that it drove York to a return to open revolt. Nowhere can the short-sighted nature of the household's policy be seen more clearly than in the panel of arbitration ostensibly set up to end the difference between York and Somerset. Following Somerset's rehabilitation on 4 March 1455, the two dukes were persuaded to submit their disputes to arbitration. To ensure their compliance, York and Somerset sealed recognisances for 20,000 marks that they would abide by the decision of the panel, which would be delivered by 20 June 1455.⁶⁸ However, from York's point of view, the make up of the panel left something to be desired. Apart from two

⁶⁴ P.R.O. E404/71/3/49

⁶⁵ *Cal. pat. rolls, 1452-61*, p 226

⁶⁶ *Cal. close rolls, 1454-61*, p. 71

⁶⁷ P.R.O. E403/801, m. 12

⁶⁸ *Cal. close rolls, 1454-61*, p. 49

generally neutral lords, Worcester and Lord Cromwell, the panel was made up of men who were unlikely to decide in York's favour. The panel included Wiltshire, Buckingham, the soon-to-be chancellor, Archbishop Bourghier, and Lord Beaumont. York could be forgiven for regarding this panel as a thinly veiled attack and coming to the conclusion that there would be no chance of justice for him while Somerset was the king's chief minister.

The events leading up to the first battle of St. Albans have been exhaustively researched, analysed and chronicled.⁶⁹ What made this small street brawl so important is that the long delayed clash between York and Somerset came in the presence of the king. Henry VI was on his way to Leicester for the great council meeting that had been called for 21 May 1455, when his entourage met a larger force led by York and his few magnate supporters. The two sides did try to negotiate but the needs of York and Somerset were too different. The battle that started after the end of the talking was a fairly small affair, lasting some four hours and leaving only some sixty dead. When the dust settled, Somerset was dead, York had regained possession of the king and was again the political master of England.

Wiltshire was one of the magnates present in the king's entourage on the way at St. Albans and it has been suggested that he was one of the few who thought that the issues facing the nation could be solved by battle.⁷⁰ However, it seems incredible that a politician like Wiltshire would ever wish to see an issue decided by the sword. He may have wished York dead, but there is no reason to think that he wanted to risk his life and position on something as unpredictable as a battle. The sources concerning the battle at St. Albans are a miscellaneous group of newsletters written fairly soon after the battle and a mixture of fairly biased chronicle entries written up to fifteen years after the fact. The portrayal of Wiltshire reflects this diversity in sources. At least two sources note Wiltshire's presence in the king's entourage before the battle.⁷¹ Very little information about his activities in the battle has survived, and much

⁶⁹ see C.A.J. Armstrong, 'Politics and the battle of St. Alban's'; for a shorter description see R. Griffiths, *Reign of King Henry VI*, pp 741-6

⁷⁰ *ibid.*, p. 743

⁷¹ C.A.J. Armstrong, 'Politics and the battle of St. Alban's', p. 65; 'Bale's Chron.', 142

of it highly biased. The 'Stow Memoranda' says only that 'the earl of Wiltshire and many others fled and left their harnesses behind cowardly.'⁷² His activities are expanded somewhat in 'Gregory's Chronicle' where it says:

'The earl of Wiltshire bore the king's standard that day in the battle, for he was at that time named but Sir James Ormond; and the said James set the king's banner against a house and fought mainly with the helys for he was afraid of losing of beauty, for he was named the fairest knight of the land; and a little while after he was made the earl of Wiltshire.'⁷³

The 'Dijon Relation' notes that York's men were going to the abbey 'pour tuer le duc du Bouquingnan...et le comte de Wiltshire' who had taken refuge with the king.⁷⁴ According to the same source, York stopped his men and sent a herald to demand the surrender of the two magnates only to find that Wiltshire had escaped using a monk's habit as a disguise.

The entry in 'Gregory's chronicle' is the most damaging to Wiltshire but it is also the least reliable. The chronicle was written in two parts, the first, covering the period to 1452, was written by William Gregory, a mayor of London. The continuer, who takes the narrative into the first reign of Edward IV, is unknown but is clearly less well informed than his predecessor.⁷⁵ He does add the fact that Wiltshire was considered to be a handsome man to our catalogue of knowledge but then turns that to an attack on his vanity. He was also apparently unaware that James Ormond had been an earl for several years by the time of the battle.

The claim that Wiltshire could have been the standard bearer is not out of the bounds of possibility given his friendship with the king and his position at court but this is the least substantiated fact in the narrative. In fact it is contradicted by two other reports, of which one was written soon after the battle. In one chronicle, written at about the same time as 'Gregory's Chronicle', the standard bearer is named as Ralph Butler, Lord

⁷² J. Gairdner, *Paston Letters*, iii, p. 28

⁷³ 'Gregory's chron.', p. 198

⁷⁴ C.A.J. Armstrong, 'Politics and the battle of St. Alban's', p. 64

⁷⁵ J. Gairdner, *The historical collections of a citizen of London in the fifteenth century*, pp iv-v

Sudeley, although his conduct is not questioned, possibly because he was still alive when the chronicle was written.⁷⁶ The duke of Norfolk identified the standard bearer as Sir Philip Wentworth and felt that he should be hanged for casting down the standard and fleeing from the battle.⁷⁷ As this was written within a month of the battle, it seems fair to absolve Wiltshire of the taint of losing the standard. The claim that Wiltshire was the king's standard bearer during the battle ties him to the shame of losing the standard and tacitly makes accusations of cowardice. In the atmosphere of Edward IV's first reign it probably seemed politic to cast these aspersions on the proven, and safely dead, enemy of the king.

After distilling the Yorkist venom from these accounts, what emerges is that Wiltshire was with the king before the battle, escaped the rout, took sanctuary at the king's side after the king had been brought to the abbey, and fearing for his life at York's hands, fled quietly and went into hiding. Hardly a glorious account, and perhaps overly cautious, but given Somerset's fate, one can hardly blame Wiltshire for this caution. He also seems to have taken an extremely wary approach to York's attempts at a general reconciliation in the aftermath of St. Albans. Reconciliation between York and the king was made publicly at a ceremony at St. Paul's cathedral on 25 May 1455 and on the following day, writs were sent out to all lords, Yorkist and Lancastrian, summoning them to a parliament on 9 July 1455.⁷⁸ While this may have been a promising sign, the fact that York replaced Wiltshire as treasurer with his brother-in-law, Viscount Bourghier, could hardly have set Wiltshire's mind at ease.⁷⁹ However, he also realised that his position was isolated and untenable and wrote to York to seek a compromise solution. According to second hand information, Wiltshire asked to be allowed to 'abide about the king's person as he did before' or that he be given 'licence to go to Ireland and live there upon his lands.'⁸⁰ Despite modern dismissals of these requests

⁷⁶ *Engl. Chron.*, p. 72

⁷⁷ J. Gairdner, *Paston Letters*, iii, p. 33

⁷⁸ R. Griffiths, *Reign of King Henry VI*, p. 746

⁷⁹ *Cal. pat. rolls, 1452-61*, p. 242

⁸⁰ J. Gairdner, *Paston letters*, i, p. 336

as 'absurd' and 'extreme', there is little to suggest that Wiltshire was looking for more than he asked.⁸¹

In neither case does it appear that Wiltshire was seeking political power. Taken at face value, the requests were from a fugitive asking to return 'home', either to live with his life-long friend or to return to the ancestral home which he had not seen in over a quarter of a century. The requests were a recognition that York had won and that Wiltshire was preparing to rebuild his life as best he could in the circumstances. Unfortunately for him, York and his allies saw only the potential harm in these requests. They could not allow Wiltshire close proximity to the king or the potential to upset the Yorkist control of Ireland and demanded that he submit to the same conditions as had Buckingham, who agreed to 'recognisances in notable sums' and that he and his brethren would be ruled by them [York and his supporters] and draw the line with them.'⁸² In the end, Wiltshire had no recourse but to accept these conditions but the Yorkist intransigence certainly soured his opinion of them further and he was clearly not reconciled to the new regime. He refused to attend the July parliament and once again stopped attending council meetings, not returning until Easter 1456, after York had surrendered his second protectorate.⁸³ Despite this opposition, York did nothing to further antagonise Wiltshire, even going as far as to accept an amendment that protected Wiltshire's life grants of the shrievalties of Cardigan and Carmarthen from the act of resumption passed during his protectorate.⁸⁴

York's second protectorate was even shorter than his first, but no more of a success.⁸⁵ He delayed taking the step of being appointed protector until 19 November 1455 and only then because he needed the formal authority that came with the position.⁸⁶ Although he had some modest successes as protector, his inability to reconcile Lancastrian

⁸¹ R. Griffiths, *Reign of King Henry VI*, p. 747

⁸² J. Gairdner, *Paston letters*, iii, pp 32-3

⁸³ P.R.O. E404/71/3/50

⁸⁴ *Rot. parl.*, v, p. 309

⁸⁵ see R. Griffiths, *Reign of King Henry VI*, pp 746-57; P. A. Johnson, *Duke Richard of York*, pp 156-73; C. Carpenter, *Wars of the Roses*, 136-40

⁸⁶ 'Benet's chron.', p. 215; *Cal. pat. rolls, 1452-61*, p. 273

supporters to his regime, to quell magnate violence in the north and south-west, or to get agreement on the terms of an act of resumption forced him to resign the protectorate to a newly lucid Henry VI on 25 February 1456.⁸⁷ By the spring of 1456, York had exhausted his store of good will among the magnates of the country and he found himself replaced by a new regime led by Queen Margaret and her supporters in the household, with Wiltshire prominent among them.

The actions of Queen Margaret's regime show that it was, in some respects, much more aware of the need for longer term thinking than had been shown by either York or Somerset. It is clear that the queen and her advisors were prepared to take a longer view of events, carefully preparing their position, playing a game of reconciliation until they were ready to strike out at those the queen perceived to be a threat to her husband's authority or her son's future. She shifted the court to the midlands, away from hostile London, using the royal family's extensive landed holdings as a base from which to derive power and money. The lands of the principality of Wales, the duchy of Lancaster and the earldom of Cornwall meshed well with the holding of loyal supporters like Buckingham, Wiltshire and Lords Beauchamp and Sudeley to give the queen an extremely strong base from which to work.

Wiltshire was not much in evidence in 1456. Although rumours hinted that he was to be made chancellor in May 1456, nothing came of this.⁸⁸ In fact, York's appointments to the offices of State were left in place until the fall of 1456, when they were replaced by men who were 'loyal and obedient servants securely attached to the king and the queen...and had little or nothing in common with the Yorkists'.⁸⁹ Interestingly, even after the replacement of the officers of state, Wiltshire still had no official place in the government beyond his membership in the council. His presence in council meetings was also less than sterling, as he missed more than two hundred days in the two and a half years from his return to the council at Easter 1456.⁹⁰ Wiltshire was apparently happy to remain an *eminence gris*

⁸⁷ *Rot. parl.*, v, 321

⁸⁸ J. Gairdner, *Paston letters*, iii, p. 88

⁸⁹ R. Griffiths, *Reign of Henry VI*, p. 773

⁹⁰ P.R.O. E404/71/3/50

at court, making his opinions known directly to the queen or perhaps through his brother-on-law, Shrewsbury, who became treasurer on 5 October 1456.⁹¹

Perhaps the most interesting non-event in Wiltshire's activities in 1456-7 is that he and the queen did not take the opportunity to replace York as lieutenant of Ireland when the ten year term stipulated in York's 1447 indenture ran out on 8 December 1457. In fact they did not even wait for his term of office to run out but gave him a new ten year term, starting on 8 December 1457, on 6 March 1457.⁹² Why this decision was made is uncertain but it does show an element of political calculation. The regime probably felt that it had pushed York far enough by removing him from the council and from authority in Wales and that it was still too early to force a break with York. They also probably took the calculated risk that York's influence in Ireland could be balanced by that of Wiltshire and Shrewsbury, but if this is true, then it shows a complete lack of understanding of the political geography of the lordship. The final reason for not re-appointing Wiltshire to Ireland was that while they knew Ireland was important, they had to secure their regime in England first, and Wiltshire could not be spared to go to Ireland. However, as valid as these reasons all were, the failure to disconnect York from Ireland would prove to be disastrous.

Although Wiltshire had no formal place in the king's government before October 1458, his presence is felt. Apart from his behind the scenes connection at court, Wiltshire spent much of his time on judicial duties in his region of the south-west. In this period, he was the very picture of an active magnate bringing justice to his areas of influence. He also served as the eyes and ears of the queen's faction in the south-west and on several occasions as the strong right arm as well. Wiltshire appears as a J.P. in Cambridgeshire, Essex, Leicestershire, Devon, Dorset, Somerset and Wiltshire in this period.⁹³ In March 1456 he was appointed to commissions of *oyer et terminer* for Devon, Dorset and Somerset. While on this commission he was one of the judges who passed final sentence

⁹¹ *Cal. pat. rolls, 1452-61*, p. 324

⁹² *ibid.*, p. 341

⁹³ *Cal. pat. rolls, 1452-61*, pp 661 (Cambridgeshire), 664 (Devon), 665 (Dorset & Essex), 669 (Leicestershire), 676 (Somerset),

on the activities of the earl of Devon, although Devon was later pardoned all the fines imposed upon him. His range of judicial activities was expanded beyond his normal area when he was appointed to a commission of *oyer et terminer* for the counties of Hereford, Gloucester and Worcester on 8 March 1457. He served on commissions of array Devon, Dorset, Somerset, and Southampton from September 1458 to February 1459, and in the same period was sent to survey the dilapidations of the king's manors on the Isle of Wight and to hold a muster of the retinue of the warden, Henry, duke of Somerset.⁹⁴ Clearly, Wiltshire was kept busy in this period, representing Lancastrian interests throughout the south-west and midlands. His position and loyalty was recognised at court when he was one of a group of prominent Lancastrian lords appointed to the newly formed council of the Prince of Wales on 28 January 1457.⁹⁵ Although these lords were nominally only advisors, they effectively controlled the lands of the principality and used their collective experience to bring the management of the prince's lands to peak efficiency and profitability to raise money for the queen's use.

Wiltshire also used his presence at court to arrange closer connections to the court circle. From 1456 to 1460 there was a rash of marriages in the court circle, clearly designed to bind the supporters of the queen together and to tie lords to the extended royal family where possible. After the death of his wife in June 1457, Wiltshire used his connections to secure her lands for himself and then used those lands to arrange a marriage with Eleanor Beaufort, the eldest daughter of the duke of Somerset, who had died at the battle of St. Albans.⁹⁶ After his wife's death, Wiltshire wasted no time taking possession of her lands, not even waiting for royal permission to do so, for which he was pardoned on 10 July 1457.⁹⁷ Wiltshire's marriage to Avise Stafford had been childless, but he was still entitled to the use of her lands by the custom of England. As these lands formed the basis of his landed wealth in England, however, Wiltshire had long since made moves to keep them in his family, denying them to Avise's heirs. In point of fact Avise had connived with him to do

⁹⁴ *Cal. pat. rolls, 1452-61*, pp 304, 309, 348, 357, 488, 489, 490, 495, 359

⁹⁵ *ibid.*, p. 359

⁹⁶ *Calendarium inquisitionum post mortem sive escaetarum*, iv, p. 257

⁹⁷ *Cal. pat. rolls, 1452-61*, p. 352

so. In an enfeoffment of October 1445, Avice had transferred her lands to Wiltshire's long term servant, Henry Filongley, who in turn enfeoffed the couple.⁹⁸ The terms of the new enfeoffment were set so that the heirs of James and Avice would hold the land, and that failing any issue of the two of them, the lands would revert to her right heirs. However, there was also a clause that stipulated that should Avice die without an heir of her body, then the 'premises wholly shall remain to the right heirs of the said James.' One important point to note is that there is absolutely nothing in the entail that says the right heirs of Wiltshire had to be of his body. This entail would involve the Butlers in legal battles for the next forty years, as Wiltshire's brother, Thomas, sought to claim the lands for himself.

On the strength of this entail and the land it brought, Wiltshire married Eleanor Beaufort and gave her twelve of his former wife's manors as her marriage endowment in April 1458.⁹⁹ Beyond tying him to the court faction even more closely than he already was, Wiltshire's marriage to the sister of Henry Beaufort, duke of Somerset, also indicates that he was also making contingency plans for the future. If certain circumstances came to pass, this marriage could make Wiltshire the brother-in-law of a king. The convoluted thinking concerning the succession to the throne in this period has been well documented, especially with respect to Somerset and York before 1455.¹⁰⁰ There is some evidence that the general preference in late medieval England was a succession in the male line, without formally barring a succession in the female line. This argument actually worked in the favour of Richard of York, if one ignored his descent from Lionel of Clarence. However, it also favoured Henry Beaufort, duke of Somerset, over his cousin, Margaret, if one removed the bar placed on a Beaufort succession in the 1406 act of parliament. In such a scenario, all that separated Wiltshire from being the brother-in-law of a king was the death of the five year old prince of Wales, and the removal of the Duke of York as a contender for the throne. Although this chain of events may have been remote, something similar had happened already in Wiltshire's lifetime when both the duke of

⁹⁸ E. A. Fry & G. S. Fry, 'Dorset Feet of Fines', p. 322-3

⁹⁹ P.R.O. E326/5414-6

¹⁰⁰ see R. Griffiths, 'The sense of dynasty in the reign of Henry VI' and M. Bennett, 'Edward III's entail and the succession to the crown, 1376-1471'

Touraine and his young son died, leaving a large part of their inheritance to Wiltshire's wife, Avise. In any case, Wiltshire was laying plans for the future.

He began to emerge from the shadows of the court in the autumn of 1458, when he replaced Shrewsbury as treasurer on 30 October 1458.¹⁰¹ Once again, he was one of the three most important figures of the Lancastrian regime. In his new position as treasurer, Wiltshire was responsible for much of the government's money and was well aware of the precarious nature of the Lancastrian finances. He advanced the government a loan of £1000 in February 1459 but, in general, credit and loans were hard come by for the Lancastrian government.¹⁰² His problems finding money for the government were probably at the heart of his reputation as a cruel and rapacious man. On the other hand, his proximity to government allowed him to secure grants of back pay of 200 marks yearly for his service as an earl on the council dating back to Easter 1456.¹⁰³ He even went as far as to claim back pay for the period 21 February 1455 to Easter 1456, all but three months of which were covered by York's second protectorate when Wiltshire had no contact with the council for day to day business.¹⁰⁴ That Wiltshire's reputation among the magnates and gentry of England was something less than sterling can be seen in a comment made in a letter from William Paston to John Paston on 12 November 1459, where he says 'my lord treasurer speaks fair, but many advise me not to put my trust in him.'¹⁰⁵ However, set against these doubts there were undoubtedly many like Sir John Fastolf who wished to let it be known that he trusted in Wiltshire's good lordship.¹⁰⁶ Fastolf even went so far in his quest for Wiltshire's favour that he invited the earl to spend Christmas 1459 with him.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰¹ *Cal. pat. rolls, 1452-61*, p. 489

¹⁰² R. Griffiths, *Reign of King Henry VI*, p. 788

¹⁰³ P.R.O. E404/70/3/50

¹⁰⁴ P.R.O. E404/70/3/49

¹⁰⁵ J. Gairdner, *Paston Letters*, iii, p. 191

¹⁰⁶ *ibid.*, p. 138

¹⁰⁷ 'Worcester's chron.', p. [771]

Wiltshire's status and influence also benefited from the demise of Sir Thomas Stanley, the queen's foremost supporter in Lancashire. On 12 February 1459, shortly before Lord Stanley's death, Wiltshire was appointed to succeed him as chief steward of the duchy of Lancaster south of the Trent.¹⁰⁸ This had the effect of extending Wiltshire's influence over a wide area of the midlands, complementing his own influence in this region, and making him even more important to the proper functioning of the Lancastrian regime. Wiltshire also moved into Stanley's place in the order of the Garter in April 1459, a social improvement with little real power attached, but with significant prestige.¹⁰⁹ That Wiltshire was once again emerging as one of the central figure of the Lancastrian government probably worried the duke of York and his supporters, but is only one of the indicators that the two factions in English politics were beginning to polarise in early 1459.

The divisions between the factions broke down into open warfare in September 1459 and the queen's faction emerged victorious from Blore Heath and Ludford Bridge. York fled to Ireland with his son, the earl of Rutland, while his eldest son, Edward, earl of March, fled to Calais with the earl of Warwick and Salisbury. The Lancastrians were left as the unchallenged government of the kingdom, although their influence was severely limited in certain regions, most notably in London and the south east. What followed was a Lancastrian dominated parliament that pushed through attainders for the most important Yorkist lords and an attempted purge of all Yorkist influences from the country, as the Lancastrians prepared themselves for the inevitable invasion from Calais and Ireland. In the eight months from November 1459, southern England began to look like an 'armed camp'.¹¹⁰

Wiltshire may not have been the mastermind of this Yorkist witch hunt but he was certainly one of its foremost proponents. He was one of the triers of petitions at the Coventry parliament and was also one of the lords that took an oath of allegiance to the Lancastrian dynasty on 11 December, four days after the attainders were passed against the main

¹⁰⁸ R. Somerville, *History of the duchy of Lancaster*, p. 429

¹⁰⁹ C. P., x, 128; W. A. Shaw, *Knights of England*, i, p. 13

¹¹⁰ R. Griffiths, *Reign of King Henry VI*, p. 859

Yorkist lords.¹¹¹ It was clear from the demeanour of the government that there was no chance that the Yorkists would ever be rehabilitated, their lands and titles were gone, absorbed into the royal demesne. The Lancastrian policy seems to have been to use this windfall to strengthen the king's ability to live on his own revenue. Repayment of debts was more important than granting land for past support. Wiltshire was one of the few people to benefit directly from this new-found wealth. On 19 December 1459, he received two small grants, life grants of the forest of Pederton, Somerset, and the stewardship of the manor and lordship of Farsten in Wiltshire.¹¹² He also received a grant of 100 marks from the issues of York's manors of Old Wotton and Compton in Wiltshire.¹¹³ Beyond this, the revenues gained from the Yorkist lands were earmarked for defence.

Any semblance of Lancastrian control ended at the shoreline of England. Wiltshire was personally involved with Ireland, as he was appointed lieutenant of Ireland on 4 December 1459, even before York was attainted.¹¹⁴ He was appointed for an optimistic twelve year term with Sir Thomas Bathe, baron of Louth, and John Bole, archbishop of Armagh, as his deputies but it was obvious that this appointment would have virtually no effect in Ireland. The one attempt to enforce Wiltshire's position led to the attainder and execution of his messenger, William Overy for inciting 'rebellion and disobedience to the said lieutenant [York] in whose person in this land the person of our said sovereign lord is represented.'¹¹⁵ Clearly, the Lancastrians realised that Ireland was an important component of the English realm but there was nothing they could do about it until they had England firmly under their control.

The measures to stamp out Yorkist influences in England began on 21 December 1459, when commissions of array to resist the rebellions of the duke of York and the earls of March, Salisbury and Warwick were set up. As could be expected, Wiltshire was appointed to lead the

¹¹¹ *Rot. parl.*, v, pp 345, 349-50, 351

¹¹² *Cal. pat. rolls, 1452-61*, pp. 542, 574

¹¹³ *ibid.*, p. 585

¹¹⁴ *Cal. close rolls*, p. 426

¹¹⁵ *Stat. Ire. Hen. VI*, pp 677, 679

commissions in Devon, Dorset, Somerset, Wiltshire and Essex.¹¹⁶ On 12 February 1460, he sat on a commission of *oyer et terminer* for London and Middlesex, the purpose of which was obviously to root out Yorkist support around the capital.¹¹⁷ Although it is undoubtedly biased, one of the Yorkist chronicles gives a description of the commission led by Wiltshire descending on Newbury in Berkshire. Anybody that showed 'any favour or benevolence or friendship to the said duke or any of his' was regarded with suspicion and anyone proven to favour him was treated with extreme harshness.¹¹⁸ Preparations continued with commissions to recruit any able-bodied men to resist the landings of the Yorkists, with Wiltshire appearing on the commissions for Devon, Dorset, Somerset, Wiltshire and Essex on 28 April 1460.¹¹⁹ Extra taxes were levied and each town along the coast was ordered to supply troops for its own defence. A new commission of array was called for Kent on 15 March 1460, which apparently prompted the people of that county to write to the exiles in Calais asking them to save them from 'the malice and tyranny of the foresaid earl of Wiltshire.'¹²⁰ The Lancastrian paranoia reached a crescendo in early June 1460, when two separate commissions were called. The first was a general commission of *oyer et terminer* where Wiltshire sat for Oxford, Berkshire, Southampton, Wiltshire, Somerset, Devon and Cornwall. The second commission was specifically aimed at Yorkist support with orders to arrest and imprison any Yorkists in Oxford, Berkshire, Southampton, Wiltshire, Surrey, Sussex, Kent and Middlesex, the heartland of Yorkist support.¹²¹

The Yorkist lords who had escaped to Calais were kept well aware of these preparations and sent a manifesto back to England in the form of an open letter to the archbishop of Canterbury. They portrayed a land in turmoil because the king was misled by his advisors. The commons had been 'greatly and marvellously charged with taxes...to their great

¹¹⁶ *Cal. pat. rolls, 1452-61*, pp 557-9

¹¹⁷ *ibid.*, p. 574

¹¹⁸ *Engl. chron.*, p. 90

¹¹⁹ *Cal. pat. rolls, 1452-61*, p. 608

¹²⁰ *Engl. chron.*, p. 91; *Cal. pat. rolls, 1452-61*, p. 611

¹²¹ *ibid.*, pp 613-4

impoverishment.' Diverse lords had 'caused his highness to write letters under his privy seal unto his Irish enemies whereby they may have comfort to enter into the conquest of the said land.' Calais had been starved of food, soldiers and material by 'execution and labour' of the same lords.¹²² With a great degree of political finesse, these evil councillors were named as the earls of Shrewsbury and Wiltshire and Viscount Beaumont. The dukes of Buckingham, Somerset and Exeter and the earl of Pembroke were quietly ignored and the queen could not be attacked directly without raising questions about their loyalty to the king. But by singling out Wiltshire, Shrewsbury and Beaumont as 'our mortal and extreme enemies', the Yorkists at Calais could put limits on the forthcoming violence. For the lords so mentioned it was only one more piece of evidence that they had to win or die.

Warwick, Salisbury and March landed at Sandwich on 26 June 1460 and proceeded to gather their forces. They also had an extra weapon in their arsenal. With them came the papal legate, Coppini, who brought with him an order to excommunicate Wiltshire, Shrewsbury and Beaumont.¹²³ On 10 July they met a Lancastrian force led by Buckingham and emerged victorious. By the end of the day Buckingham, Shrewsbury and Beaumont were dead, and the king had once again come into Yorkist hands. Wiltshire was not at the battle because he had been sent to prepare ships at Southampton to bring troops to Calais. He provisioned five Genoese carracks, filled them with troops and set sail, only to find that his enemy had sailed before him. He set sail for the Netherlands, probably after hearing of the defeat at Northampton, seeking to join Somerset, who led the garrison at Guisnes but who had retreated to Dieppe.¹²⁴ This chronology is admittedly speculative but the only source for Wiltshire's activities in the summer of 1460 is biased towards the Yorkists. The chronicle portrays Wiltshire as preparing the ships as ordered, but with the intent to 'steal privily out of the realm, as it proved afterward', and that he 'sailed about in the sea always dreading the coming of the earls of

¹²² *Engl. chron.*, pp 86-90

¹²³ *ibid.*, p. 94; 'Benet's chron.', p. 225; see also C. Head, 'Pope Pius II and the Wars of the Roses', *Archivum Historiae Pontificae*, vii (1970), pp 139-78

¹²⁴ 'Worcester's chron.', p. [774]

Warwick and Salisbury.¹²⁵ Another source, a letter written on 12 October 1460, says he later sought sanctuary in Utrecht but the same letter reports Somerset in Dieppe, some three weeks after he returned to England.¹²⁶ Wiltshire probably returned to England with Somerset, landing in Devon. They recruited men, joined up with the earl of Devon and joined the Queen and her northern lords at Hull in early December 1460.

The Yorkist victory at Northampton reversed the situation that had existed since the previous November but did not fundamentally alter the way the game was played. Once again, one faction controlled the king and appointed their own officers of state. Wiltshire, for example, was replaced as treasurer by Henry, Lord Bourghier, on 28 July 1460 but was not replaced as steward of the southern parts of the duchy of Lancaster until 1 December 1460.¹²⁷ His claim to the lieutenancy of Ireland was simply ignored. However, the Yorkist lords still attempted to govern in the name of Henry VI. This changed when Richard of York returned to England in September 1460 and made his formal claim to the throne before parliament on 10 October 1460.¹²⁸ Nevertheless, this fundamental change in policy was irrelevant in many respects. By the winter of 1460, it was clear to all concerned that the two factions in English politics could not continue to see-saw they way they had in the previous year. One side or the other had to be eliminated.

Unfortunately for Richard of York, his time as heir apparent to Henry VI, the compromise negotiated in parliament, lasted only two months. He decided to spend Christmas at Sandal with his son, Rutland, and the earl of Salisbury. For the Lancastrians this was a singular opportunity. A large army, led by Somerset, marched to Sandal and baited York until he rashly decided to give battle. When he sallied forth to attack the visible enemy, he was surrounded by two hidden forces led by Wiltshire and Lord Clifford.¹²⁹ York and his son, the earl of Rutland, died at Sandal and Salisbury was killed at Pontefract. Their deaths did not

¹²⁵ *Engl. Chron*, p. 90

¹²⁶ *J. Gairdner, Paston Letters*, iii, p. 234; *English Chron.* p. 99

¹²⁷ *C. P.*, v, 138; *H.B.C.*, p. 107; *R. Somerville, History of the duchy of Lancaster*, p. 429

¹²⁸ *Rot. parl.*, v, 375; *Engl. chron.*, pp 99-100

¹²⁹ *J. Stow, Annales*, p. 408

change the fundamental problem, although the Lancastrians almost certainly felt more confident as a result. York's heir, Edward, earl of March, had spent Christmas at Gloucester, before moving his forces to Salisbury. In late January 1461, he heard that Wiltshire and Pembroke had gathered a large force of Welshmen, supported by Breton and Irish mercenaries and were moving to support the main Lancastrian force. March retreated before them and then brought them to battle at Mortimer's Cross, near Ludlow. In a brilliant victory, he routed the Lancastrians, forcing Pembroke and Wiltshire to flee to the main Lancastrian force.¹³⁰

Both Queen Margaret and the son of Richard of York moved towards London in February 1461. The defeat of the earl of Warwick's forces at St. Albans on 17 February resulted in the recapture of the king by the Lancastrians. The queen and her northerners marched towards London, but were met with suspicion by the citizens of the city and found the city barred against them on 22 February 1461. In contrast, when the soon to be Edward IV came to the city on 27 February, he was welcomed with open arms and celebrations. He moved carefully but swiftly and on 4 March took 'possession and entry of the exercise of the royal estate', declaring himself Edward IV.¹³¹ The strategic situation between York and Lancaster had hardly changed by this development but the new king acted as if it made all the difference, setting out to make himself king, despite the fact that the 'majority of the English nobility' still accepted Henry VI as their rightful king.¹³² On 6 March, he issued proclamations in thirty three counties charging that he be accepted as the king. In these proclamations, he charged that his enemies had ridden 'in warlike guise...committing treasons and robberies' and that Wiltshire and Pembroke had brought into the land a 'great multitude' of Scots and Frenchmen.¹³³ Clearly, the new king was preparing to take his father's guise of champion of the commons for his own and portrayed the Lancastrians, especially Wiltshire, as those who would conspire with hereditary enemies to keep their power.

¹³⁰ J. Stow, *Annales*, p. 413, 'Benet's chron.', p. 229

¹³¹ *Rot. parl.*, v, p. 464

¹³² C. D. Ross, *Edward, IV*, p. 34

¹³³ *Cal. close rolls, 1461-8*, pp 54-5

On the same day as the proclamations were sent, Edward IV also offered a pardon to any who supported Henry VI, although the pardon did not apply to twenty two named people and 'all others having lands to the yearly value of 100 marks and over.'¹³⁴ This move was clearly meant to pacify the fears of the lesser gentry and attempt to secure their neutrality, if not their immediate acceptance of the new king. For men like Wiltshire, who had been named as one who would bring Scots into the realm in the first proclamation and barred from seeking any terms from Edward IV in the second, the message was clear. The only way to settle the civil war was to defeat the Yorkists in the field, and execute any who supported the rival king.

The final battle of this phase of the Wars of the Roses came when the two sides met near Towton on Palm Sunday, 29 March 1461, with relatively large armies and engaged in the 'bloodiest battle of the entire civil war.'¹³⁵ Although Wiltshire's name is not on the list of those who supported the Lancastrians, he was certainly at the battle, along with Devon, Northumberland and Pembroke.¹³⁶ The battle was fought in appalling conditions but the Yorkists emerged victorious, inflicting severe losses on the Lancastrians, before forcing them to retreat. Wiltshire managed to survive the battle and escape the field, but did not manage to escape to join the Lancastrian court-in-exile in Scotland. He was captured at Cockermouth by the squire, Richard Salkeld, and brought to Newcastle.¹³⁷ In April 1461, Edward IV marched north from Durham to Newcastle, probably as part of his efforts to secure the north-east of England for the new regime. He reached Newcastle by 1 May 1461, where he watched the execution of his family's 'mortal enemy'. As a warning to others Wiltshire's head was then sent to London and mounted on London Bridge.¹³⁸

With his death, his earldom of Wiltshire expired but his earldom of Ormond passed to his younger brother, John. The new earl of Ormond

¹³⁴ *Cal. pat. rolls, 1461-8*, pp 55-6

¹³⁵ C. D. Ross, *Edward IV*, p. 36

¹³⁶ 'Gregory's chron.', p. 216-7; C. D. Ross, *Edward VI*, p. 36

¹³⁷ *Cal. pat. rolls, 1467-77*, p. 25

¹³⁸ 'Gregory's chron.', pp 217-8

had lived a life at court since his release from France earlier in the decade. He is mentioned as one of the squires of the body on 25 March 1455, when a warrant was issued rewarding him for bringing messages to Calais.¹³⁹ It is not known whether he fought at St. Albans in 1455 but, given his career as a soldier, it is not far-fetched to assume that he was present. He did not marry in this period but remained at court, where he served as a conduit for people who wished the ear of Wiltshire or the queen.¹⁴⁰ He was rewarded for his service in January 1460 when he was given a grant of all the mines that could produce gold and silver in Cornwall and Devon to a yearly value of £140.¹⁴¹ His brother further rewarded him on 14 March 1460 with a ship, forfeited by the lord of Dures.¹⁴² John Butler apparently returned to military service in 1460, as he was reported among those who were with Somerset at Dieppe in the fall of 1460.¹⁴³ From there he returned with Somerset and was certainly with the Lancastrian forces in the winter of 1460/1. Although it is unknown whether Wiltshire's brothers, John and Thomas, were at Towton, it is more than likely that they were. Neither was specifically named as unpardonable in the proclamations of 6 March, although both certainly fell in to the category of having lands worth more than 100 marks *per annum*. Certainly, their activities on behalf of the Lancastrians warranted their attainder in Edward IV's first parliament, and both are mentioned as having joined the queen in exile.¹⁴⁴

Although he did not formally attain Wiltshire and his brothers until 4 November 1461, Edward IV lost no time confiscating their lands.¹⁴⁵ Even before Towton, he had sent orders to the sheriff and escheators of Somerset and Devon to take Wiltshire's lands into the king's hands. Similar orders followed on 27 April and 11 May, 1461 for his lands in

¹³⁹ P.R.O. E404/70/2/48

¹⁴⁰ J. Gairdner, *Paston Letters*, iii, 213

¹⁴¹ *Cal. pat. rolls, 1452-61*, p. 573

¹⁴² *ibid.*, p. 574

¹⁴³ J. Gairdner, *Paston Letters*, iii, p. 234

¹⁴⁴ *ibid.*, p. 307; 'Worcester's chron.', p. [781]

¹⁴⁵ *Rot. parl.*, v, p. 480; *Cal. pat. rolls, 1461-7*, p. 178

Surrey and Sussex and the Welsh Marches, respectively.¹⁴⁶ While the king did not start to grant out these lands to his supporters until the Christmas season of 1461, once he did start, he granted them out quickly, leaving only four Butler manors in royal hands by August 1462.¹⁴⁷ Edward IV used Wiltshire's extensive group of manors to reward his supporters without weakening his own landed position. The size of the grants varied, the smallest being an annuity of £36 *p.a.* from Wiltshire's manors of Shere and Vacherie in Surrey, given to William Brandon and his wife on 3 January 1462. Larger grants were given to the king's sister, the duchess of Exeter, who received Wiltshire's Essex manors as part of the grant given to her on 21 December 1461, in order to support her while estranged from her husband. Equally generous was his grant to Fulk Stafford, who received eight of Wiltshire's manors in Worcestershire and Staffordshire.¹⁴⁸

The king's generosity was not limited to Wiltshire's English lands. The Butler manors in the Pale were seized by the Dublin administration and divided between the earl of Kildare and Sir William Welles. Welles was a long time servant of Richard, duke of York, who had served as seneschal of Trim and deputy chancellor of Ireland and was now appointed to the offices of chancellor and chief butler of Ireland.¹⁴⁹ To support his new position, he was granted the manors of Turvey, Rush and Balscadden in Co. Dublin, with Blakecastle and Donoghmore in Co. Meath on 27 July 1461.¹⁵⁰ No grant remains to indicate the disposition of the rest of the Butler lands in the Pale, but the earl of Kildare was in possession of the manors of Oughterard, Oughterany, Castlewarden, and Clintonscourt, all of which were in the county of Kildare, by 1468.¹⁵¹ The seizure of Wiltshire's manors in the Pale was apparently done quickly and easily, although his family's ancestral lands in Kilkenny and Tipperary would be harder to take, and the government of the lordship had made little or no

¹⁴⁶ *Cal. pat. rolls, 1461-7*, pp 29, 32, 34

¹⁴⁷ C. D. Ross, *Edward IV*, p. 376

¹⁴⁸ *Cal. pat. rolls, 1461-7*, pp 75, 104, 112

¹⁴⁹ P. A. Johnson, *Duke Richard of York*, p. 240; *Stat. Ire. Hen. VI*, pp 457-9; *Cal pat. rolls, 1461-8*, pp 21, 124

¹⁵⁰ *Rot. pat. Hib.*, p. 279

¹⁵¹ *Stat. Ire. Hen. VI*, pp 586-7

progress by the winter of 1461/2 when the new earl of Ormond appeared in his lordship to gauge support for a pro-Lancastrian revolt in the lordship of Ireland.

Edward IV's coronation and victory at Towton put him in a better position with respect to the Lancastrians than his father had ever enjoyed, but his was still far from secure on his throne. Much of the country was still uneasy and dominated by ties to the Lancastrians and they could mount a serious challenge if they could gain the support of the Scots.¹⁵² However, Scottish opinion had divided since the death of James II on 3 August 1460. His son's minority government had largely divided into two camps centred on Queen Mary and James Kennedy, bishop of St. Andrew's. Bishop Kennedy was consistently pro-Lancastrian in his outlook, while the queen tended to waver somewhat.¹⁵³ The obvious plan to regain Scottish support was to secure a new base of operations in Ireland. A successful Lancastrian uprising in Ireland would bring pressure on Edward IV from several directions and serve to cement an alliance with the wavering Scots. The obvious person to send was John Butler, earl of Ormond.

The new earl of Ormond went to Ireland in the winter of 1461/2 to gauge the level of support for him and was in Kilkenny on 30 January 1462.¹⁵⁴ As the major Butler activity in the summer of 1461, namely a raid into Meath in alliance with the O'Connor Falys, was a continuation of the 'usual wars in the marches', it seems clear that Ormond did not arrive in Ireland until it was too late to mount a campaign in 1461.¹⁵⁵ He spent the winter familiarising himself with his Irish lordship and making preparations for a campaign in the summer of 1462. Ormond's preparations were probably aided somewhat because he had some familiarity with Ireland, although it had been fifteen years since he had come to Ireland in Shrewsbury's retinue. A point in Ormond's favour was the continuity in leadership among the cadet branches of the Butler

¹⁵² For a discussion on the state of the realm, see C. D. Ross, *Edward IV*, pp 45-50 and J. Lander, *Government and community*, pp 223-35

¹⁵³ For a detailed discussion of Scottish-Lancastrian diplomacy in this period, see R. Nicholson, *Scotland: The later middle ages*, pp 397-406

¹⁵⁴ *Ormond deeds, 1413-1509*, no. 211, pp 189-90

¹⁵⁵ Otway-Ruthven, *Med. Ire.*, p 389

family. All of the family heads, especially Edmund MacRichard Butler in Kilkenny, were old enough to have known his father, the fourth earl, and remember their allegiance to the earls of Ormond. They all remembered what a strong and active earl could do for the Ormond lordship and while Wiltshire had never come to Ireland, the loyalty still remained.

Ormond was also careful enough not to make changes within his lordship before a revolt. He gained the support and confidence of men like Edmund MacRichard by accepting their positions within the lordship and ratifying them by re-appointments under his own seal. On 30 January 1462, Ormond appointed MacRichard as his deputy for all his lands anywhere in Ireland, a position he had held since the 1440s.¹⁵⁶ As a reminder of the loyalty owed to him as head of the family, he was careful to refer to himself as earl of Ormond and lord of the liberty of Tipperary in all of his charters.¹⁵⁷

Whether he actually was the earl of Ormond or not is a question of some debate. Wiltshire and his brothers had been attainted by the English parliament on 4 November 1461 and stripped of their lands and titles.¹⁵⁸ However, as acts of attainder are simply acts of parliament, there is some question whether they actually applied in Ireland or not. The legal opinion of the day was divided and the most recent precedent, that of Richard of York and the 1460 parliament, meant that John Butler was still earl of Ormond until attainted in Ireland.¹⁵⁹ However, while the legalities of his position were in some doubt, it is clear that John Butler considered himself to be the earl of Ormond and was accepted as the leader of the Butlers in Ireland by his kinsmen. Nor was this acceptance contingent on a successful campaign. He was referred to as earl of Ormond in a rental prepared by James fitz Edmund Butler almost a full decade after the failure of the revolt of 1462.¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁶ *Ormond deeds, 1413-1509*, no. 211, pp 189-90

¹⁵⁷ for other examples see *Ormond deeds, 1413-1509*, p. 204, no. 229 and *Cal. Carew MSS, Book of Howth and misc.*, p. 445

¹⁵⁸ *Cal. pat. rolls, 1461-7*, p. 178; *Rot. parl.*, v, p. 480

¹⁵⁹ For a full discussion of this issue see A. Cosgrove, 'Parliament and the Anglo-Irish community'

¹⁶⁰ *Ormond deeds, 1413-1509*, no. 234, pp 210-13

Ormond's charters and grants also highlight another facet of his personality. What is abundantly clear from his personal grants is that he refused to accept the validity of the coronation of Edward IV. While some of the documents preserved by the Butlers in this period are dated by the regnal year of Edward IV, these tend to be charters from transactions that did not immediately affect the Butlers.¹⁶¹ Ormond, on the other hand, scrupulously dated his documents by the regnal year of Henry VI or, at the very least, by the year of grace. His grant of the office of seneschal of the liberty of Tipperary to Edmund Butler of Dunboyne was dated 7 June 41 Henry VI, while his charter making James fitz Edmund Butler his deputy is dated 17 August in an uncertain year, although the faded words *quadragesimo* and *Henrici sexti* can be seen on the original document.¹⁶² Ormond's dogged refusal to accept the reality of Edward IV's accession was a prominent part of his personality and continued throughout his exile until he had no choice but to accept Edward IV as his king in 1471.

Despite this inflexibility in this one area, he proved to be quite able to adapt to the particular problems and idiosyncrasies of his Irish lordship. Although there was a certain degree of acculturation in the Ormond lordship in Ireland it still remained one of the most anglicised regions of the lordship. For Ormond, who had spent the majority of his life in England and France, Kilkenny probably seemed somewhat odd but was clearly recognisable as an 'English' town. Ormond's greatest problem lay in the potential for animosity and bickering between the minor Butler clans during his absence. That he was well aware of the potential problems is seen by the fact that he set up an arbitration mechanism to settle any difficulties that arose in his absence.

His vision for the governance of his lordship is set out in the charter appointing Edmund MacRichard Butler as his deputy. While the earl was in England, MacRichard was to act as his *alter ego*. Ormond ordered his 'kinsmen and friends, retainers and servants shall be obedient and intendant to the above Edmund in our absence as they would be to us'. Clearly, Ormond intended to leave the preparations for the upcoming

¹⁶¹ for example, *Ormond deeds, 1413-1509*, no. 210, p. 188

¹⁶² *Cal. Carew MSS, Book of Howth and misc.*, p. 445; *Ormond deeds, 1413-1509*, no. 229 p. 204 [N.L.I. D1789]

revolt in his cousin's hands while he went to England. However, he also recognised the potentials for friction and ordered that they 'submit themselves and the points of controversy to the judgement, arbitration and ordinance of the archbishop of Cashel and the bishop of Ossory.'¹⁶³ That the archbishop and bishop were willing to perform this function does not mean that they accepted and supported the revolt against Edward IV, merely that they recognised Ormond's authority within his own lordship and were willing to work with him on that basis to ensure peace within their dioceses.

The last element of the revolt indicates how truly flexible Ormond was prepared to be in order to win the lordship for the Lancastrians. Sometime in the winter of 1461/2, Ormond met and allied himself with Tadhg O'Brien, the lord of Thomond. In all probability, the initial contacts between the men were initiated from the O'Brien side. It is difficult to envisage a scenario where an English lord, which is what Ormond effectively was, would initiate an alliance of equals with one of the 'king's Irish enemies'. O'Brien almost certainly saw Ormond's arrival as a good opportunity to foster his own ambitions. Tadhg O'Brien had succeeded to the lordship of Thomond in 1459 and had begun a period of expansion with the support of his father-in-law, Uilleag Ruadh de Burgh of Clanricard. His main focus was to expand his lordship across the Shannon into the areas of Limerick and Tipperary where the Ormond, O'Brien and Desmond spheres of influence met.¹⁶⁴

This expansion was not exactly in Ormond's interest but if the alliance with O'Brien could neutralise the potential threat of the earldom of Desmond, then Ormond was prepared to accept this alliance of political convenience and worry about the consequences later. The alliance was sealed by the relationship that formed between Ormond and O'Brien's daughter, Reynalda. This short-lived union would have lasting implications for the Ormond lordship as Reynalda gave birth to a son, the future Sir James Ormond. It seems certain that the union was never solemnised as a formal marriage because Sir James was never recognised as the legitimate son of the earl of Ormond and, as a result, was barred from inheriting the earldom on his father's death in 1477. However, his

¹⁶³ *Ormond deeds, 1413-1509*, pp 189-90, no. 211

¹⁶⁴ *N.H.I, 1169-1534*, p. 628; Nicholls, *Gaelic Ire.*, p. 156

illegitimacy would not stop James Ormond from playing a vital role in the politics of the Irish lordship in the 1490s. Reynalda stayed with the Butlers after Ormond's departure from Ireland in 1464 and married Richard fitz Edmund Butler, a son of Edmund MacRichard. After his death she entered the convent at Kilone, in the diocese of Killaloe, where she died as abbess in 1510.¹⁶⁵

Assured of the support of the minor Butler families and the O'Brien alliance, Ormond returned to England to recruit more troops, leaving Edmund MacRichard to oversee preparations for the revolt in Ireland. The most promising place for Ormond to recruit was in the west country, a region that was 'particularly dissatisfied' with the new regime, and where Wiltshire had exercised most of his power and influence.¹⁶⁶ That Wiltshire's network of supporters was still active is attested by the fact that two commissions were sent to arrest supporters of Henry VI, Exeter and Wiltshire in Southampton, Somerset, Dorset and Wiltshire.¹⁶⁷ Ormond was apparently successful in his efforts and even gained some support from Scotland before he returned to Ireland.¹⁶⁸

All the available evidence shows that Edward IV was well aware of Ormond's actions in England and Ireland and was taking steps to counter them. His father's experiences certainly made him aware of the value of Ireland and the 'thin but consistent trickle of royal charters' showed that he kept abreast of events in his Irish lordship.¹⁶⁹ Presumably, there was also a regular stream of messengers moving between England and Ireland and, in the winter of 1461/2, the king turned to one of these, Sir Roland FitzEustace, as the most available expert on Irish affairs. FitzEustace was a member of a prominent Pale family that had come to support Richard of York during his time in Ireland. His father, Edward, had served as deputy lieutenant to York after the death of the White Earl in 1452 and Sir Roland

¹⁶⁵ B. Ó Dálaigh, 'Mistress, mother and abbess, p. 62-3, printing N.L.I. D1978

¹⁶⁶ C. D. Ross, *Edward IV*, pp 42-3

¹⁶⁷ *Cal. pat. rolls, 1461-7*, pp 67, 101

¹⁶⁸ M. Dillon, 'Laud Mss 610', p.151, no. lxxxiv

¹⁶⁹ *N.H.I.*, ii, p. 599

had served as treasurer of Ireland in the 1450s.¹⁷⁰ FitzEustace, like many of the gentry of the Pale actively supported the duke of York in 1460, and simply transferred his allegiance to his son after York's death at Wakefield.¹⁷¹

FitzEustace was almost certainly sent to England by Kildare, who was acting as justiciar of Ireland until the king made provisions for the governance of the lordship.¹⁷² His task was probably to convince the king to confirm Kildare as deputy lieutenant and to pledge Kildare's support to the new government. He may also have been the messenger that brought the news of Ormond's arrival in Ireland to England. While this is by no means certain, it would suggest that his mission was also to find out what the king wanted to do about his rebellious earl. FitzEustace arrived in England sometime before 21 December 1461, when he secured a re-grant of his office of treasurer, although he now had to share his position and the proceeds of his grant with John, Lord Wenlock, the new butler of England.¹⁷³ FitzEustace continued to benefit from royal generosity when he, with James Dockeray, was granted custody of several manors forfeited by Richard Bermingham and William Butler of Dunboyne.¹⁷⁴ While Butler's forfeitures appear to have had nothing to do with Ormond's activities, as they arose from Butler's activities in the 1450s, Bermingham had been attainted in the Irish parliament of 1460 for having tried to raise an army in England to fight Richard of York in Ireland, and as such was an obvious source of largesse for the king in Ireland.¹⁷⁵ Obviously, FitzEustace did not mention to the king that William Butler had died in the meantime or that his brother, Edmund, had secured a pardon for his actions.¹⁷⁶

¹⁷⁰ *N.H.I.*, ix, p. 477; V. Gorman, , 'Richard, duke of York, and the development of an Irish faction', p. 173

¹⁷¹ P. A Johnson, *Duke Richard of York*, p. 200

¹⁷² *N.H.I.*, ix, p. 478

¹⁷³ *Cal. pat. rolls, 1461-7*, p. 84

¹⁷⁴ *ibid.*, p. 117

¹⁷⁵ *Stat. Ire. Hen V*, pp 658-61

¹⁷⁶ *ibid.*, pp 360-5, 658-61, 760-5

Edward IV's generosity to FitzEustace culminated with the grant of the manor of Portlester in Meath and the title of baron of Portlester on 5 March 1462.¹⁷⁷ It was hardly surprising, therefore, that when the king finally settled on a policy to deal with the potential rebellion in Ireland, he turned to Portlester. On 20 March 1462, Portlester sealed an indenture with the king for service in Ireland. He was to assemble a force of 300 archers and muster them at Chester on 19 April 1462. They were to serve in Ireland for a year at the expense of the English exchequer and orders were sent to Chester and Dublin to prepare for musters of troops.¹⁷⁸ However, if the expedition sailed on time, it sailed without money or Portlester. Portlester managed to secure £450 as the first instalment of money promised in his indenture on 28 April 1462 but was still in London on 7 May when he agreed to remit £55 to the exchequer to receive the remaining £353 10s. as cash in hand.¹⁷⁹ This was still less than he had negotiated with the king, but he recognised that this was as much as he was going to get. He may also have been delayed somewhat by further discussion with the king, who decided to appoint him deputy lieutenant, probably to give him political authority to match his military forces, and Portlester was still in London on 18 May 1462, when he had an *inspeximus* of his appointment as deputy to the duke of Clarence made.¹⁸⁰ In the end, Portlester's expedition was at least a month to six weeks late setting out for Ireland and apparently arrived too late to have any effect on the course of Ormond's revolt. This mattered little, because the revolt was suppressed from an unexpected direction.

The timing and events of the Butler revolt in the summer of 1462 are largely shrouded in mystery. The surviving evidence is highly fragmentary, consisting of little more than long entries in the Irish annals, complemented by some scattered information in English and Anglo-Irish sources. Unfortunately, there is not even a surviving Anglo-Irish chronicle to enhance the picture gleaned from the Irish annals. Nevertheless, a general picture of events can be formed. The revolt itself

¹⁷⁷ *Cal. pat. rolls, 1461-7*, p. 178

¹⁷⁸ D. B. Quinn, 'Guide to English financial record for Irish history, 1461-1558', pp 39-40; *Cal. pat. rolls, 1461-7*, p. 201

¹⁷⁹ D. B. Quinn, 'Guide to English financial record for Irish history, 1461-1558', pp 28, 41

¹⁸⁰ *Cal. pat. rolls, 1461-7*, p. 185

happened in June or perhaps early July 1462, a supposition supported by the fact that the earl of Desmond received grants from the king on 2 August 1462.¹⁸¹ The only reason for these grants, which included the stewardship of Connacht, custody of the Irish lands of the earldom of March and the constablenesship of Limerick castle, was as a reward for Desmond's good services in suppressing Ormond's revolt. This grant also confirms that it was Earl Thomas of Desmond who led the Geraldine forces, not his father, Earl James.¹⁸² The grant clearly referred to Thomas, earl of Desmond, which, given the time needed for information to reach England, indicates that his father died several weeks earlier, probably sometime during the initial stages of Ormond's campaign.¹⁸³

When the fighting did break out in the early summer of 1462, it resembled more of a continuation of the traditional clashes between the lordships of Ormond and Desmond than a rebellion put down by a loyal vassal of the king. In the previous half-century, the earls of Desmond had generally kept to themselves, operating far outside the effective reach of the government in Dublin. While James, sixth earl of Desmond, had submitted to Richard of York in 1449 and then stood as one of the godfathers of York's son, George, such a level of interaction was unusual.¹⁸⁴ Even York's prestige was not enough to control Desmond who is described as being 'suffered and not controlled during the government of Richard, duke of York.'¹⁸⁵ When Ormond met Desmond in 1462, Thomas fitz James of Desmond was less concerned about the validity of the Yorkist claim to the throne than he was about the potential threat posed to the Desmond lordship by an alliance of Ormond and the O'Briens of Thomond.

The first phase of Ormond's campaign centred on the city of Waterford. While the city lay within the traditional sphere of Butler interests, it had retained a large degree of autonomy. However, its trade

¹⁸¹ *Cal. pat. rolls, 1461-7*, p. 196

¹⁸² There is a certain amount of confusion on this point, see A.F.M. *s.a.* 1462; 'MacFirbis' *s.a.* 1462; *N.H.I.*, ix, p. 273; Curtis, *Med. Ire.*, p. 370

¹⁸³ G. Butler, 'The battle of Pilltown', pp 210-11

¹⁸⁴ Otway-Ruthven, *Med. Ire.*, p. 380; P. A. Johnson, *Duke Richard of York*, p. 74

¹⁸⁵ *Campion*, p. 150

links with England and the continent made it a valuable target for Ormond. By taking the city, Ormond would gain control of a major port, access to trade and information, tighten his grip on the Suir basin and secure a base from which he could mount a revolt.¹⁸⁶ The only source for this phase of the campaign comes from the Irish annals. The *Annals of Connacht* report

'The young earl of Ormond came to Ireland this year with an innumerable following of English. War between the earls of Ormond and Desmond. Gerald, son of the earl of Desmond was captured by the Butlers. They took Waterford.'¹⁸⁷

As none of the contemporary Anglo-Irish sources shed any more light on the events of June 1462, modern historians are forced to draw conclusions from a source primarily interested in the affairs of Gaelic Ireland and that mentions the Butler revolt only as an interesting piece of current events. The most problematic part of the annal entry is the bald statement concerning the fate of the city of Waterford, a city that was a compact defensive unit once described as a 'little castle'.¹⁸⁸ While the city undoubtedly fell into Butler's hands, its method of capture remains unclear. The medieval city of Waterford has been described as 'virtually a self-governing city-state of the continental type' and while this may be overstating the case somewhat, the city was well able to defend itself.¹⁸⁹ Later in the century, it was able to withstand the great earl of Kildare's demands that the city recognise the pretender, Lambert Simnel, and successfully held out against a siege by the forces supporting the other pretender, Perkin Warbeck.¹⁹⁰

¹⁸⁶ For discussions on the city of Waterford in the later middle ages see J. F. Lydon, 'The city of Waterford in the later middle ages'; P. Power, *History of Waterford city and county*, esp. chap. 2; W. Nolan & P. Power (eds.), *Waterford: History and Society*, esp. chap. 7

¹⁸⁷ *Ann. Conn. s.a.* 1462. The *Annals of Connacht* are used here because they are more contemporary than the *Annals of the four Masters*. see G. MacNiocaill, *The medieval Irish annals*, p. 36

¹⁸⁸ *Cal. pat. rolls, 1374-7*, p. 145

¹⁸⁹ A. Conway, *Henry VII's relations with Scotland and Ireland*, p. 85

¹⁹⁰ *Cal. Carew MSS, Book of Howth and misc.*, pp 472-3

However, the available evidence indicates that Waterford was captured, rather than joining the rebellion freely, as did the cities of Kilkenny and New Ross. While the sovereign and the leading citizens of those cities were attainted for their support of the Butlers, the city of Waterford was rewarded on 20 November 1462 with a confirmation of all its charters and a pardon of its debts on the grounds that 'the said city lies upon the frontier of the king's enemies being the rebels in the four counties of Waterford, Kilkenny, Tipperary and Wexford.'¹⁹¹ The actual events surrounding the capture of the city may never be known but the most likely scenario is that the city was divided between factions that supported Ormond and those that wanted to maintain the city's *de facto* independence. Once the Butlers had defeated and captured Gerald fitz James, lord of Decies, and son of the earl of Desmond, the city probably surrendered to avoid the destruction of a full scale siege.

Conflict between Ormond and Desmond was inevitable from the moment Ormond returned to Ireland. He chose not to turn his attention towards Dublin until he neutralised the threat of Desmond. The Geraldine response to the threat was somewhat chaotic and disjointed. Gerald fitz James had been installed by his father to secure the Decies lordship but spent most of his life working to make his lordship more independent of the earls of Desmond.¹⁹² This drive for independence led Gerald fitz James to meet the Butlers on his own rather than wait for his brother, Thomas, to arrive with the more numerous forces at his command. This failure to co-ordinate left Ormond in control of his own lordship and the city of Waterford, allowing him to dominate the whole Nore-Suir-Barrow region, which gave him a strong base to turn his attention further west.

However, after the initial successes of his campaign, Ormond's revolt came to a sudden end at the battle of Pilltown. The battle is described as follows,

'A day of battle was set between them. The earl of Ormond did not come to battle that day because it was the custom of the English not to give battle on a Monday nor after mid-day on other days. MacRichard came to fight the battle in defiance of the earl, and he came by himself. He and the FitzGerald's fought

¹⁹¹ *Stat. Ire. 1-12 Edw. IV*, pp 256-61, 280-3; *Cal. chart. rolls, 1416-1527*, pp 171-6

¹⁹² *N.H.I., ii*, p. 628; Nicholls, *Gaelic Ire.*, pp 163-4

a fierce and bloody fight and the Butlers were routed. Four hundred and ten of them were counted as being buried, besides those whom the dogs and wild animals devoured.¹⁹³

If the annalist has accurately portrayed the general outline of the events surrounding the battle, this entry raises more questions than it answers. Ormond's training as a soldier came in the last decade of the Hundred Year's War, which saw few pitched battles. Furthermore, set piece battles were extremely rare in medieval Ireland and if Pilltown was one, then it was the only one in the fifteenth century with Knockdoe in 1504 being the next one. Furthermore, in a country where custom and terrain favoured small lightly armed forces for raiding, Ormond's army was noted for its size.¹⁹⁴ Leaving aside the tendency of medieval annalists to exaggerate numbers, four hundred and ten is not a typical large round number, and may in fact be accurate. Even if one discounts the unburied and assumed a forty percent fatality rate in the battle and the rout, MacRichard had at least one thousand troops with him at Pilltown. Add to this figure the forces that stayed with Ormond, it is quite possible that Ormond had a force of some two thousand men under his command, an army comparable to those fighting in France in the last years of the Hundred Years War or the recent battles in England.¹⁹⁵

Faced with an army that large, Thomas of Desmond's decision to agree to a set piece battle is even more surprising. However, if the assertion that Ormond's army was one of the largest seen in Ireland that century is correct, then Desmond may actually have had no choice. Allied with the O'Briens, Ormond's army could possibly roll over Desmond's lordship without serious difficulty, so Desmond's least unpalatable option may have been to accept a time and place for battle and risk all on a single throw of the dice. The annalists description indicates that heralds were sent, possibly by Edmund MacRichard Butler to Desmond and it is more than possible that the herald's message was a taunt to Desmond to come and settle the issue of supremacy in Munster once and for all. Before one dismisses this action as an illustration of the Gaelicised nature of the

¹⁹³ *Ann. Conn. s.a.* 1462

¹⁹⁴ *ibid.* s.a. 1462; 'MacFirbis', s.a. 1462

¹⁹⁵ for a discussion of the armies that fought in France in the later phases of the Hundred Years War see A. Curry, 'English armies in the fifteenth century'

Anglo-Irish of Munster, we must consider a similar example that happened in England in 1470.

The Talbot-Berkeley feud had been smouldering in England for several decades and in 1470 resulted in the Battle of Nibley Green, the last private battle to be fought in England. Thomas Talbot, Lord Lisle sent a herald to William, Lord Berkeley saying,

'I marvel ye not come forth with all your carts of guns and bows and other ordnances...for I trust to God to meet you near home with Englishmen of my nation...I require you of knighthood and manhood to appoint a day to meet me half way, there to try between God and our two hands all out quarrel...or else at the same day bring the uttermost of thy power, and I shall meet thee.¹⁹⁶

If such a challenge could be sent in England in 1470, a similar one could have been sent in Ireland in 1462. It is apparent that Desmond accepted and both sides agreed to meet at Pilltown, near Carrick-on-Suir, a place that could 'scarcely be more convenient for both sides', with Butler territory to the north, east and west, and Geraldine lands just across the Suir to the south.¹⁹⁷

Desmond's chances of victory were greatly enhanced before the battle by dissension in the Butlers' ranks. As noted in the annal entry, Ormond refused to fight on the appointed day, retiring instead to an 'unpregnable stronghold', while his cousin went on to the appointed place.¹⁹⁸ Just where Ormond remained is unclear. The *Annals of the Four Masters* refers to a 'fortified town' and a modern writer has suggested that this was Dangan, co. Kilkenny, but this could stem from a misreading of the Irish phrase *i mbaile daingin*.¹⁹⁹ Without corroborating evidence, the location of Ormond's retreat must remain speculative. What caused this disastrous split in the Butlers' ranks is uncertain, but it is clear that it was Ormond, and not his cousin, who objected to fighting at Pilltown.

¹⁹⁶ J. Blow, 'Nibley Green 1470; The last private battle fought in England', p. 105

¹⁹⁷ G. Butler, 'The battle of Pilltown', p. 206-7

¹⁹⁸ 'MacFirbis', *s.a.* 1462

¹⁹⁹ *A.F.M.*, *s.a.* 1462; G. Butler, 'The battle of Pilltown', p. 205

As there are no other examples from the Hundred Years War to support the annalist's claim that the English did not fight on Mondays, one must conclude that this was the public reason given by Ormond to cover other concerns he had. He and MacRichard Butler probably disagreed on both strategy and tactics. It is also very likely that Ormond objected to MacRichard Butler's arrangement of a time and place for the battle but was forced to acquiesce once the arrangement had been made. Ormond's career as a soldier had taught him a style of warfare more suited to the battlefields of France and England than the more fluid style practised in Ireland. Knowing the strengths and weaknesses of his English troops, Ormond probably objected to either the choice of battlefield or the conditions of the day in question. On the strategic side, Ormond was fighting a war for his king and knew that a defeat would probably end any hope of a Lancastrian comeback. He was also waiting for reinforcements brought from England by his brother. Thomas Butler's involvement in the campaign is a conjecture based on annal entries in both *MacFirbis* and the *Annals of Connacht*, which state that

'a young kinsman [or brother] of the earl of Ormond met at sea four ships, belonging to the earl of Desmond's people, loaded with treasure and captured them. This capture greatly strengthened the Butlers'²⁰⁰

It seems clear that Thomas Butler continued to recruit troops in Scotland and England after his brother returned to Ireland and he clearly commanded a small fleet if he was able to capture four of Desmond's ships. Unfortunately, we have no evidence to support this tantalising glimpse of naval warfare in late medieval Ireland, not even whether Thomas' ships were English, Scottish or Irish in origin. For MacRichard Butler, the dynastic issues were less important than the need to secure the Butler lordship from attacks from Desmond. The Geraldines had raided into Tipperary and Kilkenny several times in his lifetime and he almost certainly wanted to return the favour. In some respects, the goals of the two men were incompatible.

Whatever the reason for the division between Ormond and his cousin, MacRichard and his supporters, including the O'Briens, left the

²⁰⁰ *Ann. Conn. s.a.* 1462; *'MacFirbis' s.a.* 1462

earl in his fortified town and went to meet Desmond.²⁰¹ The battle appears to have been fluid, moving from west to east, with MacRichard's forces making their final stand at the bridge over the river Pill, according to local tradition, before breaking and fleeing over the Walsh mountains.²⁰² The entry in the *Annals of Connacht* states that the battle was 'fierce and bloody' and the reported death toll seems to support this. It would seem that no quarter was asked or given, nor was it a one-sided affair. MacRichard Butler apparently gave Desmond a serious challenge and, in all likelihood, the presence of Ormond and his troops would have turned the tide against Desmond.

The defeat at Pilltown effectively ended any hope of establishing a Lancastrian base in Ireland. The Irish Butlers were defeated and without them, Ormond did not have enough support to make a credible threat to the *status quo*. After the battle, Desmond led a massive raid into Ormond territory on a scale unheard of for twenty years. He sacked the towns of southern Kilkenny before moving north to sack Kilkenny itself. The only exception to this bleak picture was that Desmond could not take the town which Ormond and his troops had made their base.²⁰³ At the same time, the city of Waterford took the opportunity to remove itself from Butler control and protest its loyalty to the king. Although there was virtually no hope of success, Ormond did not give up after Pilltown and succeeded in making himself a problem throughout the winter of 1462/3.

Ormond, his brother, and the heads of the junior branches of the Butler family were all attainted at a parliament held at Dublin from 15 October 1462.²⁰⁴ Ormond's failure to surrender to the authorities is underlined in the act as it says that he and his family 'have adhered and from day to day continue to adhere to a great multitude of enemies of our said lord the king.' It is clear that Ormond retained some degree of support from the people of his lordship, because without that support he could not have remained at large for more than two years after the defeat at

²⁰¹ M. Dillon, 'Laud Mss 610', vi, p.151, no. lxxxiv

²⁰² G. Butler, 'The battle of Pilltown', p. 207-8; W. Carrigan, *History and antiquity of the diocese of Ossory*, p. 223

²⁰³ *Ann. Conn. s.a.* 1462

²⁰⁴ *Stat. Ire. 1-12 Edw. IV*, p. 27

Pilltown. Ormond retained the support of the Butler lordship because he was the head of the Butler family and the earl of Ormond and the strength of those ties can not be underestimated. Ormond entered a shadowy world where he was considered a lord by his people but could not perform the protective functions of a lord because he was considered an outlaw by the authorities.

Although the threat of a serious Butler revolt faded after the summer of 1462, the Dublin administration started to bring pressure to bear on the heads of the junior branches of the Butler family. The attainder passed by the Irish parliament repeated the attainders passed in the English parliament of November 1461 and extended them to include Edmund MacRichard Butler, Edmund MacPiers Butler of Dunboyne and Piers fitz James Butler of Cahir. Attainders were nothing new to these men, as both Edmunds had been attainted at least once in the previous decade.²⁰⁵ While it is futile to distinguish between degrees of seriousness when considering attainders, there was a subtle difference between these earlier attainders and the one passed in 1462. The earlier attainder resulted from Butler activities within the Irish lordship that had no real implication for the king of England. They were treasonous actions but they were largely offences against the rights of the crown and, as such, the offenders could reasonably expect them to be reversed in the next parliament. The attainder of 1462 was different in that it directly touched the king's person and the heads of the junior Butler families were guilty of supporting a rebellion aimed at removing the king from his throne. Forgiveness for this offence would be much harder to obtain.

Edmund MacRichard and his peers were placed in the difficult place of having to choose between their loyalty to their lord and head of their family and their loyalty to the king. It is a measure of the difficult nature of this choice and the fact that direct ties to their earl came first, that there is no sign of a reconciliation with the crown until after Ormond went into exile in August 1464. However, their ties of loyalty and kinship were balanced by the demands of their immediate families and the need to defend and protect their own lands from threats, both Anglo-Irish and Gaelic. In the end, Ormond's decision to join the Lancastrians in exile on the continent probably had as much to do with the realisation that his

²⁰⁵ *Stat. Ire. Hen VI*, pp 360-5, 734-41

presence in Ireland actually harmed his lordship as it did with the acceptance that further rebellion in Ireland was futile. But it still took him two years to come to that decision.

Those two years coincided with the first two years of Desmond's period as deputy lieutenant. Desmond had varying amounts of success as chief governor and is indicative of the continuing cultural divisions in the Irish lordship. Despite initial successes, he proved to be too Gaelic for the inhabitants of the Pale and was eventually replaced by an English deputy, John Tiptoft, earl of Worcester.²⁰⁶ Two of Desmond's initial successes involved the containment of two rebellions, one in Meath that has been linked to the Butler revolt, and the other being the continued suppression of Ormond's activities in Kilkenny. The problem faced by Desmond in Meath was the 'insurrection of 5,000 of the commons of Meath' led by Philip de Bermingham. The rising was short lived and ended 'without hurt to any person' when Desmond took 'the said commons to the king's grace, binding the captain...by his oath to be true to the king.'²⁰⁷

Despite the regular connection of this insurrection with the ongoing Butler problem by modern historians, it appears to have nothing to do whatsoever with the deputy's ongoing problems in Kilkenny.²⁰⁸ This confusion is understandable given the nature of the 'glowing testimonial' sent by the Irish parliament on behalf of Desmond on 24 February 1464.²⁰⁹ The letter covers events spread over four years and the Meath insurrection is sandwiched between two entries regarding the Butlers. Despite this apparent connection, the problems in Meath had nothing to do with Ormond and everything to do with Desmond as deputy lieutenant and should be considered in the light of the ongoing confrontation between Desmond and William Sherwood, bishop of Meath.

²⁰⁶ The best study of Desmond's difficulties as chief governor is still A. Cosgrove, 'The execution of the earl of Desmond'

²⁰⁷ *Stat. Ire. 1-12 Edw. IV*, p. 182; *N.H.I.*, ii, p. 599

²⁰⁸ Curtis, *Med. Ire.*, p. 326; Lydon, *Lordship*, p. 269; *N.H.I.*, ii, p. 599

²⁰⁹ A. Cosgrove, 'The execution of the earl of Desmond', p. 19

After pacifying the commons of Meath, Desmond turned south to deal with Ormond. Although full of exaggerations the letter of the Irish parliament to the king gives an indication of the difficulties faced by Desmond in Kilkenny. The letter speaks of 'great and continual war' throughout the summer of 1463. While the deputy was 'as long in the country as pleased him' he still needed '20,000 men' for the task of 'brandyng, wastyng and destroying by cause thinhabitauntz of the said country the parties that wold not doo oubeisaunce' to the king.²¹⁰ While the 20,000 men is an exaggeration of a factor of at least ten, the very size of the number only serves to underline the perceived seriousness of the situation and the extent of Desmond's service in removing the threat. Presumably Desmond took no chances and gathered together the largest force possible 'at his own proper cost' but the actual composition of the force is unclear. It was definitely a mixed force of Anglo-Irish and Gaelic troops as Conn O'Connor Faly was later deemed 'to have kept his peace to the said county of Meath and performed his service to the king in Kilkenny' after several of the Pale gentry bought O'Connor Faly hostages from the de Berminghams.²¹¹

Desmond's campaign in Kilkenny in 1463 marked the real end of Ormond's revolt. The Butlers proved unable to hold off the deputy's forces and even had they been able to achieve a stunning success, Edward IV was now in effective control of all of England and Wales.²¹² The king had followed a policy of reconciliation wherever possible and had achieved some notable successes. Henry VI's supporters fell into three groups; those willing to put aside their loyalties to Henry VI and make a permanent peace, those who submitted temporarily, and those who refused to consider accommodating Edward IV and preferred exile to the betrayal of their oaths to Henry VI.²¹³

Ormond and his brother fell into the third group. After Pilltown, Thomas Butler returned to Queen Margaret's court-in-exile in Scotland

²¹⁰ *Stat. Ire. 1-12 Edw. IV*, pp 182-3

²¹¹ *ibid.*, pp 176-9; For a discussion of the O'Connor Faly lordship in this period see C. Ó Cléirigh, 'The O'Connor Faly Lordship'

²¹² see C.D. Ross, *Edward IV*, pp 51-63; J. Lander, *Government and community*, pp 233-6

²¹³ see M. Hicks, 'Edward IV, the duke of Somerset and Lancastrian loyalism in the north'

and was with her when she crossed to Sluys in July 1463.²¹⁴ Ormond, for his part, remained in Ireland until at least 17 August 1464 before sailing for Portugal and a continental exile that would last for more than six years.²¹⁵ Before he left, Ormond attempted to set affairs in order and ensure the smooth functioning of his lordship. Although his dispositions had little or no legal merit, the loyalty shown by his cousins indicates that his wishes would be carried out. Ormond generally returned to the policy started by his father in the 1440s and divided the functions of the earl between the junior branches of the family, attempting to avoid allowing any one branch becoming too powerful. As Edmund MacRichard had died during the summer of 1464, Ormond appointed the son of this 'most esteemed and renowned of the Galls of Ireland' as his deputy.²¹⁶ However, this position of deputy did not extend to the administration of the liberty of Tipperary, as Ormond had already made Edmund Butler of Dunboyne the seneschal of the liberty on 7 July 1463.²¹⁷ Ormond refused to accept the validity of his attainder and the resumption of his liberty but even he could see that if he was forced into exile the administration would put the attainder into effect. By appointing Edmund Butler as his seneschal, Ormond was showing that he expected his kinsman to continue to serve and protect the Ormond lordship to the best of the ability and it is clear that his wishes were carried out. Edmund Butler continued to act as the seneschal of the liberty until his own attainder was reversed and then continued much in the same role, serving as the sheriff of the royal county of Tipperary from 1466.

Intentionally or not, Ormond's decisions only served to highlight the different nature of his authority in Kilkenny and Tipperary and served to underline the differing statuses of the junior branches of the family. In Kilkenny, which was theoretically a royal county, Ormond's authority rested first and foremost on the traditional base of his landed wealth. By making James fitz Edmund Butler his deputy, Ormond ensured that the MacRichard Butlers would remain the pre-eminent branch of the family in Ireland. As the earl's deputy, James Butler was to administer the

²¹⁴ B. Wollfe, *Henry VI*, p. 335

²¹⁵ *Ormond deeds, 1413-1509*, no. 229, p. 204

²¹⁶ *Ann. Conn. s.a.*, 1464

²¹⁷ *Cal. Carew MSS, Book of Howth and misc.*, p. 445

demesne lands of the lordship and generally act in the earl's place in the affairs of the lordship.²¹⁸ In Tipperary, on the other hand, the earl's landed wealth was only on a par with the other branches of the family, but his authority also rested on the mechanisms of government of the liberty, which were passed to Edmund Butler of Dunboyne. This dichotomy between the halves of the Ormond lordship would become important in later decades.

Ormond also seems to have attempted to reward past service by granting one of his servants Kilcollum castle, which the servant held until dispossessed by Piers Ruadh Butler c.1500.²¹⁹ He also tried to remove a point of tension between the MacRichard Butlers and the Butlers of Cahir. The two families had come to blows in the 1440s over the possession of the town of Carrickmacgriffon (Carrick-on-Suir), and Ormond tried to end these conflicts by granting the town to Piers fitz James Butler of Cahir.²²⁰ His efforts were generally successful as the two families did not come into conflict for another two decades.

Ormond was in Kilkenny on 17 August 1464 but took ship for Portugal soon afterwards, arriving sometime before 24 September 1464.²²¹ Why he chose to sail to Portugal is unclear, but his intention was to join the Lancastrian court in France as soon as possible. One of his first acts was to write to Sir John Fortesque, who was acting as the queen's chancellor, to ask for a letter of safe conduct from Louis XI. The plight of the exile's court is shown in Fortesque's reply. By December 1464, the queen and her courtiers had come to St. Michael in Barr and were living off the generosity of Louis XI. Fortesque's letter paints a picture of genteel poverty saying 'the queen sustaineth us in meat and drink so we beith not in great necessity' but also he counseled Ormond 'to spend sparely such money as you have for when you come hither you shall have need of it'. In a piece of personal news, Fortesque notes that Ormond's brother, Thomas, was among the queen's company at St. Michael. On the matter of the safe conduct Fortesque was less hopeful. He did send letters of safe conduct

²¹⁸ *Cal. Carew MSS, Book of Howth and misc.*, p. 204, no. 229

²¹⁹ *Ormond deeds, 1509-1547*, app. no. 53, p 345

²²⁰ *Ormond deeds, 1413-1509*, no. 271, pp 260-1

²²¹ J. Fortesque, *The works of Sir John Fortesque, knight*, p. 24

from queen Margaret, but warned Ormond 'not to trust firmly thereupon'. Fortesque noted that Edmund Beaufort, the self-styled duke of Somerset, had ridden across France without being molested, but felt that since Butler had to pass through Languedoc and Guyenne, he should have some form of protection. In the end, he left the matter up to Ormond because he felt that he did not know 'the manner of this country as you do.'²²²

The queen and Fortesque also decided that while Ormond was in Portugal he could serve as the Lancastrian ambassador to the Portuguese court, to sound out the king's willingness to support the Lancastrian cause. With Fortesque's letter to Ormond came letters from the prince of Wales to Ormond and to the king of Portugal and diplomatic instructions on how Ormond and Master Robert Targe were to approach the Portuguese. These instructions were calculated to draw upon the king's connections to the house of Lancaster, his good relations with Henry VI and his contacts throughout the courts of Europe in order to gain his support for an invasion of England. Ormond was to assure the king that Edward IV ruled through 'fear and tyranny' and that the queen and Fortesque had the authority to bind the English realm for the payment of the 3,000 men he was asked to supply. Finally, Ormond was to ask the king to write to the emperor, the king of Castille, the pope and the college of Cardinals to intercede on behalf of Henry VI.²²³

There is some question whether these instructions ever actually reached Ormond. They are preserved in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris, which could indicate that they were intercepted en route to Portugal by spies of Louis XI.²²⁴ Even if they did reach Ormond, it is doubtful whether he could have done anything with them. The Portuguese king, Alphonso V, was not prepared to end a centuries old alliance with England for the sake of a deposed king, even if he was a close relative. Eventually, Ormond did leave Portugal for France, where the poverty of the queen's court forced him to ply the only trade he ever had, soldier, and joined a group of exiles in the service of Charles, count of Charolais. Ormond remained in his service after the count succeeded his father as

²²² J. Fortesque, *The works of Sir John Fortesque, knight*, pp 23-5

²²³ *ibid.*, pp 25-8

²²⁴ C. Scofield, *The life and reign of Edward IV*, i, p. 371

duke of Burgundy in June 1467 and was active in the duke's campaigns in the autumn of that year.²²⁵ Ormond found several prominent men of similar backgrounds in the count's service, the most prominent being Edmund Beaufort, the self styled duke of Somerset, his brother, John, Henry Holland, duke of Exeter. Like Ormond, these prominent Lancastrians refused to accommodate Edward IV and had been stripped of their lands and titles. Charolais probably used the English expatriates as mercenaries in his War of the Public Weal and continued to give them a home, even as his relations with Edward IV became closer and closer. The duke diplomatically sent them away when he married Margaret of York and again when the earl of Warwick visited in May 1469 but let them return after these occasions.²²⁶

The Burgundian group of Lancastrian exiles were generally separate from the group that formed the queen's court-in-exile, with a different set of goals and aspirations. They remained loyal to Henry VI and the Lancastrian dynasty but, unlike the queen and her followers, they were not willing to pay any price to have Henry VI restored to his throne. On the other hand, Queen Margaret and Fortesque were willing to make a 'nauseating bargain' with Warwick and the duke of Clarence in order to regain the throne.²²⁷ However, the settlement negotiated in the treaty of Angers was incredibly difficult for many Lancastrians to accept. Warwick's support for the restoration of Henry VI was its greatest strength but was also its greatest weakness. His presence alienated many, Lancastrian and Yorkist alike, making it difficult for the restored government of Henry VI to gain the support it needed.

The invasion of England was accomplished by an alliance of Louis XI, Warwick and Queen Margaret, and was completed without the knowledge of the exiles in the Burgundian court. Indeed, the first they heard of events in England was that Edward IV and his brother, Richard, duke of Gloucester, had arrived penniless in Holland and had been

²²⁵ M. Jones & M. Underwood, *The king's mother; Lady Margaret Beaufort, countess of Richmond and Derby*, p. 61

²²⁶ R. Vaugh, *Charles the Bold*, p. 61

²²⁷ J. Lander, *Community and government*, p. 262. For the negotiations surrounding Warwick's attempted coup and his negotiations with Queen Margaret, see C. D. Ross, *Edward IV*, pp 126-60; J. Lander, *Community and government*, pp. 249-66; M. Hicks, *False, Fleeting Perjur'd Clarence*, pp 52-103

welcomed by the lord of Gruthuse.²²⁸ In all probability, there were mixed feeling among the Lancastrians in Burgundy at this news; joy at the restoration of Henry VI, mixed with despair at the prominent role played by Warwick. The duke himself was probably content with the news because he had protected the Lancastrian exiles and expected to come to an arrangement with the new regime. However, despite his affection for the Lancastrians he was soon forced to support Edward IV because of Warwick's policy towards France.

If Ormond's reaction was any indication, the Burgundian exiles were extremely slow to come to terms with the new regime, and especially with Warwick's prominent place within it. As late as 19 January 1471, Butler was being urged to 'put out of your heart all hate and rancour towards him [Warwick] and bear him love and benevolence and friendship.'²²⁹ The author of this letter is one of the more interesting mysteries surrounding Ormond. The writer signs himself Fernando dela Corignon, addresses Ormond as 'mon pere el conte Dalshire et Dormond', and asks to be remembered to 'Master Thomas, your brother'. Clearly, there is a personal connection between Ormond and dela Corignon but what this connection was is unclear. He may be another illegitimate son or possibly the husband of an unknown illegitimate daughter of Ormond's. His name is more Iberian than French, but he could not have been born while Ormond was in Portugal. The most likely explanation is that he was born of a Portuguese mother while Ormond was in France in the late 1440s. He may even have been the reason Ormond went to Portugal in the first place. Dela Corignon then probably followed his father to France, hoping for a position in the queen's court.

Ormond, Exeter, Somerset, and Pembroke remained aloof from the new regime until they returned to England in February 1471.²³⁰ Although most of the record of this period were destroyed by the Yorkists after 1471, a reasonably clear picture can be gleaned from the chronicles. A parliament was summoned on 26 November 1470 and met in February, but attendance was sparse as the country waited to see what would happen

²²⁸ P. de Commynes, *Memoirs*, pp. 189-90

²²⁹ J. Bain, 'Notes on an original letter referring to Edward IV', p. 65-6

²³⁰ C. D. Ross, *Edward IV*, p. 156; 'Warkworth's chronicle', p. 13

next. Clearly, one of the first acts of the new regime was to reverse the attainders passed by the parliament of 1461, but that was about as far as they got. The issue of the attainders underlines the problems faced by the returning Lancastrians. After a decade in exile, they expected that Edward IV's supporters would be treated in the same fashion as they had been and that rewards would come from the confiscated lands of the attainted. However, the very people who should have been attainted, namely Warwick and Clarence, were vital to the new regime. In the end the only people attainted were Edward IV and Gloucester and the only Yorkist to be executed was John Tiptoft, earl of Worcester, the 'Butcher of England'.²³¹ The returning Lancastrian loyalists had to be satisfied with a restoration of name and title. A restoration of lands would complicate matters too much. Ormond's case is highly illustrative of the problem.

Although Edward IV had pursued a policy of reconciliation where he could, he was equally prepared to use the full weight of the law against those Lancastrians that did not recognise him as king.²³² He attainted 113 Lancastrians in his first parliament, giving himself the 'most magnificent accretion of landed revenue in the middle ages'.²³³ Although he initially used a network of auditors to manage this windfall, he started to use them to reward his supporters by August 1462, and the windfall was gone by 1466.²³⁴ Wiltshire's lands went to long standing Yorkists, neutrals, relatives, Warwick, supporters of Warwick, and a large part of Wiltshire's landed wealth in England ended up in the hands of the duke of Clarence. In dispersing these lands, Edward IV had created a huge vested interest in his government that the restored Lancastrians could not afford to ignore. The restoration of Ormond's lands alone would have alienated Warwick, Clarence, Henry Bourghier, earl of Essex, and Lords Audely and Ferrers. While these men would have survived the loss of these lands, lesser men like Sir Walter Wrottesley and Richard Fowler would be greatly harmed by any restoration. To a large extent, the restored Lancastrian government

²³¹ C. D. Ross, *Edward IV*, p. 155

²³² J. Lander, 'Attainder and forfeiture', p. 133

²³³ C. D. Ross, 'The reign of Edward IV' in S.B. Chrimes *et al.* (eds.) *Fifteenth century England*, p. 55

²³⁴ B. Wolffe, *The crown lands*, pp 54-9

fell because it could neither reward its long time supporters nor purchase the support of the neutrals, as Edward IV had done with his land windfall.

The coalition that brought Henry VI back to the throne proved to be extremely fragile and fell apart at the first serious challenge from Edward IV in the spring of 1471. From his landing at Ravenspur on 14 March 1471 to the battle of Barnet, Edward IV was favoured by the neutrality of the kingdom, the active support of a few Yorkist lords and the defection of Clarence.²³⁵ Edward IV emerged from the campaign of 1471 with an unchallenged grip on the throne. Warwick was killed in the battle of Barnet, where Edward captured Henry VI, and the remaining Lancastrian forces were decisively defeated at Tewkesbury. The deaths of the prince of Wales, Edmund and John Beaufort virtually eliminated all the Lancastrian claimants to the throne. With his dynasty secured by the birth of an heir while he was in exile, Edward IV was now the undisputed master of his realm. This also meant that the Butlers had little choice but to bow to the inevitable and come to terms with the Yorkist king. Wiltshire's career had proven that an Irish earl could play a vital role in English politics. The loyalty shown by Wiltshire and his brothers to the Lancastrian cause also serves to underline the central political question of the day, but with no Lancastrians to remain loyal to, Ormond and his brother, Thomas, now had to face the challenge of re-building the fortunes of their family.

The career of the earl of Wiltshire in the 1450s serves to underline the fact that there was little or no bar to the participation of a magnate of Anglo-Irish extraction in the politics of England. At the highest levels of society the growing distinctiveness and separation between the English and the Anglo-Irish was simply not a factor, as the relatively open nature of the English magnate community allowed even a newcomer like Wiltshire to play an active role in the politics of the day. Nevertheless, Wiltshire's career also serves underline the problems faced by a first or second generation magnate in England, where the magnate's family did not have a long-standing connection with a locality. Despite Wiltshire's obvious successes, a study of his career shows him to have been highly dependent on royal favour and generally lacking in a regional power base

²³⁵ see C.D. Ross, *Edward IV*, pp 161-77; J. R. Lander, *Community and government*, pp 266-78; M. Hicks, *False, Fleeting, Perjur'd Clarence*, pp 104-9

upon which he could fall back when out of favour at court. Furthermore, his attempts to create such a regional base, either in the midlands or in the south-west, tended to draw him into conflict with pre-existing regional magnates and played a role in furthering the factional disputes of the 1450s.

Wiltshire's dependence on royal favour, or at least the favour of whichever magnate dominated the government during the latter years of Henry VI's reign, coupled with his own ambitious nature made him one of the more dedicated supporters of the Lancastrian dynasty, although he was far from the only magnate to support Henry VI. Nevertheless, Wiltshire's place at court, coupled with his consistent opposition to the duke of York and inclusion in the list of mortal enemies of the Yorkist faction, led to his execution as one of the irreconcilable Lancastrians. Wiltshire's death ended the chance for an expansion of the Ormond lordship into England, but his brothers continued to support the Lancastrian cause throughout the lifetime of Henry VI.

The attempt of John, sixth earl of Ormond, to lead a rebellion in Ireland in the hope of securing a pro-Lancastrian base in Ireland clearly shows the strategic importance of Ireland in the politics of England. However, the support of the junior branches of the Butler family for Ormond's rebellion also serves to highlight the fact that their participation in the revolt was due more to their sense of obedience and loyalty to the head of their *natio* than it was from a sincere desire to restore Henry VI to his throne. Although Ormond tried to secure his lordship before he went into exile, his departure from Ireland started a long period of absenteeism that would force the Ormond lordship to adapt to the reality of a non-resident earl.

Chapter 5: The Butlers in Ireland, 1465-1515

Set against the restoration of the earls of Ormond and the lawful recovery of their landed wealth in England by Thomas Butler, seventh earl of Ormond, the history of the Butlers in Ireland in the same period appears disturbed and chaotic. However, if this is the case, it has to be remembered that a large part of that disturbance was caused by the king and the earl of Ormond themselves in the 1490s. When John Butler, sixth earl of Ormond, went into exile in the fall of 1464, his kinsmen were left in Ireland to come to terms with the after effects of his failed rebellion. The heads of each of the junior branches of the Butler family had to make decisions concerning their place in the lordship of Ireland and their relationship with the king, his government in Ireland and, not least, the earl of Ormond. These decisions, combined with the restoration of the earls of Ormond in England allowed an equilibrium to form within the Butler lordship. However, this equilibrium was dependent on all of the branches of the family agreeing on their respective roles within the lordship and was seriously upset in the 1490s as part of the king's measures to block the threat of the pretender, Perkin Warbeck. As a result of Ormond's attempts to reassert his ability to appoint his own deputy within his lordship, a new equilibrium emerged in the first decade of the sixteenth century as Piers Butler worked to secure his position as the earl's heir in Ireland.

The first of Ormond's kinsmen to seek reconciliation with the Dublin administration after he left for exile in Portugal in 1464, was Edmund fitz James Butler of Dunboyne. Like all of the Butlers in Ireland, Edmund fitz James had supported Ormond's attempts to establish a pro-Lancastrian regime in Ireland but his support, again like that of the other Butlers, appears to have come more from his obligation to support the earl than from any real bias in favour of the Lancastrians. In real terms, all Edmund fitz James had achieved with his support of the earl had been a new attainder in the Irish parliament. 'Edmund Butler, son to Piers Butler' was attainted with the rest of the Butlers in January 1463, undoing the

pardon he had received in June 1460.¹ The use of the patronymic fitz Piers or Mac Piarais or Pierson was common throughout Edmund fitz James' lifetime and he himself used it on more than one occasion when writing to the earl of Ormond.²

The activities of Edmund fitz James after his attainder in January 1463 are somewhat unclear, although he continued to support Ormond. Once Ormond had left the country, Edmund fitz James' attention turned to regaining his patrimony. With the exception of the earls of Ormond, the Butlers of Dunboyne were the only branch of the family that held lands in the Pale, within the effective reach of the Dublin administration. Edmund fitz James' patrimony centred on the manors of Dunboyne and Moymett in Meath and these manors had been granted to Roland FitzEustace in January 1462.³ However, the validity of this grant was somewhat questionable because Edmund fitz James was not an outlaw in January 1462 and the manors appeared to still be in the king's hands in October 1465. In addition to his desire to regain his patrimony, Edmund fitz James' responsibilities as seneschal of the liberty of Tipperary made it incumbent upon him to attempt to maintain order for the absentee earl, even if the liberty of Tipperary no longer existed.

The surest way for Edmund fitz James Butler to regain his position within the Anglo-Irish community was to secure the support of a patron and to assist in the deputy lieutenant's campaigns against the Gaelic lords surrounding the Pale. For the first, Butler secured the patronage of Thomas fitz Maurice, earl of Kildare. Edmund fitz James gave Kildare an annuity, which was confirmed in the parliament of 1465, of 10 marks for 'the support and defence...of myself and my tenants', thereby recognising Kildare's dominance in the region around Dublin.⁴ Kildare's support was apparently enough as Edmund fitz James Butler of Dunboyne, alias 'Edmund Pierce's son', in consideration of 'good and voluntary services' was pardoned of all 'manner of treasons, felonies robberies and

¹ *Stat. Ire. 1-12 Edw. IV*, p. 27

² e.g. *Ormond deeds, 1509-47*, app. no. 11, pp 317-18

³ *Cal. pat rolls, 1461-7*, p. 117

⁴ *Stat. Ire. 1-12 Edw. IV*, pp 303, 305

extortions'.⁵ The good and voluntary services were not enumerated but were almost certainly military services against the Gaelic lords of the midlands and Butler continued to serve the king over the next few years. Butler undoubtedly served in Desmond's annual campaigns against the O'Connor Faly's in the 1460s and may have been present at Desmond's disastrous defeat at the hands of Conn O'Connor Faly in 1466.⁶ He definitely participated in Desmond's campaigns in 1467 as he was given a life grant of the manor of Castlericard, co. Meath, on 22 February 1468 for 'his services in the wars of Ireland and especially the taking of Conn O'Connor Faly, captain of his nation'.⁷ He was further rewarded on 27 February 1468 with two grants traditionally held by the earl of Ormond. An annuity of £10 from the fee farm of Waterford and the prise of wines in the ports of Limerick, Cork, Ross, Youghal, Galway, Kinsale, Dungarvan and Dingle.⁸ Unfortunately for Edmund Butler, the grant of the prise of wines in the ports of Munster did not last beyond 31 August 1468, when the king granted it to James fitz Thomas, eighth earl of Desmond, in an attempt to smooth over relations with the Geraldines of Munster in the aftermath of the execution of his father.⁹

The execution of the earl of Desmond sent shock waves through the lordship of Ireland but the Butlers actually benefited from the disturbances that followed. Desmond had served as deputy lieutenant since 1 April 1463 but his lieutenancy had always laboured under the accusations of "Gaelicness" made by the men of the Pale.¹⁰ His defeat and capture by Conn O'Connor Faly in 1466 only served to underline his inability to stem a growing sense of disorder in the lordship and the king sent a replacement, John Tiptoft, earl of Worcester, to restore royal control of the lordship. Worcester already had a reputation for extreme severity in England and used the same methods in Ireland. Kildare, Desmond and Sir

⁵ *Stat. Ire. 1-12 Edw. IV*, pp 307, 309

⁶ *A.F.M. s.a.* 1466

⁷ *Cal. Carew Mss, Book of Howth and misc.*, p. 355

⁸ *ibid.*, pp 354-5

⁹ A. Cosgrove, 'The execution of the earl of Desmond, 1468', p. 24

¹⁰ for a fuller account of Desmond's lieutenancy see A. Cosgrove, 'The execution of the earl of Desmond, 1468', pp. 11-27

Edward Plunkett were arrested, attainted and imprisoned on 4 February 1468 and Desmond was executed on 15 February.¹¹ Desmond's execution had effects within the Irish lordship far beyond Worcester's expectations, proving that English methods did not always achieve results in Ireland.

Desmond's brother, Garret, who had been captured by Ormond in Waterford in 1462, immediately began to raid into Meath to avenge his brother.¹² Garret of Desmond was joined by his brother-in-law, Tadhg O'Connor Faly, who was seeking to enhance his own position within the O'Connor Faly lordship.¹³ In turn, they were joined by Kildare and Roland FitzEustace, Lord Portlester, who had freed Kildare from his imprisonment and had been accused of inciting Desmond to declare himself king of Ireland.¹⁴ Worcester's immediate reaction was to invade into the O'Connor Faly lordship in May 1468 in an attempt to punish the O'Connor Falys and to recapture Kildare but failed to achieve anything by this.¹⁵ Not only did Worcester have to face the alliance of Gerald of Desmond but also faced renewed aggression from the O'Neills against the earldom of Ulster.¹⁶ By June 1468, Worcester had bowed to the inevitable and adopted a new policy based on reconciliation with the great Anglo-Irish magnate and, to a lesser extent, the Gaelic magnates as well.

To achieve this reconciliation, Worcester had to end any thoughts he may have had of crushing the Anglo-Irish community into submission and attempt to work with them instead. Worcester appears to have been ruthless even by English standards, but the events of 1468 proved that the Dublin administration did not have the resources to dominate the lordship of Ireland by fear and military force alone. To extend the control of the king over his Irish lordship, the chief governor needed the cooperation of the Anglo-Irish community, especially the great magnates. To facilitate this cooperation, the attainder against Portlester was quietly

¹¹ *Stat. Ire. 1-12 Edw. IV*, pp 465, 467

¹² B. Ó Cuiv, 'A fragment of Irish annals', pp 93, 97

¹³ *A.F.M., s.a. 1466*; C. Ó Cléirigh, 'The O'Connor Faly lordship of Offaly, 1395-1513', p. 97

¹⁴ *Stat. Ire. 1-12 Edw. IV*, pp 537, 575

¹⁵ J. Gilbert (ed.), *Calendar of ancient records of Dublin*, i, p. 328

¹⁶ I. Thornley, *England under the Yorkists*, pp 256-9

dropped when his accuser failed to appear before parliament on the appointed day.¹⁷ The attainder against Kildare was reversed on 26 July 1468, but he did not escape totally unscathed from his alliance with Garret of Desmond. He had to find mainpernors for a bond of 1000 marks and while he was restored to his name, honour and lands, this did not extend to the manors of Oughterard, Oughterany, Clintonscourt and Castlewarden.¹⁸ However, as these were Butler manors that Kildare had acquired since 1461, their seizure was hardly a heavy price to pay. Worcester completely failed to repair relations with the Geraldines of Munster. The king and the administration in Dublin recognised James fitz Thomas as the rightful earl of Desmond and attainted Garret of Desmond on 3 October 1468 but could do little beyond this.¹⁹ The new earl was left to fend off the attacks of his uncle, Garrett, who attempted to usurp the earldom, by himself. Once he had accomplished this, Desmond turned his back on the affairs of the English lordship in Ireland, preferring to concentrate on his own lordship in Munster. Sixteen years later in 1484, Richard III was still trying to reconcile Desmond and persuade him to take an oath of allegiance. In a letter to Desmond the king admitted that the execution of his father had been 'against all manhood, reason and good conscience.'²⁰ Nevertheless, this attempt failed and the earldom of Desmond would continue to pilot its own course until the 1540s.

The MacRichard Butlers also benefited from Worcester's change of policy in the summer of 1468. Like Edmund fitz James Butler of Dunboyne, Edmund MacRichard Butler had been attainted for his support of Ormond's rebellion from 1462-4.²¹ Edmund MacRichard, 'the most notable and famous English chieftain in Ireland' died in the summer of 1464, leaving his eldest son, James, as the head of his branch of the Butler family.²² Ormond recognised the position held by James fitz Edmund

¹⁷ *Stat. Ire. 1-12 Edw. IV*, p. 573

¹⁸ *ibid.*, p. 587

¹⁹ *ibid.*, p. 617

²⁰ *L. & P. Rich. III & Hen. VII*, i, pp 67-70

²¹ *Stat. Ire. 1-12 Edw. IV*, p. 27

²² 'MacFirbis', *s.a.* 1464

within the Butler family before he went into exile when he made James fitz Edmund his deputy in Ireland on 17 August 1464.²³

The Dublin administration appears to have been much less willing to rehabilitate the family of Edmund MacRichard than it was to restore Edmund Butler of Dunboyne. Nevertheless, by February 1468, Worcester was willing to restore James fitz Edmund Butler, probably because extending the attainder further served no real purpose.²⁴ The administration could not control the Butlers within the Ormond lordship except by regular military intervention and this only served to devastate the country further. In the aftermath of the execution of the earl of Desmond, Worcester needed all the allies he could muster and he turned to the Butlers for aid in securing peace in the lordship. On 9 December 1468, Edmund fitz James Butler of Dunboyne and James fitz Edmund Butler were given a commission to treat with the king's Irish enemies and English rebels.²⁵ The commission gave the two men a wide ranging brief from the lieutenant, the duke of Clarence, with power to negotiate in the king's name and then report back to Worcester for approval. The newly rehabilitated earl of Kildare was also called upon to 'make the Irishmen of Leinster to be at peace according to his power' as part of the reversal of his attainder.²⁶

The Butlers and the earl of Kildare were apparently successful in their attempts to secure peace, allowing Worcester to concentrate on the protection of the remnants of the earldom of Ulster for the rest of his period as deputy lieutenant. Worcester, for his part, was willing to reward the Butlers for their efforts and let them return to the task of restoring the Ormond lordship. On 11 September 1469, James fitz Edmund Butler was granted the manors of Donaghmore and Blakecastle in Meath 'to hold until John, son of James, earl of Ormond, returned to the king's peace'.²⁷

²³ *Ormond deeds, 1413-1509*, no. 229, p. 204

²⁴ *Stat. Ire. 1-12 Edw. IV*, pp 487, 489

²⁵ N.L.I. D1805; *Ormond deeds, 1413-1509*, no. 232, pp 209-10. In the calendar the names are given as 'James and Edmond Butler, sons of Peter Butler' but in the original the Latin reads *Jacobo Boteler et Edmundo Boteler, filio Petri Boteler*.

²⁶ *Stat. Ire. 1-12 Edw. IV*, p. 587

²⁷ N.A.I., Ferguson Collectanea, 2/446/2, no. 16, f. 224

Edmund Butler of Dunboyne was rewarded with an annuity of £10 'for his services in the wars of Ireland'.²⁸

Once they had been rehabilitated, the Butlers generally withdrew into the Ormond lordship and played little role in the affairs of the administration in Dublin. They did not turn their back on the king's lordship of Ireland as did the Geraldines of Munster, but the affairs of the Ormond lordship appear to have interested them more. However, when the pre-existing patterns within the Butler family and the Ormond lordship began to re-establish themselves in the 1470s, they did so with a crucial element that had not existed in the 1440s and 1450s, namely the realisation on the part of all the Butlers in Ireland that the likelihood of an earl of Ormond returning to Ireland to assert his lordship over his patrimony was increasingly small.

To make matters worse, a new generation of Butlers was emerging to whom this was the normal state of affairs. By 1480, there had been no resident earl of Ormond in the lordship for almost thirty years, forty if one includes the White Earl's third lieutenancy, his absence in London from September 1444 to the winter of 1448, and his service as deputy lieutenant to the duke of York. With the exception of Edmund fitz James Butler of Dunboyne, the leaders of the Butler family in the 1470s and 1480s knew the earl of Ormond only as a distant figure of authority, to be respected in the same way that the king was to be respected, but who was of little importance in the day to day affairs of the Ormond lordship. Furthermore this generational shift happened at a time when the earls of Ormond were pre-occupied with other matters, their exile, accommodation with Edward IV, and the recovery of their English lands. For almost a quarter of a century the earls of Ormond failed to maintain any but the most limited of contact with their lordship in Ireland.

These factors, the perpetual absence of the earl of Ormond, the generational shift of the Butlers in Ireland, and the lack of communication between the earls and their kinsmen in Ireland had their most profound effect on the administrative apparatus of the liberty of Tipperary. Edmund fitz James Butler of Dunboyne had been confirmed in his office of seneschal of the liberty of Tipperary by the earl of Ormond on 7 July 1463

²⁸ N.A.I., Ferguson Collectanea, 2/446/2, no. 23, f. 224

although the liberty had ceased to exist upon Ormond's attainder in January 1463.²⁹ John Butler, sixth earl of Ormond, had refused to accept the validity of his attainder and clearly expected his kinsman to continue to oversee the administration of Tipperary, even though the reality of the situation dictated that the liberty would be replaced by a royal county shortly after he went into exile.

The liberty appears to have continued to function in the earl's name well into 1465 as the sheriff of the liberty was still holding his tours in Easter term 1465.³⁰ However, by 1466, Edmund Butler of Dunboyne was acting as the sheriff of the royal county of Tipperary, which presumably had integrated the administrative structure of the liberty.³¹ The limited nature of this integration is underlined by the fact that the Dublin administration had to use one of the Butlers as sheriff. In return for accepting what amounted to a change in job title, Edmund fitz James appears to have been rewarded with the manors of Lisronagh and Kilmore in Tipperary and a house and a mill in Clonmel, which had come into the royal demesne with the accession of Edward IV.³² His possession of these manors was later confirmed in the reign of Henry VII on 5 August 1488 and they were again granted to his son, after his father's death, on 22 April 1499.³³

The royal county of Tipperary lasted less than ten years before the restoration of the liberty in June 1475 but there is no indication of the desire or ability of the administration in Dublin to take an active role in the affairs of the region. Nor was any leadership or support forthcoming from the newly restored earl of Ormond, or his brother, after he became earl in June 1477. Edmund fitz James Butler continued to serve as the sheriff of Tipperary after the restoration of the liberty but without the earl's support the task of the sheriff/seneschal to keep order within the

²⁹ *Cal. Carew MSS, Book of Howth and misc.*, p. 445

³⁰ *Ormond deeds, 1413-1509*, no. 224, p. 198

³¹ C.A. Empey, 'The Butler lordship, 1185-1515', p. 306

³² *ibid.*, pp 74-5, 314

³³ *Cal. pat. rolls, 1485-94*, p. 191; *Cal. pat. rolls, 1494-1509*, p. 169

liberty was almost impossible.³⁴ As early as 1466, Butler control over the smaller Gaelic lords of northern Tipperary and Limerick was replaced by a newly resurgent O'Brien lordship when Toirdhealbach O'Brien launched a massive raid across the Shannon and imposed his authority on Limerick, the Clanwilliam de Burghs and the 'Gwills of Desmond and Jarmond.'³⁵

Within the lordship the ability of the liberty administration to impose order on the county was limited to the personal resources of men like Edmund fitz James of Dunboyne, who appears to have tried to act as sheriff or seneschal until the end of his life in the winter of 1498/9. While this may have given him the ability to control the gentry and commons of the county, it was clearly insufficient for him to impose control on the other branches of the Butler family. As in the late 1440s, when conflicts between branches of the Butler family occurred there was no earl of Ormond to step in to mediate the dispute. However, on at least one occasion another mediator was found. In a praise poem dedicated to John Cantwell II, archbishop of Cashel, the poet stresses the mediatory role of the archbishop saying

'He made peace between the two heirs of the earl of Munster; it was an honour to the man that he was allowed to take them prisoners

He took Thomas Butler and Émann son of Piarais into his keeping. Their war turned into peace when they came into his royal custody.³⁶

The archbishop had been nominated by John, earl of Ormond, as one of two mediators should disputes between his kinsmen arose, and lacking the presence of the earl himself, the archbishop of Cashel was one of the few men with enough prestige to mediate between branches of the Butler family.³⁷ Edmund fitz James of Dunboyne was one combatant, possibly in his role as sheriff of the county, and the other was almost certainly Thomas fitz Piers Butler of Cahir, which places the conflict

³⁴ N.A.I., Ferguson Collectanea, 2/446/2, f. 242

³⁵ 'MacFirbis' *s.a.* 1466

³⁶ A. O'Sullivan & P. Ó Riain, *Poems on marcher lords*, p. 13

³⁷ *Ormond deeds, 1413-1509*, no. 211, p. 189

sometime before Thomas' death in 1478.³⁸ The Butlers of Cahir tended to be the most isolationist of the junior branches of the Butler family since the 1440s. Piers fitz James Butler had supported his cousin, John, earl of Ormond, and had been attainted with the rest of the family in January 1463.³⁹ Piers fitz James of Cahir died in 1464 and was succeeded by his son, Thomas fitz Piers, who preferred to withdraw into his family's lordship in the cantred of Offa and have as little to do with the rest of the Butler family as possible.⁴⁰ There is no record of a reversal of the Piers fitz James Butler's attainder or that his son even bothered to seek a reversal for himself. Given this isolationist tendency, the most likely explanation for conflict between Edmund fitz James Butler of Dunboyne and Thomas fitz Piers Butler of Cahir was an attempt by Edmund fitz James to assert the authority of the liberty of Tipperary over the cantred of Offa after the restoration of the liberty in 1476. That this attempt failed to a large extent is attested by the fact that the archbishop had to step in to mediate between the two men and that in 1517, Piers Butler, earl of Ormond, was forced to negotiate a 'composition' with Edmund fitz Thomas Butler of Cahir, in which the earl's lordship over the whole country needed to be affirmed.⁴¹

The administrative structures of the liberty of Tipperary suffered badly in the years after the restoration of the liberty because of the lack of communication between the earl and his administration. Edmund fitz James Butler appears to have tried to keep the administration alive, but without any formal patent from the earl. It is unlikely that John, earl of Ormond, made a formal re-appointment to the office of seneschal when the liberty was restored in 1475. Nor does Earl Thomas appear to have made an appointment to the office after his inheritance of the earldom as Edmund fitz James wrote to him at some point between 1487 and 1495 to ask for the 'authority to occupy your seneschalship' and held the office by 20 April 1495.⁴²

³⁸ *A.F.M. s.a.* 1478

³⁹ *Stat. Ire. 1-12 Edw. IV*, p. 27

⁴⁰ 'MacFirbis' *s.a.* 1464

⁴¹ *Ormond deeds, 1509-47*, no. 40, pp 43-51

⁴² *Ormond deeds, 1509-47*, app. no. 11, pp 317-18; *ibid.*, app. no. 21, p. 324-5

Without the support of the earl, the administrative structure of the liberty began to ossify and even disintegrate. In another letter to the earl before 1495, Edmund fitz James claimed that

'the liberty of your county is this many days without any law kept therein in default that I have no authority of your lordship to sit as seneschal nor no lernemen have non of you in like wise'.⁴³

Clearly, without patents from the earl to assume the offices of the liberty, any action taken by Edmund fitz James was done on little more than his own personal authority. To further underscore the problem, the seal of the liberty had been lost by April 1494, when the earl asked James Hout to give it to James Sherlock and as Sherlock pointed out, no business of the liberty could be transacted without the seal.⁴⁴ There is little wonder in Edmund fitz James Butler's repeated pleas for the earl to come to his lordship in order to reform the government of the liberty. He even goes so far in one letter to ask

'your lordship to take the labour to come into this land and to take you some goodly young lady that you may have issue by her which will be to you right great work of mercy comfort and renewal of all your blood.'⁴⁵

Whether this traditional solution would have done any good is perhaps debatable, but it does underscore the regard in which the earl of Ormond was held within his lordship. Even through the worst fighting of the 1490s, Earl Thomas' right to his lordship was never questioned. An unquestioned succession of the Ormond lordship, even to a very young minor had potential advantages but, by the early 1490s, the likelihood of Earl Thomas returning to Ireland was vanishingly small. However, the succession to the earldom was a topic of vital importance to all of the Butlers by the end of the 1480s, but especially to the MacRichard Butlers.

While Edmund fitz James Butler of Dunboyne was engaged in attempting to administer the liberty of Tipperary, the sons of Edmund MacRichard re-emerged as the dominant family of the county of Kilkenny.

⁴³ *Ormond deeds, 1509-47*, app. no. 12, pp 318

⁴⁴ *ibid.*, app. no. 20, p. 324

⁴⁵ *ibid.*, app. no. 11, pp 317-18

Once the head of this branch of the Butler family, James fitz Edmund Butler, had been rehabilitated in February 1468, the MacRichard Butlers began to solidify their hold on the county of Kilkenny. Their control of the earl's demesne lands made them the most important of the Irish Butlers. Their control over the county of Kilkenny was further strengthened by the fact that James fitz Edmund's brother, Walter, served as the sheriff of the county before being replaced by his nephew, Piers fitz James.⁴⁶ James fitz Edmund appears to have taken his role as representative of the earl conscientiously and continued to recognise John Butler as earl of Ormond even after Ormond had gone into exile. In 1472, after Ormond's return to England, James fitz Edmund prepared a rental detailing the extent of the earl's lordship in Kilkenny and Tipperary, including the lands held by members of the minor branches of the family.⁴⁷ James fitz Edmund Butler also continued the practice started by his father under which the MacRichard Butlers appear to have been willing to acquire any land that came on the open market in Kilkenny. Many of these acquisitions were relatively small, for example the two messuages and ten acres of land granted by John Spellys to Edmund MacRichard Butler on 12 April 1455, but the total of MacRichard lands within the county increased steadily throughout the lifetimes of Edmund, James and Piers Butler.⁴⁸

By the end of the century, the MacRichard Butlers had expanded their personal holdings within Kilkenny to include the manors of Cloon, Rosnharlo, Cotterelstown, Archerstown, Danesfort, Corbally and Kilcollum.⁴⁹ An addition to this list of properties was the royal manor of Callan, which had become crown demesne with the accession of Edward IV. This manor, which appears to have been co-terminous with the cantred of Callan was granted to James fitz Edmund Butler for his lifetime by the deputy lieutenant, the earl of Worcester, on 11 April 1468, probably in an attempt to maintain good relations with James fitz Edmund Butler during the disturbances after the execution of the earl of Desmond.⁵⁰ The

⁴⁶ N.A.I., Ferguson Collectanea, 2/446/2, f. 242

⁴⁷ *Ormond deeds, 1413-1509*, no. 234, pp 210-13

⁴⁸ *ibid.*, no. 191, pp 175-6

⁴⁹ *Ormond deeds, 1509-47*, app. no. 53, p. 234

⁵⁰ *Ormond deeds, 1413-1509*, no. 237, p. 214. The calendar dates this grant to 1472, but the correct year is 1468, 8 Edward IV.

family's landed wealth outside the immediate Ormond lordship was increased by a life grant of the manors of Oughterard, Cloncurry, Clintonscourt and Castlewarning, in Kildare from Earl Thomas to Piers Butler on 26 July 1486, with the proviso that the grant was valid only if Piers could gain possession. Given that these manors were still probably in the hands of the Dublin administration led by Piers' father-in-law, the earl of Kildare, one may safely assume that he did gain possession.⁵¹

James fitz Edmund Butler did not hold all of the lands formerly held by his father. He held the Kilkenny lands of the MacRichard Butlers and the manors of Carrickbeg, the part of the manor of Carrickmacgriffon that lay across the river from Carrick-on-Suir, and the manor of Tibberaghny, which was another royal manor, possibly granted to him at the same time as Callan.⁵² His brother, Richard, held the manors of Buolick, Thurles, Killenaule, Cahirconlish and Youghal after the death of Edmund MacRichard.⁵³ This indicates that Richard MacRichard Butler took over the role of defender of the Ormond lordship towards the Gaelic lordships of the midlands. He certainly had enough dealings with the MacGillapatricks for Finghin Ruadh MacGillpatrick to be willing to assassinate him on the steps of St. Canice's cathedral in 1478.⁵⁴ Thurles continued to be held by the MacRichard Butlers, but by 1500 it was held by John Butler, another son of Edmund MacRichard.⁵⁵ How the manor passed from one branch of the MacRichard Butlers to another is unclear but John Butler probably came into possession after he murdered his nephew, Thomas fitz Richard Butler of Buolick, in 1489.⁵⁶

The exile and preoccupation of the earls of Ormond with their affairs in England left James fitz Edmund Butler with a free hand to conduct affairs within the Ormond lordship, or at least the eastern half of the lordship as he saw fit. James fitz Edmund was one of the younger

⁵¹ P.R.O. C47/10/28/20; *Cal. anc. deeds*, i, no. C305, p 415

⁵² C.A. Empey, 'The Butler lordship in Ireland, 1185-1515', p. 326.

⁵³ *Ormond deeds, 1413-1509*, no. 234, pp 210-13

⁵⁴ *Ann. Conn. s.a.* 1478; *A.F.M. s.a.* 1478

⁵⁵ *Ormond deeds, 1509-47*, app. no. 53, p. 344

⁵⁶ *A.F.M. s.a.* 1489

generation of Butlers who probably only had hazy memories of the heyday of the lordship under the White Earl. He was also very aware of his place within the Butler family. As the eldest son of Edmund MacRichard, James fitz Edmund was the heir male of Thomas, earl of Ormond, and by Anglo-Irish custom and the wording of the creation charter of the earldom of Ormond, he was the rightful heir of the earldom. Knowing this, he worked very hard to ensure the continuation of his family and the legitimacy of his children, as he expected one of them to be the earl of Ormond one day.

To ensure this James fitz Edmund had to overcome obstacles to his marriage to Sadhbh, daughter of Domhnall Riabach Kavanagh. This marriage was one of three Butler-Kavanagh marriages that took place in the mid to late fifteenth century. These marriages appear to have cemented peaceful relations between the MacRichard Butlers and the Kavanagh lordship in Leinster but they were not the only ones. A sister of the White Earl had married Donnchadh MacMorrough sometime in the 1410s and this marriage appears to have been close enough for the marriage of James and Sadhbh to require a dispensation. The couple duly applied for the required dispensation but in the meantime began to live together. This had unexpected consequences for the Butler lordship as two sons were born to James and Sadhbh before the actual dispensation was promulgated in Ireland on 24 August 1465, over three years after the original absolution was granted.⁵⁷ Because of this delay and the 'stringent demands of English custom that a legitimate heir be born after a valid marriage', James fitz Edmund Butler's heir was not his eldest son, Edmund, but his third son, Piers, who was born in 1467.⁵⁸ James' elder sons were legitimised in the act that reversed the attainder on his family, but this had effectively no bearing on the inheritance of the Butler lands as Piers was the universally recognised heir of that branch of the Butler family.⁵⁹ The only people that failed to recognise the dictates of custom were Piers' elder brothers and their sons. They challenged Piers' legitimacy and right to be their father's heir in January 1501 and August 1502, but

⁵⁷ *Ormond deeds, 1413-1509*, no. 226, pp 199-203

⁵⁸ K. Simms, 'The legal position of Irishwomen in the later middle ages', p. 104

⁵⁹ *Stat. Ire. 1-12, Edw. IV*, p. 487

Piers Butler's rights were upheld by the church courts in both cases.⁶⁰ Eventually, Piers Butler, earl of Ossory resorted to a parliamentary act in 1536 to reverse the legitimisation of this brothers in the act of 1468.⁶¹

James fitz Edmund's ambitions to succeed the earl of Ormond, or at least be the father of the successor appears to have led him to attempt to extend his authority outside of Kilkenny, leading to conflict with the Butlers of Cahir over the manor of Carrickmagriffon. Possession of the manor had been granted to Piers fitz James Butler of Cahir by John, earl of Ormond, on the condition that if the earl wished to reoccupy the manor, he was to recompense his cousin for all expenses incurred defending the manor. Peter fitz James and his son, Thomas fitz Peter, held the manor peacefully until James fitz Edmund Butler despoiled him of the town 'vi et armis'. Clearly, James fitz Edmund wished to extend his control across the Suir from his manor of Carrickbeg. The two branches of the Butler family were apparently evenly matched and a negotiated settlement was reached where the town was transferred to a neutral party, Thatheus O'Maddian, and from him to Eugene MacCrahe, who held it for a year.⁶² No dates are given for this series of events, but it certainly happened before Thomas fitz Piers death in 1478, and there is the possibility that he died in the fighting for control of the town.⁶³

James Fitz Edmund Butler appears to have retained control of the town of Carrick-on-Suir and was responsible for some ordinances for the town as well as the construction of a castle nearby.⁶⁴ Shortly after his death on 16 April 1487, his family's possession of the manor was again challenged by the Butlers of Cahir. A notarial document states that Richard fitz Peter Butler, presumably a brother of Thomas fitz Piers of Cahir, who was acting in place of Thomas fitz Piers' son, Edmund, contested the possession of the manor by Piers fitz James Butler. The issue was settled by arbitration and negotiation on 21 June 1487 and seems to have resulted in the return of the manor of Carrickmacgriffon to the

⁶⁰*Ormond deeds, 1413-1509*, no. 302, pp 296-300

⁶¹ *ibid.*, no. 231, pp 206-9

⁶² *ibid.*, no. 271, pp 260-1

⁶³ *A.F.M. s.a.* 1478

⁶⁴ T. Carte, *Life of the duke of Ormond*, p. xlv

Butlers of Cahir as conflict broke out over the manor again in 1498.⁶⁵ It seems clear that Piers fitz James Butler was unwilling to push his position, not so much because of his relative youth but because he could not afford open warfare with the Butlers of Cahir while he was trying to recover his position after the failure of the pretender, Lambert Simnel.

The MacRichard Butlers also seems to have made the most of their marriage potential under Edmund MacRichard and James fitz Edmund in order to protect 'their' lordship in Kilkenny. Edmund had married Gyllys, a daughter of Maolruinaidh O'Carroll of Ely around 1440. In the next generation, Edmund's son, James, and his daughter, Joan, both married into the Kavanaghs, while a third marriage, between Katherine Butler and Gearalt Kavanagh, was probably between a sister or a daughter of James fitz Edmund Butler. However, there were other strategic marriages made by the MacRichard Butlers. Walter fitz Edmund Butler, a brother of James, appears to have married Grainne, a daughter of O'More of Laois, while another brother, John, married Joan, the sister of Edmund fitz James Butler of Dunboyne.⁶⁶ Richard fitz Richard Butler of Buolick also married within the Anglo-Irish of Tipperary when he married a member of the Cantwell family, a kinswoman of John Cantwell II, archbishop of Cashel.⁶⁷ One of Edmund MacRichard's daughters, Margaret, married Gerald fitz James of Desmond, lord of the Decies, brother of the executed earl of Desmond who had been captured by the Butlers in 1462.⁶⁸

However, by far the most important marriage alliance for the MacRichard Butlers came in 1485 when Piers fitz James Butler married Margaret, the eldest daughter of Gerald fitz Thomas, eighth earl of Kildare. The rise of the earldom of Kildare to pre-eminence under the capable leadership of Thomas fitz Maurice since 1456 had allowed his son an almost unprecedented level of authority within the lordship of Ireland. At least part of this authority came from the fact that there were no credible alternatives to the earls of Kildare for the position of chief governor

⁶⁵ *Ormond deeds, 1413-1509*, no. 271, pp 260-1

⁶⁶ N.A.I., *Ferguson Collectanea*, 2/446/2, f. 242; T. B. Butler, 'The Butlers of Dunboyne', p. 110

⁶⁷ *Cal. papal letters, 1471-84*, p. 21.

⁶⁸ Lodge, *Peerage*, i, p. 13

during the reign of Edward IV. The king himself was forced to concede this point in 1478 when the young Earl Gerald faced down the king's choice for deputy lieutenant, Henry, Lord Grey. However a large part of the authority of the earls of Kildare came from their ability to protect the Pale from the encroachments of the Gaelic lords surrounding the heartland of the Anglo-Irish lordship. Nevertheless, Kildare's position was also subject to the attempts by the Yorkist kings to reform the lordship of Ireland in order to bring it back under direct royal control, attempts which reached their peak not under Edward IV but under his brother, Richard III.⁶⁹

In order to combat royal wariness about the wisdom of retaining him as chief governor, Kildare had to show that he really was the only person for the job and the most effective way of doing that was to widen his area of influence. Contrary to many modern reports, Kildare's connections with the Butlers did not start after the accession of Henry VII, but rather had been in place some years earlier. The Ormond lordship as one of the most Anglicised regions of the lordship was an obvious place for Kildare to begin to exert his authority. Given the absence of the earl of Ormond in England, the obvious place to start was with the *de facto* lord of Kilkenny, James fitz Edmund Butler. The lands of the Ormond lordship had already been threatened by the passing of acts of resumption in Kildare's parliaments of 1478 and 1479/80.⁷⁰ The king had quashed all the acts from the competing parliaments of 1478, but had allowed the act from the 1479/80 parliament to pass, requiring Earl Thomas of Ormond to make a petition for the restoration of his lands in Ireland.⁷¹

While it was unlikely that the resumption of the Ormond lands was Kildare's primary goal in passing the acts of resumption, he recognised their potential value and was slow to restore Ormond's lands. A second letter from the king, dated 6 April 1481, ordering the immediate restoration of Ormond's lands was needed before Kildare stopped trying to enforce the act.⁷² Even then, the government did not stop trying to enforce

⁶⁹ see S. Ellis, *Tudor Ireland*, pp 53-68

⁷⁰ *Stat. Ire. 12-22 Edw. IV*, pp 673, 675, 685-95

⁷¹ P.R.O. C47/10/27/7; *Ormond deeds, 1413-1509*, no. 249, pp 234-5

⁷² *ibid.*, no. 252, pp 243-4

the absentee legislation, under which two thirds of Ormond's profits from his Irish lordship, including the prise of wines, as can be seen by the order for Ormond's collectors in the city of Limerick to turn over their profits on 20 March 1484.⁷³

This potential threat appears to have awakened James fitz Edmund Butler to the fact that the central government in Dublin was growing in power and that it would be better for himself and his family to be on good terms with Kildare. The immediate result of this realisation was the fosterage of James fitz Edmund's heir, Piers, into the household of the earl of Kildare.⁷⁴ This was a logical step for both sides, as it built ties of fosterage between the two families that would last for several decades, as the earl was only eleven or twelve years older than his fosterling.⁷⁵ It also indicates that Kildare accepted that Piers fitz James Butler would succeed his uncle as earl of Ormond, making him the heir to one of the greatest Anglo-Irish lordships. The ties of fosterage were further strengthened in 1485 with the marriage of Piers Butler and Kildare's daughter, Margaret. Piers was only eighteen in 1485 and Margaret could not have been more than fourteen, making their marriage largely a plan for the future.

This marriage is usually portrayed as a ploy by Kildare to balance the inevitable growth of Butler power in Ireland caused by the restoration of Thomas Butler to the earldom of Ormond in Henry VII's first parliament in November 1485. This is certainly a case of reading history backwards, using the events of the 1490s and the 1520s to explain an event that happened in 1485. The restoration of Earl Thomas of Ormond did mean a potential growth in Butler influence, but only in England. Ormond had been restored in Ireland since 1475 and had proven adept at using contacts at court to protect his interests in Ireland, but Kildare's value to the crown had been proven again and again and Ormond had neither the desire nor the ability to supplant Kildare in Ireland. The Butler-Kildare marriage of 1485 had nothing to do with the change of dynasty in England and everything to do with Kildare further consolidating his ties with the future earl of Ormond.

⁷³ *Ormond deeds, 1413-1509*, no. 261, pp 253-5

⁷⁴ *Ormond deeds, 1509-47*, app. no. 53, p. 344/5

⁷⁵ Bryan, *Great earl of Kildare*, pp 1-2

In return, Piers Butler appears to have stood with Kildare for the rest of Kildare's life. For Piers Butler, the supposedly perennial Butler-Kildare feuds began only when his brother-in-law, Kildare's son, refused to support what he saw as his legitimate claims to his earldom in 1519. During the lifetime of the Great Earl of Kildare, he had no firmer ally than Piers Butler. This can be seen on two occasions in the 1480s. The first was when Kildare and virtually all of the Anglo-Irish community supported the claims of the pretender, Lambert Simnel, to be the son of the duke of Clarence, and the rightful king of England. That Piers Butler supported his father-in-law and the pretender is shown by the fact that he was appointed to the office of sheriff of Kilkenny by Kildare, who was acting as lieutenant to 'Edward VI' on 13 August 1487, even though this was some two months after Simnel had been captured by Henry VII at the battle of Stoke.⁷⁶ A second instance of Piers Butler's support for Kildare came in 1491, after the king had summoned Kildare to England in July 1490. Kildare did not even reply to the king's letter until 5 June 1491, when he excused his absence on the grounds that he could not leave Ireland until disputes between Maurice fitz Thomas, earl of Desmond and Uilleag de Burgh of Clanricard had been settled.⁷⁷ Among those who sent a supporting letter to the king on 10 July 1491 were Desmond and Piers fitz James Butler, who signed the letter 'the earl of Ormond's deputy'.⁷⁸

It was this claim by Piers Butler to be the deputy of the earl of Ormond that caused so many of the problems within the Ormond lordship in the 1490s, when Earl Thomas began the process of reasserting his control over his Irish lordship. Piers' father, James fitz Edmund Butler, had been officially appointed deputy of the earl of Ormond by John, earl of Ormond, on 17 August 1464, just before Ormond went into exile.⁷⁹ According to later histories, he was again appointed deputy by Ormond, before he went to the Holy Land, but the date given, 12 October 1477, is several months after the sixth earl's death and may represent an appointment by Earl Thomas, shortly after being confirmed in his

⁷⁶ *Ormond deeds, 1413-1509*, no. 272, pp 261-2

⁷⁷ Bryan, *Great earl of Kildare*, pp 147-8

⁷⁸ *L. & P. Rich. III & Hen. VII*, i, p. 382

⁷⁹ *Ormond deeds, 1413-1509*, no. 229, p. 204

brother's lands by the king.⁸⁰ By the time of his death in April 1487, James fitz Edmund appears to have made a connection between these grants of the position of deputy and his own position as heir male to the earl of Ormond and bequeathed the position of earl's deputy to his son, Piers, in his will.⁸¹

Piers, for his part, appears to have accepted the position as no less than his due, without stopping to consider the opinion of the earl. Ormond as a Tudor partisan was taken aback by his kinsman's support of Lambert Simnell. Piers' actions are even more unusual when placed against the backdrop of the actions of the rest of the Ormond lordship. The city of Waterford, led by its mayor John Butler, had refused to support the pretender, to the extent of resisting pressure by Kildare to reverse their position. Furthermore, Butler had called upon the towns of Carrick, Clonmel, Callan, Kilkenny, Fethard, Gowran and Ross to oppose the pretender. That the majority of the Butler lordship were prepared to accept Henry VII as the rightful king, even when it meant going against the wishes of the head of the family of MacRichard Butler does indicate that Ormond's position was well known and followed within his lordship.

Piers Butler's support for Kildare and Lambert Simnell does not seem to have done him any permanent harm in the eyes of the king, just as he was willing to accept the reformation of the earl of Kildare. Indeed, Kildare was willing to reward Piers' support by confirming him in the position of sheriff of Kilkenny on 20 March 1489, although this time in the name of Henry VII.⁸² Nevertheless, his support for the pretender does appear to have tarnished him in the eyes of Earl Thomas of Ormond, so that when the earl began to reassert his authority over his Irish lordship, he did not choose Piers Butler as his representative, but rather turned to his nephew, Sir James Ormond, the illegitimate son of John, sixth earl of Ormond, and Reynalda O'Brien.

After Ormond went into exile, Reynalda appears to have stayed with the Butlers with her child, who had been born in 1463. According to one historian she married Richard fitz Thomas Butler of Knockgraffon but

⁸⁰ T. Carte, *Life of the duke of Ormond*, p. xliv

⁸¹ *Ormond deeds, 1413-1509*, no. 329, p. 232

⁸² *ibid.*, no. 274, pp 265-6

given the extreme differences in their ages it is much more likely that she married Richard fitz Richard Butler of Buolick as his second wife, in a move by the MacRichard Butlers to further dominate the Irish Butler family.⁸³ After the death of Richard fitz Richard in 1478, the young James Ormond was fostered in the household of Morgan O'Carroll of Ely, captain of his nation.⁸⁴ By 1486, his uncle, earl Thomas had taken an interest in his life and brought him to England. Ormond probably intended to put his nephew on the same path that he and his brothers had followed forty years earlier. Ormond's influence can be seen behind James Ormond's admittance to the Society of Lincoln's Inn on 24 June 1486, one of only five Irishmen admitted to the Inns between 1437 and 1513, although the recorders made the error of calling him John Ormond.⁸⁵ Ormond also introduced his nephew to court, where he soon became a member of the household of Henry VII. In December 1491, James Ormond was referred to as the king's servant; in June 1492, he was called the king's councillor and in June 1494, he was called a knight of the body.⁸⁶ It is unclear what plans Earl Thomas had for his nephew before 1490, but they appear to have changed dramatically once the king decided to embark on a course of reformation of the government of the lordship of Ireland in the wake of the emergence of another pretender, in the form of Perkin Warbeck.

The Warbeck conspiracy was perceived as much more of a threat to Henry VII as it had strong international backing, with support coming at various times from Edward IV's sister, Margaret of Burgundy, Charles VIII of France, James IV of Scotland and the Emperor Maximilian.⁸⁷ Henry VII took the threat of 'Richard IV' very seriously, especially in Ireland where Warbeck landed in Cork in November 1491.⁸⁸ Given Kildare's support of Lambert Simnell, the king viewed his protestations of innocence in the matter of Warbeck with a great deal of scepticism and took the opportunity

⁸³ B. Ó Dálaigh, 'Mistress, mother and abbess: Renalda Ní Bhriain (c. 1447-1510), p. 53

⁸⁴ *Ormond deeds, 1509-47*, app. no. 15, pp 319-20

⁸⁵ *Records of the honourable society of Lincoln's Inn; The Black Books*, i, 83

⁸⁶ *Cal. pat. rolls, 1485-94*, pp 368, 376, 464

⁸⁷ for a full discussion of the international aspect of Warbeck Conspiracy see I. Arthurson, *The Perkin Warbeck conspiracy, 1491-99*

⁸⁸ Otway-Ruthven, *Med. Ire.*, p. 406

to remove Kildare and replace him with a more trusted chief governor. The king's choice of Sir James Ormond also meshed well with the earl of Ormond's desire to re-assert his control of his own lordship in Ireland.

On 6 December 1491, less than a month after Warbeck landed in Cork, the king decided to 'send an army to parts of the counties of Kilkenny and Tipperary, in the land of Ireland, to suppress his rebels and enemies there' and appointed James Ormond and Thomas Garth as the 'captains and governors of the men of arms bowmen hobelars and others in the said army'.⁸⁹ Furthermore, the two men were given the authority to summon the king's lieges, make statutes and proclamations for the region and all men in the counties were absolved of their obediences to Kildare. While the commission did not remove Kildare from office, it did effectively remove Ormond's lordship from Kildare's protection. On 12 December 1491, the king gave James Ormond a landed base within the lordship of Ireland from which to work when he granted Ormond all of the lands, manors, castles and rents of the earldom of March in the counties of Meath and Kilkenny and the liberty of Tipperary.⁹⁰

While none of this was overtly threatening to Kildare or his protégé, Piers Butler, earl Thomas's appointment of his nephew as his deputy and special attorney in Tipperary and Kilkenny on 7 December 1491 was. Sir James Ormond was to hold all of his uncle's lands and castles and was given the explicit right to command all the earl's tenants for the purpose of chastising the king's enemies.⁹¹ However, Earl Thomas's grant made some specific reservations. His nephew could command the earl's officers, but not remove them or obstruct them in their duties, clearly indicating that the earl expected the administration of the liberty of Tipperary to remain separate from the governance of his lordship. Ormond also sealed an agreement with his nephew under which Sir James Ormond was granted all of the revenues of the Ormond lordship after the earl had received what was coming to him.⁹² Earl Thomas was clearly trying to avoid repeats of the situation whereby he received only £3

⁸⁹ *Cal. pat. rolls, 1485-94*, p. 367

⁹⁰ *ibid.*, p. 368

⁹¹ *Cal. close rolls, 1485-1500*, p. 580

⁹² *ibid.*, p. 580

11s. 1d. from £49 15s. 7d. in rents from the manors of Donoghmore and Blakecastle collected over a year period from 25 March 1480 to 25 March 1482.⁹³

James Ormond was expected to be a loyal servant to the earl and the king. His entire position was based on grants from his two masters and could be revoked at will if he showed signs of independence. His heritage as the earl's nephew gave him the prestige needed to govern within the lordship, especially when armed with a patent from both the earl and the king. However, his illegitimacy protected the earl from the same sort of challenges to the inheritance of the Ormond lordship presented by Piers Butler. Indeed, had he been recognised as legitimate, he would have had a better claim to the earldom than his uncle. Furthermore, Sir James Ormond was well placed to enlist the support of the Gaelic lords of Munster through his kinship to the O'Briens and his ties of fosterage to the O'Carrolls. The extent of this potential alliance was formidable and the main reason for its existence was mutual protection against the Geraldines of Desmond. According to a letter from John O'Carroll to Ormond in 1487, the alliance consisted of O'Brien, Uilleag de Burgh of Clanricard, Cormac MacCarthy Mór, MacDermot, O'Kennedy, O'Dwyer and other lesser lords.⁹⁴ The similarity of this group to those who opposed Kildare at Knockdoe in 1504 is unmistakable and represent the areas of the lordship of Ireland not yet under Kildare's hegemony. Clearly the king and Ormond expected Sir James Ormond to use the Ormond lordship as a base to build an alliance with the Gaelic lords of Munster. With this base, Sir James could contain the potential threat of Desmond's support of Perkin Warbeck and restore order to the whole of the king's lordship in Ireland.

Sir James Ormond appears to have set about his task of governing the Ormond lordship with vigour and determination. In 1492 he entered the Ormond lordship backed by his own troops, some 200 men, and with the support of the O'Briens, the MacWilliam de Burghs and the O'Carrolls.⁹⁵ Ormond's actions appear to have split the Butler family, with Piers Butler frantically opposing the earl's new deputy, while men like

⁹³ P.R.O. SC6/1237/7

⁹⁴ *Ormond deeds, 1509-47*, app. no. 9, pp 315-16

⁹⁵ *A.F.M. s.a. 1492; Conway, Henry VII, Scot & Ire.*, pp 51

Edmund fitz James of Dunboyne who desired peace, stability and the restoration of the liberty of Tipperary accepted him. Within the Ormond lordship, the new deputy appears to have governed with a zeal that had not been seen for over half a century. The first step appears to have been a resumption of all offices granted by either James, earl of Ormond, or his son, John, earl of Ormond, in the parliament of 1492.⁹⁶ Using parliamentary authority allowed the slate to be wiped clean in the Ormond lordship and the administration of the liberty of Tipperary was re-established with Edmund fitz James Butler of Dunboyne holding the office of seneschal by 20 April 1495. Edmund fitz James apparently supported these actions and wrote to the earl commenting that his deputy had taken 'great pain and labour upon him for the weal of the country.'⁹⁷

However, not everybody appreciated Sir James Ormond's great pain and labour. His most implacable enemies were Piers Butler and his patron, Gerald, earl of Kildare. At some point in his career, Piers had been imprisoned by Sir James and he later complained that Sir James had 'kept from me all mine own lands and duties'.⁹⁸ In Piers' eyes this probably meant no more than that he had been replaced as the earl's deputy and no longer controlled the earl's demesne lands, making him little more influential than any of the other heads of the junior branches of the Butler family. Kildare's enmity for Sir James Ormond surfaced after he was replaced as deputy lieutenant by Ormond and Walter FitzSimonds, the archbishop of Dublin, by 6 July 1492.⁹⁹ Although the archbishop held the nominal title of deputy lieutenant, Ormond, who held the title of the 'king's governor of Ireland' was apparently his equal. The apparent strategy was to give the archbishop responsibility for the Pale, where his lands allowed him to balance the authority of the earl of Kildare, while Sir James Ormond was expected to oversee the governance of the Ormond Lordship, Wexford, Waterford and Munster. Furthermore, Kildare's

⁹⁶ N.A.I. RC 13/9, ch. 11

⁹⁷ *Ormond deeds, 1509-47*, app. no. 21, pp 324-5

⁹⁸ *ibid.*, app. no. 31, pp 332

⁹⁹ S. Ellis, 'Henry VII and Ireland, 1491-96', pp 241, 251

influence in the administration was further curtailed by the appointment of an entirely new council, including Sir James Ormond as treasurer¹⁰⁰

Unfortunately for the king's plans this new arrangement for the governance of the lordship led only to armed conflict between Kildare and Sir James Ormond. Kildare had already tried to blacken Ormond's name by writing to Earl Thomas on 10 July 1492 by putting the blackest interpretation on Ormond's use of the O'Briens to back his entry into the Ormond lordship. Kildare claimed that they 'destroyed the king's subjects and spared no churches or religious places' and that he had accepted this because Ormond 'groundeth him on the king's authority' and suffered him 'so to do for fear of the king's displeasure'.¹⁰¹ Further angered at the disruption of his government, Kildare retaliated by burning Ship Street in Dublin leading to armed conflict between his men and the supporters of Sir James Ormond.¹⁰² Ormond retaliated by raiding into the territory of Kildare's clients, the O'Connor Falys. During this campaign, Thomas Garth killed An Calbach, son of Cathoir O'Connor Faly, which led to Garth's capture and the execution of his son by Kildare in the following year, which, in turn, led to Sir James Ormond raiding and burning Kildare.¹⁰³ The king clearly supported Ormond in these actions, sending him a gift of cloth on 26 November 1492.¹⁰⁴

Equally clear was his displeasure at Kildare's actions. In a letter to Earl Thomas on 11 February 1493, Kildare mentions that his servants, who had been sent to the king with letters explaining his actions, had been imprisoned by the king.¹⁰⁵ Kildare's letter to Ormond on 11 February 1493 clearly showed that the conflict between himself and Sir James Ormond still had a long way to go. Kildare realised that his stock with the king was low and asked Ormond to assure the king that he had no contact with 'the French lad' but does not hesitate in accusing Sir James Ormond of being in

¹⁰⁰ S. Ellis, 'Henry VII and Ireland, 1491-96', p. 240

¹⁰¹ Bryan, *Great earl of Kildare*, p. 162

¹⁰² *A.F.M. s.a.* 1492

¹⁰³ *A.U.*, iii, pp 365-7; *A.F.M. s.a.* 1493

¹⁰⁴ Conway, *Henry VII, Scot & Ire.*, p. 53

¹⁰⁵ *Ormond deeds, 1509-47*, app. no. 16, p. 321

league with Warbeck and Desmond. Furthermore, Sir James was accused of trying to usurp the earldom of Ormond by having himself legitimised by act of parliament. This accusation did apparently have a grain of truth behind it as an act of parliament had been enacted granting Sir James Ormond all the lands in Kilkenny and Tipperary that had been conquered by the Irish unless their absentee lords returned to reside on them and defend the lordship, but it is highly unlikely that this legislation could be stretched to include the lands of the earl of Ormond.¹⁰⁶ In a final understated threat, Kildare claimed not to know what Ormond's feeling towards his nephew were so he was going to stop Ormond's rents until he heard from the earl in England.

The King sent a force of 300 soldiers to Ireland in March 1493 to support his deputies but was also prepared to pardon Kildare's actions if he came to England within six months of 30 March 1493.¹⁰⁷ Before those six months were complete, a further incident, where a battle on Oxmanstown Green between the opposing factions resulted in the deaths of citizens of Dublin, forced the king to reconsider his policy in Ireland.¹⁰⁸ Sir James Ormond and archbishop FitzSimonds were replaced as chief governors and summoned to England to advise the king, followed shortly after by Kildare, the archbishop of Armagh, and representatives of the Palesmen including Lord Gormanston, Chief Justice Turner and the bishop of Kildare.¹⁰⁹ Henry VII had tried to summon his Irish magnates to England in 1489, but this gathering gave him the chance to mediate and devise a settlement that was acceptable to all sides.

The end result of this conference appears to have been a renewed determination on the king's part to bring the administrative structure of the lordship into line with English practice and also place it firmly under his control. Sir James Ormond had proven that he could not govern the lordship of Ireland in the face of Kildare's opposition and the king refused to return him to Ireland as deputy lieutenant. However, the fact that the king made a series of grants does show that he remained in the king's

¹⁰⁶ N.A.I. RC 13/9, c. 25

¹⁰⁷ S. Ellis, 'Henry VII and Ireland, 1491-96', p. 240; *Cal. pat. rolls, 1485-94*, p. 423

¹⁰⁸ Bryan, *Great earl of Kildare*, pp 165-7

¹⁰⁹ *ibid.*, p. 179

good graces. On 16 June 1494, he received an annuity of £100 from the revenues of the lordship. On the same day he was made hereditary constable of Limerick castle with another annuity of £10 from the farm of the city. Two days later, he was also granted the manors of Patrick Bermingham in the Pale, with the wardship and the marriage of Bermingham's heir, Richard.¹¹⁰ Finally, and most importantly, his conditional grant of the lands of the earldom of March in Meath, Kilkenny and Tipperary was made hereditary on 12 September 1494.¹¹¹ The grant of the constablership of Limerick indicates that the king's attempts to affect a reconciliation with Desmond had broken down by that date and that he was prepared to entrust the vital castle of Limerick to Sir James Ormond. Clearly, neither the king nor the earl of Ormond were cutting Sir James Ormond off without a penny. If he had lived long enough, these grants could have made Sir James Ormond a powerful player in the politics of the Ormond lordship and the Irish lordship in general, but he had made himself too great an enemy in Kildare and his very existence posed a threat to Kildare's protégé, Piers Butler.

Sir James Ormond returned to Ireland with Kildare and the new deputy lieutenant, Sir Edward Poynings, in October 1494.¹¹² Poynings immediately set out on an expedition to take submissions for the Gaelic lords of Ulster, taking both Kildare and Ormond with him. Kildare fell out with Poynings almost immediately when the deputy chose to interpret Kildare's connections with Gaelic magnates in Ulster as treasonable, leading to Kildare's attainder in November 1494.¹¹³ As could be expected, Sir James Ormond remained loyal to the deputy lieutenant and can be seen taking part in Poynings' capture of Carlow castle in April 1495.¹¹⁴ He also commanded a detachment of men under Poynings in 1496.¹¹⁵ Sir James Ormond also remained watchful of Poynings' activities as they applied to the earl of Ormond and wrote to the earl, on 20 February 1495,

¹¹⁰*Cal. pat. rolls, 1485-94*, p. 464

¹¹¹*Ormond deeds, 1413-1509*, no. 287, p. 278

¹¹²*A.F.M. s.a.* 1494

¹¹³ Conway, *Henry VII, Scot & Ire.*, pp 216-7

¹¹⁴*ibid.*, pp 80, 156

¹¹⁵*ibid.*, p. 88

warning that he could be greatly affected by an act of Resumption proposed in Poyning's parliament which would resume all royal grants since 1327.¹¹⁶ Sir James' warning resulted in a letter from the king, on 31 March 1495, ordering that the sweeping act of Resumption not be applied to the earl of Ormond.¹¹⁷

Despite these good services, even Sir James Ormond could see that his was a losing position within the lordship of Ireland by the summer of 1496. He took steps to confirm some of his grants, namely the hereditary grant of the constablership of Limerick and his position as the deputy of the earl of Ormond but these were only stopgap measures.¹¹⁸ By the summer of 1496, the king had changed his mind concerning his policy in Ireland, no doubt appalled by the fact that his experiment with direct government in Ireland had cost him almost £12,000 between August 1494 and December 1495.¹¹⁹ The king returned to the older policy of entrusting Kildare with the governance of the lordship of Ireland. Kildare had been arrested in February 1495 and sent to the king in England, but by the end of the year his attainder had been overturned by the English parliament.¹²⁰ In England, Kildare had charmed the king and given enough proofs that he had committed no unforgivable offence and Henry VII bowed to the inevitable and re-appointed Kildare as deputy lieutenant for a ten year term, probably on 6 August 1496, after Kildare had sworn to abide by various articles.¹²¹

Kildare's restoration was at least partially contingent on the settlement of his disputes with Sir James Ormond. On 6 August 1496, Kildare, Earl Thomas, Sir James Ormond and the archbishop of Dublin swore themselves to end the 'rancorous malices' and foster peace between 'these two noble bloods of Ireland called Butler and Geraldine'.¹²² Despite

¹¹⁶ *Ormond deeds, 1509-47*, app. no. 18, pp 322-3; Conway, *Henry VII, Scot & Ire.*, pp 149-51

¹¹⁷ *Ormond deeds. 1413-1509*, no. 288, pp 279-80

¹¹⁸ *ibid.*, no. 292, p.281; *Ormond deeds, 1509-47*, app. no. 19, p. 323

¹¹⁹ S. Ellis, 'Henry VII and Ireland, 1491-96', p. 244

¹²⁰ *Rot. parl.*, vi, 491-2

¹²¹ Conway, *Henry VII, Scot & Ire.*, pp 230-1

¹²² *ibid.*, pp 226-9

the fine sounding words of reconciliation, the reality of the situation was that Kildare had achieved everything he had desired and Sir James Ormond had been deserted by his former patrons, the king and the earl of Ormond, in the name of expediency. He remained Ormond's deputy and was probably expected to work to strengthen the Ormond lordship, but he was expected to do this in the face of opposition by Kildare and Kildare's protégé, Piers Butler.

Faced with this opposition, Sir James retreated to an alliance with his O'Brien kinsmen to aid him in the Ormond lordship. In doing so, Sir James Ormond gave his enemies the very ammunition they needed to discredit him with the earl of Ormond and the king. Kildare wrote to Ormond detailing Sir James' actions and Ormond appears to have believed him. On 16 May 1497, Ormond replied that he had brought the matter to the king's attention and that the king had written to Sir James, reminding him of his oaths and promises of the previous summer.¹²³ Events in the Ormond lordship came to a head by 7 September 1497. Sir James had imprisoned Piers Butler, but he had been freed by the 'great instant labour' of the earl of Desmond as one of the conditions for the proposed marriage between Sir James and one of Desmond's daughters.¹²⁴ Once Piers was at liberty, he rejoined Kildare and an open contest for control of the Ormond lordship broke out.

According to Piers Butler, Sir James had proclaimed himself earl of Ormond, ignored at least two summons to appear before the king, had communed with Warbeck, had openly threatened to kill Piers Butler and impoverish any who supported him. While the charges of Sir James Ormond proclaiming himself earl and communing with Warbeck were basically slander against the dead, the rest of Piers charges have the ring of truth. The contest between the two men could have dragged on for years but for a chance encounter between the two on 17 July 1497. There are different versions of the story, but the basic details are that Piers came across Sir James riding only with a small guard and attacked, killing his opponent with a spear.¹²⁵

¹²³ Conway, *Henry VII, Scot & Ire.*, p. 239

¹²⁴ *Ormond deeds, 1509-47*, app. no. 31, pp 332-3

¹²⁵ Bryan, *Great earl of Kildare*, p. 215

The assassination of Sir James Ormond ended one chapter in the history of the Ormond lordship but opened up another. From September 1497 to the earl's death in 1515, and even beyond, the pre-eminent problem facing the earl of Ormond was deciding what was to be the place of Piers Butler within the Ormond lordship. Piers had wasted no time requesting that Earl Thomas appoint him to the position so recently vacated by Sir James Ormond, but the earl appears not have been swayed by his cousin's request.¹²⁶ However, Piers Butler also had the open support of the earl of Kildare in his campaign to rehabilitate himself. There appears to have been regular correspondence between Kildare and Ormond in this period with Ormond's servant John a Devonshire acting as the message carrier.¹²⁷ Kildare wrote to Ormond on 28 January 1498 on Piers' behalf saying 'whatsoever promise he [Piers] shall make unto you I have very confidence that he will not fail to perform the same in every behalf.' Kildare also promised to and support Piers in 'whatsoever thing you [Ormond] will give him in this country.'¹²⁸ By 28 February 1498, the king had had enough and pardoned Piers Butler at the request of Kildare, especially absolving him of contacts with the king's Irish enemies.¹²⁹

Piers' pardon from the king did not end the conflict within the earldom of Ormond. On 30 March 1498, Kildare wrote to Ormond painting a picture of the Ormond lordship in distress. The O'Briens were raiding to avenge their kinsman and the earl's kinsmen were fighting among themselves. Kildare had hoped that Piers could keep order but he could not due to illness. Furthermore, Kildare could not predict how long it would be before order was restored to Ormond's lordship.¹³⁰ Supporting Kildare's comments on the unrest within the Ormond lordship if not his claims of Piers Butler's illness, a letter from John Wise, dated 30 April 1498, tells of a renewal of conflict between Piers Butler and Edmund fitz Thomas Butler of Cahir and his uncle, Richard, over the manor of

¹²⁶ *Ormond deeds, 1509-47*, app. no. 31, p. 333

¹²⁷ *ibid.*, app. no. 33, p. 334

¹²⁸ Conway, *Henry VII, Scot & Ire.*, p. 240

¹²⁹ *Ormond deeds, 1413-1509*, no. 295, pp 282-3

¹³⁰ Conway, *Henry VII, Scot & Ire.*, p. 241

Carrickmacgriffon.¹³¹ Wise notes that many of the men of Tipperary were about to meet to 'distrue the coign and livery that your cousins taketh there against right'.

Wise also makes it clear that Piers Butler retained control of the county of Kilkenny, whose people 'been greatly a pleased of his pleasurable manner' but continues that 'honourable governance is never like to be there until your coming'. Furthermore, he was actively blocking Ormond's appointees from taking up offices granted to them in Kilkenny, as is made clear in a letter from Earl Thomas Piers in a letter written on 27 June 1498.¹³² Piers Butler, with Kildare's help, was also becoming the master of the liberty of Tipperary. The state of the Ormond lordship in the winter of 1498/9 is made abundantly clear in a letter from James fitz Edmund Butler of Dunboyne to Ormond on 24 January 1499.¹³³ In the letter James fitz Edmund Butler says that since his father's death he is not allowed into any of the towns of the Ormond lordship. The earl of Kildare was in control of all of Ormond's lands and was apparently threatening to back claims by members of the de Bermingham family to recover the former de Bermingham lands in Tipperary, thereby dispossessing the Butlers of Dunboyne and the fitz Thomas Butlers at a stroke. Piers Butler and Kildare had also taken control of the administration of the liberty as James fitz Edmund related that 'none officer is not spoken here in your name but all in the said earl of Kildare's name'. Dunboyne asked to be appointed to succeed his father as seneschal of the liberty, but until Ormond had settled with Kildare and Piers Butler, any appointment made by him had little value. As noted in James fitz Edmund's letter to Earl Thomas, Kildare was exceedingly slow in restoring control of Ormond's lands to him. Kildare had little compunction in ignoring the fact that the king had ordered that the act of resumption passed in the parliament of 1494 was not to apply to Ormond. It seems clear that Kildare was using his power as deputy lieutenant on behalf of his son-in-law but he was also trying to build an agreement that would satisfy all concerned.

¹³¹ *Ormond deeds, 1509-47*, app. no. 38, pp 336-7

¹³² *ibid.*, app. no. 40, pp 337-8

¹³³ *ibid.*, app. no. 43, p. 339

There was regular communication between Ormond and Kildare and on 31 May 1499, Ormond showed that he was aware of Kildare's actions when he replied to a letter sent by Kildare. In his reply, Ormond sets out his position saying

'in my lord brothers time as in mine my cousin James Butler and after that my cousin Sir Piers have had the rule and governance of the county of Kilkenny and my cousin Sir Edmund Pierson, now deceased, of Tipperary...but I have not known before this that one of my kinsmen only him should have the rule of both the counties of Kilkenny and Tipperary'.¹³⁴

Ormond was well aware that Kildare was acting in his interests and restraining Piers Butler but he was not willing to grant Piers the lease of one third of his lands just for the sake of peace. Nor was he prepared to grant Kildare the farm of his manors of Oughterard, Oughterany, and Castlewarning on the grounds that any grant would be void because he had not been restored to his lands in Ireland by the Irish parliament. Ormond's Irish lands eventually returned by an act of parliament on 26 August 1499, but by then both sides of the dispute had made their point.¹³⁵ Ormond's control of his Irish lordship was secure only as long as he was willing to deal with Kildare and Piers Butler, but he was not going to simply hand his lordship over to them.

The process of restoring order in the Ormond lordship took several years after the restoration of Piers Butler, and in many ways was not completed before the death of Earl Thomas in 1515. Ormond appears to have kept a watchful eye on the situation in Ireland, continuing to correspond with Kildare and sending his trusted servant, John a Devonshire to Ireland, in order to assess the situation there. While Devonshire was in Ireland he appears to have drawn up a summary of the Butler holdings within Kilkenny and Tipperary for the earl.¹³⁶ Perhaps the most interesting thing about the period between 1500 and 1505 is the volume of correspondence that has survived, especially when compared to the almost complete lack of interest shown by Ormond in the affairs of his Irish lordship during the 1480s. John a Devonshire appears to have

¹³⁴ P.R.O. SC46/130/20

¹³⁵ *Ormond deeds, 1413-1509*, no. 298, pp 285-7

¹³⁶ *Ormond deeds, 1509-47*, app. nos. 50, 53, pp 342-3, 344-5

made regular crossings to Dublin carrying letters to Kildare and John Alen, the dean of Dublin. Alen appears to have been acting on Ormond's behalf during the earl's legal battle with St. Mary's abbey, Dublin, over money that had been entrusted to the abbey and record of which vanished at the death of the previous abbot.¹³⁷ Alen also appears to have acted as Ormond's agent with respect to the earl's manors in the Pale. Sometime before 1506, Alen reported to the earl that one Edmund Golding, who held Ormond's manors of Blakecastle and Donoghmore, had failed to keep up the manor. In this case Alen advised Ormond to seek Kildare's aid to force Golding to repair the manors.¹³⁸ Alen also wrote to the earl on behalf of the earl's tenants in the manor of Turvey and Rush to request the earl's aid in the construction of a new harbour for ships of sixty to seventy tons.¹³⁹ Ormond kept the oversight of his manors in the county of Dublin separate from the heartland of his lordship in Ireland, first entrusting John Alen, the dean of Dublin, and then from 19 June 1507, Thomas Kent, the chief baron of the exchequer.¹⁴⁰

Despite Ormond's active correspondence regarding his Irish lordship in the last fifteen years of his life, all concerned with the Ormond lordship could see that a crisis over the succession of the earldom was looming. Under English common law, all of Ormond's lands in England and Ireland would be divided between his two daughters or their heirs. However, Piers Butler and the earl of Kildare had just proven that Ormond's control over his own lordship in Ireland was tenuous at best. The simplest solution was to divide Ormond's lands, with his title and lands in Ireland, or at least in Kilkenny and Tipperary going to their *de facto* lord, Piers Butler, while the earl's English lands were divided between his immediate family. This appears to have been the basis of the indenture sealed between Kildare and Piers Butler on 13 April 1504.¹⁴¹

Under the terms of the absentee statutes, two thirds of Ormond's revenues were taken by Kildare as chief governor, meaning that much of

¹³⁷ *Ormond deeds, 1509-47*, app. nos. 49, 59, 60, 66, pp 342, 348-52

¹³⁸ *ibid.*, app. no. 75, pp 355-6

¹³⁹ *ibid.*, app. no. 78, pp 358-9

¹⁴⁰ *ibid.*, app. no. 80, pp 359-60

¹⁴¹ *Ormond deeds, 1413-1509*, no. 317, pp 307-8

the money generated in the Ormond lordship was draining away to support Kildare's defence of the Pale. Under the terms of the indenture, if Piers could purchase or be granted the Irish lands of the earl of Ormond, he was to hold any lands in Kilkenny, Tipperary or Waterford free and clear, and to pay Kildare one third of the value of the purchased lands in any other part of the lordship. In return for Kildare's support of this venture Piers granted him the manor of Oughterany in Kildare for the term of Kildare's life. For his part, Kildare wrote to Ormond on 17 May 1504 recommending the arrangement.¹⁴²

Ormond saw the wisdom of the arrangement and sealed three indentures with Piers Butler in July 1505.¹⁴³ In the first indenture, dated 9 July 1505, the earl restored Piers Butler to his 'rightful' place as deputy to the earl. For four years, Piers was to be the omni-competent *alter ego* of the earl in Kilkenny, Tipperary, Carlow, Limerick and Waterford with authority over all of the earl's lands with the exceptions of the manors of Kilkenny, Gowron, Knocktopher, Dunfert, Carrick and the annuity from the fee farm of Waterford. Ormond also reserved the appointment of any of the various officials within the lordship. Ormond also specifically included protections for Edmund fitz Thomas Butler of Cahir, James fitz Edmund Butler of Dunboyne, John fitz Edmund Butler, who held Thurles, and Richard Butler. Each of these men were to retain the lands they held of the earl during pleasure. A second indenture, sealed on 20 July 1505 gave Piers a life grant of the manors of Cloncurry, Oughterany, Oughterard and Castlewarning, and one can assume that under the terms of Piers' indenture with Kildare the profits of these manors would be split evenly between Kildare, Ormond and Piers Butler. The third indenture granted Piers the manors of Arklow and Tullow in tail male, rendering one third of the revenues to the earl each year. This series of grants was capped by the earl's appointment of Piers as the seneschal of the liberty of Tipperary on 21 July 1505.¹⁴⁴

These grants acknowledged the realities of the Ormond lordship in Ireland, but there was still some scope for differences in interpretation.

¹⁴² *Ormond deeds, 1509-47*, app. no. 72, p. 354

¹⁴³ *Ormond deeds, 1413-1509*, no. 320, pp 312-18

¹⁴⁴ *ibid.*, no. 321, pp 318-19

Clearly, Ormond desired to re-assert his authority over his lordship and the forms of the indentures clearly attest to the fact that Piers Butler was willing to serve as the earl's representative during the earl's lifetime. However, Ormond also seems to have been engaged in arrangements that would alter the balance within his lordship in Ireland somewhat. On 7 April 1508, Ormond's representative in Dublin, Sir Thomas Kent, wrote to the earl saying that Kildare

'has given at this time sufficient authority to the baron of Slane and to the said dean [of St. Patrick's, Dublin] to conclude the marriage with your lordship between my said lord's daughter and master St. Leger, your daughter's son which has long been delayed.'¹⁴⁵

Ormond's use of Kent as his representative in Dublin indicates that he was willing to pursue closer relations with Kildare, as Kent had been in Kildare's service since at least 3 May 1499 when he had been sent by Kildare to propose the Kildare-St. Leger marriage.¹⁴⁶ A marriage alliance between Ormond and Kildare was potentially profitable for both sides. It would be expensive for Ormond, but it would almost certainly guarantee Kildare's support for the descent of Ormond's lands in Ireland to Ormond's grandchildren, and not to Piers Butler. However, Kent does warn the earl that the marriage, should it go ahead, would cause the earl to lose the 'love and good will of Sir Piers Butler and his wife'. This is surely an understatement, given Piers Butler's lifelong struggle to gain control of the Ormond lordship. Between 1508 and 1515, Piers Butler restored much of the function of the liberty of Tipperary and oversaw its courts on a regular basis. It is extremely unlikely that he would stand aside and meekly serve as the deputy of Sir George St. Leger and Sir Thomas Boleyn, even if they were supported by the Great Earl of Kildare. In the end, the marriage did not happen, probably because both Kildare and Ormond felt that the value of the marriage was not worth the destruction of the Ormond lordship just as it was beginning to recover from the problems of the absentee period. It is clear from Ormond's bequests to Sir Thomas Boleyn that his personal desire was that his grandchildren inherit all of his lands, but even at his death in 1515, it was unclear whether Piers Butler or Sir Thomas Boleyn would emerge as the next earl of Ormond.

¹⁴⁵ *Ormond deeds, 1509-47*, app. no. 81, pp 361-2

¹⁴⁶ P.R.O. SP46/130/23

The period from 1464 to the death of Earl Thomas in 1515 saw a fundamental change in the relationship between the earl of Ormond and his lordship in Ireland. This change emerged as a result of the quarter-century in which Earls John and Thomas paid little, if any, attention to the affairs of their Irish lordship because they were too occupied with English politics and the desire to re-build their place in England after their exile in the 1460s. To further complicate this problem, the same twenty year period saw a generational shift in the leadership of the junior branches of the Butler family in Ireland, resulting in a leadership that had lost its personal connection to the earl of Ormond and was generally aware of him only as a distant figurehead in England.

As a result of this prolonged period of absenteeism and lack of personal contact with the earl in England, the heads of the junior branches of the Butler family came to regard the divisions of comital authority created during the life of the White Earl as permanent hereditary offices, even to the extent of being outside the control of the earl of Ormond himself. This change in perceptions can be personified by the career of Sir Piers Butler, who saw his position as the deputy of the Earl of Ormond in Ireland as a logical outgrowth of his position as the male heir of the Earl. The career of Sir James Ormond reflects the attempts by both Henry VII and Earl Thomas of Ormond to enforce their rights and authority on their lordships in Ireland in the face of dogged, if respectful, opposition. The successes and failures of Sir James Ormond underlines not only the long term allegiance given by the majority of the Butler family to the earl of Ormond but also the political reality under which that loyalty functioned. After the death of Sir James Ormond in 1497, Earl Thomas' willingness to maintain regular lines of communication with his lordship in Ireland and, eventually, to work with Piers Butler allowed the reconstruction of much of the authority lost by the earl in the absentee period, although this reconstruction would not be complete until the earldom of Ormond and effective control of the Ormond lordship in Ireland were re-united in 1539.

Conclusion

Despite the strong and enduring ties that bound the kingdom of England and the lordship of Ireland throughout the medieval period, the general trend in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries was for the two countries to become increasingly separate as time went on, although a certain level of interaction was maintained at the 'national' level represented by the king's administration in Dublin. At all other levels of society, the dominions of the king of England tended to draw further apart and develop along separate, although roughly parallel, lines. This separation is extremely apparent at the level of the nobility, as the number of magnates that held lands on both sides of the Irish Sea dwindled in the late thirteenth and fourteenth centuries as families concentrated their interests in either England or Ireland. This concentration of interests fostered a gradual differentiation in perspective between the magnate community in Ireland and its counterpart in England as the magnates of Ireland became increasingly pre-occupied with the threat of their Gaelic neighbours while the magnates of England turned their attention to wars with Scotland and France. At the beginning of the fourteenth century, Edward I was able to command significant support, both in men and material, for his wars in Scotland from the lordship of Ireland but a century later, Anglo-Irish participation in Henry V's campaigns in France was notably absent.

By the first quarter of the fifteenth century only a bare handful of English magnates retained a significant lordship in Ireland. While the list of these magnates included some of the most important magnates in England such as the Mortimer earls of March, the Stafford earls of Stafford and the Lords Talbot, only the Mortimers showed any consistent interest in their Irish lands. The list of Irish magnates that retained any significant interest in the affairs of England was even shorter, being limited to the Butler earls of Ormond. The traditional portrayal of the earls of Ormond as the most English of the great Anglo-Irish is perhaps overstated but they were the only one of the Anglo-Irish comital houses to regularly marry into the English nobility and who retained any landed wealth in England

at all. In the lifetimes of the second and third earls of Ormond this connection to England was of minor importance. However, the importance of the English connection to the Butler family grew steadily from the succession of James Butler IV to the earldom of Ormond in 1405 and came to play a central role in the history of the Butlers in the second half of the fifteenth century.

The career of the White Earl serves to illustrate some very important points concerning the relationship between the nobility of Ireland and its counterpart in England. The first of these is that there appears to have been absolutely no distinction drawn between an Anglo-Irish earl and an English earl. Ormond may have spent most of the first twenty years of his life in the lordship of Ireland and probably had a landed estate that generated an income somewhat below the average value associated with an earl in England but this made him no more alien in the court of Henry V than one of the northern magnates such as the earl of Northumberland. Ormond's comfort and familiarity with the English court can be seen in the fact that he was the source of many of the anecdote later incorporated into the *First English life of Henry V*. Furthermore, Ormond's reason for being at court was identical to that of all of the other magnates; a desire for the patronage of the king and his family. Ormond's connections to the Lancastrian dynasty, first through Thomas, duke of Clarence and then through Henry V, formed the basis of a familial loyalty that would last throughout the century.

While Ormond's career in the service of Henry V serves to highlight the basic similarities between the magnate community of England and that of Ireland, his career within the lordship serves as a further illustration of the growing gap between the orthodox perception of Ireland held in London and that held by the king's loyal subjects in Ireland. It is clear from a study of Ormond's life that he spoke Irish and had a firm grasp of Gaelic culture and was willing to accept the institutionalisation of aspects of that culture within his own lordship, as long as he was in control of the process. This does not mean that we can consider Ormond himself to have been Gaelicised to any great extent, but he was clearly willing to accept that the Gaelic populace of Ireland had a place within the lordship of Ireland and pursued a policy of extreme pragmatism with respect to the Gaelic magnates of Ireland. It was this pragmatic approach that brought Ormond into conflict with the Talbots,

who represented the traditional English policy of conflict with the 'King's Irish Enemies'. Ormond's unorthodox stance towards the Gaelic-Irish, combined with his own combative nature, caused a deep factional divide within the Dublin administration. It also served to damage his credibility with the government of England during the reign of Henry VI, leaving him open to charges of treason on two occasions.

The White earl's career also illustrates the limitations under which an Irish magnate who wished to maintain connections with England laboured. Despite his social equality with his English peers, Ormond found that without the king's patronage he was very much the political outsider in England. Ormond proved to be adept at forging good relations with specific magnates in England, such as Thomas, duke of Clarence or Edmund Mortimer, earl of March, but if those relationships faltered for whatever reason, he found that he had no other relations on which he could build. Ormond determined that his son would not suffer the same liability and sent his son to be raised in England, building connection within the English nobility from childhood.

It seems clear that Ormond's original plan was to have his son and heir raised in England, perhaps marry an Englishwoman, and then return to Ireland to take his father's place in the lordship. Unfortunately for Ormond, his plan succeeded far too well as his son developed ties of loyalty to Henry VI and a landed estate in England that shifted the balance of the family's landed wealth away from Ireland to England. This problem was exacerbated after Ormond's death when the revenues of the Butler lordship in Ireland were subjected to the absentee legislation, thereby further reducing the value of the lordship in Ireland to his sons. The career of James Butler, earl of Wiltshire and Ormond clearly shows the heights to which an Anglo-Irish magnates could aspire in England. Building on his grandmother's legacy, his wife's extensive inheritance and his own position at court, Wiltshire became one of the most influential figures in the last decade of the reign of Henry VI and might well have returned to Ireland as lieutenant to continue the Butler dominance of the political life of the lordship of Ireland. However, Wiltshire was also a central figure in the factionalism that marred, and ultimately ended, the reign of Henry VI. As one of the few 'mortal enemies' singled out by the Yorkists, Wiltshire was not even given the

chance to reconcile with Edward IV, although it is highly unlikely that he would have taken that chance in any case.

Following Wiltshire's execution, his brother, John, unsuccessfully tried to create a pro-Lancastrian uprising in Ireland but was eventually forced into an exile that lasted until 1471. Edward IV's victory in 1471 forced even die-hard Lancastrians like John and Thomas Butler to accept the reality of the Yorkist monarchy and attempt to come to an accommodation with the king but even then the full restoration of the Butler lands in England was dependent on circumstances beyond their control and was not accomplished until 1485.

Thomas, earl of Ormond, managed to recreate much of the standing his brother, Wiltshire, had enjoyed at court and became a perennial figure within the courts of Henry VII and Henry VIII. It is perhaps ironic that a family which was able to produce two such successful courtiers in one generation failed to produce a son who could carry on the tradition of Butler influence at court. Lacking a male heir of his own body, Earl Thomas chose to aid and promote the career of his grandson, Sir Thomas Boleyn, at court and clearly desired him to be his successor, to the extent of bequeathing him an heirloom that had been in the Butler family for centuries. Earl Thomas' promotion of his grandson and his relations with Sir Piers Butler should provide ample evidence that while a magnate's ties to his lineage were of great importance, his ties to his own immediate family and his desire to promote their interests could be of paramount importance. This difference could often lead to conflicts between the magnate's potential heirs, as happened in the case of Piers Butler and Sir Thomas Boleyn after the death of Earl Thomas in 1515.

Despite the successes of the sons of the White Earl in England in England, the Butler lordship in England was transitory. However, the absentee period did have profound effects on the Butler lordship in Ireland. In many respects, the development of the Ormond lordship in Ireland reached its height during the lifetime of the White Earl. As the authority of the administration in Dublin retreated in the early fifteenth century, Ormond was left as the only viable source of authority in the counties of Kilkenny and Tipperary. Ormond used his position as the dominant landholder in the region and his possession of the liberty of Tipperary as a basis from which to organise the defence of his lordship

during his lifetime. Although he brooked few challenges to his authority, he was also careful to seek the advice of the commons of his lordship and use that advice as the basis of a series of local laws promulgated to ensure order within his lordship. While formulating these laws, Ormond showed a willingness to accept elements of Gaelic culture within his lordship, but only on his terms and only to the extent agreed by the commons of his heavily Anglicised lordship.

Ormond's legislation also dealt with the need to limit the power and authority exhibited by his own kinsmen, the leaders of the various cadet branches of the Butler family. The rise of the cadet branches posed no threat to Ormond's dominance of the Butler family as they had been largely endowed with lands that came from outside the Butler patrimony. Ormond's concern was not to exclude his kinsmen from power and authority within his lordship but to regulate their participation so as to ensure that he remained the ultimate authority within his own lordship. Ormond also evidenced a preference for using his kinsmen as his deputies for various aspects of his authority within his lordship; Edmund MacRichard as his personal deputy, the Butlers of Dunboyne as the seneschal of the liberty of Tipperary and the Butlers of Cahir as part of the defences of the lordship because that was their rightful place in the structured society in which they lived. Furthermore, this division of powers was accepted by the cadet branches, just as they accepted the earl's place at the head of the Butler *natio*. This respect for the position of the earl must be stressed. The White Earl's son, John, was accepted as the unquestioned earl of Ormond when he came to Ireland to gauge his support in 1462 and even in the depths of the absentee period, when Piers Butler had effectively taken control of the Ormond lordship, Earl Thomas was still regarded as the natural lord of the Ormond lordship and addressed with a great deal of respect.

Nevertheless, the absence of the earls of Ormond from the lordship of Ireland for more than sixty years after the death of the White Earl did have profound effects on their lordship in Ireland and on the cadet branches of the Butler family. Absenteeism, *per se*, was not a guarantee of disaster within the medieval lordship of Ireland. As evidenced by the regular contact kept by Earl Thomas with his agents in Ireland in the period from 1491 to 1510, an absentee magnate could keep a close eye on events within the Irish lordship from England and even the earl of

Wiltshire left evidence that he was concerned with the state of affairs within his lordship of Ireland. However, for an absentee magnate to exert his authority over his Irish lordship he had to choose trusted agents and maintain regular communication with those agents.

In the case of the earls of Ormond, they did have trusted agents in place. The sons of the White Earl continued their father's practice of dividing the authority of the earl between the MacRichard Butlers and the Butlers of Dunboyne for much the same reason as Ormond instituted it in the first place. It simply made sense to entrust the governance of the Ormond lordship to the earl's kinsmen to govern the lordship in the best interests of the Butler family. However, from c.1455 to the 1490s, there is no evidence that the earls of Ormond maintained the level of communication with their kinsmen in Ireland needed to ensure that their wishes were followed. The circumstances of Wiltshire's involvement with Lancastrian politics, the exile of John and Thomas Butler, and the efforts of Thomas Butler to recover his family's lands in England mitigated against regular communication with Ireland for almost a quarter of a century.

This did not cause many problems for the Ormond lordship in the period 1452 to 1462, as all of the men who were charged with the governance of the Ormond lordship remembered the White Earl and transferred their allegiance to his sons without difficulty, as evidenced by their support of John, earl of Ormond. However, the period 1464 to 1490 is marked by an almost total lack of communication between the earls of Ormond and their kinsmen in Ireland. While there were two earls of Ormond in this period, they were both of the same generation and the same could not be said of their kinsmen in Ireland. With the exception of Edmund fitz James Butler of Dunboyne, none of the heads of the cadet branches of the Butler family in 1490 knew the earl of Ormond as anything more than a distant figure of authority. Without personal communication and knowledge, the relationship between the earl and his kinsmen became formalised and was often ignored by the Butlers in Ireland when inconvenient. Furthermore, in the absence of communication from the earls, the arrangements of the White Earl became 'fossilised' over time with his appointments slowly becoming seen as hereditary offices by the recipients of those offices.

This problem is most clear in the relationship between Earl Thomas and his closest Butler kinsman in Ireland, Piers Butler. To Piers Butler, his place as the earl's heir male and the fact that his family had served as the deputy of the earl of Ormond in Ireland since the mid-1440s, meant that the position was his by right. Earl Thomas on the other hand saw the position as being his to appoint and remove. Both positions had merit but were largely incompatible. The appointment of Sir James Ormond as the earl's deputy was seen by Piers Butler as an attack on his rightful position within the Ormond lordship and caused immediate hostility between the two men. Indeed, all of the controversy within the Ormond lordship in the 1490s was based on the clash between the hereditary principle and the powers of the earls and the issue was largely settled in favour of heredity when Ormond finally recognised that his insistence on his legal rights was useless without the co-operation of Piers Butler and his father-in-law, the earl of Kildare.

Kildare's relationship with Ormond and Piers Butler highlights the fact that the overall Butler-Geraldine relationship was not one of inveterate hostility. Historians tend to emphasise the periods of conflict between the Butlers and either the Geraldines of Munster or the Geraldines of Leinster and ignore the fact that these conflicts were imbedded in years of peaceful relations. The White Earl's relations with the fifth earl of Kildare and the sixth earl of Desmond clearly show that the Butlers were more than capable of living in relative harmony with their neighbours. Each of the Butler-Geraldine conflicts in the fifteenth century had a very specific reason, a broken marriage alliance, the recovery of the Kildare patrimony or the attempt to remove the Great Earl from a position of authority within the Irish lordship. In the case of Piers Butler, most of the loyalty that probably should have been bestowed on an earl of Ormond was transferred to his foster father and father-in-law, the earl of Kildare. Kildare's ties with Piers Butler also serve as another reminder that political change in England did not always have the same impact in Ireland. The timing of the marriage between Piers Butler and Margaret Fitzgerald may have been triggered by the restoration of Thomas, earl of Ormond in England, but had more to do with Kildare securing the allegiance of an important Anglo-Irish family than it had to do with offsetting Ormond's influence in England.

Finally, the decades long absence of the earls of Ormond had enduring effects on the cadet branches of the Butler family as each of them adjusted to the absentee period in different ways. The question of legitimacy apparently had an effect on the way that each of the junior branches adapted. For instance, the Butlers of Cahir, who were descended from an illegitimate son of the third earl of Ormond and who had no stake in the governance of the Ormond lordship, tended to retreat into their own minor lordship around Cahir and simply follow a path of independence. The Butlers of Dunboyne, whose family had a legitimate descent, remained concerned with the administration of the liberty of Tipperary, even as the administrative structures began to decay for lack of support from the absentee earls.

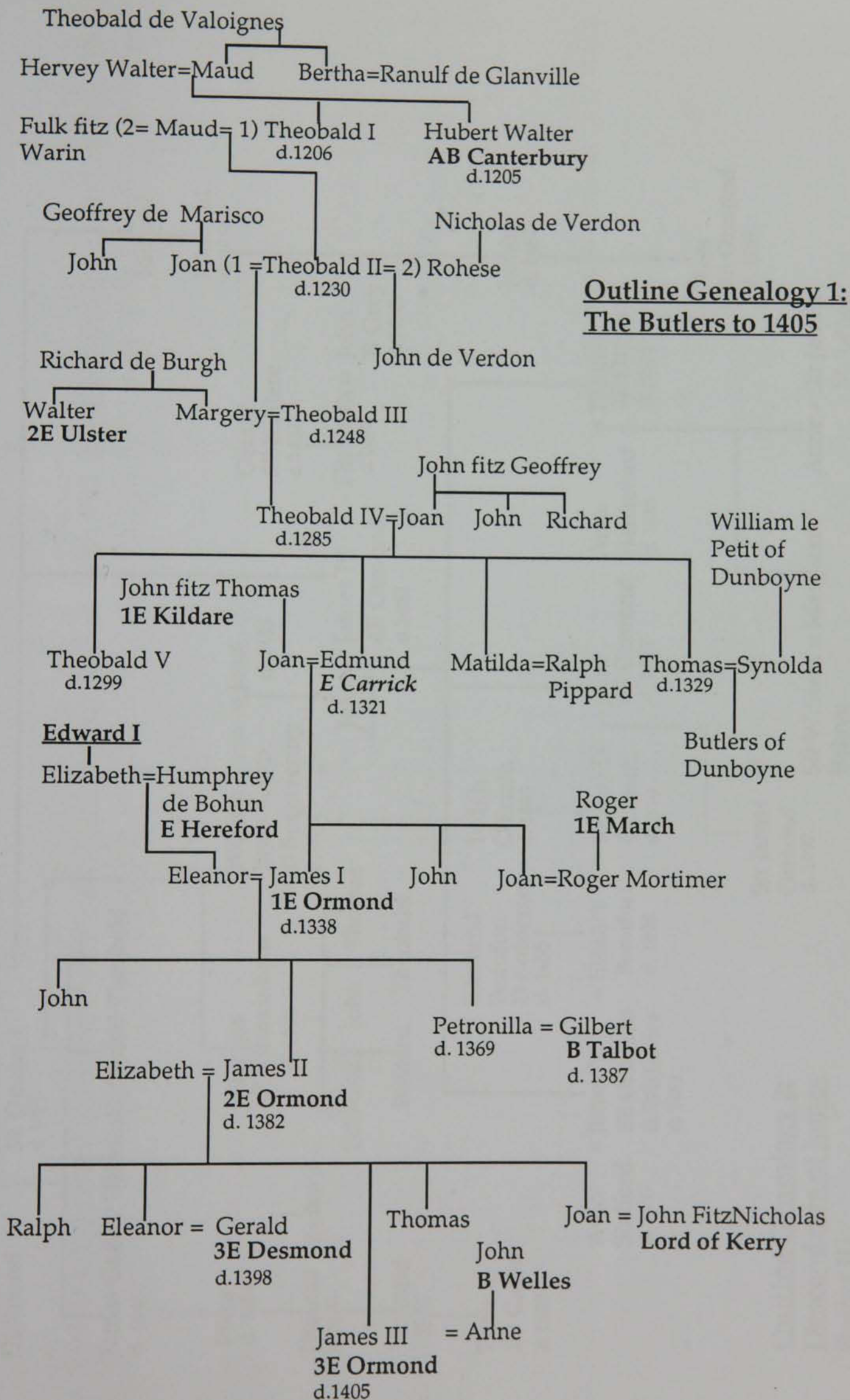
The MacRichard Butlers were the family that adapted best to the absentee period, largely because they gained the most from it. Edmund MacRichard was recognised by the White Earl as his heir male after his own sons and this was the main reason he was entrusted with the earl's own demesne lands. Control of his own family's lands in addition to the demesne lands of the earls, plus their willingness to purchase any lands that came on the market in Kilkenny, allowed the MacRichard Butlers to make themselves first among equals within the Ormond lordship. As a group, Edmund MacRichard, James fitz Edmund and Piers fitz James showed themselves to be well aware of their place in the Butler family and the fact that they were the *de facto* lords of Kilkenny.

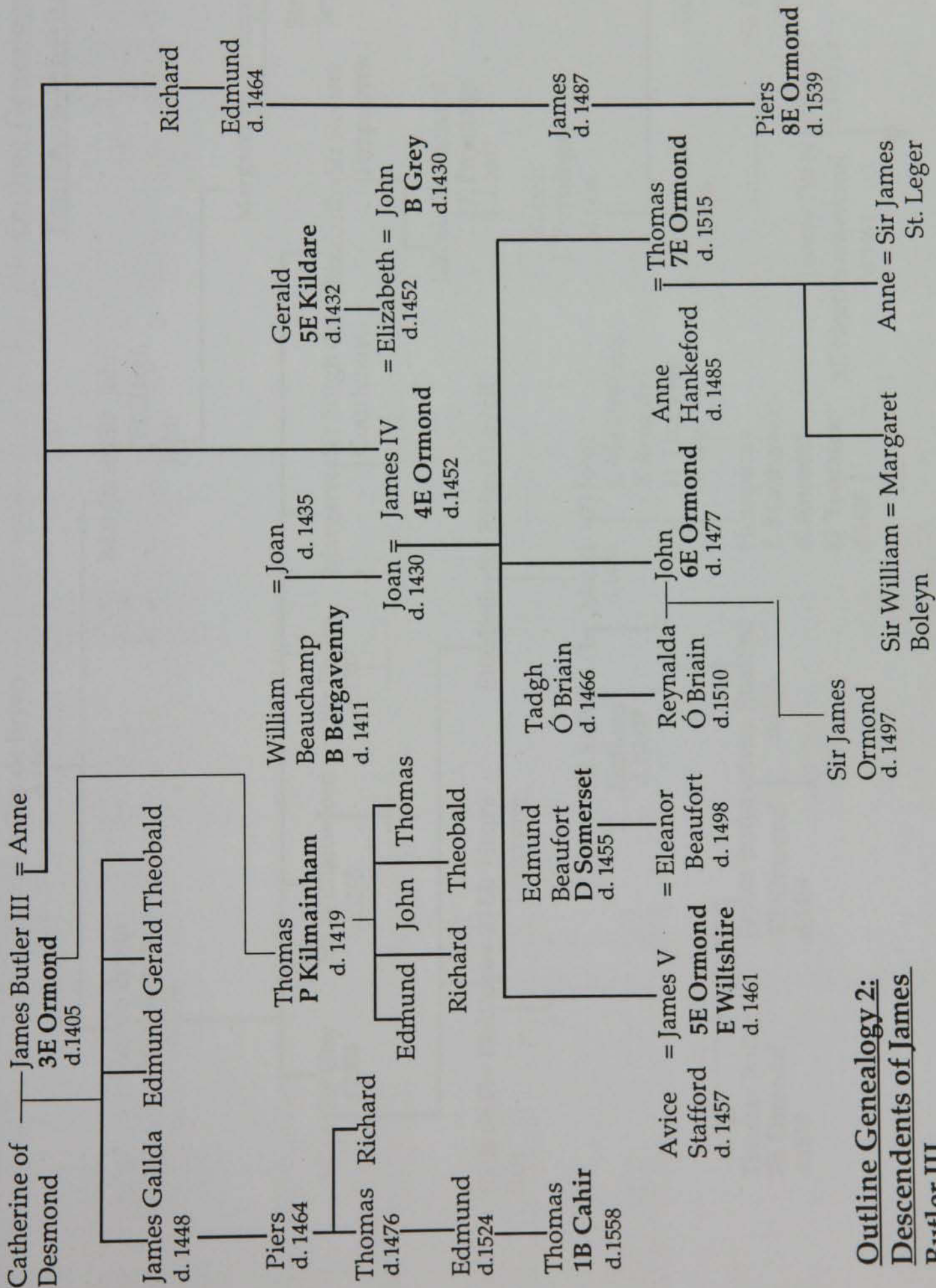
As a family, they also tended to be more willing to undertake questionable activities in their quest to protect their lordship. The most obvious example of this is the close relations between the MacRichard Butlers and the Kavanaghs of Leinster. Edmund MacRichard was willing to support a Kavanagh raid into Wexford for the sake of good relations, a raid that also highlighted his ability to command the support of other branches of the Butler family. Furthermore, a series of marriage alliance with the Kavanaghs cemented the good ties between the families and allowed the MacRichard Butlers to concentrate on their place within the Ormond lordship. They were also ambitious enough to attempt to expand their influence beyond Kilkenny, using the earl's lands in Tipperary as a base from which to expand. These efforts at expansion appear to have centred on gaining control of the town of Carrick-on-Suir and invariably brought them into conflict with the Butlers of Cahir but tend to have been

inconclusive as control of the town passed back and forth between the two families for more than forty years.

These conflicts serve to underline the difficulties the MacRichard Butlers had in expanding their authority over the other branches of the family. Without the full backing and authority of the earls to support them, the MacRichard Butlers were only the most powerful of the branches of the family, but they were not powerful enough to overcome the smallest of the branches. In fact, even with the backing of the earl from 1505, Piers Butler could not conquer the Butler of Cahir and was forced to negotiate a settlement with them in 1516. Furthermore, as the events of the 1490s showed, the rest of the Ormond lordship remembered its loyalty to the earl and supported Sir James Ormond, leaving Piers Butler to be imprisoned by the earl's deputy and freed only by the grace of the earl of Desmond. The MacRichard Butlers were the first among equals of the Butler family in Ireland, but their position was fragile in many respects, depending on the good will of the earl of Ormond or the support of the earl of Kildare.

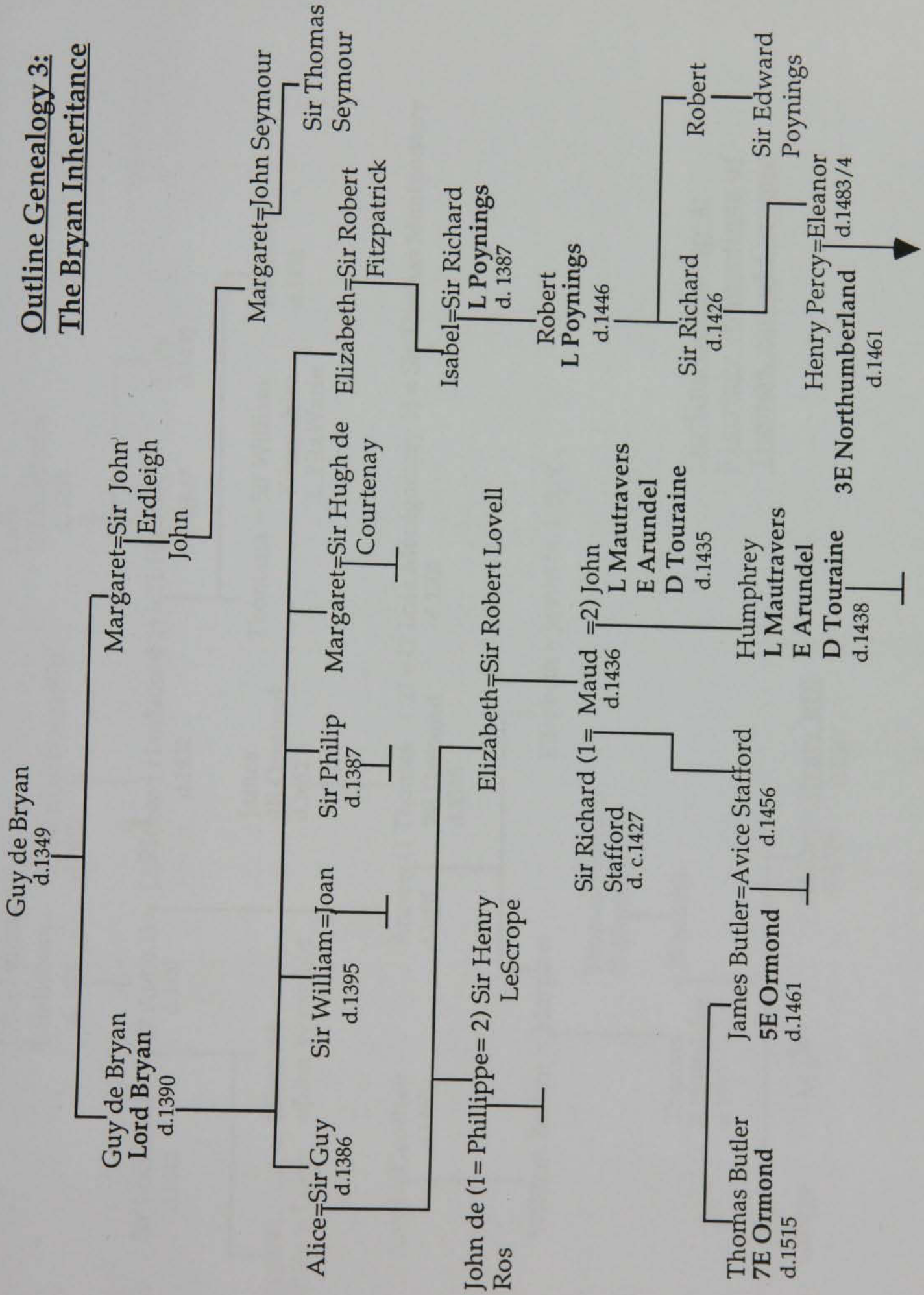
The history of the Butler family provides highlights for almost every aspect of the Anglo-Irish magnate community. The careers of the White Earl and his sons illustrate that it was possible for an Anglo-Irish magnate to play a role in the magnate community of England, but their experiences also show that an Anglo-Irish magnate in England is even more dependent on royal patronage than their English counterparts. Within the lordship of Ireland the main effect of the absenteeism of the earls of Ormond was to remove any challengers to the emerging Kildare hegemony from within the Anglo-Irish community. For the Butler family itself, the absentee tended to highlight and fossilise divisions within the Butler *natio*, although those divisions never stopped the Butlers from working as a unit when necessary. The recovery of the Ormond lordship only began when Earl Thomas bowed to the realities of the situation and broke with precedent by appointing Piers Butler as his omni-competent deputy in 1505, and was still not complete by the time of his death in August 1515.

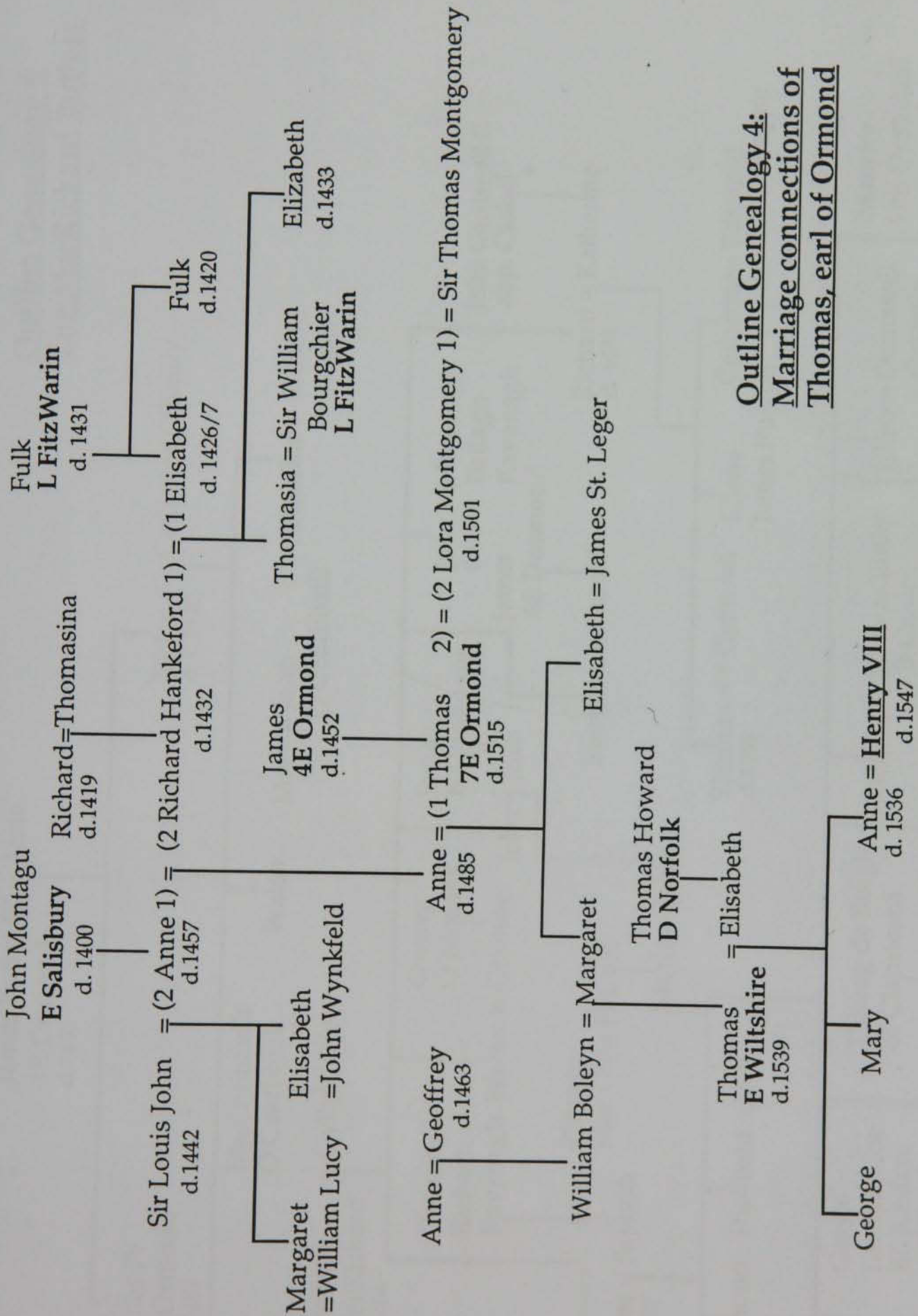




Outline Genealogy 2:
Descendents of James
Butler III

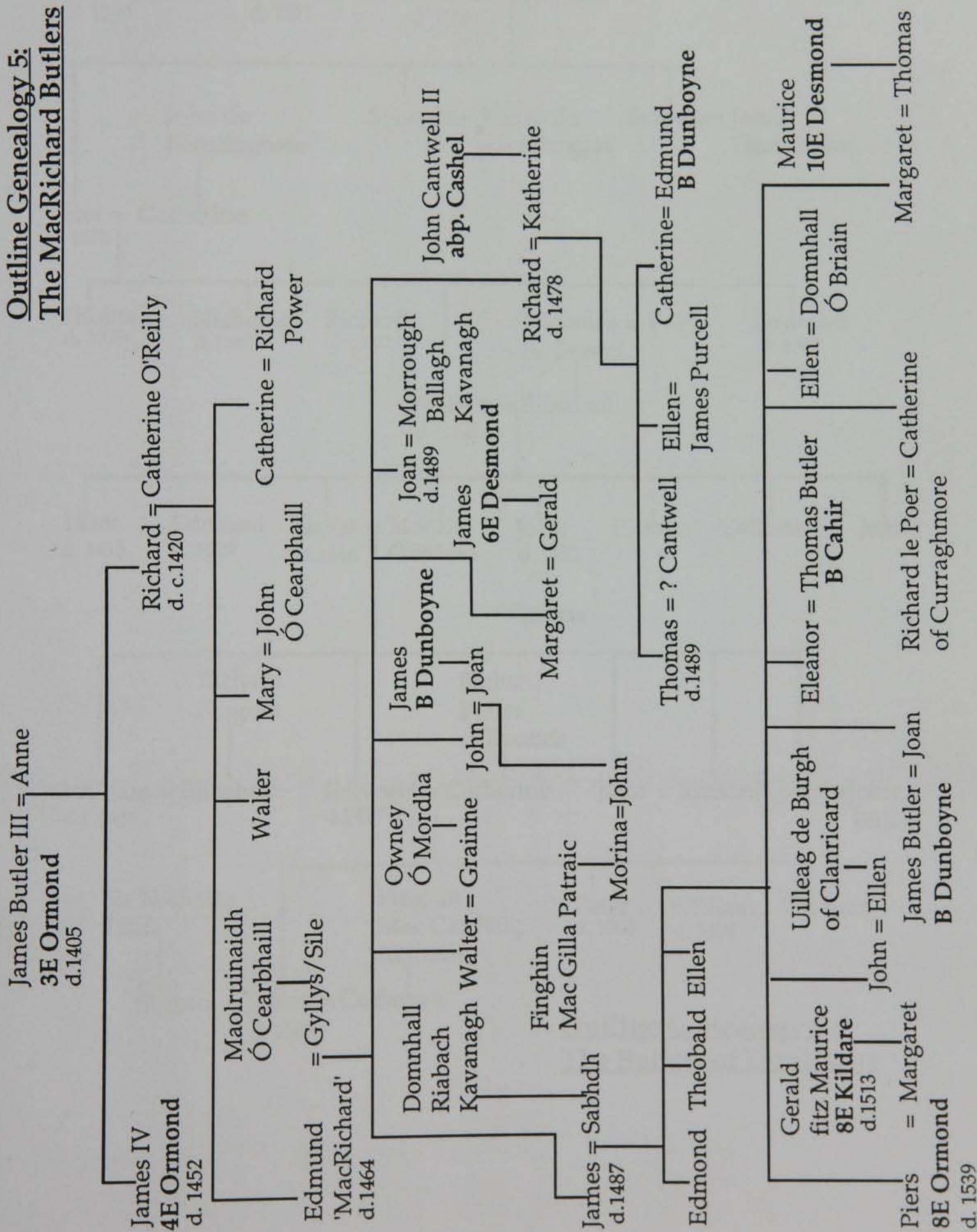
Outline Genealogy 3:
The Bryan Inheritance

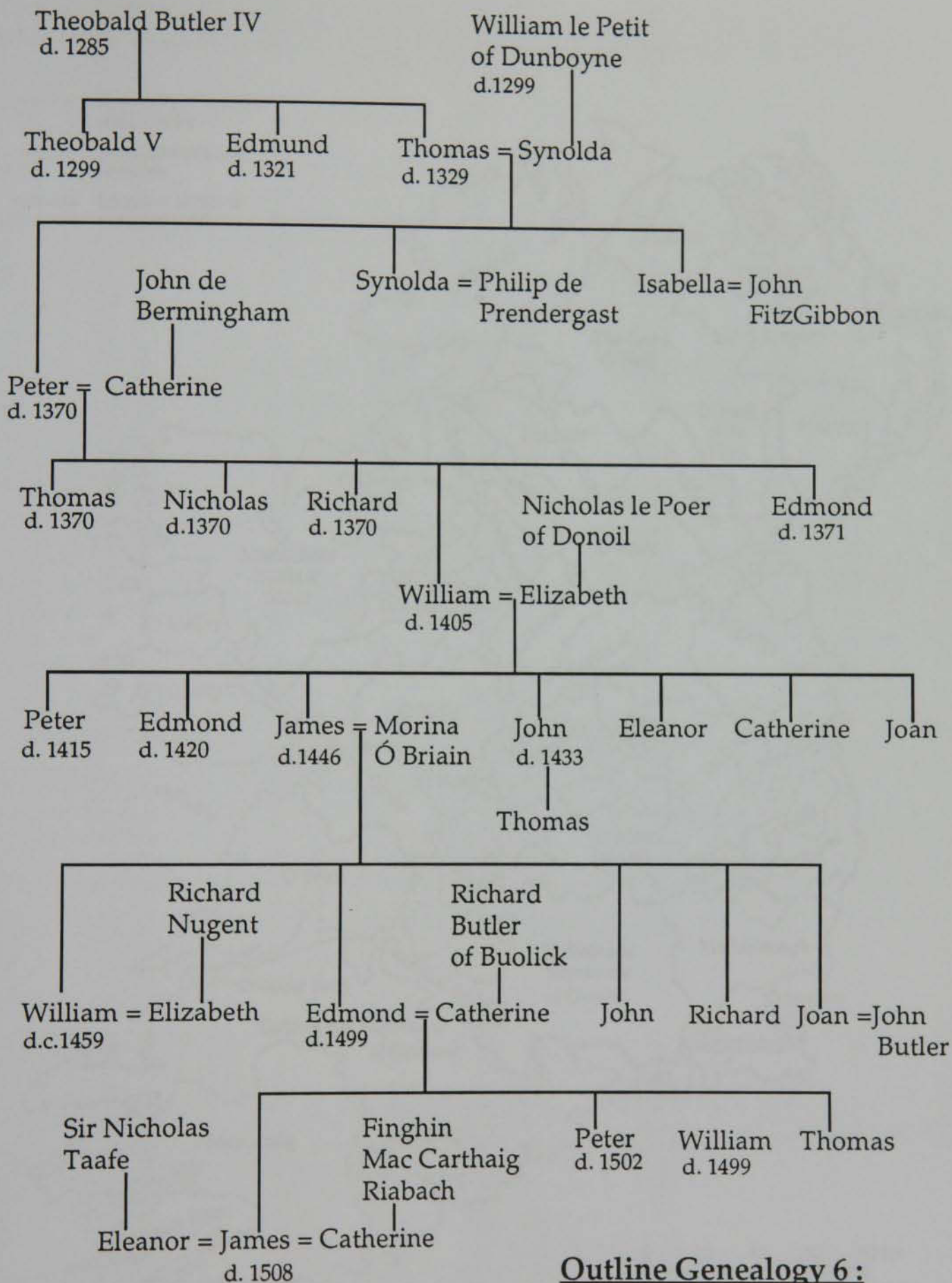




Outline Genealogy 4:
Marriage connections of
Thomas, earl of Ormond

Outline Genealogy 5:
The MacRichard Butlers



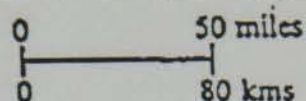


Outline Genealogy 6 :
The Butlers of Dunboyne

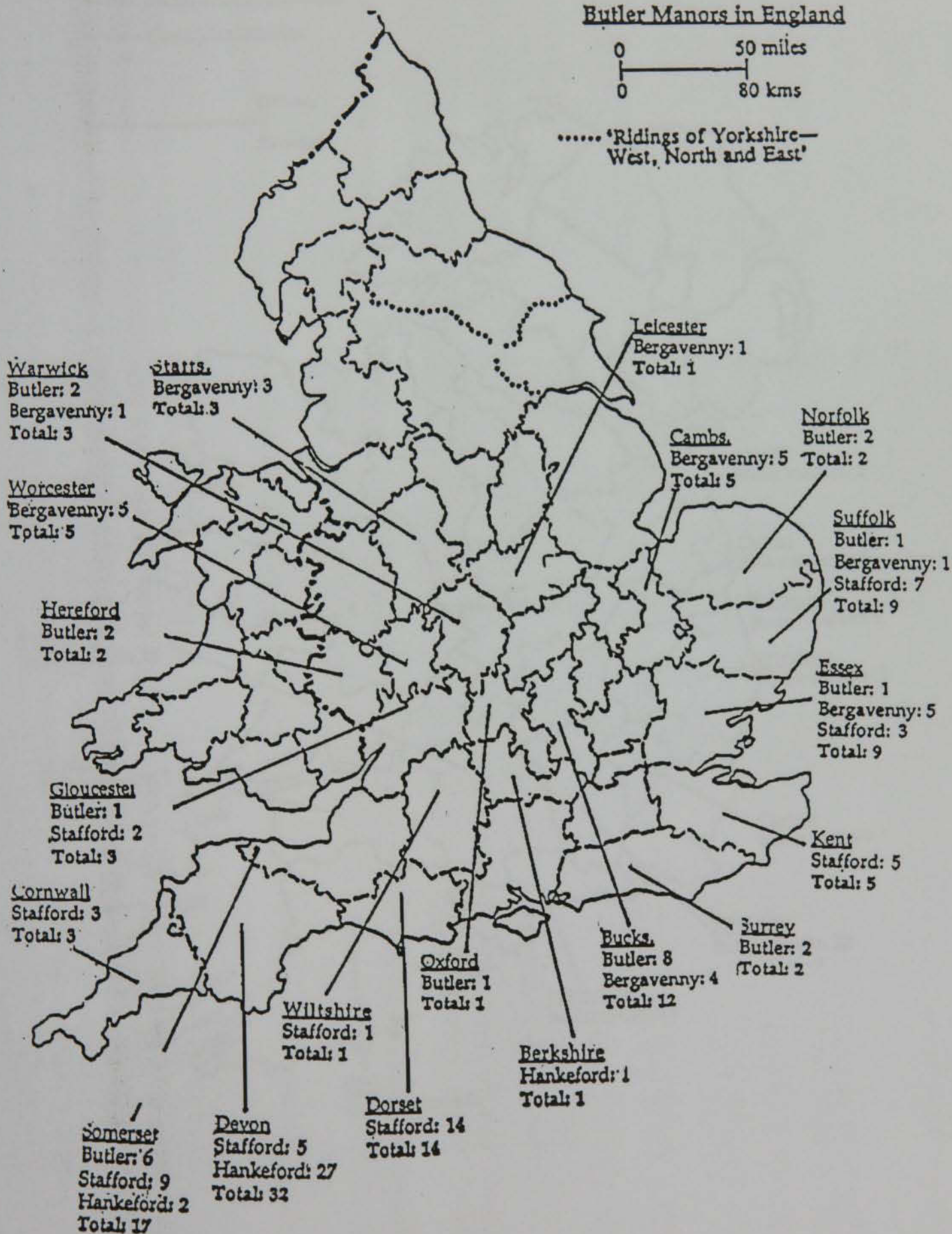
- boundaries of counties and lordships
- - - boundaries of lesser lordships
- boundary of Pale in statute of 1488



Butler Manors in England



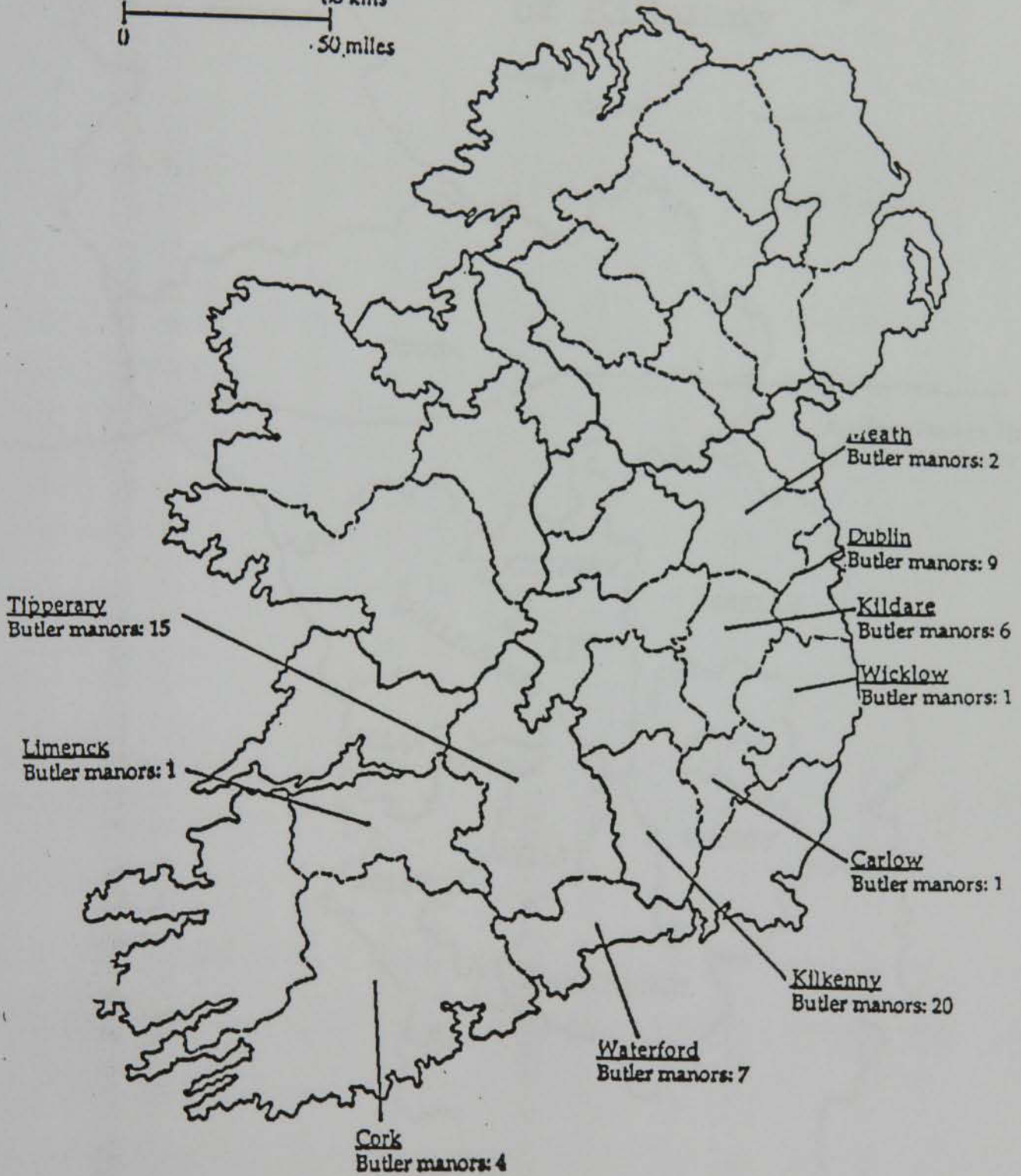
..... 'Ridings of Yorkshire—
West, North and East'



Butler manors in Ireland

— Boundaries of provinces

- - - County boundaries



The Medieval County of Kilkenny

AGHABOE

Legend:

Centred



After Empey

ODOGH

Approximate line of Gaelic recovery

KILKENNY

OSKELAN

SHILLELOGHER

CALLAN

OGENTY

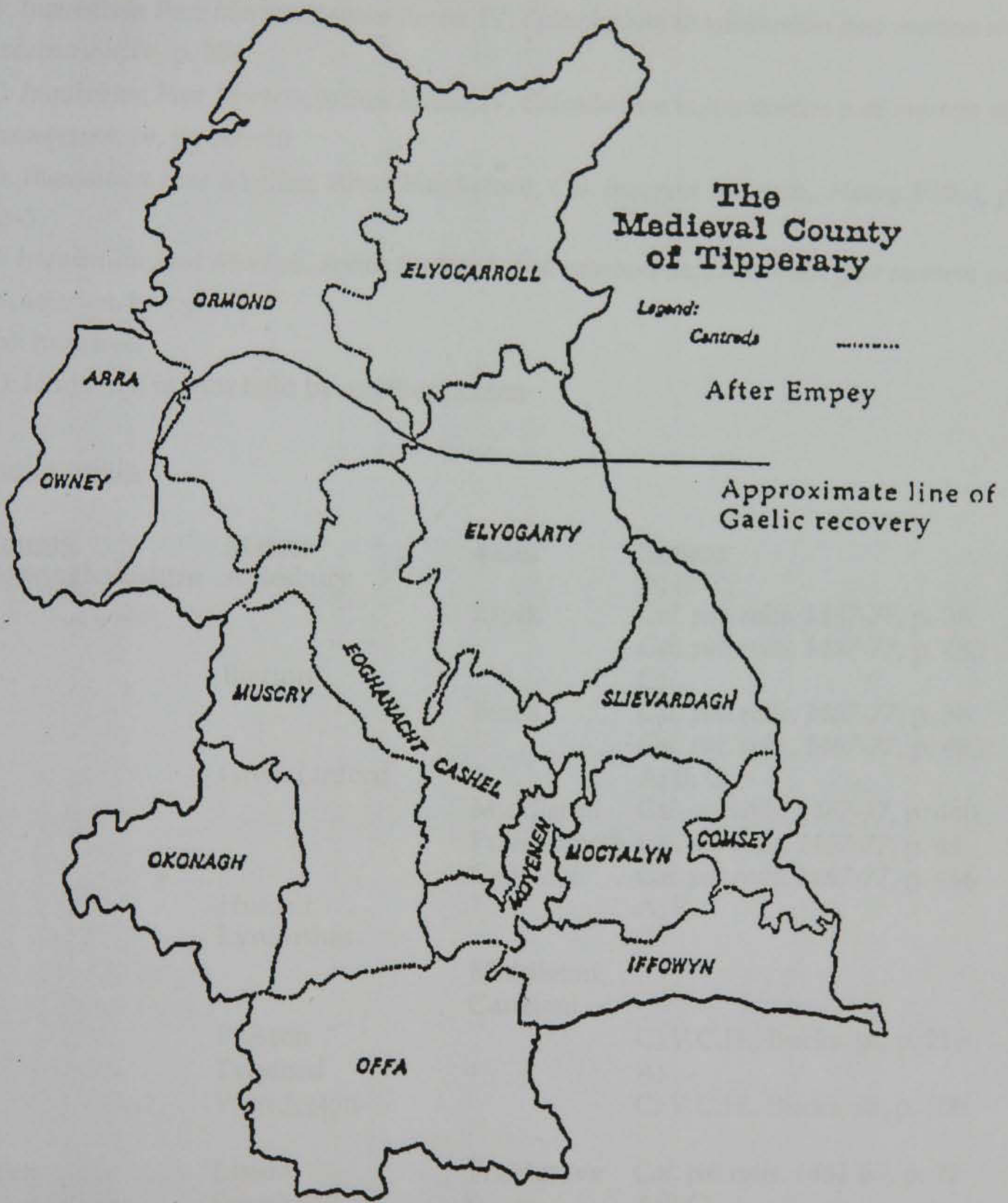
KELLS

ERLEY

KNOCKTOPHER

IVERK

The Medieval County of Tipperary



Appendix no. 1: Butler manors in England and Wales in the fifteenth century

A: *Inquisition Post Mortem*, James Butler III, *Cal. inq. post mortem*, xix, pp 7-8

B: *Inquisition Post Mortem*, James Butler IV, *Calendarium inquisitionum post mortem sive excaetarum*, iv, p. 253

C: *Inquisition Post Mortem*, James Butler IV, *Calendarium inquisitionum post mortem sive excaetarum*, iv, pp 309-10

D: *Inquisition Post Mortem*, Anne Hankeford, *Cal. inq. post mortem*, Henry VIII, i, pp 63-5

E: *Inquisition Post Mortem*, Avise Stafford, *Calendarium inquisitionum post mortem sive excaetarum*, iv, pp 273

(h): hundred

(l): lands in a manor held by another person

Butler origin

<u>County</u>	<u>Manor</u>	<u>Exile</u>	<u>Source</u>
Buckinghamshire	Aylesbury		A; B; C;
		Essex	<i>Cal. pat. rolls</i> , 1467-77, p. 38 <i>Cal. pat. rolls</i> , 1467-77, p. 480
	Bierton		C;
		Essex	<i>Cal. pat. rolls</i> , 1467-77, p. 38 <i>Cal. pat. rolls</i> , 1467-77, p. 480
	Great Linford		A; B; C;
		Middleton	<i>Cal. pat rolls</i> , 1467-77, p. 440
		Pr. Elizabeth	<i>Cal. pat rolls</i> , 1467-77, p. 44
		Canziani	<i>Cal. pat rolls</i> , 1467-77, p. 466
	Hulcott	?	A; B
	Lynforthes		C
		Middleton	
		Canziani	
	Preston		C; V.C.H., Bucks, iii, p. 216
	Twyford		A;
	Woddeston		C; V.C.H., Bucks, iii, p. 109
Essex	Liston	Waldgrave	<i>Cal. pat rolls</i> , 1461-67, p. 72
	Smethamhall		A;B;C;
		Howard	<i>Cal. pat rolls</i> , 1461-67, P. 458
Gloucestershire	Coldaston		A;B;C;
		Devereaux	<i>Cal. pat rolls</i> , 1461-67, p. 486
	Elkeston		<i>Cal. pat rolls</i> , 1476-85, p. 307

<u>County</u>	<u>Manor</u>	<u>Exile</u>	<u>Source</u>
Hereford	Kilpeck		A; B
	Trevyle	Herbert Milewater	<i>Cal. pat rolls, 1461-67, p. 425</i> <i>Cal. pat rolls, 1461-67, p. 91</i>
Norfolk	Hereford		C
	Meyton		C
Oxford	Fritewell		A;
		Hatcliff	<i>Cal. pat rolls, 1467-77, p. 36</i>
Somerset	Belveton		B; C
		Clarence	<i>Cal. pat rolls, 1467-77, p. 459</i>
	Camely		A
	Exton	Clarence	<i>Cal. pat rolls, 1467-77, p. 459</i>
	Horsey		C
	Hunspill Mareys	Clarence	<i>Cal. pat rolls, 1467-77, p. 459</i> B; C
	Pensford	Clarence	<i>Cal. pat rolls, 1467-77, p. 459</i> B; C
	Steeplehome Is.	Clarence	<i>Cal. pat rolls, 1467-77, p. 459</i> B
Suffolk	Cantilupe		A
Surrey	Shere		A; B
		Audeley	<i>Cal. pat rolls, 1461-67, p. 68</i>
	Vacherie		A; B
		Audeley	<i>Cal. pat rolls, 1461-67, p. 68</i>
Warwickshire	Long Compton		A
		Devereaux	<i>Cal. pat rolls, 1461-67, p. 4</i>
	Shotteswell		C
		arecourt	<i>Cal. pat rolls, 1461-67, p. 198</i>

Abergavenny origin

<u>County</u>	<u>Manor</u>	<u>Exile</u>	<u>Source</u>
Buckinghamshire	Little Linford		C;
		Clarence	<i>Cal. pat rolls, 1467-77, p. 457</i>
	Lynforthes		C;
		Middleton	<i>Cal. pat rolls, 1467-77, p. 440</i>
		Canziani	<i>Cal. pat rolls, 1467-77, p. 466</i>
	Newport Pagnell		C;
		Clarence	V.C.H., Bucks, iv, pp 415-6
	Wallingford		C;

<u>County</u>	<u>Manor</u>	<u>Exile</u>	<u>Source</u>
Cambridgeshire	Colvilles		
	Fulbourne	Essex Lovell	<i>Cal. pat rolls</i> , 1467-77, p. 480 V.C.H., Cambs., ix, 382
	Sherdlowes	Essex	<i>Cal. pat rolls</i> , 1467-77, p. 480
	Swavesey	Essex	<i>Cal. pat rolls</i> , 1467-77, p. 480
	Zouches manor	Essex	<i>Cal. pat rolls</i> , 1467-77, p. 480
		Essex	<i>Cal. pat rolls</i> , 1467-77, p. 480
Essex	Easthall	Exeter	<i>Cal. pat rolls</i> , 1461-67., p.104
	Foulness	Exeter	<i>Cal. pat rolls</i> , 1461-67, p. 104
		T. Grey	<i>Cal. pat rolls</i> , 1467-77, 373
	Leigh	Exeter	<i>Cal. pat rolls</i> , 1461-67, p. 104
		T. Grey	<i>Cal. pat rolls</i> , 1467-77, 373
	Rocheford	Exeter	<i>Cal. pat rolls</i> , 1461-67, p. 104
	T. Grey	<i>Cal. pat rolls</i> , 1467-77, 373	
	Southhall	Exeter	<i>Cal. pat rolls</i> , 1461-67, p. 104
	various lands ¹	Exeter	<i>Cal. pat rolls</i> , 1461-67, p. 104
Leicester	Ashbey la Zouche		C;
		Hastings	<i>Cal. pat rolls</i> , 1461-67, p. 103
Stafford	Clent		C;
		Stafford	<i>Cal. pat rolls</i> , 1461-67, 112
	Hottesworth		C;
		Stafford	<i>Cal. pat rolls</i> , 1461-67, 112
Mere		C;	
	Stafford	<i>Cal. pat rolls</i> , 1461-67, 112	
Suffolk	Leyham	Boughcier	C; <i>Cal. pat rolls</i> , 1467-77, p.25
Warwickshire	Bordesley		C;
		Erdyngton	<i>Cal. pat rolls</i> , 1461-67, p. 186
Worcester	Cradeley		C;
		Stafford	<i>Cal. pat rolls</i> , 1461-67, p. 112
	Gannowe		C;
		Stafford	<i>Cal. pat rolls</i> , 1461-67, p. 112
	Hageley		C;
Oldswynford	Stafford	<i>Cal. pat rolls</i> , 1461-67, p. 112	
	Stafford	<i>Cal. pat rolls</i> , 1461-67, p. 112	

¹ Lands called 'Doggetts', 'Morises', rents and services called 'Wakerings', marshes called 'Ruggewerd' and 'Tylwerd' in Rocheford, Canwedon, Hakewell, Littel Stanbrigge, Great Stanbrigge

<u>County</u>	<u>Manor</u>	<u>Exile</u>	<u>Source</u>
Worcester	Snoddisbury	Stafford	C; <i>Cal. pat rolls, 1461-67, p. 112</i>
	various lands ²		

Stafford origin

<u>County</u>	<u>Manor</u>	<u>Exile</u>	<u>Source</u>
Corwall	Elerkey	Clarence	<i>Cal. pat rolls, 1467-77, p. 457</i>
	Oldawitta	Clarence	<i>Cal. pat rolls, 1467-77, p. 457</i>
	Penpoll	Clarence	<i>Cal. pat rolls, 1467-77, p. 457</i>
Devon	Daundy	Clarence	<i>Cal. pat rolls, 1467-77, p. 457</i>
	Lunday Isle	Clarence	E; <i>Cal. pat rolls, 1467-77, p. 457</i>
	Northam	Clarence	E; <i>Cal. pat rolls, 1467-77, p. 457</i>
	Slapton	Clarence	E; <i>Cal. pat rolls, 1467-77, p. 457</i>
	Torbrian	Clarence	E; <i>Cal. pat rolls, 1467-77, p. 457</i>
Dorset	Chilfrome	Clarence	E; <i>Cal. pat rolls, 1467-77, p. 457</i>
	Clevecombe	Clarence	E; <i>Cal. pat rolls, 1467-77, p. 457</i>
	Colifordester (h)	Clarence	E; <i>Cal. pat rolls, 1467-77, p. 457</i>
	Haselbury Bryan	Clarence	E; <i>Cal. pat rolls, 1467-77, p. 457</i>
	Maperton	Clarence	E; <i>Cal. pat rolls, 1467-77, p. 457</i>
	Marshwood	Clarence	E; <i>Cal. pat rolls, 1467-77, p. 457</i>
	Netherkentcomb	Clarence	E; <i>Cal. pat rolls, 1467-77, p. 457</i>
	Pounknohle	Clarence	E; <i>Cal. pat rolls, 1467-77, p. 457</i>
	Rampesham	Clarence	E; <i>Cal. pat rolls, 1467-77, p. 457</i>
	Sutton Poynts	Clarence	E; <i>Cal. pat rolls, 1467-77, p. 457</i>
	Tollor Porcorum	Clarence	E; <i>Cal. pat rolls, 1467-77, p. 457</i>

²1croft, 80a. land, 60 a. pasture, 10a. meadow, 10s. rents in Kingsnorton called 'Farmous'

<u>County</u>	<u>Manor</u>	<u>Exile</u>	<u>Source</u>
Dorset	Valet		E;
		Clarence	<i>Cal. pat rolls, 1467-77, p. 457</i>
	Wroxhale		E;
		Clarence	<i>Cal. pat rolls, 1467-77, p. 457</i>
Wyrdesford Bolet		E;	
	Clarence	<i>Cal. pat rolls, 1467-77, p. 457</i>	
Essex	Borle		E
	Clare		E
	Foxherd	Essex	<i>Cal. pat rolls, 1467-77, p. 480</i>
	Great Holland	Essex	<i>Cal. pat rolls, 1467-77, p. 480</i>
Gloucestershire	Ocle Graunson		E
		Devereaux	<i>Cal. pat rolls, 1461-67, p. 486</i>
	Oxenhale		E
		Devereaux	<i>Cal. pat rolls, 1461-67, p. 486</i>
Kent	Ashe		E
		Kent	<i>Cal. pat rolls, 1461-67, p. 225</i>
		Essex	<i>Cal. pat rolls, 1467-77, p. 480</i>
	Easthall		E
		Kent	<i>Cal. pat rolls, 1461-67, p. 225</i>
		Essex	<i>Cal. pat rolls, 1467-77, p. 480</i>
	Faulkham		E
		Kent	<i>Cal. pat rolls, 1461-67, p. 225</i>
Goddington		E	
	Kent	<i>Cal. pat rolls, 1461-67, p. 225</i>	
Somerset	Bathenesdon		E
		Clarence	<i>Cal. pat rolls, 1467-77, 459</i>
	Chiltern Mackerell		E
		Clarence	<i>Cal. pat rolls, 1467-77, 459</i>
	Clifton		E
			E
	Dounhead		E
		Clarence	<i>Cal. pat rolls, 1467-77, 459</i>
	Kingsdon		E
		Clarence	<i>Cal. pat rolls, 1467-77, 459</i>
	Shockerwyck		E
		Clarence	<i>Cal. pat rolls, 1467-77, 459</i>
Somerton Erleigh		E	
	Clarence	<i>Cal. pat rolls, 1467-77, 459</i>	
Somerton Randolph		E	
	Clarence	<i>Cal. pat rolls, 1467-77, 459</i>	
Stoke Michael		E	
	Clarence	<i>Cal. pat rolls, 1467-77, 459</i>	
Suffolk	Acton		E;
		Essex	<i>Cal. pat rolls, 1461-67, 38</i>

<u>County</u>	<u>Manor</u>	<u>Exile</u>	<u>Source</u>
Suffolk	Great Waldingfeild		E;
		Essex	<i>Cal. pat rolls, 1461-67, p. 145</i>
	Hatfield Peverell		E
	Overhall		C; E
	Reydon	Bourgchier	<i>Cal. pat rolls, 1461-67, p. 25</i>
			E
	Sylvestershall	Waldgrave	<i>Cal. pat rolls, 1461-67, p. 72</i>
		C; E	
	Worsted	Bourgchier	<i>Cal. pat rolls, 1461-67, p. 25</i>
			E
	various lands ³	Howard	<i>Cal. pat rolls, 1461-67, p. 111</i>
			E
Wiltshire	Wardour	Clarence	<i>Cal. pat rolls, 1467-77, p. 457</i>

Hankeford origin

<u>County</u>	<u>Manor</u>	<u>Exile</u>	<u>Source</u>
Berkshire	Eastbury		
		Warwick	V.C.H., Berks., iv, p. 260
Cornwall	Kilhampton (1)	Warwick	<i>Cal. pat rolls, 1467-77, p. 36</i>
	Poundestoke (1)	Warwick	<i>Cal. pat rolls, 1467-77, p. 36</i>
Devon	Anery		D;
		Warwick	<i>Cal. pat rolls, 1467-77, p. 36</i>
	Bewishill		D;
		Warwick	<i>Cal. pat rolls, 1467-77, p. 36</i>
	Buckissh		D;
		Warwick	<i>Cal. pat rolls, 1467-77, p. 36</i>
	Clifford		D;
		Warwick	<i>Cal. pat rolls, 1467-77, p. 36</i>
	Cokebury		D;
		Warwick	<i>Cal. pat rolls, 1467-77, p. 36</i>
	Ernescombe		D;
	Warwick	<i>Cal. pat rolls, 1467-77, p. 36</i>	
Hals		D;	
	Warwick	<i>Cal. pat rolls, 1467-77, p. 36</i>	
	Hankeford		D;
		Warwick	<i>Cal. pat rolls, 1467-77, p. 36</i>

³ 28 messuages, 5 1/4 mills, 390a. land, 133a. meadow, 108a. pasture, 107a. wood, 60a. heath, 50a. alder timber and 23s. rent scattered in Great Bures, Whiston, Asyngton, Little Cornanrd, Meldyng, Ilerth Monacorum, Lavenham, Cokefield, Preston, Thorpe Moreaux, Reydon, brendwenham, Hadlegh, Leyham, Hegham, Holoughton, Chapels, Stretford, Little Wenham, Worsted, Freston, Westerfeild

<u>County</u>	<u>Manor</u>	<u>Exile</u>	<u>Source</u>
Devon	Heghan		D;
		Warwick	<i>Cal. pat rolls, 1467-77, p. 36</i>
	Hewissh		D;
		Warwick	<i>Cal. pat rolls, 1467-77, p. 36</i>
	Horton		D;
		Warwick	<i>Cal. pat rolls, 1467-77, p. 36</i>
	Illerssh		D;
		Warwick	<i>Cal. pat rolls, 1467-77, p. 36</i>
	Littleham		D;
		Warwick	<i>Cal. pat rolls, 1467-77, p. 36</i>
	Milton Damerell		D;
		Warwick	<i>Cal. pat rolls, 1467-77, p. 36</i>
	Petris Merlonde		D;
		Warwick	<i>Cal. pat rolls, 1467-77, p. 36</i>
	Reveton		D;
		Warwick	<i>Cal. pat rolls, 1467-77, p. 36</i>
	Roccombe		D;
		Warwick	<i>Cal. pat rolls, 1467-77, p. 36</i>
	Rolston		D;
		Warwick	<i>Cal. pat rolls, 1467-77, p. 36</i>
	Sepulton		D;
		Warwick	<i>Cal. pat rolls, 1467-77, p. 36</i>
	Shesterugge		D;
	Warwick	<i>Cal. pat rolls, 1467-77, p. 36</i>	
Sodworthy		D;	
	Warwick	<i>Cal. pat rolls, 1467-77, p. 36</i>	
Uppecote		D;	
	Warwick	<i>Cal. pat rolls, 1467-77, p. 36</i>	
Viraworthy		D;	
	Warwick	<i>Cal. pat rolls, 1467-77, p. 36</i>	
Wayte		D;	
	Warwick	<i>Cal. pat rolls, 1467-77, p. 36</i>	
Westdowne		D;	
	Warwick	<i>Cal. pat rolls, 1467-77, p. 36</i>	
Yaddebury		D;	
	Warwick	<i>Cal. pat rolls, 1467-77, p. 36</i>	
Yenstowe		D;	
	Warwick	<i>Cal. pat rolls, 1467-77, p. 36</i>	
Somerset	East Cranmere		D;
		Warwick	<i>Cal. pat rolls, 1467-77, p. 36</i>
	Quarum		D;
	Warwick	<i>Cal. pat rolls, 1467-77, p. 36</i>	

Appendix no. 2: Butler manors in Ireland in the fifteenth century

In the following chart:

A = *Ormond deeds, 1350-1413*, no. 359, pp 255-6 (1401)

B = *Ormond deeds, 1350-1413*, no. 388, pp 278-80 (1405)

C = *Ormond deeds, 1509-47*, no. 218, pp 177-8 (c.1411)

D = *Ormond deeds, 1509-47*, app. no. 53, pp 344-5 (c.1500)

E = *Ormond deeds, 1509-47*, no. 218, pp 178-9 (1538)

County	Manor	Holding	Holder	Source
Carlow	Clonmore	castle	Ormond - 1538	E
	Clonmore	manor	Ormond - 1538	E
	Clonmore	town	Ormond - 1538	E
	Kealasma	castle	Ormond - 1538	E
	Kealasma	manor	Ormond - 1538	E
	Kealasma	town	Ormond - 1538	E
	Leighlin	castle	Ormond - 1538	E
	Leighlin	manor	Ormond - 1538	E
	Leighlin	town	Ormond - 1538	E
	Powerstown	castle	Ormond - 1538	E
	Powerstown	manor	Ormond - 1538	E
	Powerstown	town	Ormond - 1538	E
	Rathvill	castle	Ormond - 1538	E
	Rathvill	manor	Ormond - 1538	E
	Rathvill	town	Ormond - 1538	E
	Tullow	castle	Ormond -1411	C
			Ormond - 1538	E
	Tullow	manor	Ormond -1411	C
			Ormond - 1538	E
Tullow	town	Ormond -1411	C	
		Ormond - 1538	E	
Cork	Ballygimer	manor	Ormond -1411	C
	Ballincloigh	manor	Ormond -1411	C
	Glanballycullenan	manor	Ormond -1411	C
	Inchiquin	barony	Ormond -1411	C
	Inchiquin	manor	Ormond -1411	C
	Inchiquin	town	Ormond -1411	C
	Kinsale	town	Ormond -1411	C
	Youghal	advowson	Ormond -1411	C
	Youghal	town	Ormond -1411	C

County	Manor	Holding	Holder	Source
Dublin	Baleske	manor	Ormond -1411	C
	Balscadden	castle	Ormond - 1538	E
	Balscadden	manor	Ormond -1411	C
			Ormond - 1538	E
	Balscadded	town	Ormond - 1538	E
	Ballyleas	manor	Ormond -1411	C
	Barons Inn	house	Ormond - 1538	E
	Beverstown	manor	Ormond -1411	C
	Bray	manor	Ormond -1411	C
	Corduff	castle	Ormond - 1538	E
	Corduff	manor	Ormond -1411	C
			Ormond - 1538	E
	Corduff	town	Ormond - 1538	E
	'Le Steyne'	lands	Ormond -1411	C
	Portrane	castle	Ormond - 1538	E
	Portrane	manor	Ormond - 1538	E
	Portrane	town	Ormond - 1538	E
	Rush	castle	Ormond - 1538	E
	Rush	manor	Ormond -1411	C
			Ormond - 1538	E
	Rush	town	Ormond - 1538	E
	Turvey	manor	Ormond -1411	C
	Kildare	Castlewarning	castle	Ormond - 1538
Castlewarning		manor	Ormond - 1538	E
Castlewarning		town	Ormond - 1538	E
Clintonscourt		castle	Ormond - 1538	E
		manor	Ormond - 1538	E
Cloncurry		manor	Ormond -1411	C
Downada		castle	Ormond - 1538	E
Downada		manor	Ormond - 1538	E
Downada		town	Ormond - 1538	E
Oughterard		castle	Ormond - 1538	E
Oughterard		manor	Ormond - 1538	E
Oughterard		town	Ormond - 1538	E
Oughterim		barony	Ormond -1411	C
Jagoestown		manor	Ormond -1411	C
Kilkenny	Archerstown	town	MacRichard -1500	D
	Ardclon	manor	Ormond -1411	C
	Callan	advowson	Ormond -1411	C
	Callan	town	MacRichard -1500	D
			Ormond -1411	C
	Camerdinston	manor	Ormond -1411	C
	Castlegannan	manor	Ormond -1411	C

County	Manor	Holding	Holder	Source
Kilkenny	Cloon	castle	MacRichard -1500	D
	Correstown	manor	Ormond -1411	C
	Corwall	town	MacRichard -1500	D
	Cotterelstown	town	MacRichard -1500	D
	Downbrin	town	Ormond -1411	C
	Drumdowney	castle	Ormond -1411	C
	Drumdowney	manor	Ormond -1411	C
	Dunfert	castle	Ormond -1538	E
			MacRichard - 1500	D
	Dunfert	manor	Ormond -1405	B
			Ormond -1411	C
			Ormond- 1538	E
	Dunfert	town	Ormond -1538	E
	Ellid	manor	Ormond -1411	C
	Glashaire	castle	Ormond - 1538	E
	Glahaire	manor	Ormond - 1538	E
	Glashaire	town	Ormond - 1538	E
	Gowran	castle	Ormond -1411	C
			Ormond- 1538	E
	Gowran	manor	Ormond - 1405	B
			Ormond -1411	C
			Ormond -1538	E
	Gowran	town	Ormond -1538	E
	Grenagh	castle	Ormond -1411	C
	Grenagh	fair	Ormond- 1500	D
	Grenagh	manor	Ormond -1411	C
	Grenagh	town	Ormond -1500	D
	Hill of Callan	manor	Ormond -1411	C
	Hopkinstown	manor	Ormond -1411	C
	Irraght	manor	Ormond -1405	B
			Ormond -1411	C
	Kilcollom	castle	MacRichard -1500	D
	Kilcryne & Drakesland		Ormond -1405	B
	Kilcyclen	parish	Ormond -1500	D
	Kilkenny	advowson	Ormond -1411	C
	Kilkenny	castle	Ormond -1411	C
			Ormond - 1538	AIA
	Kilkenny	manor	Ormond - 1538	E
	Kilkenny	mills	Ormond -1405	B
	Kilkenny	town	Ormond - 1538	E
Kilsheelan	lordship	Ormond -1405	B	
Knoctopher	barony	Ormond -1411	C	
Knocktopher	castle	Ormond -1411	C	
		Ormond - 1538	E	

County	Manor	Holding	Holder	Source
Kilkenny	Knocktopher	manor	Ormond -1405	B
			Ormond -1411	C
			Ormond - 1538	E
	Knocktopher	town	Ormond - 1538	E
			Ormond -1405	B
	Leghnaghstown	manor	Ormond -1411	C
			Ormond -1411	C
	Lomoc	manor	Ormond -1411	C
	Lyssorly	parish	Ormond -1500	D
	Mellagh	manor	Ormond -1405	B
			Ormond -1411	C
	Mocleynerlochinchin	manor	Ormond -1411	C
			Ormond - 1405	B
	Overk	barony	Ormond -1411	C
			Ormond -1411	C
	Pollroan	manor	Ormond -1411	C
	Rathkiran	advowson	Ormond -1411	C
	Rosbarcon	castle	Ormond - 1538	E
	Rosbarcon	manor	Ormond - 1538	E
	Rosbarcon	mill	Ormond -1500	D
	Rosbarcon	town	Ormond -1411	C
			Ormond -1500	D
			Ormond - 1538	E
Ormond -1500			D	
Rosnharlo	castle	MacRichard -1500	D	
Rotern	castle	MacRichard -1500	D	
Saunderstown	manor	Ormond -1411	C	
Tredinstown	town	Ormond -1411	C	
Whitstown	town	Ormond -1411	C	
Limerick	Cahirconlish	advowson	Ormond -1411	C
	Cahirconlish	barony	Ormond -1411	C
	Cahirconlish	manor	Ormond -1411	C
	Cahirconlish	town	Ormond -1411	C
Meath	Blakecastle	castle	Ormond -1411	C
			Ormond - 1538	E
	Blakecastle	manor	Ormond -1411	C
			Ormond - 1538	E
	Donoughmore	castle	Ormond - 1538	E
	Donoughmore	manor	Ormond - 1538	E
Donoughmore	town	Ormond - 1538	E	
Tipperary	Ardmayle	manor	Ormond -1411	C
	Aghdir	town	Ormond -1411	C
	Ardmayle	town	Ormond -1411	C
			Dunboyne -1500	D
	Ballinri	castle	Ormond - 1538	E

County	Manor	Holding	Holder	Source
Tipperary	Ballinri	manor	Ormond - 1538	E
	Ballinri	town	Ormond - 1538	E
	Ballybothy	manor	Ormond -1411	C
	Ballybothy	town	Ormond -1411	C
	Ballywode	barony	Ormond -1500	D
	Brittas	town	Ormond -1411	C
	Cahir	barony	Ormond -1411	C
			Ormond -1500	D
	Cahir	castle	Ormond -1500	D
	Cahir	manor	Ormond -1411	C
			Ormond -1500	D
	Cahir	town	Ormond -1411	C
			Ormond -1500	D
	Carrick	castle	Ormond -1411	C
			Ormond -1500	D
			Ormond - 1538	E
	Carrick	manor	Ormond -1405	B
			Ormond -1411	C
			Ormond - 1538	E
	Carrick	town	Ormond -1411	C
			Ormond -1500	D
			Ormond - 1538	E
	Clonmel	mill	Ormond -1500	D
	Clonmel	town	Ormond -1500	D
	Creg	town	Ormond -1411	C
	Crompscastle	castle	Dunboyne - 1500	D
	Desgrallagh	town	Dunboyne - 1500	D
	Fewmayne	town	Dunboyne - 1500	D
	Glane	castle	Ormond -1500	D
	Gracecastle	castle	Ormond -1411	C
			Ormond -1500	D
	Killenaule	castle	Ormond - 1538	E
	Killenaule	manor	Ormond - 1538	E
	Killenaule	town	Ormond - 1538	E
	Kiltinan	castle	Dunboyne -1500	D
	Knockgraffon	castle	Ormond - 1538	E
	Knockgraffon	manor	Ormond - 1538	E
	Knockgraffon	town	Ormond - 1538	E
	Maynestown	town	Ormond -1411	C
	Miltown	manor	Ormond -1411	C
Miltown	town	Ormond -1411	C	
Mochillstown	town	Ormond -1411	C	
Monorstown	town	Ormond -1411	C	
Nenagh	castle	Ormond - 1538	E	

County	Manor	Holding	Holder	Source
Tipperary	Nenagh	manor	Ormond -1411	C
			Ormond - 1538	E
	Nenagh	town	Ormond -1411	C
			Ormond - 1538	E
	Newtown Luman	town	Ormond -1411	C
	Ofahi	lordship	Ormond -1411	C
	Oteragh	castle	Dunboyne - 1500	D
	Oteragh	town	Dunboyne - 1500	D
	Priortown	town	Ormond -1411	C
	Richardstown	town	Ormond -1411	C
	Roscrea	castle	Ormond - 1538	E
			Ormond -1411	C
	Roscrea	manor	Ormond - 1538	E
			Ormond -1411	C
	Roscrea	town	Ormond -1411	C
			Ormond - 1538	E
	Shanestown	castle	Ormond - 1538	E
			Ormond - 1538	E
	Shanestown	manor	Ormond - 1538	E
	Shanestown	town	Ormond - 1538	E
	Sowchestown	town	Ormond -1411	C
	Thurles	castle	MacRichard	D
			Ormond - 1538	E
	Thurles	manor	Ormond -1411	C
			MacRichard- 1500	D
	Thurles	town	Ormond - 1538	E
			Ormond -1411	C
Thurles	town	MacRichard	D	
		Ormond - 1538	E	
Waterford	Balmacloid	manor	Ormond -1411	C
	Burrinfingh	manor	Ormond -1411	C
	Carrickbeg	fair	Ormond -1411	C
	Carrickbeg	manor	Ormond -1411	C
	Little Island	castle	Ormond -1411	C
			Ormond - 1538	E
	Little Island	manor	Ormond -1411	C
			Ormond - 1538	E
	Lisnakill	manor	Ormond -1411	C
	Moegrinstown	manor	Ormond -1411	C
	Pembrokestown	manor	Ormond -1411	C
Wexford	Great Island	castle	Ormond - 1538	E
		manor	Ormond - 1538	E
Wicklow	Arclow	castle	Ormond -1411	C

Arclow

manor

Ormond -1411

C

Ormond - 1538

E

Appendix No. 3: The will of Thomas Butler, seventh earl of Ormond (1515-07-31) [P.R.O. PROB 11/18]

In the name of god amen The last of the moneth of July the yere of our lord god m^l v^c xv and the viith yere of the reigne of kyng Henry the viith I Thomas Ormond knyght erle of Ormond beyng of hoole mynde and of good memorie laud therof be unto allmyghty God make and ordain this my present testament and last wyll in maner and fourme folowing. ffurst I bequeth and recomend my soule unto allmyghty my maker and redemerto the moost glorijs virgyn his mother our Lady Saint Mary and to the glorijs martyr Saint Thomas and to all the holy colege of saintys in hevyn. And my body to be buryed in the churche of Saint Thomas Acon in London that is to wytt uppon the north syde of the hygh aulter of the high aulter in the said church where the sepulture of all myghty God is used yerely to be sett on Good Friday to thentent that by the merytes of his most precyous passion and glorijs resurreccion and the presence of the blessed sacrement then restyng uppon my body hit may be to the singula comforth and gostly releff of my soule and this to be doon in case it fortune me to decesse within the citie of London or in any place of myn in the countie of Essex or in any other place within xl myles of London. And yf it fortune me to decesse ells where and farther out of London so that my body may not convenyent be brought unto the said church of Saint Thomas Acon than I wool my body be buryed in holy sepulture wher it shall please allmyghty God to dispose of me. And I woll that myn executours do convey my body honestly to be buryed and without pompe to thentent that the more largely of my goods be employed to the helth of my soule after their distrecion. And wher so ever hit shall fortune me to be buryed I wyll ther be ordeyned and sett an epithafe makyng memyery of me and the day and yere of my decesse. And this to be doon by the distrecyons of myn executours not for any pompe of the worled but only for a rememberance. And if it fortune me to be buryed within the said church of Saint Thomas I wyll that then the maister and brethern and seculer preestys and clerkys of the same place for the tyme beyng have distributed amongys them for their labours in doyng of myn exequyes solemy by note. And also for my sepulture ther to be hadd and for lycence of my heire ther to be made. And also that the remayne of torches and other lyghts and apparell such as shall be brought thyther at my said exequyes and after the same doone to be restored to myn executours than my executours to

delyvre them for all the said causes xl marc. Item I wyll that myn executours by their distrecion distribute among poore people at the tyme of my said exequies the some of xx marc. ffurthermore I wyll ordene that where so ever it shall happen my body to be buryed be it in the said church of Saint Thomas Acon or els where that if the maister and brethern of the same house for the tyme beyng woll make unto myn executours such suffycyent and lauffull suertie as by them shalbe advysed that the said maister and brethern and thier successours shall kepy myn anniversary or obyte on such a day of the yere as it shall fortune me to decesse yf it may be convenyently doone or ells as sone before or after the same day of my decesseas shalbe thought moost convenyent by the maister of the said house of Saint Thomas for the tyme beyng honestly and solenly by note in their said church for my soule for my wyffes soules and for the soules of my lord my ffather my lady my mother and for the soule of Dame Jane Beauchamp my grandame and for all Christyen soules by the space of vii yeres next after my decesse. And also that the said maister and brethern and thier successours aftre the same vii yeres past and expyred shall atte obyte in the said church ordeyned and establyshed by my lord my ffather and my lady my mother yerely and perpetually to and for them solemiely to be holden and kept aswell in their diriges masse orisons and prayers to reherce my name and the names of my wyves with the names of my same ffather and mother at in every sermon yerely in the said church to be made and said that than myn executours shall delyver unto the maister and brethern foore foore pounds of my goods wych I wyll shalbe employed and bestowed by thadvyce and oversyght of the said maister of the said place for the tyme beyng for the reparacion of their said church and other their places where as most nede shall requyre. Item I bequeth myn olde sawlter being at Awdere in the countie of Devon hit be delyvered to the parych church of Monkeley in the said countie of Devon. Also i bequeth to my doughter Dame Anne Seyntleger a cloke of laton gylt wych whas my wyffes her moder. And I bequeth also unto her a lyter masse boke covered with russett velvett. Item I bequeth unto my doughter Dame Margaret Bolen late the wyff of Sir Wyllyam Bolen knyght a bedde of tapister worke that is to wytt color testor and counterpoynt of hawkers wych was her mothers and also the costryngs and pers of tapestry workys belonging to the same bedde with some imagis thereuppon holding hawkys with some horses of the said hawkes. Item myn olde greate carpet that was her mothers and it markyd for her. Item ii quysshyns velvett of diverse

colours with flowersuppon them and also a pair of aulter clothes of blew and grene satten fugerywith the vestyment corporas according to the same. Item I will that my sawter boke covered with whyte lether and my name writtin with myn owne hand in thende of the same wych is at my lodgyng in London shalbe layd and fyxed with a cheyne of iron at my tombe wych is ordeyned for me in the said church of Saint Thomas Acon there to remayne for the servyce of God in the said church the better to be hadde and done by suche persones as shalbe disposed to occupye and loke upon the same boke. Item I wyll that myn executours of and without further provysion of vytaile as is ordeyned by me ans shalbe at the tyme of my deceste or more as shalbe requysete by their provysion do kepe and gyther my menyall household servaunts at my maner of Newhall in the countie of Essex by the sapce of half a yere next ensuyng after my deceste. Item for my ffunerall expenses convenyently to be doone and performed and my household to be kept And maynteyned by the space of half a yere as is aforesayd. I woll that assone as goodly may be doone as well my stuff and plate what so ever they may be as all my cheynes of gold and other jewells of gold with precious stones suche as I have and my stuff of household where so ever it came to be founed and all my horses and harnes to them belonging. And also all my weryng arraye and other goodys and cattalls that it shall fortune me to have the day of my deceste except suche as I have by this my present testament gyven and bequethed wheresoever the same my goodys cattalls and stuff be my lodggeyng in London or at Saint Thomas of Acres Rocheford Newhall or ellys where and all my dettys and arrerages of my fermers tenants accomptaunts of any of my landes and tenementys that shalbe to me due and owyng the day of my deceste I wyll shalbe applyed and disposed be myn executors hereunder named to the performance and paymentys of my dettys and also of my legacies and bequestys in this my present testament gyven and as for suchth as the said goodys jewells cattalls and dettys wyll amounte and extend unto and asmoche therof as shall take for the perfourmaunce of the premysses I wyll it be taken perceved and levied by my said executours of thissues profutys and revennues of my said londys and tenements wych sometime were Sir Guy de Bryans or Sir Andrewe Bures being in feffment and in ffeoffes handes or in recovery to my use under suche maner and fourme as I have ordeyned and declared in my last wyll concernyng the disposicion the same my londes and tenementys requiring and hertly praying myn executours to take the paynes and laboures and busynes upon

them to the good orderynge and performaunce of this my poore wyll. And mynde how be it that my lytle sunstance of goods shall be suffycient to the fullfylling of the same for that concyderation I have ordeyned and wyllid by my said wyll of my said londes thissues and profuts of the same to be levied and perceyved to the full furnishing and performing of the same wych be lykely as shalbe occasion of greate peynes labours and busynes to my said executours. I wyll therefore that every of the same myn executours for such his further busynes and labours and also for his costys shall of thissues and profutys of the said ondes and tenements be more largely rewarded and recompensed in such wyse as they by there agreement among them self shall thynke aftre their constyence to be suffycient for their labours busynes costs and charges in that behalf. Item I well that All suche detts and duties the wych aftre my decesse can duely be provyded and founde due in ryght as in conscyens to any personne or personnes be well and truely payd. Item wher my lorde my ffather whose soule God assoyle left and delyvered unto me a lytle whyte horne of ivory garnysshed at both thendes with golde and a corse thereunto of whyte sylke barred with barres of gold and a tyret of golde thereuppon the wych was myn auncetours at fyrst tyme they were called to honor and hath sythen contynually remayned in the same blode for wych cause my said lord and ffather commaunded me uppon his blessing that I shuld doe my devoir to cause it to contynew styll in my blode as forsucth as it myght lye in me so to be doone to the honour of the same bloode. Therefore for the accomplysshment of my said ffathers wyll as farre as in me is to execute the same I woll that myn executours delyver unto Sir Thomas Boleyn knyght sonne and heire apparaunt of my said doughter Margarett the said lytle whyte horne and corse he to kepe the same to thuse of thissue male of his body lafully begotten and for lacke of suche issue the sayd horne to remayne and be delyvered to Sir George Seyntlyger knyght sonne of my said doughter Anne and to thissue male wych successyvely shall come of the same George and so to continew in thissue male of the bodies of the same Dame Margarett and Dame Anne as long as shall mowe fortune any suche issue male of their bodys to be and else for defaute of issue male of the body of eny of my said doughters the said horne to remayne and be delyvered to the next issue male of my said auncetours so that it may contynewe styll in my blode hereafter aslong as it shall please God lyke it hath doone hytherto to the honour of the same blode. Item as towching suche offeryngs as shalbe due and be behynd the tyme of my decesse to the

parsonne of the parysshe church of Saint Peter besyde Paules wharf in London where by reason of my loggyng place that I have in the said parysshe I am as a parisshen I wyll that myn executours shall agree with the parsonne of the said church and paye hym for the said offeryngs accordyng to ryght and good conscyence. Item I bequeth to the reparacion of Bydeford bryge in Devonshyre v marc. Item I bequeth to the reparacion of the church and howsing of the pryory of Tykford besyde Newport Paynell in the county of Buk wych is in decaye to be spent upon the reparacion by the oversight of myn executours or of suche trusty persone or personnes as they wyll depute therunto xx marc. Item I wyll that every persone of my said menyall household servauntys taking of me household wages as in servyce with me and in my household on the day of my decesse shall at halfe yeres ende before appoynted have of suche money as shall come of the sale of my goods or of the rents and revenues of my sayd londes towardes his exhibicion and sustynaunce an half yeres wages after the rate of suche household wages as he hadde of me besyde such wages as shalbe due unto hym the tyme of my decesse and I wooll that my servaunts then beyng at my lordeshypps of Rocheford and Newhall have and be entreated in lyke maner and fourme be myn excutours and that aswell women servauntes as men servauntes. And over that I bequeth to Isabell Trussell lat servaunt with Dame Lore late my wyff xx li. Item I bequeth to John Coke late servaunt to the same Dame Lore x marc. Item I bequeth to Wylham Bewell me servaunt wych was late preferred be my meanes to maryage yet that notwithstanding I bequeth unto hym v li. Item I bequeth unto John Padmore my servaunt xli. Item to Robert Bromeley my parker at Rocheford v marc. Item to xtofer Dawysonmy bayly at Rocheford x marc. Item to Rychard Shyrloke my servaunt v marc. Item to John Brygge my servaunt x li. Item I bequeth to Margarett Kempe my servaunt x marc. Item I bequethe to John Alwecke my servaunt v marc. Item to Joane Covyle sometime servaunt with my daughter Elysabeth fyve marc. Item I bequeth to Edmond Mygghelfeld my servaunt x li. Item to Rychard Grater my servaunt xl s. Item To John Elkyn xl s. Item to John Abolton xx s. Item to James Pykeryng my servaunt v marc. Item to Thomas Branthwayte fyve marc. Item I bequeth to my godsonne John Talbot sonne to Sir Gylbert Talbot knyght ten poundys. Item to Rychard Harysonne my servaunte iiii marc. Item to Robert Bokkys my servaunte iiii marc. Item to John ffolwell my servaunte iiii marc. Item to John Parker my servaunt xl s. Item to Lawrence Smyth my servaunte xl

s. Item to Roger Okeley my servaunt xl s. Item to John Chertsey v marc. Item to Thomas Parpoynt c s. Item I bequethe to Sir Gylbert Talbot knyght to thentent it maye please hym to be overseer of myn executours of this my present testament all myn astate and terme of yeres comyng from the tyme of half a yere aftre my deceas forthward of and in my place that I occupye for my lodgyng in the foresaid parisshe of Saint Petur at Poules wharf in London to have and to hold all the same my place with thapputenaunces to the said Sir Gylbert and his assignes from the tyme of the said half yere aftre my decesse forthward unto thende and ffull accomplysshment of all the terme of yeres to me due and for to come of and in the same. Item I bequeth to the same Sir Gylbert xx li. in money and ii of my best gownes of sylke furred to be hadde unto hym at hys own choyce and also all maner of harms wych I have for the werre of me and my servauntys. The residue of all my plate money and jewells goodys and cattalls and also dettys to me owing what soever it shalbe aftre my dettys payed my ffuneralls expences borne the legacys in this my present testament conteyned perfourmed and executed I wyll ordeyne and bequeth them unto myn executours or to suche of them that takyth uppon them to be myn executours and to prove this my present testament they to dyspose them after their contyenceand distrecions for the weale of my soule the soules of my wyfes and chylders and for the soules of my ffather and mother my foresaid lady and graundame Dame Jane Beauchampe my brethern and sisters my ffrendes and good doers and for all Christyen soules in dedys and werks pytie and charyte such as my said executours by thier wyse distrecion shall thynke best to please allmyghty God and moost profute to the helth of my soule and all thother soules before specyfyed and reherced. And over this I wyll that all other testamentys and wylls by me the said erle before the date of this my present testament concernyng oonly the dysposicion of my goodys and cattalls made made and by me declared except only this my present testament be utterly voyde and of noo force nor effecte. And moreover I the sayd erle woole that if myn executours be letted or interrupted so that they kannenot with my goodys an cattalls the rentes and revenues of my said londes being in feoffment and to them as is above reherced lymytted to proyeve and take execute and performe thys my present testament and last wyll in maner and forme as it is before expressed and specyfyed than I requyre and specyally defyse and praye them that they and every of them endeavour them selfto preforme as moche therof as they canne or may and in suche wyse and to and to suche

personnes as by their wyse distrecions shalbe thought to them moost necessary nedefull and merytory for the weale of my soule and the soules abovenamed. And of this my present testament and last wyll I make and ordeyn myn executours the ryght reverend ffathers in God Rychard bysshop of Wynchestre Rychard bysshopp of London John Yong bysshopp of Calipolen and maister of Saint Thomas of Acon in London John ffitziames Wyllyam ffrost and Thomas Hobert and their overseer of the same I make and ordeyne the sayd Sir Gylbert Talbot knyght. And I bequeth to my sayd lord of Whynchestre my best wasshing bason of sylver and gilt covered. And to my sayde lorde of London for his labour and payne in this behalf a stondeing cup covered of silver and gilt pounced with damaske worke wych is the best cupp I have and xx li. in money. And I bequeth to the sayd John Yong xx li. and to the said John ffitziames xl li. And to the says Wyllyam ffrost xl li. and to the abovesayd Thomas Hobert xx li. This my legacy to stonde and be effectuall to every of the same personnes that taketh uppon hym to be myn executours and to prove my testament and this my last wyll except my said lorde of Wynchestre wyche I woole shalhave his sayd legacie for his ayd favour and assistance for the prefourmaunce of my last wyll whether it shall please hym to take on hym thadmistracion of thys my present wyll or not. Moreover I wyll that my sayd executours shall content and pay suche somes of money and to suche personnes as by the said erle shalbe appoynted and lymytted to them by a byll signed and substribed with my hande with out any rasure or interlynnyng in the said byll. In wittenes wherof to this my present testament and last wyll i have put my seale and signe manuell the day and yere abovereherced.

Appendix IV: Creation charter of the earldom of Ormond (N.L.I. MS 11044)

Edwardus dei gratia etc. Salutem. Sciatis quod cum uper dilectum consanguineum et fidelum nostrum Jacobum le Botiller de Hibernia volentes dederimus ei nomen et honorare comitis de Ormond in Hibernia ipsumque comitem de Ormond prefecimus et gladio cinerimus, nos contemplacione premissorum dedimus et concessimus et hac carta nostra confirmavimus eidem comite decem libras annui redditas habendum percipiendum et tenendum eidem comiti et heredibus suis sub nomine et honore de Ormond de firma civitatis nostri de Waterford in Hibernia per manus ballivorum eiusdem civitatis qui pro tempore fuerint imperpetuum. Quare volumus et firmiter precipimus et pro nobis et heredibus nostris quod predictes comes et heredes sui habebat, percipiant, et teneant predictas decem libras sub nomine et honore de comitis de Ormond singulis annis de firma civitatis predicite per manus ballivorum euisdem civitatis qui pro tempore fuerint imperpetuum sicut predictum est. Hiis Testibus venerabilibus patribus H. Lincoln' episcopo cancellario nostro, Thome Hereford' episcopo, thesaurio nostro, Johanne Eliense episcopo, Johanne de Warenne, comite Surr', Henrico de Percy, Gilberto Talbot, Johanne de Wytham senescallo de hospitii nostri, et alliis. Datum per manum nostram apud Sarum secundo die Novembris anno regni nostri secundo

Bibliography

Unpublished Manuscript Sources

British Library

Additional Mss

Egerton Rolls

Harleian Charters

Royal Mss

East Yorkshire Record Office

DDx 152/50

National Archives of Ireland

RC8 Record Commission calendars of the Memoranda Rolls

RC13/9 Transcript of the rolls of the Irish parliament, 8 Henry VII

National Library of Ireland

D Ormond Deeds

Ms 2551

Ms 12023 Blake Butler Manuscripts

Public Record Office

C1 Early Chancery proceedings

C47 Chancery Miscellanea

C64 Norman Rolls

C66 Patent Rolls

C76 French Rolls

C137-40 Chancery Inquisitions Post Mortem

C146 Ancient Deeds

E40 Ancient Deeds

E101 Exchequer accounts-Variou

E210 Ancient Deeds

E326 Ancient Deeds

E401 Receipt Rolls

E403 Issue Rolls

E404	Warrants for Issue
E405	Tellers Rolls
LC9	Lord Chamberlain's department: Accounts and Miscellanea
SC1	Special Collections: Ancient Correspondence
SC6	Special Collections: Minister's Accounts
SC8	Special Collections: Ancient Petitions
SC11	Special Collections: Rentals and Surveys
SC12	Special Collections: Rentals and Surveys
SP46	State Papers Domestic: Supplementary

Trinity College, Dublin

Ms 1207/35

Ms 1208/450

Ms 4331/2

Printed Primary Sources

Annála Connacht; The Annals of Connacht (A.D. 1224-1544), A. M. Freeman (ed.), Dublin, 1944

Annala rioghachta Eireann: Annals of the kingdom of Ireland by the Four Masters, from the earliest period to the year 1616, J. Donovan (ed. and trans.), 7 vols, Dublin, 1851

Annála Uladh, Annals of Ulster, otherwise Annála Senat: a chronicle of Irish affairs, 431-1131, 1155-1541, ed. W. M. Hennessy and B. MacCarthy, 4 vols., Dublin, 1887-1901

Bain, J., 'Notes on an original letter referring to Edward IV, while an exile, and his schemes for restoration to the throne', *Genealogist*, n.s. iii (1886), pp 65-6

Barnard, F. P., *Edward IV's French expedition of 1475: The leaders and their badges*, Gloucester, 1925, reprinted 1975

Bayne, C. G. (ed.), *Select cases in the council of Henry VII*, Selden Society, London, 1958

Benet, John, 'John Benet's chronicle for the years 1400 to 1462' G. L. Harriss

- (ed.), *Camden Miscellany XXIV*, Camden fourth series, London, 1972
- Berry, H. (ed.), *Statutes and ordinances and the acts of parliament of Ireland, reigns of John to Henry V*, Dublin, 1907
- , *Statute rolls of the parliament of Ireland, reign of King Henry VI*, Dublin, 1910
- , *Statute rolls of the parliament of Ireland, 1st to 12th of the reign of King Edward IV*, Dublin, 1914
- Brewer, J. (ed.), *Letters and papers, foreign and domestic, of the reign of Henry VIII, preserved in the Public Record Office, and elsewhere in England*, 21 vols, London, 1862-1932
- Brie, F. W., *The Brut or chronicles of England*, E.E.T.S., London, 1908
- Calendar of the Carew manuscripts preserved in the archiepiscopal library at Lambeth*, J. S. Brewer & W. Bullen (eds.), 6 vols, London, 1867-73
- Calendar of the charter rolls, 1226-1516*, P.R.O., London, 1903-27
- Calendar of the close rolls, 1272-1509*, P.R.O., London, 1892-1963
- Calendar of the fine rolls, 1272-1509*, P.R.O., London, 1911-62
- Calendar of inquisitions post mortem and other analogous documents...Henry III to 5 Henry V*, P.R.O., London, 1904-95
- Calendar of inquisitions post mortem and other analogous documents...Henry VII, series 2*, 3 vols, P.R.O., London, 1898-1955
- Calendar of the patent rolls, 1232-1509*, P.R.O., London, 1891-1971
- 'Calendar of the French Rolls', *Reports of the Deputy Keeper of the Public Records*, xliv (1883); xlviii (1887)
- 'Calendar of the Norman Rolls', *Reports of the Deputy Keeper of the Public Records*, xli (1880); xlii (1881)
- Calendarium inquisitionum post mortem sive excaetarum*, J. Cayley & J Bayley (eds.), vol. 4, London, 1828
- Campbell, W., (ed.), *Materials for a history of the reign of Henry VII*, Rolls Series, 2 vols., London, 1873-7
- Catalogue of Ancient Deeds*, 6 vols., London, 1890-1915
- de Commynes, P., *Memoirs: the reign of Louis XI, 1461-83*, (M. Jones, trans.), London, 1972
- Clyn, J., 'Annalium Hiberniae chronicon ad annum MCCCXLIX', printed in *The annals of Ireland by friar John Clyn and Thady Dowling*, R. Butler (ed.), Dublin, 1849

- Chronique de Mattieu d'Escouchy*, G. de Fresne de Beaucourt (ed.), 3 vols., Paris, 1863
- Curtis, E. (ed.), *Calendar of Ormond deeds, 1172-1603*, 6 vols, Dublin, 1932-43
- Davies, J. S. (ed.), *An English chronicle of the reigns of Richard II, Henry IV, Henry V and Henry VI written before 1471*, Camden Society, London 1856
- Davis, N. (ed.), *Paston letters and papers of the fifteenth century*, 2 vols, Oxford, 1971
- Dillon, M., 'Laud Mss 610', *Celtica*, v, (1960), pp 64-76; *Celtica*, vi (1963), pp 135-55
- Ellis, Sir Henry, *Original letters illustrative of English history*, first series, London, 1824
- , *Original letters illustrative of English history*, second series, London, 1827
- Flenley, R. (ed.), *Six Town Chronicles of England*, Oxford 1911
- Fortesque, J., *The works of Sir John Fortesque, knight*, London, 1869
- Fry, E. A. & Fry, G. S., 'Full abstracts of the feet of fines relating to the county of Dorset, 1327-1485' *Dorset Records*, x (1910)
- Gairdner, J. (ed.), *The historical collections of a citizen of London in the fifteenth century*, Camden Society, London, 1876
- , *Letters and papers illustrative of the reigns of Richard III and Henry VII*, Rolls Series, 2 vols., London, 1861-3
- , *The Paston letters, 1422-1509*, 6 vols., London, 1904
- Gilbert, J. (ed.), *Calendar of ancient records of Dublin*, 19 vols., Dublin, 1899-1944
- Graves, J. (ed.), *A roll of the proceedings of the king's council in Ireland for a portion of the sixteenth year of the reign of Richard the second, A.D. 1392-3*, London, 1877
- Hay, D. (ed.), *The Anglica Historia of Polydore Vergil, 1485-1537*, London, 1950
- Hayman, Reverend, 'The Geraldines of Desmond', *R.S.A.I. Jn.*, 4th ser., v (1879-82), pp 211-35, 411-40

- Hore, H. & Graves, J., *The social state of the southern and eastern counties of Ireland in the sixteenth century*, Dublin, 1870
- Horrox, R. & Hammond, P., *British Museum Harleian manuscript 433*, 4 vols., Gloucester, 1979
- Jacob, E. F. (ed.), *Register of Henry Chichele, Archbishop of Canterbury, 1414-43*, Canterbury & York Society, 4 vols., 42, 45-7 (1938-47).
- Kingsford, C. L. (ed.), *The Chronicles of London*, Oxford, 1905
 ———, *First English life of king Henry the Fifth*, Oxford, 1911
- MacNeill, C., *Liber Primus Kilkenniensis*, Dublin, 1931
- MacNiocaill, G., *The red book of the earls of Kildare*, Dublin, 1964
- Marlborough, Henry of, 'The chronicle of Ireland' printed in *Ancient Irish Histories: The works of Spencer, Campion, Hanmer and Marleborough*, James Ware (ed.), Dublin, 1809, reprint London, 1970
- Monstrelet, E., *The chronicles of Enguerrard de Monstrelet*, translated by Thomas Johnes, London, 1840
- Morrissey, J. F. (ed.), *Statute rolls of the parliament of Ireland, 12th and 13th to the 21st and 22nd years of King Edward IV*, Dublin, 1939
- Myers, A. R., *The household of Edward IV: The black book and the ordinance of 1478*, Manchester, 1959
- Nicholas, Sir H. (ed.), *Proceedings and ordinances of the privy council of England, [1386-1542]*, 7 vols., London, 1834-7
- Nicolas, N. H., *Testamenta vetusa*, 2 vols, London, 1826
 ———, *The Privy purse expenses of Elizabeth of York*, London, 1830
- Nicholls, K., 'Late medieval Irish annals: Two fragments', *Peritia*, ii (1983), pp 87-102
- Ó Cuiv, B., 'A fragment of Irish annals', *Celtica*, xiv (1981), pp 83-104
- O'Donovan, J. (ed.), 'The annals of Ireland from the year 1443 to 1468, translated from the Irish by Dudley Firbisse, or as he is more usually called, Duaid Mac Firbis, for Sir James Ware in the year 1666', *Miscellany of the Irish Archaeological Society*, i, (Dublin, 1846)
- O'Sullivan, A. & Ó Riain, P., *Poems on Marcher lords*, I.T.S. no. liii, London,

1987

- Otway-Ruthven, A. J., 'The background to the arrest of Sir Christopher Preston in 1418' in *Anal. Hib.*, xxix (1980), pp. 71-95
- Pender, S., 'The O'Clery book of genealogies', *Analecta Hibernica*, no. 18 (1951)
- Quinn, D. B., 'Guide to English financial records for Irish history, 1461-1558', *Anal. Hib.*, x (1941), pp 1-70
- , 'The bills and statutes of the Irish parliaments of Henry VII and Henry VIII', *Anal. Hib.*, x (1941), pp 71-170
- Records of the honourable society of Lincoln's Inn; The Black Books*, 5 vols, London, 1897-1968
- Riley, H. T. (ed.), *Annales Monasterii Sancti Albanii a Johanne Amundesham, monacho*, 3 vols, Rolls Series, 1870
- Rotuli parliamentorum [1278-1503]*, 7 vols, London, 1783-1832
- Rotulorum patentium et clausorum cancellariae Hiberniae calendarium*, E. Tresham (ed.), Dublin, 1828
- Rymer, T., *Foedera, conventiones, litterae et cuiuscumque generis acta inter reges Angliae*, 3rd. ed. reprinted, 10 vols., Farnborough, 1967
- Stevenson, J. (ed.), *Letters and papers illustrating the wars of the English in France during the reign of Henry VI*, 2 parts, Rolls Series, 1864
- Stow, John, *Annales or a generall chronicle of England*, London, 1631
- Sutton, A. & Hammond, P., *The coronation of Richard III: The extant documents*, Gloucester, 1983
- Ware, James (ed.), *Ancient Irish Histories: The works of Spencer, Campion, Hanmer and Marlborough*, Dublin 1809, reprinted, 2 vols, London, 1970
- Warkworth, J., 'A chronicle of the first thirteen years of the reign of King Edward IV', reprinted in *Three chronicles of the reign of Edward IV*, Gloucester, 1988
- White, N. B., *The red book of Ormond*, Dublin, 1932

Secondary Authorities

- Allmand, C. T., *Henry V*, Berkeley, 1992
- Armstrong, C. A. J., 'Politics and the Battle of St. Alban's, 1455', *B.I.H.R.*, xxxiii (1960), pp 1-72
- Arthurson, I., *The Perkin Warbeck conspiracy, 1491-99*, Stroud, 1994
- Asch, R.G. & Birke, A. F., *Princes, patronage and power; The court and the beginning of the modern age, c. 1450-1650*, Oxford, 1991
- Bartlett, R. and MacKay, A. (eds.), *Medieval frontier societies*, Oxford, 1992
- Bean, J. M.W., *The estates of the Percy family, 1416-1537*, Oxford, 1958
- Bellamy, J. G., *The law of treason in England in the later middle ages*, Cambridge, 1992
- Bennett, M., 'Edward III's entail and the succession to the crown, 1376-1471', *E.H.R.*, cxiii (1998), pp 580-609
- Bernard, G.W., (ed.), *The Tudor Nobility*, Manchester, 1992
- Blow, J., 'Nibley Green 1470; The last private battle fought in England' in Crowder, C. M. D., *English society and government in the fifteenth century*, pp 87-111
- Bradshaw, B., 'Nationalism and historical scholarship in modern Ireland' reprinted in Brady, *Interpreting Irish history*, pp 191-216
- Brady, C., *Interpreting Irish history: The debate on historical revisionism*, Blacrock, 1994
- Brooks, E. St. J., *Knight's fees in cos. Wexford, Carlow and Kilkenny*, Dublin, 1952
- Bryan, D., *Gerald FitzGerald, the great earl of Kildare*, Dublin and Cork, 1933
- Butler, G., 'The Battle of Piltown' *Ir. Sword*, vi (1963-4), pp
- Butler, T. B., 'Origins of the Butlers in Ireland', *Ir. Geneal.*, i (1937-42), pp 147-57
- , 'Thomas le Botiler, prior of Kilmainham', *Ir. Geneal.*, i (1937-42), pp 362-72
- , 'The Barony of Dunboyne', *Ir. Geneal.*, ii (1943-55), pp 61-81, 107-21, 130-6, 162-4
- , 'Seneschals of the liberty of Tipperary', *Ir. Geneal.*, ii (1943-55) pp 294-302, 326-36, 368-76; iii (1956-67), pp 46-59, 109-15

- Carpenter, C., "The Beauchamp affinity: a study of bastard feudalism at work", *E. H. R.*, xcv (1980), pp 514-32
- , *Locality and Polity; a study of Warwickshire landed society, 1401-99*, Cambridge, 1992
- , *The Wars of the Roses*, Cambridge, 1997
- Carrigan, W., *History and antiquity of the diocese of Ossory*, 4 vols., Dublin 1905, reprinted, Kilkenny 1981
- Carte, T., *An history of the life of James, duke of Ormond from his birth in 1610 to his death in 1688*, London, 1736
- Chrimes, S B., *Henry VII*, London, 1974
- Chrimes, S. B., Ross, C . D. and Griffiths, R. A., *Fifteenth century England; Studies in politics and society*, Manchester, 1972
- Cokayne, G. E. & Gibbs, V., *The complete peerage of England, Scotland, Ireland, Great Britain and the United Kingdom, extant, extinct or dormant*, London, 1910-59
- Conway, A., *Henry VII's relations with Scotland and Ireland, 1485-98*, Cambridge, 1932
- Cosgrove, A., 'The execution of the earl of Desmond, 1468', *Kerry Arch Soc. Jn.*, viii (1975), pp 11-27
- , 'Hiberniores ipsis Hibernis' in A. Cosgrove & D. McCarthy (eds.), *Studies in Irish history presented to R. Dudley Edwards*, Dublin, 1979
- , 'Parliament and the Anglo-Irish community: The declaration of 1460', *Hist. Studies*, xiv (1983), pp 25-41
- Cosgrove, A. (ed.), *A new history of Ireland; medieval Ireland, 1169-1534*, Oxford, 1987
- Crouch, David, *The image of aristocracy in Britain, 1000-1300*, London, 1992
- Crowder, C. M. D., *English society and government in the fifteenth century*, London, 1967
- Currin, J.M., 'Pro expensis ambassatorum: Diplomacy and financial management in the reign of Henry VII', *E.H.R.*, cviii (1993), pp 589-609
- Curry, A., 'English armies in the fifteenth century' in A. Curry & M. Hughes (eds.), *Arms, armies and fortifications in the Hundred Years War*, Woodbrige, 1994, pp 39-68
- Curtis, E., 'Richard, duke of York, as viceroy of Ireland: with unpublished materials for his relations with native chiefs', *R.S.A.I. Jn.*, lxii (1932), pp 158-86

- Delany, V. T. H., 'The palatinate court of the liberty of Tipperary', *The American journal of legal history*, v (1961), pp 95-117
- Dunham, W., 'Notes from the parliament at Winchester, 1449', *Speculum*, xvii (1942), pp 402-15
- Duffy, S., *Ireland in the middle ages*, London, 1997
- Ellis, S. G., 'Henry VII and Ireland, 1491-1496, in Lydon, *Engl. & Ire.*, pp 237-54
 ———, *Tudor Ireland: Crown, community and conflict of cultures, 1470-1603*, London, 1985
 ———, *Reform and revival: English government in Ireland, 1470-1534*, Woodbridge, 1986
 ———, 'Nationalist historiography and the English and Gaelic worlds in the late middle ages', re-printed in Brady, *Interpreting Irish history*, pp 161-80
 ———, *Tudor frontiers and Noble Power: The making of the British state*, Oxford, 1995
- Empey, C. A., 'Cantreds of medieval Tipperary', *North Munster Antiquarian Journal*, xiii (1970), pp 22-9
 ———, 'The Butler lordship', *The Butler Society Journal*, no. 3 (1970-1), pp 174-87
 ———, 'Cantreds of the medieval county of Kilkenny', *R.S.A.I. Jn.*, ci (1971), pp 128-34
 ———, 'Theobald Walter: His life, times and contribution to Irish history', *The Butler Society Journal*, iii (1986-94), pp 18-20
 ———, 'The Norman period, 1185-1500' in W. Nolan, *Tipperary: History and Society. Interdisciplinary essays on the history of a county*, (Dublin, 1985)
 ———, 'From rags to riches, Piers Butler, eighth earl of Ormond, 1515-1539', *Butler Society Journal*, ii (1980-5), pp 299-314
 ——— & Simms, K., 'The ordinances of the White Earl and the problem of coign in the later middle ages', *R.I.A. Proc.*, lxxv (1975)C, pp 161-87
- Frame, Robin, 'The Bruces in Ireland, 1315-18', *I.H.S.*, xix (1974-5), pp 3-37
 ———, 'Power and society in the lordship of Ireland, 1272-1377', *Past and Present*, no. 76 (August 1977), pp 3-33

- , *English lordship in Ireland, 1318-1361*, Oxford, 1982
- , 'Ireland in the Baron's War' in R. P. Coss & J. D. Boyd (eds.) *Thirteenth century England*, i, Woodbridge 1986
- , *The political development of the British Isles, 1100-1400*, Oxford, 1990
- , *Ireland and Britain, 1170-1450*, London, 1998
- Fryde, E. B., Greenway, D. E., Porter, S. & Roy, I. (eds.), *The handbook of British chronology*, London, 1986
- Gilbert, J. T., *History of the viceroys of Ireland*, Dublin, 1865
- Given-Wilson, Chris, *The English nobility in the late middle ages: The fourteenth century political community*, London, 1987
- Gorman, V., 'Richard, duke of York, and the development of an Irish faction', *P.R.I.A.*, xxxv (1985), C, pp
- Griffith, M., 'The Talbot-Ormond struggle for control of the Anglo-Irish government, 1414-47', *I.H.S.*, ii (1940-1), pp 376-97
- Gray, H. L., 'Incomes from land in England in 1436', *E.H.R.*, xlix (1934), pp. 607-39
- Griffiths, R. A., *The Principality of Wales in the later middle ages*, i, Cardiff, 1971
- , *The reign of King Henry VI: The exercise of royal authority, 1422-1461*, London, 1981
- , *King and country: England and Wales in the fifteenth century*, London, 1991
- , 'The king's council and York's first protectorate', reprinted in Griffiths, *King and Country*, pp 305-20
- , 'The sense of dynasty in the reign of Henry VI', reprinted in Griffiths, *King and Country*, pp 83-102
- , 'The king's court during the Wars of the Roses; Continuities in an age of discontinuities' in Asch, R.G. & Birke, A. F., *Princes, patronage and power*, pp 41-69
- Gross, A., *The dissolution of the Lancastrian kingship: Sir John Fortesque and the crisis of Monarchy in fifteenth century England*, Stamford, 1996
- Gunn, S., 'Henry Bouchier, earl of Essex' in Bernard, G.W., *Tudor Nobility*,
 ———, 'Courtiers of Henry VII', *E.H.R.*, cviii (1993), pp 23-49
 ———, *Early Tudor Government, 1485-1558*, London, 1995

- Hampton, V. E., 'Sir Thomas Montgomery' in Petre, R. G. (ed.), *Richard III, crown and people*, London, 1985
- Head, C., 'Pope Pius II and the Wars of the Roses', *Archivum Historiae Pontificae*, vii (1970), pp 139-78
- Healey, W., *History and antiquities of Kilkenny*, Dublin, 1893
- Hicks, M. A., *False, Fleeting, Perjur'd Clarence*, Gloucester, 1980
- , *Richard III and his rivals: Magnates and their motives in the War of the Roses*, London, 1991
- , 'Edward IV, the duke of Somerset and Lancastrian loyalty in the North' reprinted in *Richard III and his rivals*,
- , 'Attainder, resumption and coercion, 1461-1509', reprinted in *Richard III and his rivals*,
- , *Bastard feudalism*, London, 1995
- Horrox, R., *Richard III: A study of service*, London, 1995
- Horrox, R. (ed.), *Fifteenth century attitudes: Perceptions of society in late medieval England*, Cambridge, 1994
- Ives, E. W., *The Common Lawyers of pre-Reformation England: Thomas Kebbel, a case study*, Cambridge, 1983
- Jeffries, P., 'The medieval use as family law and custom: the Berkshire gentry in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries', *Southern History*, i (1979), pp 45-69
- Johnson, P. A., *Duke Richard of York, 1411-1460*, Oxford, 1988
- Jones, M. & Underwood, M., *The king's mother; Lady Margaret Beaufort, countess of Richmond and Derby*, Cambridge, 1992
- Lander, J. R., *Crown and Nobility, 1450-1509*, London, 1976
- , 'Attainder and forfeiture, 1453-1509' reprinted in *Crown and Nobility*, pp
- , *Government and community in England, 1450-1509*, London 1980
- Lachaud, Frédérique, 'Liveries of robes in England, c. 1200- c.1300', *E. H. R.* xci (1996), pp 279-98
- Lodge, J., *The peerage of Ireland, or a genealogical history of the present nobility of the kingdom*, 4 vols., Dublin, 1754
- Lydon, J. F., *The lordship of Ireland in the middle ages*, Dublin, 1972

- , *Ireland in the later middle ages*, Dublin, 1972
- , 'The city of Waterford in the later middle ages', *Decies*, no. 12 (September 1979), pp 5-15
- , 'The middle nation' in J. Lydon (ed.), *The English in medieval Ireland*
- , (ed.), *England and Ireland in the later middle ages: Essays in honour of Jocelyn Otway-Ruthven*, Blackrock, 1981
- , (ed.), *The English in medieval Ireland: proceedings of the first joint meeting of the Royal Irish Academy and the British Academy*, Dublin, 1984
- MacFarlane, K. B., *The nobility of later medieval England*, Oxford, 1973
- MacNiocaill, G., *The medieval Irish annals*, Dublin 1975
- Matthew, E., 'Financing the Lordship of Ireland under Henry V and Henry VI' in T. Pollard (ed.), *Property and politics: Essays in later medieval history*, Gloucester, 1984, pp 97-115
- McKenna, E., 'Was there a political role for women in medieval Ireland?: Lady Margaret Butler and Lady Eleanor MacCarthy' in Meek, C. E. & Simms, M. K. (eds.), *Fragility of her sex?*, Dublin, 1996
- Mertes, Kate, *The English noble household, 1250-1600*, Oxford, 1988
- Moody, T. W. & F. X. Martin, *The course of Irish history*, revised edition, Dublin, 1994
- Nicholls, K., *Gaelic and Gaelicised Ireland in the middle ages*, Dublin, 1972
- Nicholson, R., *Scotland: The later middle ages*, Edinburgh, 1974
- Nolan, W. (ed.), *Tipperary: History and Society. Interdisciplinary essays on the history of a county*, Dublin, 1985
- & P. Power (eds.), *Waterford: History and Society. Interdisciplinary essays on the history of a county*, Dublin, 1992
- Nugent, W. F., 'Carlow in the middle ages', *R.S.A.I. Jn.*, lxxxv (1955), pp 62-76
- Ó Cléirigh, C., 'The O'Connor Faly lordship of Offaly, 1395-1513', *R.I.A. Proc.*, xcvi (1996), C, pp 87-104
- Ó Dálaigh, B., 'Mistress, mother and abbess: Renalda Ní Bhriain (c. 1447-1510)', *N. Munster Antiq. Jn.*, xxxii (1990), pp 50-63
- Orpen, G. H., *Ireland under the Normans, 1169-1333*, 4 vols. Dublin, 1911-20
- Otway-Ruthven, A. J., 'Anglo-Irish shire government in the thirteenth

- century', *I.H.S.*, v (1946-7), pp 1-28
- , 'The medieval county of Kildare', *I.H.S.*, xi (1958-9), pp 181-99
- , 'Knight service in Ireland', *R.S.A.I. Jn.*, lxxxix (1959), pp 1-15
- , 'Knight's fees in Kildare, Leix, and Offaly', *R.S.A.I. Jn.*, xci (1961), pp 163-82
- , *A history of medieval Ireland*, 2nd ed., London, 1980
- Petre, R. G., *Richard III, crown and people*, London, 1985
- Phillips, J. R. S., 'The mission of John de Hotham to Ireland, 1315-6' in J. Lydon (ed.), *Engl. & Ire.*
- Pollard, A., *John Talbot and the war in France, 1427-53*, Royal Historical Society, London, 1983
- Powell, J. E. & K. Wallis, *The House of Lords in the middle ages*, London, 1968
- Power, P., *History of Waterford city and county*, Dublin, 1990
- Pugh, T. B., 'Richard Plantagenet (1411-1460), duke of York as lieutenant of France and Ireland' in J. G. Rowe (ed.), *Aspects of late Medieval government and society: essays presented to J. R. Lander*, Toronto, 1986, pp 107-42
- Pugh, T. B. & C. D. Ross, 'The English baronage and the income tax of 1436', *B.I.H.R.*, xxvi, (1953), pp. 1-28
- Quinn, D. B., 'Anglo-Irish local government, 1485-1534', *I.H.S.*, i (1939-40), pp 354-81
- Richardson, H. G. & G. O. Sayles, *The Irish parliament in the middle ages*, Philadelphia, 1952
- Rosenthal, J. T., *Nobles and the noble life, 1295-1500*, London, 1976
- Roskell, J. S., L. Clark & C. Radcliffe, *The house of Commons. 1386-1421*, 4 vols, Stroud, 1992
- Ross, C. D., *Edward IV*, London, 1974
- , *Richard III*, London, 1983
- , & Pugh, T. B., 'Materials for the study of baronial incomes in fifteenth century England', *Economic History Review*, 2nd ser., vi (1953-4), pp 185-94
- Sayles, G. O., 'The vindication of the earl of Kildare from treason, 1496', *I.H.S.*,

vii (1950-1), pp 39-47

Scofield, C., *The life and reign of Edward IV*, 2 vols., London, 1923

Shaw, W. A., *The knights of England*, 2 vols., London, 1906

Simms, K., 'The archbishops of Armagh and the O'Neills, 1347-1471', *I.H.S.*, xix (1974-5), pp 38-55

———, 'The legal position of Irishwomen in the later middle ages', *Ir. Jurist*, x (1975), pp 96-111

———, 'The king's friend; O'Neill, the crown and the earldom of Ulster' in J. Lydon (ed.), *Engl. & Ire.*

———, *From kings to warlords; the changing political structure of Gaelic Ireland in the later middle ages*, Suffolk, 1987

———, 'Bards and Barons: The Anglo-Irish aristocracy and the native culture' in Barlett & MacKay (eds.), *Medieval Frontier Societies*

Somerville, R., *History of the duchy of Lancaster*, vol. 1: 1265-1603, London, 1953

Starkey, D., *The English court: from the Wars of the Roses to the Civil War*, London, 1987

———, 'Intimacy and innovation: The rise of the privy chamber, 1485-1547' in Starkey, D., *The English court*, pp 71-119

'Court, council and nobility in Tudor England' in Asch, R.G. & Birke, A. F., *Princes, patronage and power*, pp 175-204

Storey, R. L., 'The Wardens of the Marches of England towards Scotland, 1377-1489', *E.H.R.*, lxxii (1957), pp 593-615

———, *The end of the house of Lancaster*, London, 1966

Thornley, I., *England under the Yorkists*, London, 1920

Tipton, C. L., 'The Irish Hospitallers during the Great Schism', *R.I.A. Proc.*, lxxix (1969), pp

Vaugh, R., *Charles the Bold*, London, 1973

Virgoe, R., 'The Cambridgeshire election of 1439', *B.I.H.R.*, xlvi (1973), pp 95-101

Watts, J., *Henry VI and the politics of kingship*, Cambridge, 1996

Wedgewood, J. C., *History of Parliament: biographies of the members of the Commons house*, London, 1936

- Wolffe, B. P., *The crown lands, 1461-1536: An aspect of Yorkist and Tudor government*, London, 1970
- , *Henry VI*, London, 1981
- Wood, H., 'The office of chief governor of Ireland, 1172-1509', *P. R. I. A.*, xxxvi, sect. C (1923), pp 206-38
- Wylie, J. H., *History of England under Henry the fourth*, 4 vols, London, 1884-98
- , & W. T. Waugh, *The reign of Henry V*, 3 vols., London, 1914-29

Unpublished Theses

- Blackler, B., 'Thomas of Lancaster, duke of Clarence, 1388-1421: The consolidation of the Lancastrian dynasty', Ph.D., University of Dublin, 1996
- Curry, A., 'Military Organisation in Lancastrian Normandy, 1422-1450', Ph. D., Teeside Polytechnic, 1985
- Dean, W., 'Sir Thomas Boleyn: The courtier diplomat, 1477-1539', Ph. D., West Virginia University, 1987
- Empey, C. A., 'The Butler Lordship in Ireland, 1185-1515', Ph. D., University of Dublin, 1970
- Griffith, M., 'The council in Ireland, 1399-1452', B. Litt, University of Oxford
- Matthew, E. A. E., 'The governing of the Lancastrian lordship of Ireland in the time of James Butler, fourth earl of Ormond, c.1420-1452', Ph. D., University of Durham, 1994
- Ó Cléirigh, C., 'John fitz Thomas, first earl of Kildare', Ph. D., University of Dublin, 1996
- Parker, C., 'The society and politics of county Waterford in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries', Ph. D., University of Dublin, 1992

Pollard, A, 'The family of Talbot, Lords Talbot and earls of Shrewsbury in the fifteenth century', Ph. D., University of Bristol, 1968

