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Armed conflict and border society: The East and Middle Marches, 1536-60

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ABSTRACT

Armed Conflict and Border Society: The East and Middle Marches, 1536-1560

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The final phase of the Anglo-Scots Wars (1542-1560) significantly affected

Northumberland. The Tudor government attempted to use the militarised society of

Northumberland as a means of subduing Scotland. However, the ensuing conflict took

a heavy toll on the Marchers. Instability plagued the region, while leading military

families feuded with each other. The efforts of the Tudors were not concerted enough

to overcome the Marchers' allegiance to kith and kin. March society proved to be

remarkably inhospitable for Tudor state building, and in the end, the military

community of Northumberland remained just as vulnerable to both internal and

external threats as it had been before the wars.

This work questions the success of Tudor state building in the mid-sixteenth

century. The analysis employs both State Papers and local documents to illuminate the

political dialogue between central government and the peripheral frontier

administration. Official correspondences of March officers also highlight the depths to

which Tudor policy had taken root in Northumberland. An analysis of muster rolls

suggests that Northumbrian society's involvement in the wars greatly fluctuated over

nearly a twenty-year period, only to see the military capacities of Northumbrians

significantly wane by 1560. The personal testimonies of officers imply that the Tudors

had some initial success in bringing significant military power to their side. However,

the same documents also suggest that incoherent policies resulted from the rapid

succession of three separate monarchs after the death of Henry VIII. In the end, the

Tudor state was unable to instil order in Northumberland, and the military necessities of

frontier security remained problematic for the rest of the sixteenth century.

Table of Contents

Declaration of the Author

No part of this thesis has been submitted for a degree in this or any other university.

<u>Citations Key</u>

Addenda	<u>Calendar of State Papers, Domestic, Elizabeth I, 1601-1603, with Addenda 1547-65.</u> Green, Mary Anne Everett (ed). London: Longman, 1870.
APC	<u>Acts of the Privy Council of England.</u> John Roche Dasent (ed). London: HMSO, 1890-91.
Bell MSS	Bell Manuscript, Cumberland Record Office, Carlisle.
BL	British Library MSS, London.
BRO	Berwick Record Office, Berwick-upon-Tweed.
CBP	<u>Calendar of Letters and Papers Relating to the Affairs of the Borders of England and Scotland.</u> Bain, Joseph (ed).Two vols. London: HMSO, 1984.
CPR, Edward VI	<u>Calendar of Patent Rolls, Edward VI.</u> Six vols. London: HMSO, 1924-29.
CPR, Elizabeth	<u>Calendar of Patent Rolls, Elizabeth I.</u> Seven vols. London: HMSO, 1939-82.
CPR, Mary	<u>Calendar of Patent Rolls, Philip and Mary.</u> Four vols. London: HMSO, 1937- 39.
CRO	Cumberland Record Office MSS, Carlisle.
CSPD, Edward. VI	<u>Calendar of State Papers, Domestic, Edward VI, 1547-53.</u> Knighton, C.S. (ed.) London: HMSO, 1992
CSPD, James I	<u>Calendar of State Papers Domestic, James I.</u> Four vols. M.A.E. Green (ed.). London: HMSO, 1857-59.
CScotP	<u>Calendar of State Papers Relating to Scotland.</u> Thirteen vols. Bain, Joseph and Boyd, W.K. (eds). Edinburgh and Glasgow: HM General Register House, 1898.
CSPF	<u>Calendar of State Papers Foreign Series for Elizabeth.</u> Twenty-five vols. London: HMSO, 1863-1901.
Foedera	Rymer, Thomas (ed.), <u>Foedera Conventiones Litterae inter Reges Anglie et alios quosvis.</u> Four vols. London, 1816.
Hamilton Papers	<u>The Hamilton Papers.</u> Bain, J. (ed) 2 vols. Edinburgh: HM General Register House, 1890 and 1892.
LP	<u>Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic of the Reign of Henry VIII, 1509-1547.</u> 21 vols. in 33 parts. Brewer, J.S. (ed.) vols. 1-4; Gairnder, J. (ed.) vols. 5-13; Brodie, R.H. (ed.) vols. 14-21. London: HMSO, 1862-1910.

Citations Key, cont.

NRO   Northumberland Record Office MSS, North Gosforth.

PRO   Public Record Office MSS, National Archives, Kew.

Sadler Papers   The State Papers and Letters of Sir Ralph Sadler. Clifford, Arthur, Esq.
                   (ed.) 2 vols. Edinburgh: Archibald Constable; London: T. Cadell and W.
                   Davies, William Miller, and John Murray, 1809.

St.P   State Papers, Henry VIII. 11 vols. London: His Majesty's Commission.
                   1831-52.

Talbot MSS   Talbot MSS, Lambeth Palace Library, London.

THE ENGLISH AND SCOTTISH MARCHES

Scottish
East March

Scottish
Middle March

● Berwick

● Melrose

Norham

Dryburgh

Ford

Wark

(1546)

Kelso

English
East March

Fairnington x

x

Haddon

Ancrum Moor

(1542)

(1545)   x

Jedburgh

Teviotdale

Redesdale

Liddesdale

● Harbottle

North Tynedale

Cumberland

Chipchase

English
Middle March

Newcastle

Hexham

Durham
●

Weardale
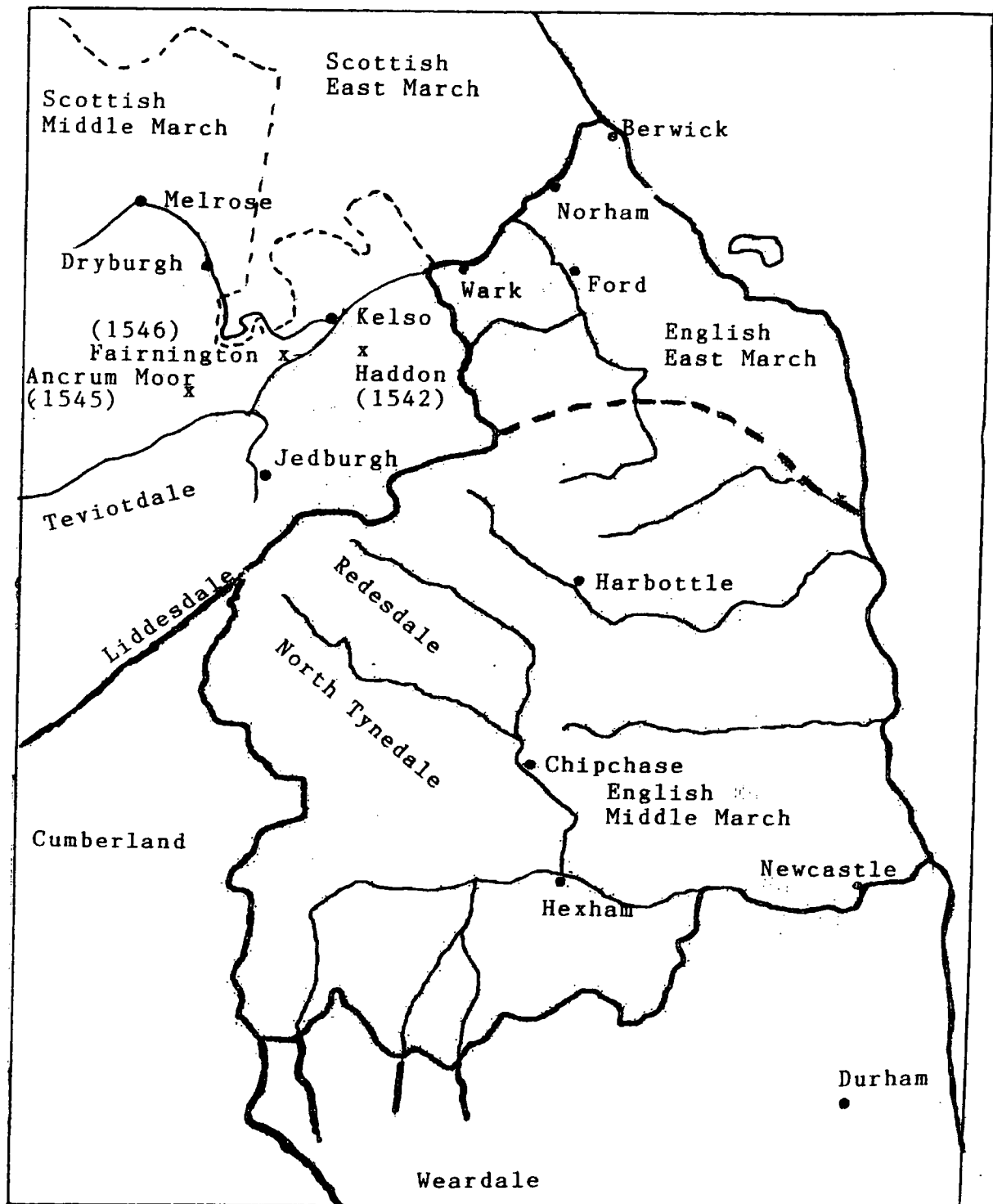
KEY:

o = Castle or Fortified Town

x = Major Border Skirmish or Battle

Chapter One: Introduction

This work probes the problematic relationship between the Tudor government and its Northumbrian subjects, and argues that Tudor intervention actually weakened the Northumbrian military community. The last phase of the Anglo-Scots wars, which officially lasted from 1542-1551—the period known as the 'rough wooing'—and from 1557-1560, was characterised by desultory raids and increased disorder. This had profound effects upon the relationship between the Marchers, but especially affected was the relationship between the crown and its Border soldiers. In an attempt to build a modern army that could effectively subject Scots to English rule, the Tudors only created instability in an already volatile, militarised society.

In their collection of essays on medieval frontiers, Robert Bartlett and Angus MacKay conclude that European frontier societies shared the common trait of militarism.[1] The society that inhabited the Northern Marches of Tudor England exhibited the tendency to militarise, mainly because the defence of the English frontier was entirely dependent upon military service from the Borderers themselves. The Northumbrian military community was defined by three groups that served the crown on the borders: the gentry, who provided leadership as part of their military obligation to the crown; their tenants, who were obliged to serve as part of their tenure; and the border clans of the uplands, whose obligation to serve could only be enforced by a local magnate who was familiar with their chieftains. This was not a harmonious group. The gentry and their tenants often found themselves the victims of the clans' tendency to pilfer livestock, extort their neighbours and cause general unrest. However, Northumbrians tended to unite when attacking the Scots, giving

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[1] Robert Bartlett and Angus MacKay, eds., *Medieval Frontier Societies*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), p. v.

the impression that the military infrastructure of the Marches was enough to overawe the Scottish Borders.

Before 1536, the crown relied upon border magnates to defend the Anglo-Scottish frontier. Marcher society fed the defensive networks of the East and Middle Marches through the patronage of the Percys, the powerful family whose ranks included the Earl of Northumberland. As March Wardens, who were the ranking officers along the frontier, the Percys recruited followers in every corner of Northumberland. As Warden in West March, Lord Dacre did the same, operating in the troubled areas of Gilsland and Bewcastle. The authority of the crown was essentially weak since it depended wholly upon the services of these magnates. Although Henry VII had reduced the salary of the Wardens to prevent his nobles from accruing too much military power, the connections that allowed Percy and Dacre to function were largely unaffected. Both families were able to use the gentry, their tenants and the upland clans as a means of defending the border, even if it meant the occasional collusion with ruffians.

Military tenure and the social bond of blood ties—kinship and kindred— proved essential to military recruitment in the Marches. Many small bands that patrolled the frontier were composed of members from a single extended family who were accustomed to rendering military obligation according to specifications of their tenure. When the Percys rapidly declined in power in the 1530's, the crown resumed control of the frontiers, but found it difficult to penetrate the web of Northumbrian families for recruitment purposes. In an effort to rebuild its power in the borders, Tudor statecraft and military ambition exploited the Marchers for their military potential. The crown sought to use the gentry's connections in the Marches to bolster the military power of the offices that were formerly filled through Percy patronage, and the results were dismal at times. The gentry simply did not have the

resources available to them to effectively harness the military power of Northumberland. Additionally, four Tudor monarchs ruled during this period, producing an incoherent array of policies and Border officers. As such, it is difficult to track appointments to March offices, especially in the mid 1550's, due to a paucity of source material, but the lack of clear policy under the mid-Tudor monarchs proved ultimately detrimental to the war effort.

Through the distribution of offices and fees, Henry VIII created a pool of royal retainers, or 'Border pensioners', and was successful in deputising some highlanders to police their own rebellious family members, which essentially involved an attack upon the insulating factors of kith and kin. Ironically, it was unchecked raiding that kept the clans militarily prepared, so that domestic policing weakened recruitment numbers.[2] Moreover, the Tudor government used the military tenancies to gather offensive armies, even though their original purpose was strictly defensive. This encouraged the Marchers to only serve for wages.

By the same token, the military necessity of employing the Marchers undermined law enforcement. Northumbrians, especially the reiving clans, used their military services as a means of increasing their standing with the government. However, the government's patronage created problems when royal pardons were extended to criminals and rebels in exchange for salaried military service, as it only encouraged a cycle of recidivism and penitence. Moreover, inconsistent royal policies towards the Northumbrians upset the delicate relationships the Borderers had forged not only amongst themselves but also with their more powerful Scottish neighbours in Liddesdale and Teviotdale. It was also during this time that several

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[2] These are located in the SP 1 collection of the National Archives, Kew (Public Record Office). Also see John Roche Dasent (ed.), *Acts of the Privy Council of England,* (London: HMSO, 1890-91), and Sir Harris Nicholas (ed.), *Proceedings and Ordinances of the Privy Council,* (London: HMRC, 1831).

prominent reiver clans rose against their governors, which immediately questioned whether the local gentry were capable of securing the Marches from military threats without the direct intervention large garrisons. The threat that the surnames presented was palpable in the Privy Council; a good proportion of the Council's records from this period discusses the problematic surnames of North Tynedale and Redesdale. The result of royal intervention was increased violence along the frontier, while the important border fortresses were left isolated and the Northumbrian military leadership overwhelmed.

A complex, delicate hierarchy defined the Northumbrian military community, and this was upset by royal intervention. Multiple offices created by Henry VIII complicated the upper tiers of Marcher military society. The Northumberland gentry filled these offices, although many were incapable of performing the task that the crown had handed them. The common Marchers of Northumberland also had a key role to play in Border warfare. However, their role changed in the 1540's, and those who were previously responsible for defending the border were used by the central government in offensive manoeuvres, which resulted in attrition rates that Northumberland could not support. There is also the question of the great reiving clans, and their subsequent decline in military power after the wars. Their roles in the Anglo-Scottish wars of 1542-1560 suggest at least a growing partiality for royal service, and the pay that went with it, a marked contrast to their reputation as freebooters and undisciplined rabble. This might be seen as a victory for the Tudor state, but like the common Marchers, the clans essentially wasted away through attrition and through increasing pressure by the Scots Border clans. Overall, the period 1536-60 marked a major transformation in

Border administration, but it was Northumbrian society that felt the effects of this change.

The struggle to establish royal power in the borders has attracted the attention of antiquarians and historians, who have produced a wealth of literature, widely ranging from printed source material to historical surveys. William Gray's *Chorographia* was initially produced in 1649 as a history of Newcastle, but was also descriptive of the old traditions of the Liberties of Tynedale and Redesdale, some of which were still extant in the remote, upper reaches of both dales. Gray noted that the 'rank riders' of the dales—no doubt descendants of the reiving clans—still honed their martial skills through rustling livestock, although now they were subjected to more consistent law enforcement at the frequent assizes in Newcastle.[3] *Chorographia* also suggested that people of the uplands still regarded themselves as customary military tenants, a remnant of the border tenant right that provided the Tudor monarchs with a supply of Border soldiers, despite the legal demise of this form of tenure in the early years of the Stuarts.[4] Gray clearly regarded the upland dwellers as *homo silvestris,* who were still being transformed into a civilised people through the enforcement of English law. In contrast, Bishop William Nicholson compiled the *Leges Marchiarum*, which was a partial reprint of the late sixteenth-century *Bell MSS*, as a means of showing how a unique, Marcher institution kept a marginalized people within the confines of 'Englishness', a problem more fully discussed in the last chapter.[5] Nineteenth-century antiquarians such as John

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[3] William Gray, *Chorographia or a Survey of Newcastle-on-Tyne,* (London and Newcastle, 1649). Gray descended from the Grays of Chillingham, probably one of the most influential border families of the East March. They were also known for their literary talents. A fourteenth-century Sir Thomas Gray of Chillingham wrote the *Scalacronica,* and it is likely that his descendant was looking to complement this work.

[4] This is discussed in chapter five.

[5] William Nicholson, *Leges Marchiarum or Border Laws,* (London, 1747). Most of the *Leges* and the *Bell MSS* catalogued March law as existed in the twilight of Tudor England, but border ordinances drawn up from the twelfth century onwards also appear in both collections. Tough has pointed out

Hodgson, George Ridpath and James Raine compiled surveys and collections of printed sources relating to Northumbrian history, although their almost haphazard use of documents allowed forgeries and error, as well as folklore, to influence their understanding of Marcher society.[6] The insular nature of Northern politics in the middle ages prompted these early authors to assume that Tudor power fundamentally transformed Border society into a functional part of the English nation through increasing royal intervention.

The study of Border history reached a watershed in the first quarter of the twentieth century when D.L.W. Tough and Rachel Reid made use of the recently calendared State Papers collection.[7] However, the research of Reid and Tough presented a *status quo* portrait of Border administration, where the crown and the Privy Council were portrayed as active participants in a Border administration that was an inherent aspect of expanding state power.[8] This marked little divergence from the previous approaches as Tough saw the transformation of March administration into a civil government as a matter of central, rather than local, politics. Tough limited his chronology to the reign of Elizabeth, partially because Reid's work had already argued that the Council of the North, which facilitated Border administration under Henry VIII and Edward VI, was indicative of the progressive English state. Both authors saw Tudor efforts in the borders as critical to the success of Tudor state power, despite the stopgap measures with which the government acted.

that Nicholson did not include the entire Bell MSS, which suggests that he was working with an incomplete manuscript, of which there are several in the Carlisle Dean and Chapter Records.

[6] John Hodgson, *A History of Northumberland*, (Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 1820-1825); James Raine, *The History and Antiquities of North Durham*, (Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 1852). George Ridpath, *The Border History of England and Scotland*, (Berwick, 1848).

[7] Rachel Reid, *The King's Council in the North*, (London: Longmans and Green,1921); D.L.W. Tough, *The Last Years of a Frontier*, (Oxford: OUP, 1928).

[8] Tough, *Frontier*, preface & p. 278.

The role of the Tudor government in the borders has subsequently provided a viable arena for more recent debates. Tudor historiography has essentially polarised, with two distinct camps arguing that Tudor responses to problems posed by the frontiers represented either limited or increased state power. B.W. Beckinsale downplayed the uniqueness of the North, and argued that the state's approach to problems was uniformly persistent, serving as a bellwether of the rise of the English nation.[9] Comparing similar problems that affected other regions, Beckinsale concluded that the barriers to royal power in the Marches were not unique. M.E. James, on the other hand, approached the 'Northern problem' as a regional matter of a lineage-based locality reconciling with a growing, 'civil' Tudor state.[10] James argued that Percy influence was a barrier to royal power, so that the crown appointed allies to key offices in order to offset the entrenched magnates. This resulted in tension rivalry between the two. Using private letters, family records, and accounts of the Pilgrimage of Grace in 1536, James reasoned that the Earl of Cumberland's appointment as March Warden in 1534 abruptly siphoned muscle from the Percys' traditional, feudal military strength in the Northern counties. In turn, this disaffected some of Cumberland's new tenants, who were still allies of the Percys. Since the Earl of Northumberland saw Cumberland as a territorial rival, James concluded that Percy sought to undermine Cumberland's authority by encouraging lawlessness and rebellion among his ex-tenants who had been subsumed by Cumberland's office.[11] James' work on Thomas Lord Wharton built upon the perception that royal favour had shifted away from those with the largest estates, and turned to those Border

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[9] B.W. Beckinsale, "The Characteristics of the Tudor North", *Northern History*, vol. 4 (1969), pp. 67-83.

[10] M.E. James, *Family, Lineage and Civil Society: A Study of Society, Politics, and Mentality in the Durham Region, 1500-1640*, (Clarendon: Oxford, 1974).

[11] James, "The First Earl of Cumberland and the Decline of Northern Feudalism," *Northern History*, vol. 1 (1966), pp. 60-69.

gentry who were willing enough to serve the king.[12] Wharton was representative of the transformed Border administration, as service to the king earned him a place amongst the new elite of March society. James viewed the rise of Wharton as an example of the increased power of the Tudor state: a co-operative venture between the central government and local elites.

R.W. Hoyle questions James' conclusions, and the notion that royal hegemony in the borders necessitated disposing of the Percys. Instead, Hoyle indicts the policy that placed Cumberland in such an important position, arguing that Cumberland's problems stemmed from his earldom, which was hollow and bereft of any connections or loyal officers. Military power was the least important factor in Cumberland's recruitment of followers, a policy that contributed to Cumberland's military weakness.[13] Hoyle argues that during the rebellions of 1536, the siege of Cumberland's castle at Skipton-in-Craven was not machinated by a Percy hand as James had claimed, but was merely a manifestation of an old rivalry between Cumberland and one of his tenants, since Percy was too weak to encourage any rebellion against Cumberland. However, Hoyle's focus, including his recent work on the Pilgrimage of Grace,[14] does not incorporate Northumberland and the impact of the Tudor policy in the Marches.

Recent challenges to historians' assumptions regarding the English nation-state provide a better foundation for this work. In his seminal article on the 'Northern Problem', M.L. Bush disputes the notion of the 'ubiquity of the crown's effective authority' in demonstrating that the gentry of the borders were used in a

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[12] James, *Change and Continuity in the Tudor North: The Rise of Thomas First Lord Wharton*, Borthwick Papers, vol. 27, (York, 1965).
[13] R.W. Hoyle, "The Earl of Cumberland: A Reputation Reassessed," *Northern History* vol. 22 (1986), pp. 66-67.
[14] Hoyle, *The Pilgrimage of Grace and the Politics of the 1530s*, (Oxford: OUP, 2001).

clumsy policy of filling Border offices after the fall of the Percys and Dacres.[15]

Bush's conclusions dovetail with the recent work of Steven Ellis on Tudor frontiers.

Ellis argues that the frontiers of the British Isles challenged the power of the Tudor

state, though the undermining of Border magnates such as the Percys and Lord

Dacre provided an overall step forward for the British state. Tudor intervention

brought the region direct royal involvement at the expense of seigniorial power.

However, Ellis saw it as a very limited success since the Tudor policy of promoting

lesser men to rule the borders was unrealistic considering the demands of Border

defence.[16] Despite the new face of the English state, the reorganisation of Border

administration failed to solve the problems of the north, which was 'assimilated

administratively and culturally to the centre,' while remaining politically

marginalised.[17] This notion is partially reflected in the frustrations experienced by

the military officers of the Border, a dominant theme in this work. Ellis' greatest

contribution comes from his methodology as he has called for a more balanced study

of centres and peripheries of power. Ellis has underscored the need for

understanding Marcher society within the contemporary political framework, what

he terms the 'effective devolution of authority with the retention of overall

control.'[18] Nevertheless, Ellis' focus upon the failure of Marcher administration only

provides a partial reason for the military decline of the Northumbrians, which

challenged the later Elizabethan administration.

Internecine violence and warfare had a dire effect upon the military

infrastructure of the Marches, but especially affected were the Marchers who held no

administrative post or office. This is a contentious point that is subject to differing

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[15] M.L. Bush, "The Problem of the Far North", *Northern History*, vol. 6 (1971), p 63.
[16] S.G. Ellis, 'A Border Baron and the Tudor State: The Rise and Fall of Lord Dacre of the North', *The Historical Journal*, vol. 35 (1992), pp. 253-77.
[17] S.G. Ellis, 'Civilising Northumberland: Representations of Englishness in the Tudor State', *Journal of Historical Sociology*, vol. 12, no. 2. (1999), p. 123.

interpretation of the source materials. Ralph Robson's study of the surnames of North Tynedale suggests that the heidsmen of the Marches took advantage of both devolved and central authority, but suffered in the end from an ill-advised association with the English government.[19] However, Robson does not look at Northumberland society wholly, which portrays only a partial view of the military community of the borders, much like George MacDonald Fraser's work on the reiving clans.[20] The result is a confusing glimpse of an older 'lineage' society, one that valued the connections of kith and kin, and one that was at odds with the new 'civil' society. Such isolated studies of the clans obfuscate why the surnames perpetrated acts of violence against each other or their English neighbours. Robson and Fraser sensationalise the violence of the surnames, and exaggerate the cross-border relationships that both Tynedale and Scottish Liddesdale shared. In doing so, both authors miss the opportunity to answer the more vital questions pertaining to the rise and fall of Northumbrian military power.

Others have downplayed the effects of violence and warfare in the sixteenth-century borders. Anthony Goodman is amongst the first to question the nature of violence in the Anglo-Scottish Borders, suggesting that cross-border ties were more characteristic of the borders than bloodshed or violence.[21] Goodman's student, Maureen Meikle, takes his thesis one step further. Meikle thoughtfully analyses the gentry of the East Marches using National Archives records, as well as family records,[22] concluding that cross-border relations and the 'normal' daily business of estate management counters the perception that the Marches suffered from pandemic

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[18] Ellis, *Tudor Frontiers and Noble Power*, (Oxford: Clarendon, 1995). p. 258.
[19] Ralph Robson, *The Rise and Fall of the English Highland Clans: Tudor Responses to a Mediaeval Problem*, (Edinburgh: East Linton, 1989).
[20] G.M. Fraser, *The Steel Bonnets*, (London: Barrie and Jenkins, 1971).
[21] Anthony Goodman, 'The Anglo-Scottish Marches in the Fifteenth Century: A Frontier Society?' in R.A. Mason, (ed.), *Scotland and England, 1286-1815*, (Edinburgh: Donald Press, 1987).

violence. However, Meikle's work side-steps any in-depth look at the small but established military community that was actively engaged in both domestic security and the Anglo-Scots Wars. Rather than viewing Northumbrian society as a tied to the defence of the borders, Meikle emphasises the connection to 'civil' society. Still, Meikle's thesis is an elegant analysis of a section of the Northumbrian gentry community that lived in an area which was more settled than other areas of the borders. Many of the East Marcher families were eager to avoid any entanglement that might lead to a violent bloodfeud, with a few notable exceptions such as the Herons and the Carrs. Meikle admits that low-level feuding was still a problem in the settled East Marches, although it did not tend to erupt into catastrophic violence that threatened the military infrastructure of the East March.[23] Richard Lomas subsequently followed the approach employed by Goodman and Meikle. Using accounts of priory lands in North Durham and Tweedale, both of which were in the East March, Lomas argued that the incomes from lands in the East Marches were not affected as much by violence as through depopulation.[24] Lomas concluded that Border warfare was thus not as destructive as previously thought.

While violence in the Marches was certainly limited in some areas, there arise some problems when portraying the Marches as largely settled and governed by a 'civil' society with only small pockets of extreme violence. Firstly, while Meikle and Lomas have demonstrated the dangers of overemphasizing the extent of the economic damage that resulted from armed conflict, their narrow studies underestimate the fact that the East March was still a war zone. It is true that the

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[22] Maureen Meikle, 'Lairds and Gentlemen: A Study of the Landed Families of the Anglo-Scottish Borders, 1540-1603', (Edinburgh University Ph.D, 1986).
[23] Meikle has provided an entire appendix that charts the feuds of the East Marches; she counts no less than 257 individual feuds in both the Scottish and English East Marches. See 'Lairds and Gentlemen', Appendix. I.
[24] Richard Lomas, 'The Scots and South Tweedside: The Impact of Border Warfare, c. 1290-1520,' *Scottish Historical Review* 75 (1996) pp. 143-167.

battles of Haddon Rig, Ancrum Moor and Fairnington Crag all occurred outside the alleged 'quiet zones'. Yet the East March was not removed from the war and its effects. Most of the battlefields were within a day's march of Home Castle, one of Meikle's foci of study. The Tweed valley itself was a well-used route into Scotland by the Berwick garrison, and the destruction they wrought upon the tenants of the Merse and Tweedale during the wars of 1542-60 left the area depleted and scarred. A deeper look at evidence suggests that due to their proximity to the front lines, the East Marchers were no less active in the wars than other Northumbrians. Another problem with this approach is that while areas in close vicinity to Berwick-upon-Tweed provide a tempting case study for downplaying frontier violence, any lack of manifest violence, whether cross-border raiding by Scots or internal feuding, must be attributed to Berwick's military status and large garrison. Berwick deterred Scots raids, and was also a centre of Border administration that was able to dispense justice through the courts of the resident Warden. This influence reached beyond the walls of the town, and thus allowed a more civilised society to emerge in certain parts of the East March. When the Berwick garrison was drawn into a deadly feud, as it was in 1557,[25] the result was a complete breakdown of order in the areas that had purportedly been quiet. The East March was thus just as prone to violence as other areas of the Marches, as its uneasy peace was entirely dependent upon the stability of gentry relations.

The Anglo-Scottish Marches were war-torn, but they were also fascinatingly complex: an inhospitable terrain inhabited by a closed and xenophobic society that was inured to the threat of violence from every direction. But Marcher society was also vulnerable. The power vacuum left by the Percys drew the gentry into roles for

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[25] Meikle, Maureen. 'Northumberland Divided: Anatomy of a Sixteenth-Century Bloodfeud.' *Archaeologia Aeliana*, 5th series, vol. 20 (1992), pp. 79-89.

which they were unprepared. Tudor policy ensured that the Northumbrians played an active role in the Anglo-Scots wars, and that they would ultimately suffer unsustainable losses, despite the frequent defeats they inflicted upon the Scots. The Borderers' militarism made them attractive recruits, but it also led the crown to overestimate what it could expect from its Border guards. Their ultimate failure was not so much a result of one single reason. Royal prerogative, military obligation, leadership and authority, as well as identity all shaped how Northumbrians formed their own defensive networks; when these delicate connections were ruptured by sustained conflict and administrative change, the Northumbrian military community lapsed into decay. It was a legacy that Henry would hand to all of his children, but it was Elizabeth who was left to counter the effects of twenty years of costly conflict.

The politics of the borders challenge the notion of unilateral state authority, and this study builds upon Ellis' argument that royal patronage increased the king's affinity in the Marches but adversely affected administration. My intent is to show that while royal influence increased in the Marches in the form of royal appointments, as Ellis argues, the crown was ultimately left with an empty authority since it still could not instil order. Tudor polices towards Northumberland were not a step forward for the British state. Evidence suggests that any effective central authority was continually dependant upon the co-operation of the individual Marchers, which was difficult to secure, especially if the person concerned was not as servile as Lord Wharton, whose career is discussed at length throughout this work. The central government affected the administration of Marcher government, but the execution of military office required some independence of the crown as Border contingencies could not stay for royal guidance from 300 miles away. Ultimately, the crown was not militarily powerful enough to ensure good rule in its frontiers; instead, Northumbrians and the crown were mutually dependent on each

other for defence. The result was that some Marchers were able to retain their military ascendancy, whilst others suffered from the inconsistent policies that barraged the Marches over a twenty-year period. This problem undermined any attempt to instil royal authority in the Marches.

The shift of the Northumbrian military infrastructure from a defensive role to one used for offensive purposes, and the subsequent decline in Northumbrian military power, reveals itself in the material originating from military operations that began just after the rebellion of 1536-7. The State Papers collection at the Public Record office provides the staple of the evidence for this phenomenon, as do the Cotton Caligula and Additional Manuscripts of the British Library. The State Papers collection and the reports of the March officials in the British Library Caligula MSS demonstrate that the Tudor government employed a confusing array of policies over twenty years, all of which were affected by central politics.

The collection of Border Papers (PRO, SP 59) provides another source of evidence that characterises the borders during Elizabeth's reign, though many of the documents refer to sources of evidence from the 1540's and the 1550's that are now lost. Of particular interest are the surveys of Sir Robert Bowes from 1541 and 1551,[26] which shed crucial light on the state of the borders in the mid-sixteenth century. Sir Thomas Wharton's catalogue of March Law is also in the State Papers 15 collection, as is his order for the setting of the watch, both of which underscore the ongoing military reforms that affected the Northumbrians. Exchequer accounts have also proven useful, as they provide lists of Northumberland soldiers and pensioners, as well as surveys of the main fortresses. The Talbot and Shrewsbury MSS, and the Bishop's Additional MSS of Lambeth Palace, provide a wealth of

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[26] PRO, SP 1/168 f. 19 (survey of 1541) and BL, Calig. VIII, f. 106 (survey of 1551). These surveys appear as evidence in most chapters of this work due to their wealth of information.

detail about the borders in the 1540's and 1550's, when the Talbot earls of Shrewsbury filled multiple high-ranking posts in Northern government. Although some of these letters are copies of original documents in the State Papers collections, many others are unique to the collection. Local records offices have also been useful, although the manuscripts of Northumberland Records Offices are more scattered. There are some useful family collections such as the Seton-Delavale MSS, although most of the local Northumbrian records used in this study are unclassified, miscellaneous documents.

Records and accounts from the main Border towns of Berwick, Newcastle and Carlisle have provided some peripheral evidence for this study. There are a few organised collections, such as the Bell MSS of the Carlisle Records Office, that specifically deal with Border administration. The Berwick Records Office contains mostly borough records, but it also has some muster lists. However, these are from later in Elizabeth's reign, when mercenaries and inland men dominated the garrison, although many were from north of the Trent, usually Yorkshire and Lancashire or Cheshire. They consequently tell us little about the Northumbrians. Most of the earlier records for the garrison were sent to the Exchequer, and many have subsequently been lost, which further impedes any meaningful analysis of the Berwick garrison in relation to Marcher society. The Berwick accounts that have survived are largely surveys of fortresses in the East Marches, and are mostly financial details. Of the garrison muster rolls that have survived, little can be done with them since few other records exist with which they can be meaningfully connected. Other financial records that have originated at Berwick, such as those relating to the building of the *trace italiene*-style walls later in Elizabeth's reign, provide an interesting glimpse into the functions of a border fortress, but they yield little information regarding the military community that served the earlier Tudors.

This is not surprising, considering that all business of the Marches was reported to the Council of the North, whose records are now lost, although some still exist in the Hamilton Papers. Regardless of where records were sent, the Wardens of the East March were headquartered at Berwick, so the paucity of source material for the Berwick garrison is both puzzling and disappointing.

Reconstructing sixteenth-century military communities from manuscript sources is difficult, especially in the borders where there were both regular and auxiliary soldiers, as well as foreign mercenaries, on active duty at any given time. By using the State Papers collections and the surviving muster lists in the Exchequer records, it is possible to gain an understanding of the military capabilities of the common Border soldiers, as well as the Border service that his tenant right demanded. R.W. Hoyle and M.L. Bush both demonstrate the difficulty in understanding the relationship between military obligation and tenant right, but the crown and its officers engaged in lively discussions regarding forensic service owed by Borderers, much of which has been preserved in the State Papers.[27] Although they do not discuss individual tenancies, these correspondences at least provide a framework for understanding the nature of common military obligation.

Some Northumbrians such as Edward Charlton of Hesleyside, or Little John Heron of Chipchase, figure more prominently in the manuscripts due to their elevated social status and their more active role in Border affairs, although their careers say little about the lesser sort of men who participated in the wars. The prevalence of names that appear infrequently in the archives indicate that there were

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[27]Bush, M.L. 'Tenant Right Under the Tudors: A Revision Revised.' Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester 77 (1995), pp. 161-88; Hoyle, R.W. 'An Ancient and Laudable Custom: The Development and Definition of Tenant Right in North-Western England in the Sixteenth Century,' Past and Present 116 (1987), pp. 24-55. The debate about tenant right is covered in more detail in chapter six.

many fleeting, part-time border soldiers. Such soldiers often rose in rank, and their importance in the military scheme emerges as they advanced from common soldier to land sergeant, or even petty captain. Border officers also became increasingly diligent in identifying active Borderers. By comparing these letters to muster lists, the prevalence of military service and the effects of Border militarism begin to surface.

Wills and inventories at Durham and York have not worked well in establishing the dynamics of the military community since few active Borderers from this period, aside from William lord Eure and Robert lord Ogle, left behind wills that have actually survived.[28] No wills from members of the upland clans have survived, if any were produced at all. Others who died in combat, such as Sir Ralph Eure, mostly died intestate, or their wills have been lost. It was my original intent to use wills to analyse how Northumbrian soldiers related to their fellow soldiers by determining if any of the testator's fellow soldiers were bequeathed goods— especially armour—or if they served as witnesses. We are allowed occasional glimpses, such as the will of George Bowes of Biddick, which bequeathed armour to Bowes' brother.[29] However, this will originated in the last years of Elizabeth's reign, and is quite possibly indicative of the renascent chivalry that sprouted amongst all European soldiery in the last half of the sixteenth century.[30] The bequeathing of weaponry is not included in most mid-sixteenth century wills, suggesting that armour and weaponry were either scavenged from the field or merely handed over to heirs informally. Without any firm evidence, though, it is difficult to surmise if the military community reinforced itself through wills.

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[28] William Lord Eure's will is in the PRO, while Surtees has printed Ogles' will.

[29] Robert Surtees, *The History and Antiquities of the County Palatine of Durham*, vol. I, (London, 1816-40), p. 200; James, *Lineage and Civil Society*, p. 177.

[30] I.A.A. Thompson, 'The European Crisis of the 1590's: The Impact of War,' in *War and Society in Habsburg Spain*, (Aldershot: Variorum, 1992), pp. 271-76.

Studies of the surnames have been hindered by the dearth of evidence. The clans often left little written evidence, as most of their military services were formed through the customary understanding of Border service, which did not entail formal record keeping. Some Northumbrian officers wrote prolifically about the surnames, so their testimonies provide the bulk of the evidence for this work. The surveys of Bowes and Ellerkar have illustrated some aspects of the dales societies,[31] but there is much more evidence scattered about in the State Papers archives, as well as in the Cotton Manuscripts of the British Library. This presents a quandary in that men who wrote the commentaries about the dalesmen were bound to portray the surnames in a negative light since the authors represented the interests of M.E. James' 'civil' society who saw the surnames as the Percys' *enfants terribles*.[32] Some, like Little John Heron of Chipchase and Sir Ralph Eure, were more sympathetic than the earl of Hertford or the duke of Norfolk were, which makes it possible to create a less biased study of the reiving clans without exaggerating the depths of their criminality.

Although this study is a military history of Northumbrian Border society, the approach is thematic as opposed to narrative, in order to show the formative elements of the Northumberland military community. Despite their unique status, the Border soldiers of Northumberland were part of a wider development known as the 'military revolutions'. Although this term has become loaded with a myriad of connotation, it is necessary in the first sections of this study to connect the military arena of the borders to the wider British and European military theatres, in order that

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[31] PRO, SP 1/168, ff. 19-54; BL, Calig. B VIII f. 106. These surveys are also printed in full in Hodgson's *Northumberland*, as well as in M.A. Richardson, *Reprints of Rare Tracts* (Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 1848).

[32] James, *Family, Lineage and Civil Society*, p. 45 & pp. 183-87. James points out that men such as Eure and Bowes filled the vacuum left by the Nevilles and Percys, and that the gentry in general was more interested in serving the king than upholding the interests of the old nobility.

we might understand the niche that they occupied. Because I have avoided the narrative approach to warfare,[33] a description of Anglo-Scottish warfare is included in the second chapter. As the Borderers were part of a wider society, it is necessary to describe the factors that influenced Border warfare. The English military effort in the Anglo-Scottish Marches differed from the English military experience on the continent. Like Ireland, the Anglo-Scottish frontier conflict was heavily characterised by raiding due to the openness of the Marches and the lack of a strong, consistent policing apparatus in the Marches. Such approaches to armed conflict required specialist troops who were adept at negotiating the treacherous terrain of the borders, which resulted in local men serving not only as guides but also as cavalry. Their presence reduced the need for levies from the southern counties, but it also placed them in harm's way when traditionally they were only used as the first line of defence. A brief overview of the geography, and the socio-economic factors of Northumberland society form another part of the introductory chapter. The third and fourth chapters discuss the policies of the central government, and what military responsibilities it expected of its Marcher officers and soldiers. The final three chapters examine the elements that fused together the military community of Northumberland. Chapter five analyses military office and authority in the borders, with specific references to the role of the leading lords and gentry in the execution of Tudor policy. Conflicts in leadership are also treated in this chapter to illustrate that not all Tudor officers acted in concerted fashion. Military obligation and the military role of the common Marchers are the subjects of chapter six. This chapter

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[33] Gervase Phillips, *The Anglo-Scots Wars, 1513-1550,* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1999). Phillips rightly quotes James McPherson that the importance of contingency in military history 'can best be described in a narrative format'. See James McPherson, *The Battle Cry of Freedom,* (Oxford: OUP, 1988), p. 858. This approach works best with a chronological format, and this is exactly the approach that Phillips has used. However, in thematic developments, the new military history eschews this approach.

will complement the previous section by demonstrating the difficulty that the Tudors experienced in harnessing the customary military obligations of their Border tenants, and it draws a distinction between border service and national military obligation. Border service, or the obligation to serve the Warden when policing the frontier or in the pursuit of Scottish raiders, has often been confused with national military obligation. Border service essentially excluded the Northumberland military community from service in France, unlike other counties that all gave heavily to England's continental military enterprises, but as we shall see, the Tudors tried to alter this. Chapter seven will argue that the conflicts between the Marchers and the government regarding the pursuit of border warfare were rooted in the military identity that was a natural part of the militarised Northumbrian frontier, which only complicated the fractures that appeared the Northumbrian military community. The vagaries of Border conflict demanded a unified response in the face of Scottish aggression and criminality, but such responses were hamstrung by varied interpretations of duty fuelled by custom, which undermined Border service, and by the high value placed on blood ties. Military leadership in the Marches thus faced a crisis, which directly threatened the government's ability to implement its own policies. Ultimately, this work will focus upon the intersection of March society and Border conflict. For nearly three hundred years, the two were inseparable, but the role of Northumbrian society in the war as a whole has still remained obscured. This is neither purely a local study, nor is it a study solely of Tudor policy. Rather, this work will explore the synergetic relationship between a specific locality and the central government in London.

Chapter 2: Border Conflict in Europe and the British Isles

The bloody, guerrilla-style armed conflict that typified the Seven Years' War in North America is often seen as a watershed in British military history, where professional troops required the services of frontier-dwelling scouts and natives.[1] The combination of regular army with local militia was not a new practice, however. Warfare in the inhospitable terrain of the Anglo-Scottish Marches hindered military action, and required the services from the Marchers as skirmishers and scouts. Frontier troops that excelled in guerrilla warfare were indispensable to the English war effort. While Anglo-Scottish border warfare exhibited its own idiosyncrasies, border warfare in general had developed similarities throughout the British Isles, and in Europe to some extent. This chapter discusses English approaches to border warfare in the context of wider European military practice, and addresses how the geography, economy and conservative society of the Marches required the English government to employ more innovative approaches to armed conflict.

The frontier conflicts of the sixteenth century have received some recent attention, but only in the shadow of the 'military revolution' debates. J.R. Hale claimed that warfare in the British Isles was not on a scale when compared to European warfare, which has led to historians to focus elsewhere.[2] Research has largely focused upon the significance of gunpowder and the resulting general, homogenising Western military reform, though some—most notably Geoffrey Parker—have modified their earlier conclusions to explain the continual disparity of military power amongst European princes.[3] There still remains an underlying

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[1] For the most recent study of the French-Indian conflict, see Matthew C. Ward, *Breaking the Backcountry: The Seven Years' War in Virginia and Pennsylvania, 1754-1765*, (Pittsburgh: Pittsburgh UP, 2003).

[2] J.R. Hale, *Renaissance War Studies* (London: Hambledon Press, 1983), p. 247.

[3] Geoffrey Parker, 'The 'Military Revolution, 1560-1660'—A Myth?', in C. J. Rogers, ed. *The Military Revolution Debate*. p. 43. John Lynn, 'The *trace italienne* and the Growth of Armies', in *ibid*, p. 169.

technological determinism in Parker's thesis, which begins with the advent of modern artillery and Italian-style fortifications. It details a technological change that led to the creation of large navies and thus ushered in the rise of the West, which in turn allowed for colonialism to occur. This argument has its merit, though it has had some critiques, most of which point to Parker's overly general statements. The subtle aspects of European warfare are glossed over by what David Eltis describes as 'oversimplifications' of a more complex phenomenon.[4] Parker's focus upon technological advances has also caused some debate. David Parrott has cautioned historians to avoid swallowing the rhetoric of sixteenth-century military reformers and theorists, especially where fortifications were concerned, as it often did not reflect the military expediencies that characterised contemporary warfare.[5] In all of these debates, the military developments that took place in the wilder frontiers have altogether been overlooked.

While the variegated interpretations of the military revolution avoid general statements of frontier warfare, individual case studies argue that frontier defence was a costly yet necessary appendage of the state. David Potter's work on Picardy shows how the French king drew the frontier nobility closer to the crown by offer them offices and commands in the army.[6] As a 'hot' frontier, the military service of the local Picardy nobles was essential for keeping the territory in French possession. As a result, the area became highly militarised, even though the military machine there was in chaos for most of the sixteenth century.[7] James B. Wood's work on the armies of the Valois kings during the Wars of Religion underscores the need for a

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[4] David Eltis, *The Military Revolution in Sixteenth-Century Europe,* (London, 1995), p. 11.
[5] David Parrott, 'The Utility of Fortifications in Early Modern Europe: Italian Princes and Their Citadels, 1540–1640', *War in History,* vol. vii, pt. 2 (2000) pp. 127–153.
[6] David Potter, *War and Government in the French Provinces: Picardy, 1470-1560,* (Cambridge: CUP, 1993).
[7] *Ibid,* p. 306.

balance between internal security and the protection of the frontier.[8] Wood's assessment of the French army complements Potter's research, portraying a French army that was in desperate need of a more advanced military bureaucracy so that internal rebellion and frontier security could be managed more efficiently.

Foreign and internal threats stretched military resources to the limit. Most rulers elected to keep the majority of their professional soldiers stationed in border garrisons, though this policy often left rulers without a policing apparatus. Wood has shown that the Valois kings of France concentrated their troops in the vast frontier shared with their Habsburg rivals, leaving Charles IX with too few soldiers in the interior to crush the initial Huguenot rebellion.[9] Emperors Charles V and Ferdinand I, on the other hand, had literally thousands of miles of frontier to defend from French and Turkish armies. Most of the immediate defensive arrangements on the eastern frontier were administered by the Austrian Diet,[10] while the struggle with France over Burgundy required the immediate attention of the emperor. However, rebellion upset the military balance in the Habsburgs' frontiers, just as it did for the French border provinces.[11] After the failure of the Regensburg Colloquy, Charles V was engaged in suppressing Philip of Hesse and the Schmalkaldic League; the rebellion siphoned precious troops from the borders, though this was mended by alternating truces with the Turks and the French. By juggling his military resources, Charles was able to deploy the veteran troops that crushed the Lutherans at Mühlberg in 1547. In 1559, the treaty of Cateau-Cambresis temporarily diffused the wars with France, while in 1555 the Augsburg settlement with the Lutheran princes

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[8] James B. Wood, *The King's Army: Warfare, Soldiers and Society during the Wars of Religion in France, 1562-1576*, (Cambridge: CUP, 1996).
[9] Wood, *The King's Army*, p. 4.
[10] S. Guldescu, *The Croatian-Slavonian Kingdom, 1526-1792*, (The Hague: Mouton Press, 1970); G.E. Rothenberg, *The Austrian Military Border in Croatia, 1522-1747*, (Urbana: U of I Press, 1960).
[11] J.D. Tracy, *Emperor Charles V, Impresario of War : Campaign Strategy, International Finance, and Domestic Politics*, (Cambridge: CUP, 2002).

allowed the Habsburgs to shift troops from the internal German principalities back

to the frontiers. While diplomacy provided some surety for the French and Imperial

frontiers, the general political instability in the continent kept both French and

Habsburg border garrisons active so that neither power was able to stand down all of

its armies after the cease-fire.

England's rulers had even fewer resources for their borders, and these, too,

were strained in times of military and political crisis. When Henry VIII's best border

soldiers became active participants in the rebellions of 1536, it left the entire Anglo-

Scottish frontier vulnerable to invasion. Before he moved against the rebels, Henry's

initial steps ensured that the Scots upheld the treaty of 1534, in which James agreed

not to wage war on England, regardless of any pretext.[12] Luck was on the English

side; Scottish reivers were the only foreign parties to enter England during the

rising. Fifteen years later the English ran out of luck. Both the West Country rising

and Kett's rebellion in 1549 forced Protector Somerset to divert foreign mercenaries,

who were earmarked to bolster the struggling garrisons in the Scottish Pale. Without

these essential troops, the embattled English Pale that had been established in the

Scottish Lowlands suffered yet more deprivation. Moreover, the heavy-handed

approach used by the German *landsknechts* and Italian arquebusiers in quelling both

rebellions reflected poorly upon Somerset's administration.[13] The Protector paid the

ultimate price for his military blunders, and the borders were left open to the ravages

of the Franco-Scottish army that lodged in the former English outposts.[14] The treaty

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[12] Gervase Phillips, *The Anglo-Scots Wars, 1513-1550* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1999) p. 147.
[13] Julian Cornwall, *The Revolt of the Peasantry 1549*, (London: Routledge and Keegan Paul, 1977), pp. 160-67; Phillips, *Anglo-Scots Wars*, p. 73.
[14] J.B. Brown (ed.), 'The French Troops in the Borders in 1548', *Transactions of the Hawick Archaeological Society* (1905), pp. 35-45; Phillips, *Anglo-Scots Wars*, pp. 250-55.

of 1551 did nothing to shore up the border, which had suffered heavily in the attrition, leaving the crown's Northumbrian subjects vulnerable to Scottish raids.

War was essentially ill defined in early modern Europe.[15] The veil that separated war and peace was thin, and often frontier conflict simmered even during general truces. This was especially true for the militarised English borderlands: The Pales of Calais and Dublin, and the Northern Marches. Armed conflict essentially defined Marcher life, as all three borderlands faced either warring clans or professional armies of England's international rivals. The Anglo-Scottish Marches faced both during Anglo-Scottish wars when French forces made an appearance in Scotland in 1523 and again in 1548. Elizabethan Ireland witnessed a desultory Spanish intervention that sought to exploit the Irish rebellions led by Tyrone. There were no border clans in Calais, but the presence of a myriad of soldiers ranging from freebooters to professional mercenaries gave the English forces a hodgepodge appearance.

England's military frontiers presented a unique challenge to the Tudor government, but the Tudor approaches to these problematic areas were remarkably similar despite the divides separating the Irish Gaelic, Scots Gaelic and Anglo-Scottish polities. Sixteenth-century England did not yet have a centralised military administration and instead wholly relied upon regional structures of command and logistics. Spain, on the other hand, required military bureaucracies to govern the areas such as the Low Countries, so that by 1600 there were military structures in place to streamline logistics.[16] The English had no such burgeoning military organisation; the wars in Ireland and in the Marches were essentially waged much as

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[15] M.S. Anderson, *War and Society in Europe of the Old Regime, 1618-1789*, (New York: St. Martin's Press , 1988), pp. 13-16.
[16] I.A.A. Thompson (ed.), ' The European Crisis of the 1590's: The Impact of War', *War and Society in Habsburg Spain*, (Aldershot: Variorum, 1992), pp. 270-73.

they had been in the previous two centuries, even though the Tudor governments attempted some innovative approaches that never took root. This lack of central command effectively created separate military governorships in Ireland, Calais and along the Anglo-Scottish frontier. And while each regional conflict had its own peculiarities and adaptations of conventional military practice, the approach was essentially the same.

Geoffrey Parker suggests that the absence of fortifications on some frontiers forced rulers to rely on cavalry, implying there existed two mutually exclusive methods of border warfare: siege craft and set-piece battles on the one hand, and on the other a more fluid approach that employed raids and skirmishes of light cavalry.[17] The former method of warfare has proved to be much more attractive to historians, although this does not diminish the important role that cavalry enjoyed during the sixteenth century. Gervase Philips has noted that studies of the military revolutions of the sixteenth century have ignored light cavalry: 'Despite the scant attention that has been paid to light cavalry, they were an influential factor in early modern warfare. In reconnaissance, screening and raiding, an effective independent light cavalry arm added a new dimension to warfare.'[18] The European mercenaries who found employment on the English frontiers demonstrate that most nations were still using horse-based soldiers. French demi-lances, mounted Spanish infantry, and Albanian light cavalry were used in the English borderlands to good effect.

The development of light horse took occurred in the frontiers of Europe. While typical soldiery in the Austrian borders included heavy mounted *Kriegesknecht* or *Landsknecht* infantry, a generous complement of native conscripts

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[17] Parker, "Military Revolution", *passim*.
[18] Gervase Phillips, *The Anglo-Scots Wars, 1513-50*, (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1999) p. 29.

and volunteers formed non-traditional companies.[19] By the middle of the fifteenth

century, Albanian stradiot cavalry had proven their use in patrolling the difficult

terrain of the Habsburgs' Balkan frontier.[20] Poland largely depended upon the horse-

based Cossack families for the defence of the south-eastern Polish marches, which

were exposed to the marauding Tatar and Turkish armies.[21] The Hungarian hussar

was equally skilled in expanding the range of operation deep into Turkish territory.[22]

The typical light horseman carried a spear or javelin, sword, and perhaps a

missile weapon or firearm of some sort. This allowed them to move further and

faster than the heavy cavalryman, and contributed greatly to their role as raiders and

scouts. The typical stradiot was very much accustomed to the lifestyle of border

raids and ambushes, which depended upon their speed and surprise.[23] Lightly armed

with a spear and a scimitar and sword, the stradiots usually preferred to outflank an

enemy and descend upon the rearguard in order to cause confusion in the front

ranks; during the ensuing rout, they sought prisoners to ransom.[24] The development

of a light cavalry arm to police the border and conduct raids against the enemy was

thus a logical answer for military problems by maintaining an armed presence that

could act as an initial screen against invading armies using local resources and

unconventional strategies.

Irregular troops and light cavalry were in use in all three English marches by

the sixteenth century and were essentially the means by which the Marchers secured

themselves from both marauders and invading armies. Each region supplied the

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[19] S. Guldescu, *The Croatian-Slavonian Kingdom, 1526-1792*, (The Hague: Mouton Press, 1970), p. 62.
[20] Michael Mallett, *Mercenaries and their Masters*, (London: Bodley Head, 1974), p. 152.
[21] R.I. Frost, *After the Deluge: Poland and the Second Northern War, 1655-1660*, (Cambridge: CUP, 1993), pp. 1-26.
[22] Geza Perjeo, *The Fall of the Medieval Kingdom of Hungary: Mohàcs 1526 to Buda 1541*, (Boulder: Social Sciences Monograph, 1995).
[23] Mallett, *Mercenaries*, p. 143. For all of their effectiveness, the Stradiots lacked the military discipline that was desired by most commanders.
[24] Mallett, *Mercenaries*, p. 153.

Marcher lords with a suitable body of soldiers, with the exception of Calais, which

was staffed by the retinues of the English aristocracy that served as military

governors.[25] In the Irish Pale, the Anglo-Irish Earl of Kildare used his connections

as chief to raise troops, having consolidated his lands. Although the core of the

Anglo-Irish defences remained chiefly in the hands of the English retinues, the

irregular Irish border soldiers made up a substantial portion of the Marcher levies.[26]

By taking tribute from all the cheiftaincies that bordered the Pale, Kildare was able

to fund a small army from his border holdings.[27] Galloglass and kerne were

increasingly relied upon to secure the borders of the Irish Marches, as English

retinues became too expensive.[28] Lightly armed kerne warriors were much more

suited to the internal clan warring and raiding that characterised the Marches, despite

the fact that they most often served as foot soldiers. As the sixteenth century

progressed they became adept at handling firearms, probably more so than their

Anglo-Scottish counterparts mainly due to the resources available to the lords who

employed them.[29] Mounted irregulars chiefly were the galloglass mercenaries that

came from the western Scottish clans, and from the personal household of the Irish

marcher lords. The kerne and galloglass were exceptional march warriors; many

found employment in the Anglo-Scottish border wars of the mid-century, and most

standing private armies in Ireland were comprised of kerne who served under

hereditary captains.[30] However, the vulnerability of Kildare's tribute system was laid

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[25] The defences of Calais were more similar to those of the French-Imperial border than to the Austro-Turkish border.

[26] S.G. Ellis, *Reform and Revival: English Government in Ireland, 1470-1534*, (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1986), pp. 54-55.

[27] Ellis, *Tudor Frontiers and Noble Power*, (Oxford: Clarendon, 1995), pp. 119-35.

[28] Ellis, *Reform and Revival*, pp. 55-57.

[29] Colm Lennon, *Sixteenth-Century Ireland : The Incomplete Conquest* (Dublin: Gill and MacMillan, 1994), pp. 56-57.

[30] Lennon, *Ireland*, p. 56.

bare when he rebelled in 1534, which consolidated most of the Irish military resources in the hands of the rebels.[31]

The Calais Pale differed from the Celtic marches of the British Isles, as there was no clannish border society like that found in Ireland and Scotland; thus, the light skirmishers that operated in France differed from the Anglo-Celtic Marchers. Irregular troops—"crackers" or "krekers" as the French called them— in the Pale of Calais were not an official part of the army but were groups of mercenaries and adventurers who were attracted to the inherent instability of the Calais Pale, and to the opportunities that it might offer the clever raider.[32] These groups acted as freelancing quartermasters for the army but received no official pay; instead, they subsisted on booty and the sale of stolen goods. Their presence in the field gave the English a good supply of scouts and skirmishers, since they fought more desperately than the average soldier did. Such ruffians did not dissipate when each official English campaign had ended but continued to raid the surrounding French countryside. Persistent forays by English freebooters plagued the French, who in turn slaughtered the krekers whenever the chance arose.[33] In spite of the borderline lawlessness that the irregulars introduced into the Pale, the government did not underestimate the value of their services; licenses to hire bodies of soldier-adventurers were granted to suitable captains until the demise of the English garrisons in France.[34]

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[31] Ellis, *Tudor Frontiers*, pp. 210-226.

[32] Edward Hall, *The Triumphant Reigne of Kynge Henry VIII*, vol. 2 (London: Hack 1901), p. 17.

[33] Captured irregulars could not be ransomed as soldiers, which usually meant an untimely end at the hands of their captors. In 1522 after the English expedition to France had ended, a group of krekers set out on a foray and blundered into an ambush set by French heavy cavalry. It was common knowledge that the French would give no quarter, so the krekers fought with their customary ferocity. Despite inflicting heavy losses on the French, the *compaignons* were destroyed. For a contemporary sketch of this skirmish, and of the krekers in general, see Hall, *Reigne of Kyng Henry VIII*, pp. 17-18.

[34] Phillips, *Anglo-Scots Wars*, p. 52. John Goring, 'Military Obligations of the English People, 1511-58,'(London University Ph.D., 1955), pp. 251-252.

Like other light cavalry, Anglo-Scottish light cavalry—often called Border or Northern horse— excelled in small, tactical raids and ambushes. In October 1543, Sir John Wallop boasted to Emperor Charles V that Northern horse could outperform Albanian stradiots as skirmishers, and when the Emperor witnessed the Northern horse in action against the French, he quickly compared them to the light cavalry of the North African Maghreb.[35] As chief guardians of the northern English frontier, border light cavalry were useful in reconnaissance and scouting, and they often provided the English with a decent pool of light cavalry for expeditions into Scotland.

Northern horse were predominantly recruited from the rural parts of Northumberland and Cumberland. Because the English border magnates could not exact tribute from their neighbours, recruitment proved more difficult than in Kildare's Ireland. Men such as Lord Dacre and John Heron used their local connections as a base for their retinues, but had to forge military connections through guile, and sometimes through force. Dacre was Henry VIII's most talented recruiting agent; in his absence after his dismissal the crown had to resort to garrisons of southern men to secure the frontier since the Border clans would not follow an outsider.[36] The crown could not do without these March troopers, so it was more willing to spend English coin for their services. Their familiarity brought a distinct advantage to the English since the boggy and steep mountain terrains of the Cheviots were treacherous to the stranger. In this respect, Anglo-Scottish marchers occupied a specific niche. The English government appreciated this, and often lured the military services of reiving clans with pensions or rewards. Another practice enticed Scots Border clans; this was known as "assuring", whereby a head of each

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[35] *Letters and Papers [LP], Foreign and Domestic of the Reign of Henry VIII,* XVIII(2), no. 291.
[36] Ellis, *Tudor Frontiers,* pp. 248-49.

family would officially register their support for the king, in exchange for protection from the Scottish government.[37] Clans such as the Liddesdale Armstrongs and the Threapland Grahams were induced to provide military service for the English crown. This paralleled the practice of 'surrender and regrant' in Ireland, which helped to re-establish the English military presence after Kildare's rebellion. In this exchange of favours, the English crown would forgo its ancient—and unrecognisable—claims while the Celtic chieftains agreed to hold their land from the English, usually as a newly created lord or earl. The upshot was that the lord would supply the English with soldiers, and he would have to organise the socio-economic structure of his lands along English lines. This meant obeying English musters, and speaking English.[38] Under this arrangement, the O'Neills became earls of Tyrone, and the O'Briens became the earls of Thomond. These new magnates raised kerne warriors for service in Scotland, which cleared the country of disruptive elements, and demonstrated the good will of both lords, but the arrangement was short-lived.[39] Both schemes in Ireland and Scotland ultimately failed due to misgivings on both sides. By 1543, Henry was forced to abandon the practice of surrender and regrant. In similar fashion, the Scots clans were particularly discouraged from upholding their end of their assurances when the English could no longer afford them protection after 1550, when the last of the English garrisons in Scotland fell into Franco-Scottish hands. Plus, the Scots were never offered English titles and lands, even though some lairds were wealthier than many Scottish nobles were. The English assimilation of Celtic clans echoed the practice of registration that other continental governments employed, suggesting that the expediency of

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[37] Marcus Merriman, "The Assured Scots," *Scottish Historical Review*, vol. 47 (1968), pp. 10-34.
[38] S.G. Ellis, *Tudor Ireland: Crown, Community and the Conflict of Cultures, 1470-1603*, (London and New York: Longman Press, 1985), pp. 137-8.
[39] *Ibid*, pp. 141-44.

hiring border troops was not lost upon armies that were more sophisticated.[40] There was a practical angle; the Anglo-Scottish practice of assuring Border highland clans placed the defence of the vulnerable frontier in the hands of those who stood to benefit most from a secure border; consequently, they fought with more conviction. Yet when this scheme failed, it opened the frontier to raids and predatory elements.

The sixteenth-century Northumbrian cavalryman was not an entirely new military development in the British Isles. During the fourteenth-century Anglo-Scottish wars, the English policed the Borders with hobelars, a class of soldier similar to sixteenth-century light cavalry. Hobelars initially were conscripted from the moors of Ireland, although they later became a common fixture in the Northumberland dales.[41] Even though J.E. Morris readily equated the hobelar with Border horse, it is unclear if indeed the hobelar evolved into the Border horse. It is certain that light horse patrolled the Anglo-Scottish borders more effectively, but hobelars were more akin to mounted infantry, and probably did not scour and prick as Morris has claimed. It is more likely that the Border horse of the sixteenth century were born of the fifteenth-century reiving families who required speed and mobility when striking into rivals' territories. Like the hobelar, the Border horse could still dismount to fight, as they did at the battle of Ancrum Moor (1542),[42] but their primary role as fast and mobile skirmishers separated them from mounted infantry. Indeed, they proved effective in their ability to surprise and raid, but Robson notes that at the skirmish at Millstanes Edge in 1546, the English defeat was attributed to the absence of heavy cavalry, indicating the vulnerability of light

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[40] Only Cossacks who were granted the right to appear on the register of the Polish government could bear arms and enjoy the privileges of tax exemptions. F. Sysyn, "The Problem of Nobilities in the Ukrainian Past: the Polish Period 1569-1648," in I.L. Rudnytsky, ed., *Rethinking Ukrainian History* (Edmonton, 1981).

[41] M.C. Prestwich, *Medieval Warfare: The English Experience*, p. 52. J.E. Morris "Mounted Infantry in Medieval Warfare", *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 3rd ser., viii (1914), pp. 77-84.

[42] *LP*, XX(1), no. 332. For a description of this battle, see the end of this chapter.

cavalry.[43] It should not be forgotten, though, that only thirty-three years earlier during the battle of Flodden, Sir Edmund Howard's beleaguered infantry was saved by a timely charge of light horse, under the command of Lord Dacre and John Heron, 'the Bastard of Crawley'.[44] The heavier demi-lance cavalry only became more important in English armies after 1547,[45] although the Border horse retained their elite, "light" status throughout the sixteenth century.

Specialised troops called for special training. Military advances such as gunpowder weaponry in the main bastions called for practised gunners. As with all successful innovations of this period, this required the establishment of training garrisons in the Hapsburg frontiers.[46] Garrisons were useful not only for policing their neighbourhoods, they also provided raw recruits with a chance to familiarise themselves with weaponry and tactics. Training in tactics and instruction in drill and combat discipline became a typical regime for all new inductees.[47] In 1534 Francis I of France was able to re-organise and train some of his troops as 6,000-men legions, and by mid-century the French had equipped many of their companies with trained light cavalry.[48] However, in England there were not the extensive military reforms as witnessed on the continent, primarily due to the costs of training and maintaining a modern army. English garrisons at Berwick, Carlisle and Dublin

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[43] Ralph Robson, *The Rise and Fall of the English Highland Clans: The Tudor Solution to a Medieval Problem*, (Edinburgh: Donald Press, 1989), p. 203; *LP*, XXI(1), no. 58. Robson does not acknowledge that Scots light horse defeated the English, and that heavy cavalry would have been too encumbered to escape their pursuers.

[44] *CSP, Venice*, Vol. II, 134.

[45] Robson, *English Highland Clans*, p. 203. The French commander and military author Martin du Bellay considered demi-lances as part of the light cavalry. See Philips, *Anglo-Scots Warfare*, p. 27.

[46] G.E. Rothenberg, *The Austrian Military Border in Croatia, 1522-1747*, (Urbana: U of I Press, 1960). The Spanish were the first to develop a system through which garrisons served a two-fold purpose: training and providing local defence.

[47] Parker, "Military Revolution", p. 40. With a new emphasis upon training, the Hapsburg armies were able to enact a tactical revolution that employed shot, pike and artillery in a co-ordinated fashion that improved upon the earlier tactical models using the same weaponry. The efficiency of this system provided the Austrians and the Spanish with a formidable army that dominated the military scene throughout the century.

[48] Arnold, *Renaissance at War*, pp. 70-73; Potter, *Picardy*, pp. 159-62

were relatively small. The only exception was Calais, but only because foreign

mercenaries made up the bulk of the army—an indulgence that the English

government could scarcely afford.[49]

It is difficult to determine if the Northern horse were professional soldiers in

the traditional sense. Although they were often denied pay,[50] which suggests that

they were not a part of the professional soldiery of England, their tendency to pursue

the Anglo-Scottish conflict in an independent manner gave them more battlefield

experience than most professional garrison troopers enjoyed.[51] There is no direct

evidence regarding the formal or official training of Northern horse, which again

places doubt on their professional status. Their training was most likely haphazard.

Most began as young men,[52] riding on forays and pursuits of stolen property, known

in the Borders as the "hot trod". While most of these activities did not involve

combat operations, the younger men most likely used these opportunities to hone

their equestrian skills. Their kin probably taught the young men martial skills such

as swordsmanship and the handling of lances and staves, especially if the family

belonged to an active reiving surname or grayne. Many of the young men who

attended musters had already familiarised themselves with basic combat techniques,

though they were most likely unable to afford arms and armour. This accounts for

the large number of young Northumbrian men who were 'hable with no harnesses'

at the musters.[53] The Borders lacked any other formal training facility for light

cavalry.

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[49] M.B. Davies, 'Boulogne and Calais form 1545 to 1550', *Fouad I University Bulletin of the Faculty of Arts*, vol. 12 (1950), pp. 1-90.

[50] See chapter five regarding the remuneration given to march soldiers.

[51] See chapter four for crown policies regarding the use of Northumbrian bands. The crown often gave the March Wardens and the bands of light cavalry a free hand in raiding into Scotland, especially during the conflicts of 1542-1547.

[52] Young men generally were eligible for military service at age 16.

[53] Northumberland Record Office MSS (NRO), ZAN M. 15/D. 15.

In the wastes of Northumberland, the government subsequently moulded its pursuit of border warfare to suit the available military resources. Although they were a cheaper alternative to heavy-armoured cavalry, light cavalry still required specialised equipment and horses. In 1522, their typical equipment and clothing consisted of a St. George's Cross on a white tunic (for official campaigns only), which went over a jack, another sleeveless tunic usually of leather but which occasionally had iron plating sewn into the panels.[54] Steel caps were the choice of protective headgear, although these could range from the standard bullet cap to the expensive morion (a heavier helmet that protected both the neck and the face).[55] Weaponry consisted at very least of the border lance, a weapon that could either be couched for use on horseback or deployed as a pike. Some border soldiers also carried bows and bills, mainstays of the English arsenal.[56] Despite the prevalence of firearms in England by 1485,[57] the use of handguns and other personal firearms was scarce in Northumberland and Cumberland in 1536.[58] Few borderers carried them, except for gentlemen who sometimes carried a dag or a pistol of some variety. The training garrisons at Carlisle and Berwick, on the other hand, usually trained gunners and harquebusiers, so that they had a small compliment of mounted harquebusiers.[59] It is likely that at least some Marchers were able to receive some firearms training at Berwick or Carlisle, although they would prove the exception to the norm. Gunpowder weapons were more prominent amongst the royal garrisons, as it was reported after Ancrum Moor that the English had lost a wagon laden with

[54] *LP*, III (2), no. 2525.
[55] Professor Duns "Notes on a Helmet found at Ancrum Moor," *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland*, vol. 6, 3rd Ser. (1895-96) pp. 317-322.
[56] D.L.W. Tough, *The Last Years of a Frontier*, (Oxford: OUP, 1928), p. 89.
[57] Anthony Goodman, *The Wars of the Roses*, (London :Routledge, 1991), p. 173.
[58] George MacDonald Fraser, *The Steel Bonnets*, (London: Routledge, 1989), p. 88.
[59] Philips, *Anglo-Scots Wars*, pp. 158-159. 1,000 kerne warriors were shipped from Ireland to the Scottish Borders in May 1544 and were trained to use the harquebus in about three weeks.

harquebuses, probably for the gunners from Norham and Berwick who had accompanied Sir Ralph Eure across the border.[60] The average borderer could not afford expensive firearms, and since bows were easier to obtain and maintain, the longbow remained the chief missile weapon in Northumberland for the rest of the century.[61]

Destriers, or heavy warhorses, were also uncommon, as most of the Border horses were nags or fleet-footed ponies, which were unshod in order to accommodate boggy terrain; nags were only thirteen hands high, relatively short for a warhorse.[62] The Borderer's preference for the nag is demonstrated by the list of prized horses taken from the Scottish army after it was routed from Flodden—nearly all of Lord Dacre's Marcher cavalry had captured Scottish Border nags for themselves.[63] Nags were more useful when performing feints, since they were not aggressive like stallions and heavy warhorses were. The nag's tendency to wheel and turn in the face of enemy positions meant that the pricker or scourer could never trust that his horse would not take him into the midst of the enemy.

Overall, the tactics and equipment of Borderers mirrored that of other types of light cavalry and much like them, the Northumberland Border horse was a product of both geographical forces and military necessity. Although the wastelands of the Borders were not as conducive to wide cavalry manoeuvres as were the steppes upon which the Albanians and the Poles operated, the Anglo-Scottish terrain was open and desolate enough to encourage horse-based operations. Like their

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[60] British Library [BL], Add. MSS. 32656 f. 195; *LP*, XX(1), no. 1046. The English also had artillery with them as well as carts and sheaves of arrows, all of which was lost.

[61] In 1592, 1000 bows were sent to Berwick, whereas there were only 600 firearms in the shipment. This indicates that firearms had become more prominent, although the bow still held a firm place in the Border garrisons. *Calendar of Border Papers [CBP]*, Vol. I, no. 744.

[62] BL, Calig. B I f. 131; Tough, *Frontier*, p. 90. J.W. Fortescue, *History of the British Army* (London, 1910) vol. I, pp. 114-15.

[63] Public Record Office MSS [PRO], E 36/254 ff. 110-135, (*Book of Horses*).

European counterparts, the Border horse of Northumberland was primarily used in raids, some of which were large enough to deploy thousands of men. They were most effective in small groups, as the eyes of any invading army.[64] R. Robson counters that they were 'some of the claws as well,' pointing to the numerous instances where the light horse acted as effective screeners and as the army's "fire brigade," rescuing units that had blundered into ambushes.[65] Feints were also popular amongst the riders, as Eure's overland invasion in 1544 with 2000 of the best Northumberland and North Yorkshire horsemen was meant to distract from Hertford's amphibious assault near Edinburgh.[66] Ambushes were also common, as Wharton's shocking charge into the flanks of the Scottish army at Solway Moss underscored the prickers' axiom of speed and surprise. Such characteristics were also good for pursuit; after Pinkie, the border horse had a field day harrying the routed Scottish soldiers, seeking prisoners for ransom when they could find the opportunity.[67] Adept at incursions and even more talented at extracting themselves from unfavourable situations, the Northern horse proved lethal in their capacity for war craft.

Border horse shared much in common with other continental light cavalry, although there is reason enough to treat the Northumbrian soldiers as unique. Firstly, the Border soldier could not evolve as he did during the sixteenth century without the militarization that characterised much of Northumberland society. Tudor policy sought to augment the military power of the Borders, but in doing so, it

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[64] Fortescue, *British Army*, vol. I, p. 114.

[65] Robson, *English Highland Clans*, p. 188.

[66] *LP*, XIX(1) nos. 335 and 531. Eure's force was mostly traditional Border horse, although the few hundred mounted demi-hackbutters were probably from Yorkshire, where there was less aversion to maintaining expensive firearms.

[67] William Patten observed that the Border soldiers were heavy with booty, and were always seeking to take prisoners rather than kill. See William Patten, 'The Expedition into Scotland, 1547' In A.F. Pollard, (ed.) *Tudor Tracts 1532-1588* (Westminster: Constable, 1903).

inadvertently created a society that would have the means—and the willingness—to turn its military power upon the crown's subjects. Heidsmen and captains of the bands became the foci of the Border soldier's loyalty, without which there could not have been any cohesive authority to bind together the various units that guarded the frontier. Most of all, the Anglo-Scottish border soldier often considered his local political power, whether surname, constable or Warden, to be the sole authority in the region. In identifying with such powers, the Northumberland soldiers developed a fierce political identity that was characterised by local interests.[68] Still very much independent in a military sense, Northumberland society only began to appreciate the presence of royal garrisons when Northumbrian highland families treated their English neighbours more roughly than the Scots ever did.

Border Warfare and Marcher Society in the British Isles and the Anglo-Scottish Marches

While border warfare in the Anglo-Scottish Marches shared similarities with other European border conflicts, it was still a breed apart from the set piece battles and sieges of the continent. Anthony Goodman has stated the English armies of the late fifteenth century blended both traditional and more modern approaches to warfare.[69] This tendency to innovate, whilst still preserving traditional practices, relied heavily upon the country's ability to afford technologies that were more advanced. Marchers overall were wary of such modernisations, and in that respect, Border warfare can be seen as being somewhat conservative in its approach. The practices of ambush and *camisado*, which the French and English had used during the Hundred Years' War, were widely used in the Northern Marches.[70] The

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[68] The militarization of Northumbrian society is discussed in more detail in chapter seven.

[69] Anthony Goodman, *The Wars of the Roses* (London: Routledge, 1981), pp. 161-195.

[70] Ibid, pp. 177-78; Phillips, Anglo-Scots Wars, pp. 27-30.

Northern Bands were steeped in the art of skirmish and ambush, which earned them a place as some of the most formidable cavalry in Europe.

Anglo-Scottish warfare developed an almost idiosyncratic dependence upon large raids, coupled with an effort to avoid large battles. Like the Franco-Burgundian Wars in the 1470's, burning and pillaging marked most of the Anglo-Scottish wars.[71] Although cross-border raiding was commonplace throughout the sixteenth century, little detail has been left behind, except for passing comments from observers. The raids at Haddon Rigg in 1542 and at Ancrum Moor in 1545 were the only exceptions to this lacuna of information, but only because these both ended in defeat for the English.[72] Both typify the large, chevauchée-style technique that the English had developed in the Hundred Years War, which was used to good effect by England's Burgundian allies. As Perjeo Geza has observed in his study of the Hungarian frontier, there was usually a political objective to the border foray.[73] At Haddon Rigg, the aim of the marauders was to provoke Scotland into an act of aggression so that Henry VIII would have a pretext for an invasion. Sir Robert Bowes commanded about three thousand men on this occasion, a substantial force.[74] At Ancrum Moor, the English objective was again provocation, with similar numbers of men.

Most of the border clashes were in fact nothing but cavalry skirmishes or running battles, though their effects were felt by both Scottish and English governments. These skirmishes were no less devastating than Haddon Rigg or Ancrum; had they seen higher casualties, the death of a significant Marcher, or had caused a panic in the Privy Council, they would probably have been deemed battles

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[71] Potter, *Picardy*, p. 33.
[72] For a description of the battles, see the Appendix II.
[73] Geza Perjeo, *Medieval Kingdom of Hungary*, p. 49.
[74] Gainsford Bruce, 'The English expedition into Scotland in 1542', *Archaeologia Aeliana*, 3rd series, vol. iii (1907), pp. 194-95.

by historians, and earned a place on the Ordnance survey maps. However, the remarkable frequency of such small military actions, when combined with their ostensibly desultory results, has helped to obscure their real significance. For instance, Sir Robert Bowes' raids in the summer of 1545 wrought so much damage on the harvest that the Scots were unable to organise any effective opposition in the East and Middle Marches for over a year. Nonetheless, in the autumn of 1545, the Scots worsted the English Border cavalry at Millstanes Edge just outside of Hermitage. It is likely that the Scots employed heavier cavalry this time, perhaps even French mercenaries, demonstrating that the Scots still had some defensive capabilities in their West March while disrupting Sir Thomas Wharton's plans to garrison Caerlaverock Castle.[75] Soon the English learnt how to use their light cavalry more effectively against the Scots and their heavier-armoured French allies. In 1557, Sir Henry Percy met a group of Scottish raiders and French heavy cavalry at Grindon in the East March and inflicted a defeat on them, pairing this with another successful action near Swinton in the Scottish East Marches.[76] These defeats forced the Franco-Scottish forces to a stalemate.

Rearguard actions also saw more successes on the English side, which thus boosted the morale of the Northumbrians. At Farnington Crags in 1546, the Borderers under Sir Robert Bowes split into two formations: one group to escort the livestock taken during the raid, another to dismount and guard the first as it forded the Tweed. This might have resulted in another defeat similar to Haddon Rigg, were it not for the archers in the English company who managed to inflict 200 casualties on the Scots, while taking another 200 prisoner.[77] When coupled with the harm

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[75] *LP*, XXI(1) no. 58.

[76] PRO, SP 15/8/88; Raphaell Holinshed, *English Chronicles*, vol. 3 (London, 1808), pp. 581-86. Information on the raid at Grindon is sparse, but it appears to have been a noted success.

[77] *LP*, XXI(1), no. 700; BL, Calig. B V f. 1.

from the destructive raids perpetuated by the English in 1544 and 1545,[78] the damage wrought by the English at Farnington meant there was little activity from the Scots Borderers of Jedburgh and Teviotdale until the battle of Pinkie in September 1547. Thus while the individual raid held little consequence for either side, multiple successes could produce an aggregate (albeit temporary) victory.

Both English and Scottish military leaders were on a steep learning curve, so much so that each side required professional mercenaries from the continent. The game of one-upmanship to employ increasingly deadlier force was measured in small increments, but the lessons learnt from each raid were never wasted. Despite this, the military deadlock was never truly broken, even in 1560 when the English claimed political victory after starving the French garrisons into submission, an after-effect of the disastrous siege of Leith.

Outside the military arena, three major factors affected the Marchers' ability to wage Border warfare: terrain, social and economic factors. Sixteenth-century Northumberland possesses notable topographical features, with the Cheviots marking the north and west frontier, while the Pennines run north-south to divide the county from Cumberland. Much of the county is upland and heath-covered, reminiscent of the Scottish highlands and the Cumbrian fells. The Cheviot range, running on a southwest - northeast tangent, peaks at 2,600 feet, dividing Coquetdale, Redesdale and Tynedale from the Scottish dales of the Teviot, Tweed and Liddel rivers. For the sixteenth–century traveller, Northumberland presented many barriers that made passage difficult. Sir Robert Bowes remarked that the Cheviots were largely impassable due to the brushy and boggy terrain, save for the routes known

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[78] For a description of Hertford's raids during 1544-45, see chapter 3.

only to the locals.[79] In this respect, the mountain range served as a natural barrier to predations by the Scots, as few raiders were willing or indeed able to negotiate the treacherous bogs. The steepness of the hills on the Scottish side of the frontier also posed a formidable barrier to any advancing army, as steep drops and precipices characterised the north-west flank of the Cheviot range.

Berwick did not enjoy the protection of the Cheviots and was more exposed. The coastal plain leading from Edinburgh allowed access for large armies marching in either direction. It guarded the main road that led south to Newcastle, thus forming an important strategic function; this made it an attractive fortress to both kingdoms. Berwick's history confirms its importance, having switched hands fifteen times since Edward I took possession of the town in 1296.[80] The importance of Berwick combined with its exposed position meant that the crown invested large sums of money in its defence.

From the southernmost curve of the Cheviot range, the Tyne and Rede valleys provided the easiest access to England. The River Rede gently flows down from Carter Fell, which demarcated the Anglo-Scottish border, past Byrness and Otterburn, taking a sharp southerly turn to join the North Tyne near Bellingham. The Tyne branches include the South Tyne, which flows north from the highlands of the Palatinate through Allendale to join its sister just to the west of Hexham. The North Tyne curves down from the fell tops of the Larriston hills, which form the easternmost ridge of Liddesdale, through the fells around Falstone, Tarset, and Bellingham, where it meets the Rede. All of these rivers provided some access, but since the area was populated with reiving clans, any travel through the area usually required the co-operation of the chieftains. The tangle of deep forest and boggy

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[79] John Hodgson, *A History of Northumberland*, III(2), (Newcastle, 1820-25), p. 203.

ground required scouts who had intimate knowledge of the terrain. The rivers that flow from the northeastern slopes of the Cheviots into England have comparatively shallower vales, although most were much more settled in the sixteenth century, since they possessed rich soils and adequate provender for grazing. The Coquet, Aln and Till river valleys cut their way through the more settled countryside of the eastern coastal plains of Northumberland, bringing an adequate water supply for farmers. Even these areas were remote, full of bogs and steep hills. They were far enough away from most of the action to encourage more agriculture, but this did not mean that they were more accessible.

This maze of rivers and becks in the Cheviots and above the dales hindered cross-country military actions since much of the ground was too soft for carriages and heavily laden carts. The only successful military units to manoeuvre the landscape were light cavalry and infantry, so long as there was no supporting artillery train. The reiving families were particularly adept at raiding from late summer through early winter, when the nights were longer and the ground hard from winter frost. The unshodden Border nags used by light cavalry could easily negotiate softer ground. Swollen rivers still hampered the reiving families of Northumberland, as it did for the outlaw William Charlton in 1528, whose escape route from the Percys' officers was cut off by the swollen South Tyne at Haydon Bridge.[81]

The primitive road system provided armies with their only access to the frontier, which was along the old Roman roads, and even these depended upon

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[80] John Sadler, *Border Fury; England and Scotland at War, 1296-1568*, (Harlow: Pearson, 2005), p. 396.
[81] BL, Calig. B VIII f. 112. Will Charlton of Shitlington was cornered and killed largely due to his inability to escape through the locked gatehouse on the Haydon Bridge, the only safe passage over the river. The earl of Northumberland captured and executed both of his colleagues.

temperate weather to keep open the fords, as bridges were nearly non-existent.[82] In 1542, heavy rains and high river levels hampered the Duke of Norfolk's expedition into Scotland.[83] The main roads that armies used avoided river crossings wherever possible, although the general west-to-east flow of Northumbrian rivers meant that any road running north-to-south required multiple fords between Newcastle and Berwick. The main highways leading north, the Great North Road or the Devil's Causeway, were thus very much at the mercy of the weather. Roads running to the west generally fared better, especially the Carelgate, the old Roman route that followed Hadrian's Wall to Carlisle, but this was of little use except for shifting troops between the west and the east. Dere Street, which fed in from the Palatinate at Corbridge, ran to the east of the Rede and thus avoided most river crossings, and then cut over the highlands at Gammelspath to drop steeply into Scotland, making it a frequent inroad into Scotland for both the Northumbrian garrison troops and the reiving clans of Redesdale. Bogs at the fell tops above Redesdale often meant that even this route was impassable after heavy rain. From each of these roads ran a number of byways and drove roads for alternative use in case of flood or washout, although Northumberland's primitive byways turned into a quagmire with the slightest rain, which impeded the advance of any army.

The geographical difficulties presented by the Northumbrian frontier were partially responsible for the county being split into two military districts. This was a military expediency, since the elongated border that separated Northumberland from Scotland required more attention than a single Warden could give. By the sixteenth century, Northumberland had been divided into the East and Middle Marches, each

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[82] Hodgson, *Northumberland pt. III*, p. 191.
[83] See Gainsford Bruce, 'The English Expedition into Scotland in 1542', *Archaeologia Aeliana*, 3rd Series, vol. iii(1907). Phillips, *Anglo-Scots Wars*, pp 148-49.

controlled by a separate Warden and his deputies.[84] Although the River Tweed

defined the northern borders of the East March, the southwest border was a vague

line; it followed the River Aln for about half of its course, then traced across the

southeast foothills of the Cheviot,[85] and finally met the Scottish border just south of

the actual peak.[86] Despite its smaller size, even this March was not easy to patrol.

On its north and west flanks the East March bordered Scotland, and there were many

opportunities for thieves to operate over the Cheviot, if they knew of an open

pathway. Glendale and Wooler were both common passages for the Scots.[87] Bowes

noted in 1541 that the area of Glendale was open country that was prone to

predatory raids, which caused the population to flee.[88] When the Scots invaded in

1513, James IV followed the River Till past Glendale, destroying many principal

forts and towers along the way to his eventual defeat at Flodden. By 1540, the East

March was relatively quiet.

The Middle March essentially contained the rest of Northumberland that fell

outside the East March. The southern chain of the Cheviot Hills formed the March

border with Scotland, while the Saughtree and Larriston fells separated its western

border from Scottish Liddesdale. Despite the impassability of the border hills, the

March was much more conducive to cross-border raiding. Over three-dozen fords

and crossings lay between the Cheviot and Kershopefoot, the westernmost boundary

of the March. R. Robson has counted eight principle routes: Kershopefoot;

Saughtree Fell to the upper Teviot; Saughtree Fell to Note o' the Gate Pass and Rule

Water; Deadwater Marshes along the Wheel Causeway; Reidswyre at Carter Fell

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[84] As the Middle March contained the problem districts of Tynedale and Redesdale, the crown usually appointed a governor, or Keeper, for each dale, to act as an assistant to the Warden in ensuring the quietude of the population. These offices are explained in more detail in chapter four.
[85] The line began to blur when moving south of Middleton Hall. North and South Middleton mustered with the Middle Marches in 1595. *CBP,* vol. ii, 169; Tough, *Frontier,* p. 5.
[86] Tough, *Frontier,* p. 3.

into the Jed Vale; the highland route over Gamel's Path into the Jed; Harbottle along

Clennel Street; and Wark up the Tweed Vale.[89] The last of these was in the East

March, although it could be used to strike westwards into the Kelso-Roxburgh

neighbourhood, (as Sir Ralph Eure did during the destructive raids of 1544).[90] The

Redesdale men had access to most of these, while the Tynedalers preferred the

routes that led over the border fells into the Liddes and Teviot watersheds. These

are just rough approximations; in reality, there were dozens more varying routes that

one could take across the frontier. Thus the open frontier of the Middle Marches,

with its many fords and wastelands, was perfect country for light horsemen to

operate.

The defence of the frontier required above all a large number of men to act as

a conscripting pool, and supplies. However, the population of Northumberland was

relatively sparse, reflecting the undeveloped network of communications and the

generally wild character of the landscape. S.J. Watts has used muster returns to

estimate that roughly 75,000 people lived in Northumberland during the mid-

sixteenth century.[91] Southern Scotland, on the other hand, was much more

populous. The majority of these practised agriculture for a living, although the harsh

weather and the short growing season meant that wheat was not able to grow

efficiently in the Border counties; instead, oats and barley were the predominant

cereals.[92] Wheat for the garrisons and soldiers often originated either from the

Baltic, or from the southern counties via the ports of Newcastle or Berwick.[93]

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[87] C.J Bates, *The Border Holds of Northumberland* (Newcastle, 1891), p. 33.

[88] PRO, SP 1/169 ff. 19-54 (*Bowes Survey of 1541*).

[89] Robson, *English Highland Clans*, p. 101; *LP*, XVIII (2) no. 538.

[90] See chapter 3.

[91] S.J. Watts, *From Border to Middle Shire: Northumberland 1586-1625,* (Leicester, 1975), pp. 40-41.

[92] F. Grainger, 'Agriculture in Cumberland in Ancient Times', *Trans. Of the Cumberland and Westmorland Archaeological and Antiquarian Society*, New Series IX (1909), pp. 129-31.

[93] J. Thirsk, (ed.) *The Agrarian History of England and Wales, IV, 1500-1640* (Cambridge: CUP, 1967), p. 20; *LP*, XVIII(2) no. 195.

Berwick, though, was close to the rich, corn growing area of the Scottish East Marches, and it was suggested to the crown in 1542 that it build a market house for Scottish merchants in Berwick so that a permanent supply of grain for the garrison might be established.[94] During the escalations in the conflict of 1542-60, this source of grain dried up as Scottish merchants were prohibited from trading with the English under pain of death. When the English armies that mobilised in Northumberland stretched the meagre resources, the food supply consequently reached a critical low, usually just before invasions of Scotland.[95] The lack of sufficient farms in Northumberland often was to blame for the dearth, which only furthered the idea that the county was both poor and economically backward.

Before efficient methods of pasture management allowed for settled farming, most Northumbrian husbandmen, including those who resided in the remote dales of the Palatinate, practiced transhumance.[96] With the spring thaw, shepherds drove their animals into the uplands for grazing, where they erected temporary huts, or shielings, that protected their family from the elements, allowing them to tend their flocks without commuting from the lower dales. The sheer number of shielings that have been unearthed by archaeologists suggests that whole families shieled together, and that the uplands of Northumberland would have contained a dense population during the long summer months.[97] This was probably a protective measure, so that surnames might defend their flocks against theft. Despite the natural resources that could support transhumance, the end result of exposing sheep to the extremities of the fells was that their wool was of a poorer quality, which sold at a lower price than

[94] P.G. Boscher, 'Politics, Administration and Diplomacy: The Anglo-Scots Border, 1550-60,' (Durham University Ph.D., 1985), p. 6; PRO, BL, Calig. VIII B f. 106.
[95] See Bruce, "English Expedition", *passim.*
[96] Hodgson, *Northumberland*, III(2), pp. 221-30; *CBP*, I, no. 421. J. Linda Drury, 'More Stout Than Wise: Tenant Right in Weardale in the Tudor Period' in D. Marcombe, ed., *The Last Principality: Politics, Religion and Society in the Bishopric of Durham, 1494-1660*, (Nottingham: University of Nottingham, 1987), pp. 71- 100.

the wool of the southern counties.[98] Still, livestock remained the driving force behind the economy of Northumberland, even if the produce from regional animals fetched a lower price on the markets.

The economy of Tudor Northumberland was second poorest to that of Cumberland amongst all English counties.[99] D.L.W. Tough contended that the 'study of inventories as a whole gives a man a very low idea of the civilization of the north even when compared to the contemporary south.'[100] There was no singular reason for the backwardness of the economy, although the sparse populations coupled with the inhospitable environment were most likely root causes. Unlike the gentry, the lower ranks of Northumberland society had difficulty turning profit from their farms, and were thus cut from the land market. Part of this could be blamed upon partible inheritance. Quite often, a father split his parcel amongst all of his heirs; this partible inheritance remained a problem as it slowly impoverished a family over the generations.[101] Consequently, theft became a secondary industry in Northumberland, as did counterfeiting.[102]

The outcome of poverty was fewer military resources. Yet the Borderers cut their cloth accordingly. The nags they rode were inexpensive when compared to a warhorse. Most were unbarded, to keep them light. The equipment of each Borderer was less sophisticated, since few could afford firearms or articulated armour. The Border lance, the English bill and the longbow predominated, though some had fancy, basket hilt swords.[103] Any extravagant piece of weaponry or armour was most likely pilfered, or recovered from the battlefield. Out of sheer necessity, the

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[97] H.G. Ramm, R. W. McDowall, and Eric Mercer, *Shielings and Bastles*, Royal Commission on Historical Monuments, (London: HMSO, 1970).
[98] Watts, *Middle Shire*, p. 51; *CPR, Edward VI*, V, p. 397.
[99] Watts, *Middle Shire*, p. 39.
[100] Tough, *Frontier* p. 45.
[101] *The Border Papers: Calendar of Letters and Papers Relating to the Affairs of the Borders of England and Scotland* [*CBP*], (Edinburgh : H. M. General Register House, 1894-1896), II, no. 267.

Borderers innovated, and in doing so managed to become useful soldiers in spite of their economic poverty.

Unlike the commoners, the aristocracy was much better off. Maureen Meikle maintains that the Northumberland gentry enjoyed an increased prosperity, especially after the dissolution of the monasteries, when they were able to swallow up lands that had formerly belonged to the Catholic Church.[104] They were a small class, numbering less than 1% of the population, about 600 members altogether,[105] but the near simultaneous decline of the Dacres and Percys in the 1530's forced the crown to rely upon former Percy servants and northern gentry to serve as March officers.[106] This gave the acting gentry a sizeable amount of military power that they had not seen previously, although many of the Border gentry were not of high enough social status to serve effectively as Warden.[107] As M.E. James and Michael Bush have noted, the gentry nevertheless served the king as rising members of a service-based aristocracy.[108] Yet many of these officers were not from Northumberland. North Yorkshireman Thomas Wharton, who had served the Percys, became deputy Warden of the West March, and would become ennobled in 1543. Robert Bowes, who later filled multiple positions in border administration,

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[102] Tough, *Frontier*, pp. 47-50.

[103] Sadler, *Border Fury*, pp. 556-59.

[104] M. Meikle, 'Lairds and Gentlemen: A Study of the Landed Families of the Anglo-Scottish Borders, 1540-1603,' (Edinburgh University Ph.D., 1986), pp. 206-221.

[105] This is a rough estimate that Boscher has produced, created by taking the number of gentry mentioned in Bowes' survey—roughly 150 gentlemen—and using Lawrence Stone's multiplier of 4.11. See Boscher, 'Politics and Administration,' p. 13; and L. Stone, *The Crisis of the Aristocracy*, (Oxford: OUP, 1965). This method has many problems, mainly that the survey of 1542 only covers part of Northumberland. Stone's formula is also problematic in that the gentry households of Northumberland tended to split into 'graynes', or separate branches, so that there were many lesser gentry who did not appear on Bowes' list. However, the number coincides with more reliable estimates from Cumbria, so we can accept it as a rough figure. For Cumbria population estimates, see C.M.L. Bouch and G.P Jones, *A Short Economic and Social History of the Lake Counties, 1500-1830* (Manchester, 1961).

[106] M.L. Bush, "The Problem of the Far North: A Study of the Crisis of 1537", *Northern History* 6(1971), pp. 49-51.

[107] Hodgson, *Northumberland*, III(2), pp. 193-94.

was from Durham, as was William Eure, whom Henry created deputy Warden of the East March and Lord Eure.[109] The ennobling of the gentlemen Wardens during the 1540's seems to have had some effect in providing the Border gentry with more support for the office, but only because the Wardens had a war chest to hire men who formerly answered the call freely.[110] Without increased lands, or the power of the royal coffers, the new breed of gentlemen Wardens of Henry VIII and his successors had fewer connections and tenants with which to protect the border. R.W. Hoyle notes that titles that were bereft of military connections made for useless military leaders.[111]

The ties of kith and kin that underpinned the Northumbrian military community complicated the gentry's participation in county military leadership. As the great houses fell, the gentry paterfamilias filled the void.[112] As an insular society, most families were interrelated so that the tie of blood relationships was the essential lynchpin of Northumbrian society. For the gentry and their extended families, blood relationships resulted in increased familial defence networks, as families called upon their kith and kin during feuds, which were plentiful in the Borders.[113] This military made them attractive leaders, but most were tapped for secondary roles. As deputies and constables, the Northumbrian gentry were able to serve in a degree of competence since their familial connections gave them enough sway in their own district. The Herons of Chipchase were thus suited to police North Tynedale, which lay only a few miles from their castle. On the other hand, Sir Reynold Carnaby, who

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[108] Bush, "The Problem of the Far North", p. 63; also see M.E. James, *Family, Lineage and Civil Society: A Study of Society, Politics, and Mentality in the Durham Region, 1500-1640*, (Clarendon: Oxford, 1974), *passim*.

[109] James, *Family*, p. 45.

[110] Bush, "Far North", p. 52.

[111] R.W. Hoyle, "The Duke of Cumberland: A Reputation Reassessed," *Northern History* vol. 22 (1986), pp. 66-67.

[112] James, *Family*, p. 187.

[113] Meikle, 'Lairds and Gentlemen,' pp. 368-408.

had no connection to North Tynedale, was a disastrous governor of that district.[114] In

fits and pitches, the Northumbrian gentry served the burgeoning 'civil society' of the

Tudors, but their means by which they did so were still very much rooted in their

lineage.

This social bond also made the reiving families of Tynedale and Redesdale a

powerful military entity. Often referred to as dalesmen or 'surnames', a title that

denotes the strength of their kinship, the families that occupied the highland zones of

Northumberland came to depend upon their sheer numbers to defend family interests

against outsiders. Their clannishness developed as an extension of the Anglo-Scots

wars that had recurred since the last years of Edward I. The ineffective support that

they received from the English crown during times of Scottish aggression meant that

the families had to look to themselves for mutual defence. It is for this reason that

families such as the Charltons and Dodds of North Tynedale, and the Reeds and

Halls of Redesdale, came to form loose confederations based upon intermarriage and

mutual military support. Bowes observed that for 'every surname their be sundrye

families or graynes as they call them of every which theire be certayne headsmen

that leadeth and answereth for the rest, and doe lay pleadges fro' them when neede

requireth for goode rules of the countrey.' [115]

Although their society had its own conception of order, the surnames of the

Northumberland dales often threatened the peace and stability of other

neighbourhoods with their military power. This in part was a necessity. Sir Robert

Bowes reported that the ground of Tynedale was well fertile enough to provide for

profitable farming were the land not so overpopulated. Redesdale was not as fertile,

but the people there were comparatively richer in livestock than the surnames of

[114] For the feud that arose between the Herons and Carnabys in the race to control Tynedale, see Chapter four.

[115] Hodgson, *Northumberland*, III(2), p. 230

Tynedale were.[116] Farming was not a possibility in either locale due to their vulnerability to raids, and without many prospects for local employment, the surnames often resorted to theft for subsistence. The surnames often preyed upon their English neighbours, taking livestock or blackmail, a term that has its origins in the Borders.[117] These thieving activities strengthened the ties of the surname group, as it allowed the power structure of the clan society to reinforce itself with military prestige, which was realised by the services that each member of the grayne rendered to the heidsman.

Although the riding surnames also practised transhumance in the summer months, most spent the winter months raiding. The raiding season typically lasted from October to the end of March, although there were varied accounts about the high raiding season.[118] It was suggested that the most opportune period for thieving was from October to mid-November, as the fells were typically drier and better suited for herding cattle.[119] Coupled with the longer nights that afforded cover, this seems to have been one of the most active periods, according to the Wardens and March officers. Criminality in the Marches was one of the largest problems for the March officers, paradoxically so since the Borderers were all supposed to have the resources to defence their lands. However, the small and isolated vills of Northumberland simply did not contain enough men to repel a large raid. Raiding often went unchecked, and in the early winter and late fall, the thieves demonstrated their unwillingness to give up the activity that was in part necessary for their own subsistence.

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[116] PRO, SP 1/168, ff. 19-54.
[117] Webster's Dictionary defines blackmail as thus: '(ca. 1552) a tribute anciently exacted on the Scottish border by freebooting chiefs for immunity from pillage.' *Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary*, (Springfield: Merriam-Websters, 1987), p. 156.
[118] *CBP*, I, no. 746.
[119] *CBP*, II, no. 1121.

Although lawlessness was problematic in the Marches, the Wardens had at their disposal the power to try certain offences that were unique to the Marches.[120] The terms "Border Treason" and "March Treason" had previously applied only to those treasonous acts that directly involved practising with Scotsmen, but strengthening of the code throughout the sixteenth century widened the definition to include association with criminals who had conspired to commit such crimes. Consequently, Border law increasingly enforced domestic security, providing assurance when the itinerant courts could not stem the tide of violence that ebbed and flowed over the frontier. It also provided an alternative to launching police raids into the dales, which most often ended either in disaster or in failure to capture the culprits.

To the Wardens, Border Law was at best a problematic archive of ancient treaties and laws designed to enforce the Warden's military governorship. The Irish, too, had their own version of March law, and this proved equally difficult to navigate.[121] Both versions essentially performed the same task: to regulate legal relationships between two political forces. In reality, March Law was a lengthy compilation of customs formed by the instability that had plagued the Marches since the reign of Edward I. As Tough has observed, there were four sources for Border Law: Acts of Parliament; codes compiled by Border officers; statutes of Berwick and Carlisle; and the customary March Treasons that were subject to Wardens' justice.[122] Acts of Parliament and Statutes were patent enough, as these defined the powers of the Wardens and sheriffs of the Border counties. Yet, the ordinances drafted by the Wardens themselves, and the enforcement of customary March Laws

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[120] C.J. Neville has written the only current work on March laws. See C.J. Neville, *Violence, Custom and Law: The Anglo-Scottish Borderlands in the Middle Ages,* (Edinburgh: EUP, 1989).
[121] Ellis, *Tudor Frontiers*, pp. 38-39.
[122] Tough, *Frontier*, p. 147.

were more problematic as their constant state of revision and reform at the hands of those in charge created confusion. Although there had been significant attempts to codify border law in the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth centuries,[123] these had become either lost or obscured by 1540, further complicating matters.[124] Border law and its implications were enigmatic to the Tudors, and the crown endeavoured to comprehend this strange set of customs that had both checked and guided the behaviour of the border families. This confusion hampered the government's ability to work effectively in the Marches; it also contributed to certain misunderstandings between the crown and those who lived in the Borders.

Fortunately, both Henry VIII and Thomas Cromwell saw the pressing need to catalogue border law and custom. In 1533 and again in 1534, Border commissioners from both kingdoms drew up laws regarding punishment of raiders and their abettors, although the treaty was coterminous with the lives of the current kings, or for one year after the death of the first monarch.[125] As deputy Warden-General of the Marches in 1552, Thomas, Lord Wharton improved Border laws for the benefit of the other Wardens and royal officers who resided in or near the Marches.[126] Proceedings for enforcement of March law also received some restructuring. Sir Robert Bowes, who had traded his Wardenship of the East and Middle Marches for a much more prestigious counsellor's post in 1552, released a commissioned report in 1553 that regulated the proceedings during days of redress

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[123] There might have been an attempt to codify Border Laws in the thirteenth century, as a copy of a code exists in the Bell MSS. However, Nicholson considered it to be a forgery as the identity of some of the signatories was questionable. See *Bell MSS*, Carlisle Dean and Chapter Records, Cumbria County Record Office, Carlisle, f. 7 and J. Nicholson, *Leges Marchiarum*, (London, 1747) pp 1-7.

[124] Most of the previous codes were stopgap measures designed to quell hostilities between the two warring kingdoms. Tough, *Frontier*, pp. 96-97.

[125] *Foedera*, XIV, ff. 480 and 529; Nicholson, *Leges*, pp. 45-55; *Bell MSS*, ff. 45-60.

[126] *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic, Elizabeth I, 1601-1603, with Addenda 1547-1565 [Addenda]*, ed. Mary Anne Everett Green, (London: Longman, 1870) IV, no. 14 and 17.

and established juries for trials.[127] By Mary Tudor's reign, the March wardens who had spent most of their professional lives serving along the Borders managed to complete a working copy of March law, which formed the basis of Bell's exhaustive work in the last years of Elizabeth I, and Nicholson's compilation in the early eighteenth century.

In its more obvious applications, March law attempted to curtail common crimes that were prevalent throughout the marches. Theft of goods was probably the most commonly committed crime, and was dealt with through days of redress when the Wardens would exchange bills of complaint that victims had filed. Because Border outlaws and rebels usually supported themselves by theft, it was a felony to aid and abet any thief, as well as failing to report any knowledge of theft or stolen goods.[128] Likewise, it was considered a felony to traffic in stolen goods. Through suppression of theft and black market dealings, the government thought that it might stab at the heart of the reivers' livelihood. This particular hope was dashed repeatedly. Tynedalers and Redesdalers accordingly viewed theft as a legitimate means of acquisition, since it provided a driving force behind their local economy,[129] and when required by their local governors to pay compensation to their victims, they groused at having to disgorge even one-third of their ill-gotten wealth.[130] Reiving and cattle rustling created its own hierarchy, with stronger families taking a larger share, which was thus divided amongst their tenants and dependants. The social importance of wealth in moveable goods therefore prompted numerous thefts each year, so that there was little respect for any law that forbade domestic or

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[127] *Addenda*, VII, no. 6.
[128] Nicholson, *Leges*, p. 127.
[129] PRO, SP 1/178 f. 85 (May 25, 1543) Lord Parr noted in 1543 that the impoverished dalesmen reived out of necessity since there was no adequate means of support.
[130] BL, Calig. B III f. 239 (March 17, 1539).

international theft.[131] Another common crime in the Marches was the theft of grain that served as victuals for the English garrisons. The scarcity of grain in the north made the enforcement of this law a necessity, for any grain that went unguarded was quickly pilfered by outlaws and even leading lords, or destroyed through their actions.[132] Any disruption of grain supply could essentially quash a military campaign in the North.[133] In 1549, the Earl of Rutland observed that the English effort to garrison the Scottish border would collapse without adequate protection of grain, which was indicative of the ongoing problem.[134]

The list of March treasons in the Bell Manuscript and *Leges Marchiorum* demonstrate the unique needs of Marcher justice, which the days of redress and Wardens courts were supposed to address. More often than not, outlaws were taken alive in order to face their accusers, although some were killed by their would-be captors.[135] The dangers of keeping prisoners were clear enough, so the Warden's court was designed to deliver justice in a more expedient manner. Yet, Warden's courts differed from the eyre courts in that they heard all pleas ranging from land disputes to treason, within one session. A roll for a warden's court shows four scheduled arraignments for various complaints and crimes at Alnwick castle, the seat of the Warden of the East March. Bowes has given us a remarkable insight into

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[131] In one raid alone in 1541, the men of Tynedale managed to lift over £120 worth of goods, along with numerous cattle and horses. PRO, SP 49/5 f. 29 (Dec. 1541).

[132] PRO, STAC 2/29/60. Lord Ogle and Lewis Ogle stood accused in the Star Chamber for removing £30 worth of grain from Priory lands at Ellington.

[133] In 1544 and 1545 the English cancelled several chevauchées due to lack of grain. Thus, grain theft undermined any military effort in the marches. Theft of coin was also a problem, especially since stolen coin usually ended up in Scotland, in the hands of English rebels or Scottish reivers instead of the soldiers for whom it was intended. Soldiers in the marches often went months without pay simply because it was too risky to set up regular payment deliveries that outlaws could easily intercept; if their pay were pilfered, it meant another long wait until they could receive the gold to supplement their meagre rations. The Earl of Southampton wrote to the king in 1542 praising the northerner's abilities to withstand privation, concluding that "how ill-furnished we are for their needs would make your heart bleed." (*LP,* XVII, no. 828).

[134] *The Manuscripts of His Grace the Duke of Rutland,* vol. 4, Historical Manuscripts Commission (London, HMSO, 1905), pp. 192-93.

[135] Robert Dodd was killed as he struggled with his captors in 1528. PRO, SP 1/47 ff. 14-15 (Feb. 25, 1527/8).

the theoretical procedure for such occasion.[136] Before the court was proclaimed, the

Warden attached all known suspects before they fled to the outer dales. When the

court was proclaimed, all chief men and freemen qualified to hear the trial were

summoned. The jury was empanelled, with at least fifteen but no more than two-

dozen selected from dependable men. Bowes noted that unlike the common courts,

the defendant could challenge none of the jury who were assembled for the inquest

although Bowes cautioned the Warden not to staff the jury with any enemies of the

accused.[137] After the case had been heard, the jury deliberated the evidence then

read its verdict. A verdict of guilty was immediately followed by the forfeiture of

the convicted man's property, unless he lived in the liberty of Tynedale or

Redesdale,[138] in which case his next of kin inherited everything. The convict's

comparatively merciful execution by beheading followed the verdict.[139]

Aside from Wardens' courts, the March officers could also arrange days of

redress with the Wardens of the Scottish Marches as a means of settling differences

without having to resort to military action. Days of redress were essentially

conducted much like Wardens' courts, although the punishment meted out was

usually financial compensation for the bereaved, at 'double and sawfey', or three

times the declared value.[140] Such meetings could be problematic, especially if one

side held out, which would prorogue any meeting.[141] There were times, such as in

1537, when days of truce and redress occurred on a regular basis. Surviving records

indicate that the gentry of Northumberland were active participants during the

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[136] BL, Calig. VIII f. 106. (*Bowes survey of 1551*). Also in Nicholson, *Leges*, p.120; *Bell MSS*, f. 166.
[137] *Ibid.*
[138] Seventeenth-century sources indicate that confiscation of land did not apply in the Liberties. PRO, E 134/18James I/Easter no. 13.
[139] Regular felons by comparison were hung, while those convicted of high treason faced a more gruesome ordeal.
[140] BL, Calig. VIII f. 106.
[141] PRO, SP 1/131 f. 167.

redress, often acting as representative instead of the Wardens. During a series of meetings that took place at Coldstream, Sir Roger Gray of Chillingham, a leading military leader in the East March, acted as judge *pro tempore* for the English despite that Sir William Eure was the deputy Warden of the East March at the time.[142] Other representatives for the English party included John Carr, the Captain of Wark, and Lionel Gray, the gentleman porter for the Berwick garrison. The presence of active soldiers at the truce is striking, especially since they were supposed to be peaceful encounters. However, this might have been a strategy to familiarise the soldiers with some of the worst offenders in Scotland. It is apparent from the bills presented at the truces that the victims were already familiar with the men who had raided their property, thus underscoring the existence of cross-border ties.

March law remained a powerful tool for law enforcement in the Border counties, and only died when the Border counties became the middle shires of Stuart Britain. Its relevance to the pursuit of Border warfare was plain enough when it enforced military duties such as watch and ward. Yet its greatest contribution to the war effort was the stability it supposedly brought to the frontier. A stable March society was better able to pursue the Anglo-Scottish conflict since fewer resources would be needed to guard against theft and raids by fellow Marchers. The enforcement of March law at times detracted from the conflict with Scotland, although transgressions committed by the Northumbrians could always be either ignored or pardoned in order to pursue the war effort.[143]

There were many hurdles in defending the Northumbrian frontier. Roads and fortresses suffered in the weather, which hampered logistical necessities such as

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[142] PRO, E 36/254 ff. 245-81.
[143] See Chapter 4 for royal policy regarding the policing of the border.

the transportation of food for the garrisons and building supplies for castles and towers. The barrenness of the landscape and the poor growing conditions only aggravated the problems faced by the garrisons' supply lines. The relative poverty of the Marches undercut military strength as few could afford modern weapons. The population was also edgy from constant conflict. Outlawry hindered the organisation of armies as troops were often diverted to keep the Northumbrians, especially the dalesmen, in check, thus borrowing against any future military enterprise into Scotland. It is for this reason that the Tudor government allowed the March officials a great deal of latitude in organising Northumberland society for defence.

At the centre of the conflict lay the Marchers. It was logical that the Tudors would press their advantage by using Northumbrian families to police the Marches, as well as raid into Scotland. Their excellent horsemanship compensated for the average Marcher's lack of sufficient modern weaponry. Although the military revolutions of the sixteenth century produced armies that were more extravagant, the average March soldier was not entirely ignorant of military art and science. Ambushes and raids were carried out with a finesse that suggested a fair amount of skill. Marchers were predominantly irregular soldiers and as such, their arms were more primitive, but they were innovators when it came to tactics. Marchers enjoyed a large degree of mobility to serve as raiders and scouts, much like hussars of later armies. Above all, the Marchers were able to form a military community that mirrored elements of a proper military organisation. The social bonds of kith and kinship created networks upon which the defence of the local community rested. Most military activity would not have been possible were it not for the Marchers' abilities to call upon distant relatives for military aid. With this, Northumberland

produced a decently sized military community during the rough wooing and into the following decade.

Northumbrian soldiers played a vital part in the English war effort. March solders also wielded political power. Their role in the Anglo-Scottish conflict that followed the risings of 1536 was not solely as royal servants; March soldiers also served their own interests, sometimes at the expense of royal policy. The following chapters discuss the relationship shared by the crown and this military community.

Chapter 3: Northumberland and the Wars with Scotland

War provided Henry VIII the means of reaching his political goals. The final

phase of the Anglo-Scots Wars was a part of the Henrician strategy to rekindle the

effort to re-conquer France. The desire to secure England's northern border was

initially an example of Thomas Cromwell's designs rather than those of Henry, who

was incapable of realising such policies, according to J.J. Scarisbrick.[1] However,

Elizabeth Bonner has shown that while Cromwell preferred diplomacy to secure a

marriage between Prince Edward and the Scottish princess Mary, Henry favoured

the use of force to pursue this goal, which was disastrous.[2] Henry's stratagem—to

provoke James into war so that Francis I would follow suit, so that Henry might take

'some notable enterprise against France,'[3] if we are to believe Scarisbrick and

Bonner[4] —was chief amongst the root causes of the coming conflict, although the

lack of redress from the Scottish March officials was also a *casus belli*.[5] After

Cromwell's execution, Henry was free to force the Scots to assent to the marriage.

This led to the period in the Scottish Wars known as the 'rough wooing', which

ended in ultimate defeat when the English garrisons in the Scottish lowlands were

finally eradicated by 1551. This strategy had a direct effect on the East and Middle

Marches, which served as the springboard for the king's plans. Regardless of the

political aims of Tudor policy, the result signalled the coming of total war to the

Borders. By the end Border society felt the exhausting effect of the extended

conflict.

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[1] J.J. Scarisbrick, *Henry VIII*, (London: Eyre and Spottiswood, 1968), pp. 423-27.
[2] E.A. Bonner, 'The Genesis of the Rough Wooing,' *Northern History*, vol. 33 (1997) p. 53.
[3] Scarisbrick, *Henry VIII*, p. 425.
[4] Bonner, 'Rough Wooing,' p. 50.
[5] Few authors have regarded the lack of Scottish law enforcement in the borders as an underlying cause of the Anglo-Scottish wars of the 1540's, although Robson acknowledges the significance of problems caused by the Scottish clans and their ineffective governors.

The English campaigns marked a substantial turning point for warfare in the Borders, as most chevauchées into Scotland were accompanied now with at least some artillery.[6] Geoffrey Parker and David Eltis have both dismissed Anglo-Scottish warfare as primitive, but clearly the two countries possessed many modern accoutrements of war.[7] Although field artillery was still undeveloped, the English and the Scots were able to assemble a formidable pool of artillery and firearms. Flodden began with an artillery duel, while the English and Scottish troops at Pinkie fought with a well-balanced force of light cavalry, shot and pike. The fort at Holy Island, which dates to roughly 1547, sports an angled wall consistent with sixteenth-century military technology. This change in tactics mirrored those of James III and James IV, who were able to raid into England with artillery, doing considerable damage to the fortified houses of Northumberland in the early years of the sixteenth century.

The fact that the English now sent expensive artillery into the field suggests that Henry was raising the stakes in securing the Northern borders. In general, the English armies were becoming more lethal as they acquired modern firearms and artillery, and Henry was anxious to introduce his enemies to his increasing arsenal. Coincidentally, the government pursued a strategy that sought to crush the Scottish armies with one decisive blow.[8] This bid for a pitched battle not only required a sizeable army, but an army that could keep pace with the growing military technology. The resulting strain upon military resources guaranteed that

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[6] Gervase Philips, *The Anglo-Scots Wars, 1513-1550,* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1999), p. 142.
[7] See David Eltis, *The Military Revolution of Sixteenth Century Europe* (Oxford: OUP, 1995); Geoffrey Parker *The Military Revolution: Military Innovation and the Rise of the West, 1500-1800,* (Cambridge: CUP, 1988), p. 32.
[8] See Marcus Merriman, *The Rough Wooings: Mary Queen of Scots, 1452-1551* (East Linton, 2000); In keeping with the traditional campaigns of Hallidon Hill and Flodden, the Tudors were looking for decisive action to secure the borders against their Scottish neighbours.

Northumberland would have to provide a significant amount of men for military operations against the Scots.

The anarchy and armed risings that had descended upon the Marches in early autumn of 1536 was especially worrying for the Privy Council since Scotland posed a major threat to Northumberland, despite the current peace treaty. The earlier English victory at Flodden in 1513 had only provided the Borders with short-term security, as war with Scotland loomed again by 1522. Despite the tremendous endeavour to field yet another army,[9] the Tudor war effort could only manage enough power to subject the Scottish marches to a series of raids and sieges. In 1523, the Earl of Surrey crossed the Scottish borders, and besieged the castles of Cessford and Fernihurst. Both of these sieges were met with spirited defence, and the campaign was ultimately fruitless.[10] For the next fifteen years, the Borders remained a theatre for low-level conflict, despite the tenuous peace that kept England and Scotland from open war.

In the years following the Pilgrimage of Grace, England's relations with James V gradually deteriorated, despite the Scottish king's promise to refuse any military aid to the rebels. His alliance with France and his adherence to Catholicism naturally set James at odds with the Tudor Government. Although James had made overtures to entreat the English, there seemed little effort to expel the English rebels who had resettled in Scotland, while France pulled Scotland into its struggle to subdue the last English possessions on French soil. Paul Hammer is thus correct in suggesting that Henry was 'spoiling for a fight' after suffering James' insistent alliance with France,[11] and his apparent lack of control over the Borders. Henry

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[9] Jeremy Goring, 'The General Proscription of 1522,' *The English Historical Review,* vol. 86 (1971) pp. 681-705.

[10] *LP* III (2) no. 3039; Phillips, *Anglo Scots Wars*, pp. 142-43.

[11] Paul E.J. Hammer, *Elizabeth's Wars* (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave-MacMillan, 2003), p. 10.

deliberately provoked the Scots with a series of raids and military actions, and the uneasy truce with Scotland was starting to suffer. By 1540, hostilities with the Scottish king were beginning to undermine the fragile peace that had previously secured the frontier from open war. Although Scotland's alliance with France,[12] or the Scottish raid upon Haughton in Tynedale and the subsequent slaying of several Fenwicks in 1541,[13] have been cited as principal causes, it was a combination of both localised and international tensions that resulted in conflict. In addition, the failure of the Scottish crown to control its Borderers and the clumsy diplomacy by both sides only worsened the Anglo-Scottish relations.

In response to failing diplomacy, the English government was determined to strengthen its military position in the North. In 1541, Sir Rafe Ellerkar and Sir Robert Bowes received special instructions to take stock of all fortresses, barmekins, and strong houses that were used in the defence of the Marches.[14] In a striking parallel, the government's troubles in Ireland also prompted them to make a similar survey there.[15] Both Marches suffered from the neglect of landlords and were thus treated similarly by the English crown. For the Scottish survey, the king specifically named Ellerkar and Bowes, as neither were officers, yet both were experienced soldiers. The manors of Northumberland that had been depopulated through centuries of Anglo-Scottish warfare also received attention so that the wastes might be farmed once again.[16] The commission revealed the desire of the king to repopulate the waste areas of Northumberland with military tenancies, a practice that

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[12] Phillips, *Anglo-Scots Wars*, pp. 145-47.

[13] Ralph Robson, *The Rise and Fall of the English Highland Clans: Tudor Responses to a Mediaeval Problem*, (Edinburgh: East Linton Press, 1989), p. 93. According to Robson, the actions of the dalesmen from both sides of the frontier became a *casus belli* for both crowns.

[14] *St.P.*, V, no. 384; *LP*, XVI nos. 1205 & 1206; BL, Add. MSS 32646 f. 229. Bowes and Ellerkar were issued an additional commission to retain 100 men each for protection.

[15] S.G. Ellis, *Tudor Frontiers, Noble Power* (Oxford, OUP, 1995), p. 29.

[16] Northumberland suffered heavily in the early fourteenth century, when Robert the Bruce razed the Borders after his success at Bannockburn in 1314. Continual deprivation further depopulated many of

had been used in the Marches since the Yorkist administration of Edward IV.[17] 'All

the waste groundis endlonge oure Borders or frounter', of which there was plenty,

were in need of replenishment with 'able men', or men who were strong enough to

wield a weapon with a degree of proficiency, and who were 'suffincientlye horsede

and harnessede',[18] and held by military tenure, like most other Northumberland

tenancies.[19]

When completed, Ellerkar and Bowes' survey of the wastelands contributed

a 61-page report on the defences of Northumberland, and indicated that there were

many forts and towers that had indeed decayed, whose owners were ordered to

repair and re-inhabit them.[20] The military significance of this survey has been

somewhat misinterpreted,[21] as it has been used as a barometer to measure the decay

of the Northumberland frontier. While the survey reported much decay, it also

contributed to a renewed effort to buffer the Marches, and was a precursor to five

years of Tudor military success.

Rather than merely reporting military decline, the survey invoked the

'wisdomes, polleces, and discrecions' of the Marchers to install a program of

military reform. Firstly, this account implicitly condemned the trial-and-error that

had occurred in the North since the Pilgrimage of Grace, hinting that if the king had

spent more time building up the defences of the Northumbrians then the Scots and

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the Northumbrian manors. See A.C. King, 'War, Politics and Landed Society in Northumberland, c.1296-c.1408' (Durham University Ph.D., 2001).

[17] CRO, D/Lons/ L MD D65.

[18] *St.P.*,V, no. 384.

[19] NRO, MSS 1147/f.9.

[20] *LP*, XVI no. 1399; BL, Calig. B VIII, f. 63. The preamble to the commission suggests that Bowes and Ellerkar should report any fertile ground. Indeed, they found unoccupied, arable land, most of it in Glendale near Wooler. This area was the normal invasion route of the Scottish armies, so any settlement here would have been unproductive. The towers that overlooked the dale were all in ruins, 'cast down by the Scotts' during the campaigns of the 1490's and 1513.

[21] For instance, D.L. W. Tough says that Bowes and Ellerkar omitted 'the whole of the West and parts of the other two Marches' (Tough, *The Last Years of a Frontier*, [Oxford: OUP, 1928], p. 1). However, the commission from Henry in 1541 specifies a survey of Northumberland only, and of that only the areas that were close to the frontier.

border clans would not have been so bold.[22] Moreover, the report was critical of the

amount of land that had gone to waste, when it could have supported a military

tenant had the gentry not fled the area. According to Bowes, in order to reinvigorate

Marcher defences it was thus necessary to order the gentry back to their dwellings.[23]

However, Bowes did not explain how this would generate enough military tenancies

in order to support the amount of armed men necessary for the defence of the

frontier. Problems stemming from such arrangements were already evident in

Northumberland, as the custom of gavelkind had split the former military tenancies

of the Yorkists into small, unsustainable farms, where a formerly single tenement

was now split between as many as eight different holdings.[24] Although gavelkind

was practiced in Northumberland until the seventeenth century, the Tudor

government was anxious to scoop up the surplus of horsemen that populated the

dales in the first half of the sixteenth century and place them on sustainable farms,

which would have stemmed reiving. Bowes was dubious, as most dalesmen would

resist any attempt to resettle them outside the dales.[25] Even though Bowes' answer

to Henry's query was not as simple as was hoped, the fact that the crown wished for

a recovery of its military tenancies in Northumberland is unmistakable. To fill these

tenancies, the crown first looked to the surnames, despite the label of 'evyl to worse'

that they earned from Bowes. This perception of the surnames as wild and criminal

led Bowes to believe that moral decay was responsible for military decline.[26] In fact,

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[22] PRO, SP 1/179 f. 151. Bowes suggested that major castles, especially Wark and Harbottle, were key to the relief of the surrounding neighbourhoods. Overpopulation was the main problem, though, and it seems that many of the young men without land found employment in the garrisons of Northumberland. See chapter 5.

[23] PRO, SP 1/179 f. 151. Bowes went as far to include a sample letter in his survey that ordered the receiver back to his March holdings.

[24] Ibid. The tenure of gavelkind that had been practiced in the dales had limited the amount of income each tenant received, thereby affecting his ability to both arm and feed himself and his family, without resorting to theft.

[25] Ibid. Part of their boldness came from strength in numbers, according to Bowes.

[26] Ellis, Tudor Frontiers, pp. 59, 76 & 263.

the real problem was that there was a lack of a formal military organisation that policed the Borders not only as a check to reiving, but to ensure that the Northumbrians were fulfilling their requisite military roles.

Despite the decrepit state of its military resources, Northumberland witnessed the opening act of Henry's martial policy. Beginning in 1541, the principal officers of the East and Middle Marches[27] were immediately impressed into service and ordered to expel all Scots from Northumberland, the first step of Henry's aggressive new campaign to subdue Scotland. Because the English Wardens had stepped up their raids across the frontier and had recruited the services of Scottish outlaws, the Scots began to take stock of their own forces. The Scottish parliament met in October 1540, and the re-strengthening of the army took up the majority of the business that was conducted.[28] Rumours began to circulate that a massive Scots army was on the move, intending to invade England.[29] In January 1541, Henry ordered a muster in the Border counties, taking the time to specify the amount of light cavalry, archers, and billmen required.[30] The Scots, however, were nervously anticipating Henry's next move, since diplomatic relations had turned for the worse. King James complained that certain Englishmen, most likely the Keeper of Tynedale and his bands of Tynedale and Redesdale horsemen, were on the border, 'raising fire and slaughter'.[31] The Scottish Wardens eagerly sought to placate the English as the raids into Scottish Teviotdale revealed the military weakness of the Scottish frontier. The Laird of Fernihurst gave a bond, promising hostages as insurance for good rule of the Borders, and Wharton and Lord Maxwell exchanged pledges, presenting lists

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[27] SP 1/167, ff. 68-9.This included Eure, Radcliff, Sir Ralph Ellerkar, Sir Robert Bowes, Sir John Widdrington (demoted from the Wardenship of the Middle March to the captaincy of Berwick where Eure could supervise him), John Heron, Sir Robert Collingwood, and John Horsley.
[28] *LP*, XVI nos. 120 and 322.
[29] *LP*, XV nos. 634 and 709.
[30] *LP*, XVI no. 497.
[31] *LP*, XVI no. 1279.

of murdered subjects and their alleged murderers.[32] As redress continued, the

Warden of the Middle March informed the Privy Council that the Borders had

become notably quiet, though this lull was probably spent preparing for the coming

conflict.[33]

Despite the best attempts at preserving the peace, war was a *fait accompli*.

Henry's pursuivant in Scotland, Henry Rae, reported that most of Scotland was in

arms,[34] which was confirmed by Eure.[35] This news prompted the king to strike a

defensive posture, which subsequently empowered Norfolk to array the *manrede* of

Northumberland, including Newcastle, along with Cumberland, Yorkshire,

Westmoreland, and Durham for the invasion of Scotland.[36] Henry stepped up

preparations for war and warned the Earls of Westmoreland and Cumberland to be

ready to serve Norfolk since Scottish light cavalry had grievously raided Houghton

in Tynedale; he complained additionally that the Scots Council was acting in a

duplicitous manner, suing for peace yet preparing for war.[37] The king and the Privy

Council, distraught by events in the Marches and panicked by rumours of a Scottish

invasion, set off on a royal progress to the North, which the Scottish lords could

only have interpreted as an act of war,[38] although Henry had previously invited

James to attend him at York.[39]

Despite the preparations, it appears that Henry was not quite willing to engage

the Scots in all out war, but was probably waiting on the opinions of his March

officers. In general, most of Henry's March officials did not believe that the Scots

were preparing to invade England. Wharton advised the Privy Council that James V

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[32] *LP*, XVI nos. 1298 & 1405.
[33] *LP*, XVI no. 1443.
[34] *LP*, XVI no. 946.
[35] *LP*, XVI no. 638.
[36] *LP*, XVI no. 780.
[37] *LP*, XVI no. 843.

had claimed that the army he had raised was for his own protection.[40] Sir William

Eure, the Warden of the East March, and Sir Cuthbert Radcliff, the new Warden of

the Middle Marches,[41] found no evidence that suggested a Scottish invasion.[42]

Instead, the problem of Scottish incursions was the fault of ineffective Scottish

Wardens and rogue Scots lords who clamoured for war with England, not the

Scottish crown. Even James V, upon hearing of the king's coming northwards,

indicated that peace should be preserved with all efforts.[43] Realising James'

peaceful intentions, the March wardens agreed to a parley with the Scots, hinting

that if the Scottish wardens had done their part, then potential conflict with England

could have been avoided.[44] Arrangements were immediately made for a diplomatic

mission to entreat the English, and it was rumoured that the king of Scotland himself

might confer with Henry. In the meantime, the Scottish council promised Radcliff

that they would investigate the Scottish Marches.[45] Their letters to Lord Maxwell

provoked an immediate response: the Scottish warden could not keep the peace

because Sir Thomas Wharton was hiding Scottish rebels and using them to harry

Liddesdale.[46] Wharton was indeed protecting several of the Graham surname, who

were involved in a feud with the Armstrongs, and it was his intent to back the

Grahams to counterpoise the power of the Liddesdale clans—a blatant violation of

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[38] *Hamilton Papers*, I no. 98. James expressed alarm that Henry was in York, far away from 'parties quhare ye ar accustummit most to be', implying that the king had come to make war.
[39] *LP*, XVI no. 990 (part 5).
[40] *LP*, XVI no. 832.
[41]Ratcliffe's commission in listed in the *LP* XVI as *Patent Rolls, Henry VIII* p. 6, m. 24. (October 1, 1540).
[42] *LP*, XVI no. 982.
[43] *LP*, XVI no. 983.
[44] *LP*, XVI no. 1003.
[45] *LP*, XVI no. 1029.
[46] *LP*, XVI no. 1039.

March Law.[47] Despite this, Maxwell agreed—reluctantly so—to attend a day of redress at Jedburgh.[48]

Upon the Privy Council's arrival in York, the first order of business was to hear any complaints regarding of the Council of the North,[49] although the rumblings of war no doubt occupied most of the business. Most likely, it was here that Henry decided for war with Scotland, especially since James had snubbed his invitation to come south for conference.[50] Although it was too late to plan an expedition for the year, preparations for the following year ensued. His proximity to the Borderers and the March Wardens allowed fresh intelligence to arrive on a daily basis, and it is likely that the invasion plans had been drawn up. Henry also conferred with gentlemen Borderers to hear their complaints concerning Scottish reiving.[51] The largest complaint seems to have stemmed from Scots Borderers illegally pasturing in and ploughing up English common pastures, a total of less than three hundred acres in Northumberland. Still, this was a great irritation to the king, and he wasted no time in complaining directly to James V.[52] Worse news arrived when the king learnt of a Scots raid that slew several Fenwicks and burned the barns of Sir William Musgrave, another one of Henry's Border pensioners.[53] Wharton's intelligence was also noted that Lord Maxwell actively connived against English interests by populating the debatable ground, an area with both English and Scottish claims, and allying with the Fosters, men who were supposedly tendering their submission to Wharton. To make matters worse, Maxwell was quarrelling with the laird of

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[47] *LP*, XVI no. 1134.
[48] *LP*, XVI no. 1054.
[49] *LP*, XVI 1190 and 1191.
[50] *Hamilton Papers*, I no. 84.
[51] *LP*, XVI 1211.
[52] *LP*, XVI nos. 990 and 1207.
[53] *LP*, XVI no. 1203. The man responsible, Anton Armstrong, who was a member of the powerful Bewcastle Armstrongs, had fled from Gilsland and resettled with the Armstrongs of Liddesdale when the Earl of Cumberland was the Warden.

Fernihurst, Warden of the Scottish Middle Marches, thus undermining any efforts to re-establish order in the Scottish Borders.

The violence of the West Marches had direct ramifications for Northumberland. Violence supplanted diplomacy and bloodshed coloured royal policy in the Marches for the rest of the year. Sir William Eure suspected that his disorganised Scottish neighbours were in fact preparing for an attack, ostensibly without the permission of the Scottish king;[54] the Warden duly received letters commanding him to set extra watches on the borders. Berwick was to be victualed, and raids were to be conducted through blood and fire, 'three hurts for every one.'[55] In August 1542, Sir Robert Bowes along with a significant host of regular soldiers, or 'whitecoats', and irregular Northumberland light cavalry, foraged into the Scottish Marches on a covert raid, one with which Henry was all too familiar, since he had planned the raid himself.[56] Although Gervase Phillips comments that the aim of this raid was probably limited in its scope,[57] it is more likely that the raid was used as a pre-emptive strike into the Scottish frontier. The Duke of Norfolk was already in the Borders preparing to invade Scotland with a regular army. Bowes' raid was most likely meant to soften the Borders for the Duke of Norfolk's invasion force that was supposed to be gathering in Northumberland.[58] Bowes' raid had yet another purpose: to draw out the Scottish Border forces, and to destroy them with one swift blow. Initially, the raid went well. However, the Scots only appeared after the English assumed that they had no fight in them, so that Lord Huntley's Lowland forces materialized when the English were split into smaller raiding

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[54] LP, XVI no. 622.
[55] LP, XVI no. 1202.
[56] BL, Royal MSS XVIII B VI f. 75. James V was able to determine that Henry had foreknowledge of the "raid", thus proving that this was no ordinary "Wardens rood". Also printed in St.P., V, no. 393.
[57] Phillips, Anglo-Scottish Wars, p. 148. Phillips makes the claim that this raid was part of a protracted campaign of raiding, rather than interpreting it as a probe for a large-scale invasion.

groups. The resulting English defeat at Haddon Rigg was a giant blow to the invasion plans for 1542, and the Duke of Norfolk spent most of his time bargaining for the release of the English captains imprisoned in Scotland, instead of planning for the invasion.

In turn, Norfolk's invasion in the fall of 1542 was a fiasco. Not only had he lost most of his Northumberland officers at Haddon Rigg that August, the heavy rains and a dearth of cereal for rations hampered his efforts to muster an army. For most of September, he tried in vain to get victual sent up from the south.[59] Too few bakeries and breweries in the Marches only compounded the problem. In his desperate bid to seek open battle with the Scots before he was forced to disband his army, Norfolk crossed the Border in the rainy days of October 1542, with little ability to take Edinburgh, the much-coveted goal. In fact, Norfolk only succeeded in burning Kelso, the long-suffering seat of the Scottish Middle March. Roxburgh castle was also besieged, but after six days the English had already run out of food. The foragers had no success, primarily because Bowes' raiding had already destroyed so much corn earlier that August. When the game was up, Norfolk ran back to England without having achieved his objective, only to be served an angry letter from the king on October 26, which blamed Norfolk for bringing the crown into disrepute.[60] Because the Northumbrians had suffered heavy casualties at Haddon Rigg, Norfolk's army was left without foragers and prickers to scour the countryside ahead of the army. Light cavalry, an essential element to Border warfare, was simply not present in sufficient quantity, and as a result, Norfolk had limited effect in reducing the Scottish Borders.

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[58] Gainsford Bruce, "The English Expedition into Scotland in 1542," *Archaeologia Aeliana*, 3rd Series, vol. 3 (1907). Bruce is the only other author, aside from Philips, who has addressed the failed campaign of 1542.

[59] Bruce, 'Expedition,' pp. 199-204.

[60] Phillips, *Anglo-Scots Wars*, p. 149.

In the end, it was James of Scotland who had delivered Henry his wish for open battle, by invading the West March of England in November 1542. Although Sir Thomas Wharton was under prepared for the invasion, and outnumbered more than nine to one, he routed the Scots at Solway Moss. This was ultimately a hollow victory, as the Scottish Earls who were captured were already showing interest in subscribing to English authority.[61] Of the Scottish footmen, thousands had drowned in the boggy ground and in the Esk, though many were able to make good their escape, and were able to fight another day. Despite the government's perception of an overwhelming victory, Scotland remained free of English soldiers, as Henry did not follow up his success.[62] This probably was due to the death of James V in December 1542, which undoubtedly lured the English into complacency. Instead, Henry vainly focused his sights upon conquest in France.

The king's successive lieutenants, the earl of Hertford and Charles Brandon, the duke of Suffolk, were invested with definitive authority in Scottish affairs and were more than willing to take the place of the ailing Norfolk. Thereafter, Norfolk's authority in the North was eclipsed by their elevation, while his family's misfortunes in court undermined his credibility. In ill-health, and surrounded by rivals at court, Norfolk had seen the last of his military career in the North. Although the king gave Norfolk the chance to redeem himself against the walls of Boulogne, the ageing duke could no longer summon the energy that he had thirty years earlier at Flodden.[63] Henry now put his hopes in the Seymours and Suffolk to deliver a grand battle to overawe the Scots. In spring 1543, Suffolk received orders to prepare for war with Scotland and possibly snatch the young Scottish Queen Mary from her

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[61] Philips, *Anglo-Scots Wars*, p. 153.
[62] Bonner, 'Rough Wooing,' p. 52; A.F. Pollard, 'The Protector Somerset and Scotland,' *English Historical Review*, XIII (1898), pp. 464-67.
[63] Phillips, *Anglo-Scots Wars*, p. 155.

protectors in order to marry her to Prince Edward.[64] In August, the king authorised

the assembly of a 16,000-man army comprised of Northerners, many of them from

Northumberland, for burning a swath through the Scottish Marches, and Suffolk

wasted no time in criticising this plan. As usual, the main complaint was lack of

victuals. Henry's reply was sharp, demanding an immediate invasion, but it later

softened when the deputy Wardens and their subordinates reported a sharp downturn

in the weather that destroyed much of the grain and horses in the marches.[65] Suffolk

was thus able at least to help quell Henry's more reckless policies, especially when

his deputies confirmed his opinion. For the rest of 1543 and in to 1544, Lords

Wharton and Eure, along with Sir Cuthbert Ratcliffe, successfully raided throughout

the border, while repelling Scottish incursions.[66] Suffolk, who was more

accustomed to and desirous of the style of warfare he had experienced on the

continent, received instructions to repair south to accompany the king on expedition

to France. This left the Earl of Hertford, arguably one of the most effective generals

of Henry's reign, in sole charge of harrying the Scottish.

Henry's increasing interest in having his armies fitted with able mounted

skirmishers should only have meant that he would come to value the martial talents

of the Northumberland horsemen. The initial strategy laid out by Henry in 1544,

according to the Privy Council, was to subdue Scotland quickly so that the Marchers

would have been free to serve in France.[67] The king personally demanded that

Hertford release 400 Border horse for service in France, and replace them with Irish

mercenaries who would then defend the Marches.[68] The interchangeable use of

March soldiers between Scotland and Ireland only underscored the Tudors' casual

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[64] *LP,* XVIII(1) nos. 342 and 409.
[65] *LP,* XVIII(2) nos. 184, 192, 195, 196, 207, 236, and 262.
[66] *LP,* XVIII(2) nos. 209, 262, 263, 319, 339 and 422.
[67] *LP,* XIX(1) no. 314.
[68] *LP,* XIX(1) no. 331.

approach to frontier warfare. This policy of recruitment clashed at times with the opinions of the Lieutenant Hertford and the Warden-Generals Parr and Lisle, all of whom were experienced enough in warfare to recognise the value of the Northern light cavalry. Although the dalesmen had been used in warfare against the Scots many times before, Henry's attempt to use the light Border horsemen in his Boulogne campaign sparked a debate that showed the fragility of the English military system, which could not muster enough troops for France without pillaging the garrisons of its other theatres of operation.[69] This was one of the traps of an official policy that placed continental ambitions over Scottish ones: it was far too easy to be caught unexpected by Henry's military policies, which at the time were given to fits of serendipity as the 1544 Boulogne campaign has shown.[70]

Henry's ambitions in France proved to be a stumbling block for Hertford, who stood between the king and Borderers. There was a substantial drain in manpower from the Borders to the garrisons of France.[71] In light of his proposed invasion of Scotland, Hertford vowed that all Northern levies would stay under his control, unless by special letters from the king himself. The deputy Wardens also disapproved of the king's plans; the Northern horsemen were not suitable for sieges and continental warfare. Many of the Northumberland officers duly voiced their displeasure at sending away their best light horsemen as they were most effective means for keeping their own surnames under check; although Sir Ralph Eure and his men were willing to serve the king in the Marches, they opposed their accompanying any expedition to France.[72] Lord Wharton also grumbled that the

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[69] This is treated in chapter 5.
[70] Phillips, *Anglo-Scots Wars*, pp. 154-55. Phillips remarks that the entire enterprise to capture and maintain Boulogne was haphazard.
[71] *LP*, XIX(1) no. 227.
[72] *LP*, XIX(1) nos. 252 and 259.

absence of his best horsemen left the West Marches depleted.[73] The king responded that he would rather temporarily sacrifice his ambitions in Scotland in order to capture Boulogne, but still ordered Hertford to proceed against Scotland.[74] In the end, some Border officers campaigned in France, and some of those earned a notable position for themselves. Sir Robert Bowes became comptroller of the armies in France for a short time, eventually becoming a Privy Councillor.[75] Others were not so fortunate. Sir Ralph Ellerkar, Bowes' partner, died in a minor cavalry skirmish in the sands near Boulogne in April 1546, a clear waste of martial talent according to those who lamented his death.[76]

At the same time that the crown drew upon the horsemen of Northumberland for its French campaign, the irregular Northumberland light horse became a source of manpower for regular garrison duty along the Border, which raised some controversy amongst the Border officers. The Earl of Hertford objected most of all to placing dalesmen in garrisons since their sole purpose was to serve the Keeper or Warden in policing, repelling raids, or in brief, two-day excursions. In 1544, the Lieutenant reported that 700 Borderers served in garrisons with wages, despite the conditions of their tenure, which left fewer men to follow 'hot trods' and to guard the more remote dales.[77] Such objections offended some members of the Privy Council, who felt that Hertford and his captains had abused their position. Sir William Paget, Henry's secretary, wrote Hertford to mend the situation quietly in order to avoid offending his friends or the crown.[78] The king was at times in concord

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[73] *LP*, XIX(1) no. 562.
[74] *LP*, XIX(1) no. 314.
[75] See Christine Newman, *The Bowes of Streatlam, Co. Durham: A Study of the Politics and Religion of a Sixteenth-Century Northern Gentry Family*, (London: British Library, 1991).
[76] *LP*, XXI(1) no. 694. The predominant duty for the Band of Northern Horsemen was the ignominy of escorting supply trains.
[77] *LP*, XIX(1) no. 283.
[78] *LP*, XIX(1) nos. 283 & 291.

with Hertford, and was anxious to keep the men of Tynedale and Redesdale from joining the garrisons of Northumberland, where they would receive regular pay in lieu of their obligation to serve free of charge.[79] At the same time, there was the need to conscript displaced and virtually landless men into the garrisons in order to keep them from spoiling their neighbours.

In theory, the garrisons were designed to prevent Scottish raiders from entering the vicinity, and it was widely believed that garrisons provided a decent deterrent.[80] When the feud did erupt, as it did between Tynedale and Liddesdale in 1543,[81] a large, albeit temporary, garrison in the dales proved to be an effective deterrent to the Scots.[82] Having the clansmen as regular soldiers had positive results in subduing Henry's enemies, as it was noted that 'neither so many, nor yet so notable exploits had been done in Scotland as hath been.'[83] However, staffing a garrison with men who feared the deadly feud with their Scottish neighbours did have its drawbacks. Garrisons staffed by Northumbrians were often reluctant to sally out of their blockhouses, as the Wark garrison was in September 1542 when they failed to pursue a raiding party that had struck into their neighbourhood.[84] Despite the spectre of the deadly feud and the occasional setback, the desire of the surnames to serve the crown as soldiers marked a significant change from the years just after the Pilgrimage, when there were all too few veteran garrisons and the surnames enjoyed their quasi-militaristic role to regular soldiering. That the companies of light cavalry which took part in the 'rough wooing' were all from Northumberland demonstrates the dependency of the crown upon the Northumbrians to persist

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[79] This issue of Border service is covered in Chapter 5.

[80] *LP*, XVIII(2) no. 208.

[81] *LP*, XVIII(1) no. 153.

[82] Most of these were from the settled areas of Northumberland, or from Durham and North Yorkshire.

[83] *LP*, XIX (1) no. 293. Robson, *English Highland Clans*, p. 198.

[84] *LP*, XVII no. 889.

against Scotland.[85] The Wardenships of the Eures and Bowes enjoyed the co-operation of the dalesmen, who provided much-needed resources where the crown could not afford regular garrisons. Prolonged war with Scotland had brought much opportunity to the clans, and their talents as light horsemen and border soldiers, the raison d'être of their original tenures.[86] The Tudors certainly did not forget their service as regular soldiers during the preceding three years. When Scottish raiders struck down one of the Robson heidsmen in July 1546, he was eulogised as one of the more loyal servants in the dales.[87]

With the start of the 'rough wooing' in 1544, Northumberland was used once again as a staging ground for more devastating raids, which increasingly came under the direction of surnames in the king's pay.[88] The deputy Wardens received their orders, to burn the Scottish borders during seedtime in order to induce famine amongst the Scottish garrisons.[89] Hertford and Suffolk quickly used their positions as the king's Lieutenants to further the modernisation of warfare along the Borders, which was designed to bring about a devastating defeat of the Scots.[90] Firearms, heavy cavalry, large artillery trains and foreign mercenaries soon made an appearance in the Marches, which undoubtedly looked out of place next to the lightly armed Northumberland cavalry. With this impressive arsenal, Henry instructed his generals to engage in what could only be termed as total war, 'putting man, woman and childe to fyre and swoorde, without exception where any resistence shalbe made agaynst you.'[91] Hertford could only agree, and his campaign

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[85] BL, Calig. B. V f. 1.

[86] Chapter 5 discusses the military obligations of the Marchers, although Chapter 7 discusses the networks that allowed the Northumbrians to enter royal service.

[87] PRO, SP 1/226 f. 142.

[88] See Chapter 5 for the employment of Marchers outside the terms of their customary military obligation.

[89] *LP*, XIX(1) no. 314.

[90] Philips, *Anglo-Scots Wars*, pp. 149-50.

[91] *Hamilton Papers*, Vol. II, no. 207.

of 1544 was one of the bloodiest that the Tudors effected. This plan was put into action and completed with alarming success; by the end of the summer, Hertford and his new lieutenants, the earl of Shrewsbury and lord Lisle, completely sacked Edinburgh and the major Scottish border towns, with the help of the deputy Wardens and newly deployed Irish mercenaries.[92] Edinburgh, Leith and Fife were all scenes of rampant destruction, but with little overall effect since the Scottish garrison in Edinburgh castle refused to give battle. Instead, the English waged their war on the civilian population, in the hopes of enticing the Scots to give battle. James never gave the orders for muster, although there was a desultory attempt by Lord Home and Earl Bothwell to confront English whitecoats, their army scattering in the face of the approaching English. The Scots were indeed wise in keeping themselves from certain defeat, and the English contented themselves with destroying Haddington, Dunbar and Jedburgh.[93] The bloodiest stage of the 1544 campaign occurred in June when Border horse under the command of the Warden of the Middle March, Sir Ralph Eure, sacked Jedburgh. Upon returning, Eure and his Northumbrians ambushed a Scots raiding party that had just completed a foray into Northumberland. The Borderers, many of them former outlaws, netted hundreds of prisoners, many of whom they ransomed for hefty rewards.[94]

However, 1545 began on an ominous note for the Northumbrians when they suffered heavy casualties at Ancrum Moor whilst accompanying the royal army; Sir Ralph Eure, the Warden of the Middle March, and Sir Brian Layton, the Captain of Norham Castle, fell in battle, and up to 1,000 Northumbrians either perished or

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[92] *LP*, XIX(1) nos. 472, 575, 601, 762, and 96. This marked the first time that the Tudors employed foreign mercenaries in the North.

[93] A.F. Pollard (ed.), 'The Late Expedition into Scotland.' In A.F. Pollard (ed.), *Tudor Tracts 1532-1588*, (Westminster: Constable, 1903), pp. 45-46.

[94] *LP*, XIX(1) nos. 684 and 782.

surrendered themselves.[95] Despite the setback, the preparations made by Hertford and Shrewsbury left Northumberland ready to face the Scots by the end of July, although the army still lacked 2,000 pikes, which were immediately requisitioned and sent from the south in August.[96] The Northumberland and Durham levies prepared to fortify Berwick within short notice, but a lack of intelligence kept Henry's generals second-guessing themselves.[97] Stragglers returning from captivity in Scotland, who could afford new harness within eight days, were reassigned to garrison, in order to limit the levies required from the North Riding and Durham.

This marked the beginning of a newer strategy. Seeing that the North alone could not cow the Scots, Henry opted to use deadlier force. Foreign mercenaries arrived in April, when news of an impending Scottish invasion caused concern amongst the Wardens. The king personally sent north 1500 Spaniards, 4000 Germans plus several hundred horsed harquebusiers and lances, and demanded that Shrewsbury take stock of his supplies and store grain for the approaching army.[98] The mercenaries brought with them firearms and tactics, from which the English would learn and reinforce their own military knowledge. From this point, mercenaries would play a critical role in support of the Northumbrians. The muster of a further 30,000 men, the majority of whom were to come from Shrewsbury's jurisdiction, was in motion, although there were some doubts as to whether more than 25,000 fully harnessed men could be raised in the North. Worse still, Shrewsbury was quite adamant that the north held insufficient amounts of grain for victual.[99] It was assured to the king that the Spanish would find the furniture in the

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[95] *LP*, XX(1) nos. 281., 285 and 312.
[96] *LP*, XX(1) no. 1221.
[97] *LP*, XX(1) nos. 1246, and part 2 (same volume), no. 128.
[98] *LP*, XX(1) nos. 436 and 513.
[99] *LP*, XX(1) nos. 531, 535 and 555.

northeast wholly inadequate.[100] Money was a perpetual problem, hindering the officers' progress in the towns along the frontier. There was not enough to pay the Spanish mercenaries, who had to rely upon the sorely pressed inhabitants of Newcastle to supply them with food and shelter.[101] The Privy Council was repeatedly cautioned of this problem, which answered that the Spaniards knew of the pay arrangements before they set forth from Calais.[102]

The Privy Council met on May 7 to discuss the defence of the realm, including the Marches. The landing of 3,000 Frenchmen in Scotland gave the English a sense of urgency in their planning.[103] It was concluded that new surveys of the fortresses should be compiled, and that the Earl of Hertford should remain on the borders, where he would have again the same powers that he exercised in the previous year; Shrewsbury also remained in the region, as a member of the Council of the North.[104] Victuals and manpower seemed to be the prime concern for both men, for it was thought again by the government that an army of 30,000 could be raised by the combined efforts of Hertford and Shrewsbury; the former spent most of May and June reminding the Privy Council that nothing could be done without food for the troops.[105] At the end of May, the king ordered all gentlemen who lived beyond the Trent to repair home, to be at the commandment of his Lieutenant.[106] Furthermore, Hertford soon issued his own order that no former English prisoner should return to captivity in Scotland, unless by license of the king.[107] This indicated that Hertford still mistrusted some Borderers, fearing that their familiarity with the

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[100] *LP*, XX(1) no. 630.
[101] *LP*, XX(1) nos. 646, 787, 791 and 815.
[102] *LP*, XX(1) no. 834.
[103] *LP*, XX(1) nos. 909 and 911.
[104] *LP*, XX(1) nos. 846, no. 2.
[105] *LP*, XX(1) nos. 671, 673 and 906.
[106] *LP*, XX(1) no. 845.
[107] *LP*, XX(1) no. 867.

Scots might induce them to divulge intelligence, although the order violated the terms under which many of the Borderers had earned their freedom. In August, a Scottish army was rumoured to be drawing to the borders; Hertford sent 3,000 men from Durham and the Middle and Western Marches, which was performed as Border service at no charge to the king.[108] 5500 Yorkshire levies also went north, albeit at the King's expense.[109] In order to prevent any repeat of Sir Ralph Eure's fatal mistake, Hertford and Shrewsbury warned the Wardens to exercise caution until the rest of the army assembled in September.[110]

With another sizeable force, again many of which were from Northumberland, Hertford once more crossed the Tweed in September, sacking Melrose and Dryburgh. When they reached Kelso, the English assaulted the abbey, whose monks stubbornly held out until they were slaughtered by the Spanish mercenaries.[111] At the same time, Sir Robert Bowes and his band of Marcher horsemen razed the area around Jedburgh, using their customary heavy-handed tactics.[112] Once Kelso and the surrounding areas were in his hands, Hertford suggested to Henry that Roxburgh castle be used to anchor his grip on the area, rather than Kelso, which would need a significantly stronger garrison than Roxburgh.[113] It would soon come to light, however, that destruction of the Scottish borders was almost complete, and so once more the English were convinced that they had finally gained the upper hand. By the end of the month, Hertford was ready to dismiss 1200 Englishmen from service, along with all foreign mercenaries. Despite this reduction of force, Hertford, Wharton and the king hatched a plot to

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[108] *LP*, XX(2) no. 54.
[109] *LP*, XX(2) no. 96.
[110] *LP*, XX(2), nos. 110 and 205.
[111] *LP*, XX(2), no. 883. Hertford and Tunstall admired the discipline of the Spanish captain, and his ability to control his troops.
[112] *LP*, XX(2), no. 400.
[113] *LP*, XX(2), no. 347.

take and garrison Caerlaverock Castle with the power of the Western March.[114] This

last scheme, like many others, was scrapped when the castle was razed to prevent

any further English foothold in the Western March.

As before, no defending army materialised to confront the English, despite

the Scots' obvious ability to raise a large army.[115] Once again, the Scottish lords

refused to take Hertford's bait, instead sacrificing their Borders in order to keep the

rest of Scotland in their hands. On the whole, Henry's policy for overawing

Scotland with military force was somewhat of a failure in that he never brought the

Scots to battle. The raids had devastated large tracts of the Scottish Borders, but

these were always quick to rebound; the Scots simply moved back into the Marches

once the English left.

In Scotland, a civil war bloomed between pro-English and pro-French

parties; Henry wished to exploit this but resisted sending his Border troops to aid his

Scottish allies who were besieged within the castle of St. Andrews.[116] The

following year did not see another invasion of Scotland, although there was

significant English activity in the West Marches of Scotland, most of which had

been subdued by Wharton and his assured Scottish allies.[117] Sir Robert Bowes kept

the Northumberland horsemen busy, raiding up the Tweed in April 1546.[118] The fact

that he only took 2,000 men suggests that the English were now aware that Scotland

was either unwilling or unable to defend its own frontier.

War with Scotland loomed again in 1547, despite the death of Henry VIII in

January, as Hertford, now Protector Somerset, sought to finish the business that he

had started. There was a newer turn in policy; the traditional method of invasion,

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[114] *LP*, XX(2), nos. 505, 533 572, 676 and 685.
[115] Phillips, *Anglo-Scots Wars*, p. 173.
[116] *LP*, XXI(2) no. 576.
[117] Philips, *Anglo-Scots Wars*, p. 175.
[118] BL, Calig. B. V f. 1.

battle and retreat gave way to garrisoning, as Somerset was able to fully concentrate

his military resources on Scotland without the distraction of France, since Boulogne

was already well-fortified and garrisoned.[119] M.L. Bush has noted that unlike Henry,

Somerset did not prioritise French possessions, instead focusing upon ridding

Scotland of French influence, and having the Scots join the English as subjects of

the same crown. Somerset was obsessed with Scotland so that he preferred to

relinquish Boulogne in order to pursue his single-minded task of garrisoning the

Scottish Pale.[120] This policy was to bring about Scottish subjection, for which Henry

had hoped, though unlike Henry's approach these were not meant to oppress the

Scots, but to intimidate them into accepting English rule. Somerset also used

garrisons in Ireland, which suggests that his strategy was not enlightened but a

continuity of the tendency to treat frontiers in like fashion.[121]   Somerset's policy

sought to place English garrisons at Hume, Roxburgh, Eyemouth, Castlemilk, and

Moffat, thereby creating a buffer for the English borders. Other garrisons were

planned for the east coast as far north as Dundee. The proximity of the Borders to

the garrisons meant that they would again play a large part, and that March officers

would have to contribute their efforts to supporting the garrison effort, however

reluctant they might be to do so when garrison service became largely unpopular

amongst all who served.

Musters took place in all counties in April 1547, which commanded the

levies to be in Newcastle by August 12.[122]   However, the government and the March

officials experienced some reluctance amongst the Borderers to serve in forays

against Scotland, although this was limited to the West March. The Council sent

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[119] M.L. Bush, *The Government Policy of Protector Somerset* (London: Edward Arnold, 1975) pp. 8-10; Hammer, *Elizabeth's Wars*, p. 34.
[120] Bush, *Government Policy*, p. 9.
[121] Ellis, *Tudor Frontiers*, p. 268.
[122] PRO, SP 10/1/36, and SP 10/2/5.

Lord Dacre a warning regarding his tenants' reluctance to serve with the king's army, which suggests that not all Borderers were as anxious to receive the king's pay as the men of Northumberland were.[123] In September 1547, the invasion took place, and an English army invaded eastern Scotland through combined naval and land action, soundly defeating a combined Scottish and French army at Musselburgh (Pinkie). This battle, deemed by some military historians as one of the most significant Scottish defeats,[124] only marked the beginning of Somerset's plan, as Wharton kept busy on the West March, extending English influence across the border. By October, more than 2,600 Scottish Borderers served under his banner.[125] Somerset's obsession with garrisoning the Borders and the Lowlands began to colour his policies, and for the soldiers of Northumberland steady employment lay ahead, as it was Wharton's opinion that the Borderers would be more appropriate for garrisoning in Scotland, since other Englishmen might not be so keen to leave the comfort of the South.[126]

The establishment of an English pale in the Scottish Lowlands was the next phase of Somerset's plan. From westernmost Castlemilk to easternmost Eyemouth, the English set up garrisons, many of which employed Borderers as well as assured Scots, who continually swelled the garrison ranks.[127] In reality, the Scots suffered a crushing defeat at Pinkie, but they managed to maintain at least a semblance of an army. Until the utter collapse of the English garrisons in 1551, the English troops suffered siege after siege by the reformed Scottish armies, their French allies, and the ravages of famine and the weather. Garrison service also proved to be hugely unpopular, probably since pay was often in arrears while victuals were often of poor

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[123] *APC, 1547-50*, p. 473.
[124] Phillips admits that the defeat for the Scots was not total (*Anglo-Scots Wars*, pp. 199-200).
[125] *Addenda*, I, no. 33.
[126] *Addenda*, I, no. 49.
[127] Phillips, *Anglo-Scots Wars*, p. 201.

quality, and desertion became a problem with the English and Scottish surnames.[128]

It was easier for the Borderers to escape, as the protection of kith and kin lay just

across the frontier, and in some cases, in the Scottish dales. Conversely, the

Northumberland troops who managed to stay in their home county performed well

in providing supporting actions for the garrisons. In one such operation, Sir Robert

Bowes raised horse from both Northumbrian Marches and burned the area around

Edinburgh, earning praise from his fellow officers.[129] That activity of the light

cavalry meant that Northumberland and the other northern counties were

temporarily safe from Scottish incursion, but when the last English troops retreated

home after their grim experience in the garrisons of Scotland, the Borders once

again brimmed with the violence that was so remarkable before 1546/7.[130]

Until Elizabeth's reign, very little could be done against the Scots.

Somerset's ambitious scheme had failed when he did not utterly annihilate Arran and

his allies, and the resulting garrison plan was both expensive and risky. In the end,

Somerset did not have the military resources to follow up on his victory at Pinkie,

which allowed the Scots to fight another day. Pinkie was tantamount to just another

raid, albeit a large-scale one, France still held sway over Scotland, and the garrison

effort drained £600,000 from the treasury.[131]

For the next six years, policy towards Scotland was one of appeasement,

which was complicated by religious strife in both England and Scotland; regardless

of confessional differences, Northumberland was once again part of the front line,

despite the Treaty of Norham in 1551, which supposedly guaranteed peace along the

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[128] *CScotP*, I (1547-1563), nos. 155 and 267.

[129] *CScotP*, I (1547-1563), nos. 193 and 236.

[130] See chapter 4 for an account of the lawlessness that plagued the Border, and the efforts the Tudors spent in securing the frontier from internal discord.

[131] Hammer, *Elizabeth's Wars*, p. 43; Merriman, *Rough Wooing*, pp. 346-48; *CSPD*, Ed. VI, no. 721.

Border.[132] French troops, who had been responsible for the demise of the English garrisons in Scotland, were still present in Scotland when Mary Tudor became queen. In December 1554, Lord Conyers reported that the French captain at Dunbar and Blackness had requested a fresh supply of troops from the French crown, a cautionary move since France had opposed Mary's accession due to her ties with the Hapsburgs.[133] In a gesture of English good will, the extra garrisons at Berwick were reduced for the winter, with some of the soldiers skipping town before settling their debts.[134] The excuse was that the French threat was not immediate, and the Lord Warden saw no point in retaining troops that would not be needed until the following spring; but that February, French troops prepared to sail from Dieppe, even as the young Scottish Queen arranged for peaceful redress along the borders.[135] However, justice and redress could not appease the ambitions of the Stewarts and the Valois. In May 1557, it became clear that military action would be needed to suppress French garrisoning in Scotland. The northern magnates who could significantly contribute men for an army received commands: Westmoreland for the forward, the Earl of Derby for the rearward, Northumberland as Marshall, Cumberland for the foot, and Lord Talbot for the horse.[136] Shrewsbury's conspicuous absence from this list was compensated by his power to appoint officers as he saw fit, using the crown's suggestions as guidelines.[137] It appears that this army was not intended for invasion, but for the defence of the Borders, as the queen received a recommendation that the musters stay put in their own counties, and only

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[132] *Foedera*, XV, ff. 265-71; *Leges*, ff. 56-70; P.G. Boscher, 'Politics, Administration and Diplomacy: The Anglo-Scots Border, 1550-60', (Durham Ph.D., 1985), pp. 117-131.
[133] Boscher, 'Politics, Administration and Diplomacy', pp. 186-87.
[134] *Addenda*, VII, nos. 26 and 27.
[135] *Addenda*, VII, nos. 33 and 35.
[136] PRO, SP 15/8/7-8.
[137] *Addenda*, VIII, no. 8.

proceed to the Borders when and if the enemy invaded.[138] What looked like imminent war amounted to a series of border raids in the end, and by September, the crown made preparations for a peace treaty with the French and the Scots.[139]

Hedging its bets, the government busily augmented the manpower along the Borders.[140] Several military experts went north to supervise the Wardens of all three Marches, bringing with them their knowledge of French warfare and tactics.[141] Six hundred horsemen, from outside the Borders and the Bishopric, reinforced the garrisons in the Marches, at the council's orders, while the levies of Richmond and North Yorkshire were ordered to ready to march to Berwick at one hour's notice. Three hundred additional archers from Lancashire and Cheshire, under the lieutenancy of the earl of Derby, and another 100 from Nottinghamshire also reinforced the East March.[142] Direct orders were also issued to the officers of the borders who were absent from their offices, to return to them immediately upon pain of loss.[143]

Military organisation was still looked after even after it became apparent that war would not materialise. During the summer of 1557, the Talbots came to control virtually all of the Northern levies, with Shrewsbury appointed as the Lieutenant General for the Northern parts.[144] Westmoreland, despite his power in the border counties, was ordered to reside just outside the East and Middle Marches so that he could be used in case of emergency.[145] The Scottish Borderers, who had replenished their strength since the early 1550's, made impressive inroads along the marches,

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[138] PRO, SP 15/8/9.

[139] *Addenda,* VIII, no. 37.

[140] *Addenda,* VIII, no. 11. The council debated over military supplies for the West March, agreeing that no fines should be taken from the King's and Queen's tenants there so that tenants could better arm themselves.

[141] *Addenda,* VIII, no. 14.

[142] PRO SP 15/8/ 16-19.; *APC,* VI, p. 114 and pp. 119-20.

[143] *Addenda,* VIII, no. 20.

[144] *Addenda,* VIII, no. 31.

[145] *Addenda,* VIII, no. 33.

forcing the Percy Earl of Northumberland to propose the utter wastage of Scotland

with a great army, a hark back to the old strategy of annihilation. Despite such

efforts, the English were powerless to stop the Scots from raiding the border, as they

did in August. Even with a dashing counter-raid made by Sir Henry Percy,[146] his

brother the earl begged more men from the Lieutenant, despite the fact that he raised

1000 men for Berwick just a few days later, although he did point out that in doing

so he weakened the rest of the county since none would be left to guard the remote

areas of the frontier.[147] Such pinprick raids by the Scots created invasion scares,[148]

and the Council worried that constant alarms would excessively burden the military

infrastructure.[149] Thus most of the levies that had been raised in the summer of 1557

were sent home.[150] This caused a commotion amongst the March officers, who

appealed to the queen for an army. The request was granted in September, although

Shrewsbury was cautioned not to raise an army until the Scots had materialised.[151]

Throughout the conflicts of 1557-60, it is apparent that the Marchers played

a military role that was steadily becoming irrelevant. Northumberland only

contributed 1,200 men to Elizabeth's war effort, many of them as foot, a marked

change from their predominant role as light cavalry.[152] Part of the demise of the

light horse was due to the military revolution that was occurring on the Continent

and in the British Isles. By the 1550's, the militia reforms of Henry's children had

begun to eclipse the light horse in favour of the more versatile demi-lancer.[153]

Equipped with three-quarter length armour and high riding boots, the demi-lancer

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[146] This raid was reported in August 1557. Talbot MSS D. f. 74; *Addenda*, VIII, no. 52(2).

[147] *Addenda*, VIII, no. 66 and 70.

[148] Addenda, VIII, no. 70. The sight of French ships off the coast of Berwick sparked new fears that there might be a landing at Berwick.

[149] PRO, SP 15/8/33.

[150] Ibid., Boscher, 'Politics, Administration and Diplomacy', p. 268.

[151] Talbot MSS. D. f. 184.

[152] PRO, E 101/64 ff.3-12.; E 351/225; SP 15/8/52.

[153] BL, Harl. MSS 643 ff. 165 and 258.

was heavy enough to contend with men-at-arms, but also flexible enough to act as a scout; most of all, his armour was much cheaper. With the passing of the War Horses act in 1542, the demi-lancer began to overtake most forms of cavalry, including traditional men-at-arms.[154] Of the four thousand heavier cavalry that had accompanied Hertford to Pinkie, Patten comments that the majority were in fact demi-lancers.[155] Two thousand light horse cavalry, most of whom were undoubtedly from the Borders, also accompanied the force, and the day before Black Saturday they dominated the Scots light cavalry at Fawside Brae.[156] Yet their role was quickly eclipsed. It was clear as early as November 1547 that Somerset intended to demote his light cavalry on the borders when he ordered Lord Grey to audit the Border soldiers who resided within his jurisdiction.[157] As Northumberland soldiers began to fill the garrisons in Scotland, the triumph of the Border horse at Fawside Brae began to fade, their obsolescence having been reported to Somerset in 1549.[158] The military reforms that had taken place on the continent finally reached the Borders. Although light cavalry still had a role to play, it was obvious that in order to counteract the French, then the English would have to place more emphasis upon heavier cavalry that were designed to move quickly, but engage enemy forces as well. This was the crux of the light cavalry's decline, since the border foray had little political use after the 'rough wooing' had failed.

Beginning that year, the Wardens of the Marches were ordered to examine whether or not pensioners and dalesmen serving as light horsemen on the Borders were an unprofitable burden, indicating that the government saw no further use for

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[154] John Goring, 'The Military Obligations of the English People, 1511-58' (University of London Ph.D., 1955), pp. 39-41.

[155] William Patten, The Expedition into Scotland, 1547, In A.F. Pollard (ed.), Tudor Tracts 1532-1588 (Westminster: Constable, 1903), pp. 77-8. Patten lists the 4,000 mounts under the command of Sir Ralph Vane.

[156] Patten, Expedition, pp. 100-102.

[157] Addenda, I, no. 52.

the Northern horsemen.[159] There was also a call for the reforms of any abuse

regarding soldiers. In April, Lisle issued a proclamation for the reform of all light

horse of the Borders, accusing them of breaching 'the auncient discipline of war.'

Reiving, corruption, and dereliction of duty were a few of the specific charges, as

well as accusations against the officers who refused to reside in their districts.[160]

These reforms suggest that by 1549, Northumberland was in a state of military

decline, if not disorder, considering the signs of decay in military leadership.

This tendency became more pronounced, especially when war with Scotland

loomed as it did during Mary's reign. Her marriage to Philip of Spain brought the

England into the Habsburg-Valois conflicts, so that the French were forced to

redouble their efforts in Scotland. Military aid from Spain, on the other hand, never

materialised; instead, much of England's military resources went to the continent to

aid in Philip's wars there. In 1554, Border instability once again had worsened when

French troops were once more active in Scotland; Mary sought to keep her borderers

in a constant state of readiness, [161] but shortage of funds meant that there were fewer

Border horse in wages than before. That April, Ralph Grey received from the crown

an indenture for the barony, castle, and manor of Wark, agreeing to keep eight

soldiers and two gunners, to serve according to the "customs of the borders,"

meaning that they were most likely serving with either for reduced pay or *gratis*.[162]

Considering the importance of Wark, this was a pathetically small garrison,

compared to the fifty-five regular mounted soldiers and forty-two irregular Border

cavalry that comprised the constable's retinue in the late 1530's.[163]

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[158] BL, Add. MSS 32657 f. 52.

[159] *Addenda*, III, no. 55.

[160] Paul L. Hughes and James F. Larkin (eds.), *Tudor Royal Proclamations*, II, (London: Yale University Press, 1964).

[161] *Addenda*, VII, no. 15.

[162] *Addenda*, VII, no. 19.

[163] PRO, E 36/173 ff. 114-15.

The desire to imbue the English with a modern military precluded the dalesmen from any English military reform, although they were still expected to perform Border service. Despite their diminishing role, the crown still employed Northumberland troops as late as 1557. Nearly 1200 troops from the East and Middle Marches were serving under the Wardens, 450 of which were despoiled Marchers collecting 12*d.* per day. The rest earned 9*d.* per day, a considerable sum.[164] However, many of these men were also likely from the settled areas that the Scots wasted with their increasing raids, as there was a renewed call for Northumberland Borderers to be kept from wages,[165] indicating that the crown was attempting once again to avoid employing dalesmen.

Throughout the summer and fall of 1557, the employment opportunities for the Northumberland soldiers fluctuated. During the summer, Percy complained that the garrisons of the East and Middle Marches, which used to number 2,500 men, were only numbering 1150. The Border horsemen were worn and wasted, while few could afford to serve any further for that year. In November, the Privy Council ordered the garrisons to refit with soldiers who did not owe Border service, except for 300 young men who lost all holdings and farms due to Scottish raiding and wastage.[166] As costs rose, the government became adamant that the gentlemen Marchers force their tenants into rendering defensive services *gratis*, a move that would have proved vastly unpopular since it would have forced the surnames to thieve once again for their maintenance. Although the earl proposed using the sheriff to enforce the slackness of the northern gentlemen, he cautioned that doing so might make the position of sheriff unpopular.[167]

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[164] *Addenda,* VIII, no. 52 (1).
[165] *Addenda,* VIII, no. 55.
[166] PRO, SP 15/8/41-46.
[167] *Addenda,* VIII, no. 41.

Logistics and manpower proved to be stumbling blocks for the crown, and focal points for disagreements amongst its officers for the remainder of the campaign season. North Yorkshire, which was primarily responsible for sending horsemen to the Earl of Northumberland, was able to supply only 300 of the 400 soldiers that the queen and Council had requested. The queen was adamant about her original orders: 400 horsemen from Yorkshire would be sent to the borders, regardless of Shrewsbury's fear that there would be a general shortage of equipment. The earl complained to his subordinates about the free-holders—the suppliers of the horsemen—who lacked 'not ability but good will.' Percy also thought that some of the foreign mercenaries coming to the north would lack sufficient horses, rendering them useless for raids and border warfare, unless they were primarily used as garrison troops in keeps and towns.[168] Logistical problems, coupled with the loss of Calais in January 1558, prompted the Council to redouble their efforts in the North from fear that the French would do likewise with their garrisons in Scotland.[169] A commission for investigating the decay of the Border service was also suggested, and it was again encouraged to 'retayne as fewe of them [Borderers] as may be considering that they have at all tymes served when soever they are called, for their owne defence, without charging the Prynce.'[170] In order to enforce such policy, the Council suggested Wark castle as the residence for the Warden, for the surety of the area and to remind the inhabitants of their military obligations.[171] Additional mercenaries also came to Newcastle from Flanders, numbering 3,000 and, under the auspices of an English muster-master, fitted into the northern military apparatus at great cost.[172] By July 1558, nearly 9,000 able-bodied soldiers were present in the

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[168] *Addenda*, VIII, no.47, 48, 49 and 51.
[169] *Addenda*, VIII, no. 63.
[170] *APC*, VI, pp. 399 and 405.
[171] *Addenda*, VIII, no. 55.
[172] *Addenda*, VIII, no. 102, 103, 104 and 105.

Borders, at a monthly cost of over £10,000, which the crown could not afford as wages were in arrears since the previous April.[173] The cost was justifiable, though, since no real invasion ever materialised due to the clear deterrent. Instead, both sides resorted to hit and run tactics, so that the desultory raids marked the only significant military activity versus Scotland in Mary's reign.

It was not until 1560 that the English had the strength to invade Scotland once again. This time it was against Leith, and the presence of Mary of Guise, who ruled in the stead of Mary Stewart. Again, logistical problems undermined the English determination to bring the Franco-Scottish forces to battle.[174] When a party of Scots and French began to re-fortify Eyemouth, the Warden of the East and Middle Marches, Sir Ralph Sadler, urged the young Queen into action.[175] Northumberland once again provided the stage for the battle. In December, the Queen dispatched 4,000 men to Berwick, and sent a fleet with arms and provisions, with the naive hope that perhaps the navy might catch the French ships unaware and win the much-needed victory at sea, rather than on land.[176]

The campaign of 1560 had begun to show the effect of the wars upon the Northumbrians. It was arguable whether the men of Northumberland were going to be of much use in the invasion.[177] Already they had slipped from the crown's payrolls in 1557 since their use as light cavalry had been eclipsed by the heavier demi-lances that the foreign mercenaries provided. Since they were unable to provide the expensive armour that could counter that of the French, Border cavalry was useful for little else other than scouting and reconnaissance. Their numbers of men with adequate arms and mounts had already begun to slip, and it was reported

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[173] *Addenda*, VIII, no. 112.
[174] *CSPF*, 1559-60, nos. 13, 73, 114 and 141.
[175] *Sadler Papers*, II, p. 173.
[176] *Sadler Papers*, II, pp. 176-9.
[177] Cruickshank, *Elizabeth's Army*, pp. 208-209.

that many had resorted to theft once again, preferring the soft money that marauding and blackmail brought.[178]

At the same time, Sir James Croftes, the Captain of Berwick, marked the excellent horsemanship of the Northumberland men.[179] This no doubt encouraged the Elizabethan government to enter some Northumbrians on the payroll for the upcoming campaign.[180] The role that they played is unclear, although they most likely provided a cavalry screen for the advancing army. Once at Leith, they were of little use in the siege itself, except to act as foragers and scouts in case the Scots might try to relieve the siege. The siege itself was both costly and bloody, and for the English, it was a military defeat, although the French garrison eventually surrendered after being starved into submission.[181] The only soldiers who seemed to have executed their task well were the Northumberland men, so much so that their officers once again praised their martial acuity.[182] This contingent of Northumbrian Border cavalry, many of them from former thieving families who now depended upon legitimate soldiering as a livelihood, was the last to fight in an official war against the Scots.

Warfare with Scotland during the mid-Tudor dynasty was at best a messy affair. For much of the time, Henry VIII had vied to bring the Scots to battle, scheming with the Northumberland men, especially the surnames, to aid him in his endeavour to have Scotland for his own. For the men of Northumberland in general, their role in warfare only partially diminished when the crown decided to allocate enough funds to bring in a more modern army. The light horse of the Northumberland dales was really of no use in a siege environment, unless used as

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[178] BL, Calig. B VIII f. 106; *Ibid.* B VII f. 440; *Sadler Papers*, II, p. 16.
[179] *CSPF*, 1558-59, no. 289.
[180] PRO, SP 59/3/30.
[181] *CSPF*, 1559-60, nos. 220-4.
[182] PRO, SP 52/3/185 and 193.

escorts as they had been during the Boulogne campaign of 1544, but the siege of Leith proved that they still had a place in the military schemes of the Tudors, if only as scouts. Yet despite the successes of the English Border cavalry at Solway Moss and Pinkie, there was enough fight left in the Scots to ensure that the men of Northumberland were not adequate for conducting protracted, modern warfare. Worse still, the Tudor efforts to promote guerrilla warfare in the borders brought about the ultimate demise of the military power of the English surnames, who, after accustoming themselves to royal wages from 1540 onwards, soon found themselves without the protection of the royal garrisons, which the crown could scarcely afford after 1560. There was no solution to the military decay that had set into the Borders after 1560, as the indignation of the Scots Borderers had become aroused, while modern firearms and equipment remained far too expensive for the average Borderer. In their fury, the Scots began to despoil Northumberland in a manner not seen since the days of Edward II. The reasons for increasing Scottish success are rooted in demography as much as politics. First, the Scottish Borders were more populous, and there was much more husbandry than in the wastes of the English borders. However exhausted the English Borderers might have been in terms of manpower and money, the Northumberland defences were not left entirely decayed. The military infrastructure of the Marches went through considerable reforms in the mid-Tudor dynasty.

Castles, Towers and Fortifications

The approach to frontier warfare in the British Isles was uniform in that it depended upon manpower and blockhouse-style defences. Since there was no real strategy of co-ordinating the use of soldiers and forts, everything was accomplished on an ad hoc basis. That said, the English expended vast amounts of money and

effort in introducing modern fortifications in the Border. The earthen ramparts of Somerset's garrisons were ample enough to withstand artillery, but this was not enough. David Parrott has noted that fortifications were simply useless if there was no means of attacking the besiegers. In other words, without a relief army, new fortifications were just as likely to be overrun by the enemy since modern siege techniques were effective even against ramparts and bastions.[183] The policy of refitting medieval walls that were vulnerable to the new forms of artillery might further suggest that the English were naïve regarding modern military techniques. The English were on a steep learning curve, and knowledge of fortifications gradually seeped into the Anglo-Scottish borders, but there was little in the end that was accomplished in terms of building new fortifications.

Gunpowder arms in general were quicker to take root in Ireland and Calais than in the Northern Marches, and the fortifications erected reflect the growing use of guns. However, the Irish Marches were much more fluid than those of Calais were. The four loyal counties of Ireland—Dublin, Kildare, Louth and Meath created a core English Pale, but the Marches and their abutting wastelands stretched to the west coastline, through the foreign, Gaelic-speaking lands of the Celtic Irish. Unlike Calais, whose borders were international demarcations, the Irish Marches were marked by chiefdoms whose loyalties often wavered. As a result, the Irish Marches swelled during times of peace, but often shrank back to the English Pale—and sometimes further—during open rebellion. The lawlessness of fifteenth-century Ireland prompted the Yorkist and early Tudor administrations to concentrate on the containment of the Gaelic border chieftains via the use of strongholds. Fortifications around the Pale were used to re-strengthen the Irish marches, with

[183] David Parrott, 'The Utility of Fortifications in Early Modern Europe: Italian Princes and Their Citadels, 1540–1640', *War in History*, vol. vii, pt. 2 (2000) pp. 127–153.

newly erected towers in Noragh, Lackay and Kilkullen protecting the exposed areas of the Kildare lordship.[184] The earl of Kildare was primarily responsible for the security of these troubled borderlands, yet it allowed him a free hand in local politics. Ultimately, both the king and the allied Anglo-Irish nobility were dependent upon each other; the regional nobility sought to legitimise their consolidation of power and found a convenient avenue in the service of the English king, whose power in turn rested in the presence of a co-operative local magnate. Magnates like Kildare built fortresses with royal license and used the opportunity to expand their power at the expense of the Gaelic chiefs.

Calais relied more on modern fortresses for its defences, as the Anglo-French conflict had introduced England modern firearms and artillery. The Pale of Calais was also clearly defined, unlike its Irish counterpart. Instead of relying upon frontier barons to police Calais, the governor was often chosen from the English aristocracy.[185] Well-armed castles and blockhouses created the frontier that surrounded Calais, which itself was well-fortified with thick walls and artillery.[186] The fortifications of the Pale served as a screen for the main fortress at Calais, thereby giving the English commander multiple lines of defence. Unlike Ireland and Scotland, the proximity of Valois garrisons meant that light cavalry were reserved for forays and ambushes, and the occasional raid.[187]

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[184] S.G. Ellis, *Reform and Revival: English Government in Ireland, 1470-1534* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1986), p.59.
[185] Charles Cruickshank, *Henry VIII and the Invasion of France* (Stroud: Alan Sutton, 1990), pp. 20-23
[186] David Grummitt, "The Defence of Calais and the Development of Gunpowder Weaponry in England in the Late Fifteenth Century" *War in History*, vii (2000), pp. 253-72. Cruickshank, *Invasion of France*, p. 21.
[187] Calais primarily focused upon trade, and most of the subjects engaged in the port's lively commerce. Although it was created to help finance the garrisons of the town and Pale, the wool Staple was active in trading English wool on the continent, and was largely responsible for the local economy. Despite its authority over the merchants courts, the Staple largely reported to the governor, whose power and authority surpassed the commissions of all other offices in the town and Pale.

England's lack of military resources set English strategies apart from those of European military theorists. The Northumbrians' dependence upon light cavalry to patrol the borders reflected similar practices in Ireland and on the continent,[188] but unlike European armies, the Anglo-Scottish Marchers generally were not inclined towards sieges, which continental military theorists saw as central to victory. Instead, Marchers relied upon the terrain for much of their defence, as most of the ground in the wastes of the frontiers was—and still is to this day—an impassable maze of quagmires and steep fells. However, military practices began to change in the mid-sixteenth century. Artillery and siege craft played a large role during the 'rough wooing', and was indispensable in reducing the English garrisons that Somerset had erected. The Northumbrians found that their niche as light cavalry made them liable for military service outside their traditional theatre, and rather than serving as Border guards, they provided pickets for besieging armies, escorts for artillery trains and as relief columns for besieged English garrisons.

The instability of the Borders and the war with Scotland meant that the other main concern of the Tudor government was the re-fortification of the North, especially the Borders, the coast of Northumberland and Northern Yorkshire. Without sturdy buildings to accommodate the garrison troops of Cromwell and Henry, defending the Marches would have been much more difficult. The surveys commissioned by the government encapsulated Henry VIII's plans for the north: a string of fortifications with new, angled walls in the continental fashion. Yet these fortifications served another purpose: they were symbols of Henry's authority, and were meant to intimidate and overawe, thereby deterring rebellion or invasion. First Cromwell and then the king actively governed the re-fortification of the north, so

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[188] Thomas Arnold, *The Renaissance at War*, (London: Cassell, 2001) p. 112.

that any imperfection or hindrance could be swiftly dealt with. This strategy assumed that the government would have means by which it could assert itself: garrisons (castles and keeps), and officers, who would collect fines and sureties from the local borderers, both as an assurance of good behaviour, and as a means to finance local defences. However, the crown would have to subdue the areas that had significantly contributed manpower to the rebellion. Many of these were in the trouble areas of the Marches, especially Tynedale and Redesdale. Henry VIII sought to put these wild areas under his firm control, by reinforcing existing bastions, and creating new strongholds.

In the spring of 1537, the Privy Council commissioned a handful of Northern gentlemen to take surveys of the fortresses and castles of Northumberland, and to give specific details and reports of the their conditions. Even Yorkshire came under scrutiny as the Pilgrimage rebels had besieged Skipton Castle; the Earl of Cumberland's survey of Knaresborough castle suggested that the crown ought to use it as a staging point for all military activity in the area.[189] Letters patent gave the keepership of Scarborough castle to Sir Ralph Eure, who reported that the outer walls had been shot down.[190] For the most part, though, the crown and the Council concentrated their efforts within the Marches. For the rest of the year, the government in the south was busy with executing the remainder of the rebels it had captured, while busily dealing with the military surveys that began to filter in from the Border counties.

In the spring of 1538, the Council of the North surveyed the castles at Harbottle, Alnwick, Bamborough, Dunstanborough, and Warkworth for their military worth. Dunstanborough, rotting and collapsed, no longer held any military

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[189] *LP*, XIII(1) no. 286.
[190] *LP*, XIII(1) no. 45.

value, but the others offered strategic positions and intact structures.[191] Wary of

expensive repairs the Council of the North reported that no castle in Northumberland

needed attention, except for Wark, and that no castle needed any garrison beyond

that of a constable and his command, or roughly fifty men.[192] The northern

government was wary of the financial burden that a large garrison force would

impose on the region. Moreover, they were wary of the heavy costs that re-

fortification would bring to the impoverished Northumbrians, a sign that they were

already willing to enforce an agenda that differed from that of the crown.

Nevertheless, the Council of the North could not hold out for long. When Robert

Horsley repaired to his command at Bamborough, he found it wholly unusable due

to water leakage. He immediately requested instructions from the king, and what he

should do with his men until the castle underwent serious repairs.[193] Henry's

reaction was surprise at the condition of the fortress, as he was forced to send

another survey around the North to examine the castles and make certificates of

repairs. This small misstep by the Council probably contributed to Robert Holgate,

Bishop of Llandaff, replacing Cuthbert Tunstall, Bishop of Durham, as President of

the Council in June 1538.[194] This year saw more concern for the castles within

Yorkshire, indicating the paranoia of rebellion that followed in the wake of the

Pilgrimage. Sir Marmaduke Constable and Sir Rafe Ellerkar surveyed Pickering

castle, and made an additional report on the state of Scarborough castle and its lack

of guns.[195] Lord Scrope of Bolton and Lord Conyers made additional surveys of

Richmond and Middleham castles, taking note of the military value of the buildings

and the number of guns available to the castle defences. The fact that guns were

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[191] *LP*, XIII(1) no. 335.
[192] *LP*, XIII(1) no. 60.
[193] *LP*, XIII(1) nos. 360 and 361.
[194] *LP*, XIII(1) no. 1269.
[195] *LP*, XIII(1) nos. 591 and 597.

included in this might suggest the military machinations of Henry, who was mostly interested in seeing his armies fitted with modern weaponry.[196] It was most likely that Henry was confiscating private artillery collections in the aftermath of the rebellion. Such guns would be useful in any campaign against the Scots, and would provide counter-battery support in any siege. The Council of the North completed its compendium of the castle surveys by the summer of 1538 and provided the Privy Council with a list of primary and secondary fortifications. Those structures that were most needed for defence were foremost in the council's report, but the list also included castles and towers needed for rule of the country and for royal progresses. Secondary lines of defence against Scottish incursions were also listed, but these were given the least priority.[197]

The two main bulwarks of the Borders, Carlisle and Berwick, received special commissions for repairs in 1537. Because of their inherent importance, the repairs in both cities took several years, with each castle gaining an outer rampart and wall in the continental fashion, or *trace italienne*. In Berwick, the Captain of the castle, Sir Thomas Clifford, who petitioned the king to compensate the expenses that he had paid out of his own pocket, closely supervised the construction.[198] The new walls of Berwick accompanied stricter rules for protection of the town, which were personally written up by Thomas Cromwell. These included reforms of the town garrison, which ensured that each soldier resided in the town and was competent in his craft. The night watch was to be enforced, and no livestock were allowed near the new walls. The lands assigned to Berwick were also insufficient for supporting

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[196] In fact, the limited military revolution that occurred in England during this time was not necessarily confined primarily to the south, as Professor Parker has suggested. Many of the castles in the north appear to have contained weaponry that was as modern as that of southern fortresses. Berwick and Carlisle especially had modern artillery.

[197] *LP*, XIII(1) no. 706.

[198] *LP*, XIII(1) appendix 35.

the garrison; these were augmented by statute.[199] Finances for Carlisle were also

paid straight from the king's coffers, and the king took a vested interest in seeing the

fortifications built in a timely manner. By 1541, progress on Carlisle's outer walls

had slowed; there was news that Sir Thomas Wentworth, the keeper of the castle,

had supposedly interfered with the engineer, Stephan von Haschenberg. This

angered the king, whose ensuing letters demanded more cooperation amongst his

officers, and a special commission was designed to oversee the progress of the

engineers.[200] Henry's attentions were focused primarily upon Berwick and Carlisle,

and he was content to finance those operations directly from his coffers.

Throughout the rest of the Marches, though, finances for the refurbishment of the

major forts were to be raised locally, from the profits of the sheriffwickes.[201] In

Northumberland, Durham, and Cumberland, responsibility for augmenting the

fortified manors and towers that dotted the landscape rested squarely upon the

shoulders of the local gentry who either owned or resided in castles.

Although Bowes' ethnography of the surnames comprises the better-known

part of his surveys of 1541 and 1551, the chief subject of both projects was the state

of fortifications. Bowes also provided a statement of ownership of each pele and

castle that was within striking distance of the frontier so that the Council were

apprised of which gentlemen Marchers had fulfilled their military obligations.[202]

This survey reveals to a large extent the numerous fortified dwellings in the

Marches: literally dozens of peles and barmkins, many of which were in need of

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[199] *LP*, XV, no.465(parts 2 and 3).

[200] *LP*, XVI no. 959.

[201] Ellis, *Tudor Frontiers*, p. 54.

[202] The surveys do not include the numerous towers and peles of the settled coastal plains. This has given the impression that the survey was half-completed. In reality, the survey was intended for the "hot spots" of Northumberland—those places that formed the first line of defence against the Scots, as well as trouble districts like Tynedale, Redesdale and to some extent Coquetdale. Since raids rarely came as far south as Morpeth, it was most likely seen as an unnecessary expense to survey the entire March.

repairs. Of the principal border fortresses—Wark, Ford, Norham, Etal, Chillingham, Harbottle, Simonburn, Chipchase, Halton and Haughton—three needed repairs. Etal, which Lord Tailboys owned, was the most decayed. Harbottle was a close second, but Bowes placed more importance upon this structure because of its traditional role in policing Redesdale. The Duke of Suffolk seconded Bowes' opinion regarding Harbottle in 1543, when in yet another survey of the East and Middle Marches, he suggested to the king that chiefly Harbottle castle ought to be rebuilt due to its strategic importance.[203] Haughton was also decayed, having just been ransacked by the Thorlieshope band of Liddesdale.

Fortification of the Marches continued with varying degrees of success in the 1540's. As the new Warden in 1546, one of Bowes' chief responsibilities was to ensure that the primary castles of the Middle Marches, Wark and Alnwick, were in defensible array.[204] Harbottle castle still stood in ruins, and the Wardens plotted to have the owner pay for immediate repairs.[205] New fortifications in Tynemouth needed 200 men and a captain for the garrison, along with artillery pieces from Newcastle, something that required a bit of a scramble on the part of the governors.[206] In the West March, the continuing fortification of Carlisle was in temporary disorder as Shrewsbury wrote that there were no statutes for the order of the castle, town, or citadel.[207] Although Hertford had used his power to install a newly appointed gunner, Robert Sutton, this appointment was hampered by differences of opinion between the chief officers of the town.[208] Sir John Lowther and Lord Wharton were quarrelling over where the guns of Carlisle might be

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[203] *LP*, XVIII(2) no. 538.
[204] *LP*, XX(1) no. 535.
[205] *LP*, XX(1) no. 1120.
[206] *LP*, XX(1) no. 613.
[207] *LP*, XX(1) no. 580.
[208] *LP*, XX(2) no. 187.

positioned, and ultimately who controlled the fortifications, a debate that required

the Earl of Shrewsbury's interference. Some of the ordinance in Carlisle was rotten,

and most lacked sufficient shot, the supplies being used by the military activity of

1544-45, and both officers blamed the other for its state. Progress with the city walls

and the new citadel had slowed so much that Carlisle was ordered to be abandoned

in the face of any great Scottish army that might present itself before the walls,

although this plan was discarded when the inhabitants demonstrated their

willingness to defend the town by giving aid for the construction of new

fortifications, which needed only a small amount of hard cash for edification.[209]

Berwick, on the other hand, held better-quality artillery, but still lacked the stores

sufficient for defending the Eastern March.[210] Improvement on the buttresses was

dragging, though; Thomas Gower wrote that work on the castle went slowly for lack

of carriage.[211] Near the end of June 1546, the crown received another report of the

main border fortresses: Wark, Berwick, and Carlisle. Berwick, as it turns out, was

already in the market for new, Italian-style fortifications.[212] Berwick castle was also

to receive a new brewhouse in order to better accommodate the gathering army.[213]

The death of Henry in 1547 did not put an end to the fortress building in

Northumberland. It was under his son, Edward VI, that the gun-fort at Holy Island

was built.[214] Although much of the war effort in Scotland detracted from the

edification of fortresses in Northumberland, there was still concern for the state of

the March castles. This was the cause of Bowes' new survey in 1551, which

reported that the castles had lapsed even further into a state of decay. The weather

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[209] *LP*, XX(2) nos. 1167 and 1221.
[210] *LP*, XX(2) nos. 491, 581 and 582.
[211] *LP*, XX(2) no. 699.
[212] *LP*, XX(2), no. 1077. Elizabeth's Border engineers have taken most of the credit for the introduction of continental-style fortifications, but these constructions were most likely begun under the auspices of her father.
[213] *APC*, (1547-50), p. 680.

of the Borders necessitated yearly repairs on all fortress walls, a practice that had

slipped since operations had shifted north into Scotland. The former fortresses of

Harbottle, Etal and Wark had all fallen into such disrepair due to the owners'

inability to maintain the expensive repairs that they could scarcely house small

garrisons.[215] Ultimately, it was Queen Mary who had to deal with the state of decay

in the Northumberland castles, a direct result of the policies of her father and his

immediate successors.

It was hoped in 1554 that the restoration of Wark castle to Ralph Gray might

improve the state of the castle, by giving it a resident landlord. The order for Gray's

restoration as the rightful owner indicated that the crown was reluctant to hand over

an important Border castle, one that it had invested heavily in over the years.

Considering the good service that his relatives had rendered in defending the border,

the Queen could not justify placing the control of the castle in her hands.[216]

However, Gray was bound over for £500 to insure that he continued to see to its

repair.[217] This was not seen through, as in July 1557 there was astonishment in the

court regarding the un-preparedness of Wark castle; a sharp letter to Wharton

followed shortly thereafter, ordering him to put the Marches in readiness for their

defence, and to cause the captain of Wark to return to his post.[218] It is unclear what

happened to Wark that year, but evidence suggests that it was subjected to a raid by

French troops and ruined.[219] The Percy earl begged the Queen to take charge of the

castle, as Gray had proven himself as inadequate for the upkeep of such an important

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[214] *Addenda,* III, no. 21.
[215] *Addenda,* IV, no. 30.
[216] *Addenda,* VII, no. 19.
[217] *Addenda,* VII, no. 20.
[218] *Addenda,* VIII, no. 25.
[219] K.H. Vickers (ed.), *A History of Northumberland,* vol. 11 Northumberland County History Committee (Newcastle: A. Reid, 1922).

stronghold.[220] Much like her brother, Mary found the upkeep of the Northern castles both expensive and daunting, and very little was done in the way of substantial repairs during her reign.

Border forts were still an important factor in royal policy during the early years of Elizabeth I. However, the problems that plagued the earlier reigns were still extant. Sir John Forster, captain of Bamborough, received a rebuke for refusing to reside at his office, and for the general dilapidation of the castle itself. Regardless of the castle's uselessness in terms of its defensive properties, the crown still urged Forster to reside in his office in order to at least keep a royal presence in the area.[221] This is quite telling of the state of the castles in the North: ancient, decrepit and rapidly losing any functional capability. Berwick was the only castle to receive any modifications that allowed it to function within the bounds of sixteenth-century warfare.[222]

Fortresses and castles were perceived as being critical for establishing royal control in the North just after the rebellion of 1536. Many of these had weathered years of Border warfare. Some, like Ford, were beaten down during Scottish campaigns, only to be rebuilt by their owners. Others, like Etal, suffered heavily and were consequently ignored by their owners. The Tudor policy of keeping the forts in a functional state was inseparable from the policing that the Marches witnessed in the later years of Henry VIII. However, the difficulty that the Tudors had in maintaining a strong presence in the form of castles not only reveals the startling weakness of the crown's position in the Marches, but also demonstrates the difficulty that the Tudors experienced in imposing their will upon the Marchers of Northumberland.

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[220] *Addenda,* VIII, no. 52.
[221] Addenda, VIII, no. 83.
[222] Addenda, VIII, no. 89.

As the following chapters will show, improved responses to military obligation, better-defined military leadership and overall acceptance of the king as overlord imbued the Northumberland Marchers with a military identity that attached itself to the burgeoning Tudor state, so that the Marchers would never again be the utterly alien creatures and rebels that they had been during the depredations of 1536-37.

Chapter Four: Policing the Anglo-Scottish Frontier

During the Anglo-Scottish conflict that lasted nearly three hundred years,

Northumberland provided England with front line soldiers for the Anglo-Scottish frontier

defences. Every segment of Northumbrian society furnished soldiers for military service in

the Borders: the burgesses of Newcastle and Berwick, the rural gentry and their tenants,

and the surnames—clannish, militarised highland families who occupied the upland dales

of North Tynedale and Redesdale—led by their heidsmen, or chieftains. As Gervase

Philips has noted there is no doubt that the Borders provided Henry VIII with an excellent

source of light cavalry.[1] Yet the Percys and the Dacres, arguably the two most powerful

families in the North, fell from power by 1536, which meant that the crown no longer had

the leading March nobility to maintain the defence of the Borders. The armed rising of

1536 known as the Pilgrimage of Grace underscored how weak the king's military

presence in Northumberland had grown, while the looming war with the Franco-Scottish

alliance threatened the stability of the English Marches. By summer of 1537 there began a

massive effort to resuscitate military power, and to rebuild the crumbling edifices that once

guarded the frontier.

Local studies of the Marches during the Anglo-Scottish wars have divided

Northumberland into two distinct societies: the clannish, militarised families of Border

reivers who operated between the uplands and the remote dales, and the settled families of

the lower dales and coastal plains, who formed part of what M.E. James has termed 'civil

society'.[2] However, the interaction between the crown and the English border clans during

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[1] Gervase Phillips, *The Anglo-Scots Wars, 1513-1550*, (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1999), pp. 86-87.
[2] See M.E. James, *Family Lineage and Civil Society: A Study of Society, Politics, and Mentality in the Durham Region, 1500-1640*, (Clarendon : Oxford, 1974).

the wars has been subject to differing interpretations. Unfortunately, the most recent

studies of the Pilgrimage of Grace have almost entirely neglected the Marches, thus

missing the opportunity to understand the divided nature of March society, and its

relationship with the Tudor government.[3] Yet Sheila Dietrich and Ralph Robson have shed

some light on the connection between the reiving clans and the English war effort. Robson

has argued that employing the dalesmen kept them from mischief, concluding that the

honest money of regular soldiering vastly reduced reiving and criminality.[4] Dietrich,

though, has countered that Henry VIII's overt favouritism of the 'civil' gentry drove a

wedge between them and the 'rebellious commons' by granting to the former group

pardons and official positions and fees, while throwing the clans and their heidsmen only

the occasional bone.[5]

The emphasis upon salary clouds what really mattered to the surnames: military

power and prestige. This prestige was coveted so that lesser heidsmen were willing to turn

on their rebellious kin in order to secure a position as chief heidsman. Active military

service, either as a bounty hunter in the dales or as a captain of a band of Northern horse in

the Scottish wars, was desirable, and it was the conveyance of these rewards that allowed

the Tudors the best access to the Border families. Weaknesses in the surnames' networks

provided Henry VIII and his officers the perfect opportunity to display this patronage.

Their ultimate goal was to bring most heidsmen into royal service, and do away with the

more recalcitrant members of this insular, upland society, but the cultural divide that

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[3] These include R.W. Hoyle, *The Pilgrimage of Grace and the Politics of the 1530s*, (Oxford: OUP, 2001); and M.L. Bush, *The Pilgrimage of Grace: A Study of the Rebel Armies of October 1536*, (Manchester: MUP, 1996).
[4] R. Robson, *The Rise and Fall of the English Highland Clans: Tudor Responses to a Mediaeval Problem*, (Edinburgh: East Linton Press, 1989), chapters 15-20.
[5] S.C. Dietrich, 'Liberties and Lawlessness: Reiver Society in Tudor Tynedale and Redesdale', (Cornell University Ph.D., 1973), p. 75.

separated the Border reiver from 'civil society' and the Tudor court was not easily overcome.

The problems that faced the Tudor Marches, namely the violence brought by feuds and marauding, were already centuries old. Although the Northumbrian gentry had feuded regularly in the fourteenth and fifteenth century, the reiving clans of the dales did not fully develop as a military force until the advent of the Tudor dynasty, after the ancient manorial system of Northumberland had already begun to decline significantly. The structure of the manors had fostered at least a nominal amount of stability in the dales, but without manorial courts to settle disputes, the already militaristic Northumbrian turned to violence as the only means to settle their differences. The thieving clans of Tynedale and Redesdale were supposedly subject to the justice courts of a royally appointed Warden or Keeper, but their officers often protected them from the king's justices. The Herons of Chipchase, the Lisles, and even the Dacres of Gilsland—prominent families of Border gentry who served the crown—were all accused of winking at the disorders of the Marches during the first three decades of Henry's reign,[6] an affinity that undoubtedly was reinforced by the essential military power that only the thieving clans could provide. Such protection often encouraged the Marchers, especially the inhabitants of Tynedale and Redesdale, to erupt into periodic episodes of rebellion and violence.

Northumberland was first to witness the first sparks of rebellion in September 1536, when the priors of Hexham took up arms and chased away the commissioners sent to dissolve the Abbey.[7] The military organisation of the rebels suggested that the rising was a

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[6] PRO, SP 1/10 f.18; SP 1/7 f. 381; BL Add. MSS 24965 f. 41.

[7] The best narratives for the Northumberland uprisings are in M.L. Bush, *Durham and the Pilgrimage of Grace;* M.H. and R. Dodds, *The Pilgrimage of Grace*, vol. II (Cambridge: CUP, 1915); and John Hodgson, *A History of Northumberland in Three Parts* (Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 1820-1825).

result of detailed planning,[8] and a royal servant who was witness to the uprising informed

the Privy Council that there were 'many good archers and good horsemen' amongst the

rebel host.[9] Despite its eventual defeat, the rebellion revealed the military vulnerability of

the Marches—and the entire North for that matter—when outnumbered garrisons kept to

the safety of their castles and walled towns as rebels devastated large swaths of

Northumberland.[10] More importantly, the size of the rebellion indicates that the policing

arm of the Tudor state had utterly collapsed in the Marches by 1536, providing the unruly

Northumbrians an opportunity to strengthen their independence. Still, the king was

insistent in maintaining his chief supply of border soldiers, preferring 'their reformacion

than their utter destruction.'[11]

At first, Henry's policy in the years immediately following the rebellion was to

ensure the collection of sureties and pledges to keep the clans in check. The principle of

collecting pledges was that the surnames would surrender some of their kin to a March

officer, their lives acting as guarantee for good behaviour from the rest of their clan. Large

bonds, some as high as £2,000, were also taken as surety.[12] This entailed a dramatically

larger workload for Tudor officials, since the March officers would have to collect sureties

and hostages from the very men who formed the majority of the Northumbrian military

community. The motivation for this was plain enough: pledges and sureties resulted in

royal pardons to the clans that co-operated, which kept the crown's border tenants in the

fields and out of the gaols, where they were a burden to the royal coffers and of little use in

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[8] PRO, SP 1/106 f. 256.
[9] PRO, SP 1/107 ff. 89-90.
[10] PRO, SP 1/112 f. 216.
[11] PRO, E 36/119, f. 137; Robson, *English Highland Clans*, p. 149. S.J. Gunn, *Early Tudor Government, 1485-1558* (Houndmills and London: Macmillan Press, 1995) p. 64.
[12] Often pledges would be executed or otherwise punished for the misdeeds of their surname. See PRO, SP 1/136, ff. 217-18; *ibid.* SP 1/120 ff. 146-47.

defending the frontier from the Scots clans.[13] The dalesmen were left to the control of the

Wardens and the Keepers instead of the gaolers, an arrangement that left the officers

exposed to depredation and violence since most had only small armed retinues with which

they could enforce the king's policies. This was underscored by the murder of 'Hodge' à

Fenwick, the Keeper of Tynedale and Redesdale, when he demanded that Edward

Charlton, laird of Hesleyside, and his subordinate dalesmen surrender hostages along with

all property they had seized during the rebellion. When they refused, Fenwick indicted

them on felony charges, thereby hastening his own death since he had no military

resources to ensure his own security.[14]

In general, the taking of pledges was at best a mixed bag. Firstly, it was never a

guarantee of restraint. In 1539, it was reported that the surnames continued in their

criminal behaviour without regard for the surety of their pledges.[15] Taking pledges also

required the co-operation of the clans. Heidsmen almost always would refuse to give as

many pledges demanded by royal officers, often refusing to hand over any at all.[16] When

they did, the pledges would often escape from the creaking, dilapidated jails, leaving the

March officials without any bargaining power.[17]

Pardons were also used as an inducement, though this fuelled a cycle of recidivism.

An exemplary stroke of fickle law enforcement can be seen in the case of Little John

Heron of Chipchase, a royal Border pensioner who, despite a general pardon, was the

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[13] Robson, *English Highland Clans*, p. 167. Robson's curious argument that this was their reward for somehow preventing more Northumbrians from joining the Pilgrimage should be treated with some scepticism. He reasons that by using the rebellion as a chance to plunder, the highlanders tied down a significant section of the population that would have otherwise marched with the rebels to Doncaster.

[14] BL, Calig. B I f. 133. Fenwick was victim of the age-old Marcher ambush, where he was set upon at night in order to conceal the identity of the attackers should the attack have failed.

[15] BL, Calig. B III f. 98.

[16] PRO, SP1/117 ff. 228-29.

[17] PRO, SP 1/140 ff. 77-8.

subject of an ongoing investigation for his direct involvement in the Pilgrimage. Heron's

family was also implicated in the murder of Hodge à Fenwick in 1537, which was too

much for the crown to bear. It was deemed necessary to remove this thorn.[18] Cuthbert

Charlton, son-in-law to Little John, was summarily executed for his indirect role in the

murder as well as treason, while the Duke of Norfolk, Henry's temporary Lieutenant in the

North, hounded the laird of Hesleyside and John Heron of the Hall Barns, both of whom

had abetted Fenwick's murderers. Little John read the writing on the wall and duly

surrendered to the Duke of Norfolk, and was brought to London in chains, his life bound

over to insure good behaviour from the rest of his family and tenants; his son, Giles, was

also laid in as a pledge.[19] So monumental was the investigation into Heron that it used up

most of Norfolk and Carnaby's meagre resources, and in the end the principle murderers

were never brought to justice.[20] Little John duly received the benefit of doubt from the

Privy Council since no Northumbrian in their right mind had the gall to bear witness

against the Herons. However, the execution of his son-in-law and the outlawing of his

bastard son prompted Heron to co-operate with the crown. In a troublesome move, the

crown eventually released him from prison with a pardon, albeit under sureties, and

promoted him to the Keepership of Tynedale and Redesdale.[21] The fact that Heron was

never convicted demonstrated the hesitancy of royal justice to prosecute its best source of

border soldiers. Plus, the Herons were the only family left in North Tynedale that was

capable of controlling the powerful Charlton clan, and this certainly worked in Little

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[18] PRO, SP 1/116 f. 219; Ibid. SP 1/119 ff. 94-104; The murderers of Fenwick were connected or related to the Hesleyside Charltons, who in turn were connected to Heron through his cousin, the Laird of Hesleyside.
[19] PRO, SP 1/119 ff. 54-5; ibid. 1/125 ff. 21-22 and f. 65.
[20] The evidence is scanty, but it is likely that the murderers were reconciled to the crown. See Robson, *English Highland Clans*, p. 170.
[21] Heron's career as Keeper of Tynedale and Redesdale after his release from prison is detailed in chapter 6.

John's favour. That he was a prime agitator of the Pilgrimage of Grace who was also involved indirectly in the murder of a royal officer went ignored, so long as he comported himself properly as Keeper. Giles Heron was also released from acting as pledge for his father.

Overtures of loyalty from the dalesmen who were anxious to distance themselves from their more rebellious relatives provided a better opportunity for the government to hand out more pardons and rewards. Hodge à Fenwick's fatal bungle demonstrated that better results came from the crown's direct involvement with the dalesmen, rather than through the interlopers that served as officers. This was a considerable step forward for the government as more surnames sought the emoluments of rewards and immunity from prosecution. In taking advantage of family rifts, the government guaranteed the rebellious dalesmen enough harassment to decamp from Northumberland, so that the crown was able for a short time to pair a successful policy of entanglement along with that of taking sureties. In employing the Wark and Boughthill sub-chiefs—often referred to as 'graynes'—of the North Tynedale Charlton clan as bounty hunters, the Tudor government effectively pursued the Hesleyside Charltons, who were responsible for supplying Heron with most of his men during the rebellion, and for abetting Fenwick's murderers.[22] Enrolling the dalesmen in royal service, and using them to police their own was also more appropriate considering the cost of a sizeable garrison. All that was required was an oath of fealty to the king, and each complicit heidsman was eligible to receive a bi-annual

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[22]PRO, SP 1/116 ff. 178-79. Many of the Tynedalers who entered royal service had previously joined Heron in the Pilgrimage. However, they turned against his favourite, Edward Charlton of Hesleyside, in order to distance themselves from any involvement in Fenwick's murder. In addition, the arrival of the Duke of Norfolk in the Marches just after the rebellion signalled that military operations against the dales could happen at any time.

payment of £5, which was less than the typical sum offered to the gentry.[23] Followers of

the heidsmen received no pay from the crown, as their pay came from the dividends of

spoiling the lands of outlawed Northumbrians. Such service reformed the reputation of the

Tyne-and-Redesdalers, at least for the time being. The deputy Warden of the East March,

Sir William Eure, reported that the Northumberland borders were in relatively good order

as a result of the services rendered by the heidsmen and other gentry.[24] In 1537, Gyb

Charlton of the Boughthill, known participant in the earlier rebellion, was listed amongst

others as one of the 'persons of Tynedale of good estimation' for his services to the

crown.[25]

Still, these men were still suspect, especially to Sir Reynold Carnaby, the Keeper of

Tynedale since Fenwick's murder, who did not trust any of the surnames,[26] so that even

loyal heidsmen were still expected to surrender pledges, despite being pardoned by the

king. In 1537, Gyb Charlton served as a pledge for his grayne, having already entered

royal service just after the Pilgrimage.[27] Some officials argued that such men were of better

use in their homeland, as their influence over their kinsmen could prevent them from

aiding or abetting criminals and rebels. Younger kinsmen of the loyal heidsmen were

more suitable pledges, as young men were hot-blooded and prone to provoking the deadly

feud.[28] With them safe in custody, the loyal heidsman could operate more effectively.

Still, some officials thought that the taking of pledges from the penitent Tynedalers was

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[23] PRO, E36/121 f. 32. Feeing in general was a new approach for the Tudors. The typical Cumbrian Marcher received £10 or less (BL, Calig. B II f. 263), while the Northumbrian pensioners, except the heidsmen, received as much a £20 (*Ibid*, Caligula B III ff. 203-5).
[24] *LP*, XIII(1) no. 990.
[25] PRO, SP 1/116 f. 219; SP 1/111 ff. 200-201.
[26] PRO, SP1/126 ff. 180-81.
[27] BL, Calig. B III f. 239; PRO SP 1/126 ff. 180-81.
[28] PRO, SP 1/131 ff. 56-7.

seen as a further guarantee of their good behaviour and a token of their reform.[29] Despite

their grumbling at surrendering pledges, the loyalists acted as an effective royal whip on

some of the Tynedale outlaws. The Hesleyside grayne was pursued throughout 1537 and

for the next two years, although in the end the loyalists suffered more since the outlaws

had the backing of the powerful Armstrongs of Liddesdale.[30] This folly eventually

deteriorated into a brief, violent episode, as the Redesdalers and the Tynedalers polarised

and inflicted upon each other a series of raids and counter raids, while completely ignoring

their obligation to attend their Keepers.[31] Nonetheless, there was at least some effect in the

tempting offer of royal employment, since some of the dalesmen came over to the

legitimate side, having seen Little John, their former shepherd, led away to an uncertain

fate in the Tower of London.

Henry's policy of personally appointing Northumberland gentry to March offices

was expedient for administration, but the reality was that few of his appointees were able

to enforce royal authority or policy in an advantageous manner. There was also very little

attempt by some of the officers to take a softer approach with the dalesmen; in turn, this

had a sour effect on Tudor governance in Northumberland. Sir John Widdrington, the

recently appointed Warden of the Middle March, was already proving ineffectual in 1537

as the violence in Redesdale exploded, earning him the disgust of the Duke of Norfolk.[32]

Frustrations within the Privy Council continued to mount as the appointed Keeper of

Tynedale, Sir Reynold Carnaby, temporarily vacated his post to attend court,[33] although he

was likely petitioning the king in person for more direct action against the Charltons and

[29] PRO, SP 1/136 ff. 217-8.
[30] PRO, SP 1/131 f. 167.
[31] PRO, SP 1/132 ff. 25-26.
[32] *St. P.*, V, pp. 104-5; *LP*, XII(2) no. 650.

Robsons. Sir Reynold left no vestige of royal authority in the area, except for his son,

Gilbert, the Constable of Langley, who now had to look after his father's charge.[34] The

absence of royal officers exacerbated the problem, but in fact, Carnaby's absence really

meant that there was no one to stir the hornets' nest. In his father's absence, Gilbert

Carnaby did not actively pursue the Hesleyside gang, so that most of the quarrels that kept

the surnames at odds began to die out. Heidsmen of Tynedale and Redesdale mended their

rift in Sir Reynold's absence, so that when he returned to Tynedale his redoubled efforts

further alienated the surnames that had tendered their submission.[35] Although R. Robson

has made much of his absence,[36] it is likely that the dalesmen were already irked by

Carnaby's increasing insistence that they make reparations for their spoilings in 1536-37, a

demand which had precipitated Fenwick's murder.

Moreover, Carnaby's insistence on more hostages from all graynes of each surname

damaged the ties that the councils in York and London had forged since the end of the

rebellion. When Carnaby returned to the dales late in the summer of 1538, he summoned

the loyal heidsmen to Chollerford, whereupon he seized amongst others Gyb Charlton of

the Boughthill and Gerald 'Topping' Charlton of Wark, and sent them off to the prison at

Warkworth as hostages.[37] This led to a complete breakdown of the highlanders' confidence

in the king's officers, as the custom of safe conduct to such parleys was abrogated by

Carnaby's zeal. Carnaby never reasonably explained his rationale for seizing men, most of

whom a few months earlier were listed as being of good esteem. Part of the problem lay in

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[33] *LP*, XIII(1) no. 366.
[34] BL, Calig. B III f. 246.
[35] This rapprochement was predicted by Norfolk, who commented that it was relatively impossible for the graynes to fall out irreparably with each other. PRO, SP 1/126 f. 13.
[36] Robson, *English Highland Clans*, p. 85.
[37] BL, Calig. B III ff. 251-3; PRO, SP 1/136 ff. 217-8.

the fact that many of the new officers had suffered under the surnames, and viewed them as irredeemable, further underscoring the cultural divide that separated the clans from civil society. Despite the turning of some of the unruly Northumbrians, the gentry of Hexhamshire liberty, which sat next to North Tynedale, had very little trust in the surnames. It was clear to the loyal heidsmen that they were still regarded as thieves by Carnaby and his ilk: even the report of the official muster of 1538/9 listed the loyal surnames as 'thieves'.[38] Given such attitudes, there was little to be done for reconciliation. Zealous officers thus undermined Henry's conciliatory approach, ironically so since they were only trying to assert the king's authority in the dales. The result was a very muddled policy of persecution and pardon bisected by violence, bribery and conflicting familial loyalties.

The reiving clans, frustrated by contradicting overtures from the King and their Keeper, threatened the officers who attempted to collect reparations and enormous sureties.[39] Despite the fact that Norfolk released most of the hostages when he returned to the Marches as the king's Lieutenant in early 1539,[40] the damage was already done. Such inconsistent treatment of the dalesmen no doubt weakened their faith in the king's ability to make good his own promises, especially since the bailiffs and sergeants who enforced royal authority did so in such arbitrary fashion.

Violence had already escalated in the dales in the summer and autumn of 1538. The small revolt—led by surnames that began to become wary of royal authority in the liberty

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[38] NRO, MSS ZAN M. 13/ D. 15.

[39] PRO, SP 1/136 ff. 217-18. All the while, many of the surnames began once again to entreat with the Scottish surnames of Liddesdale in the hope of reviving their old confederacy.

[40] PRO, E 36/40 f. 29. It is likely that the men were released for the mobilisation that occurred shortly thereafter, as their military experience was invaluable to Norfolk.

of Tynedale—created a situation that grew swiftly out of control. Without any reckoning

of the assurance of their relatives held as pledges, troublesome clansmen quickly used the

breakdown of royal authority to conduct raids against their neighbours and across the

Scottish border into Teviotdale. The situation quickly deteriorated as the men of Scottish

Liddesdale began to make retaliatory forays into England with the help of their English

kinsmen. Richard and Gilbert Carnaby—respectively brother and son of Sir Reynold

Carnaby, the truant keeper of Tynedale—and 26 other men chased one such raid from the

Barony of Langley back into Liddesdale. Upon crossing the Kershopefoot Burn, Scots

Borderers captured all the Englishmen, who were at length ransomed by Sir Thomas

Wharton, the deputy Warden of the West March.[41] The Council of the North reported that

the king's policy of appeasement and conciliation had failed, and it was soon apparent that

the government would have to resort to military action in the dales since the dalesmen

refused to make restitution.[42] The Warden of the English Middle March, Sir John

Widdrington, opined that ex-rebels from the Pilgrimage were the cause of the trouble in

Tynedale and Redesdale, thus underscoring the need for police action, though as winter

approached in 1538, plans for a raid into the Marches had to be postponed.[43]

It was not until the summer of 1539 that the government drew up new plans for a

raid on Tynedale and Redesdale. Sir Reynold Carnaby was, unsurprisingly, the first of the

"new men" appointed after the Pilgrimage to suggest police action on the dales.[44] He made

two brief incursions into the dales in 1537 and 1538, which did little to calm any thieving.

Instead, his actions encouraged the Charltons and Robson to a tryst with the Armstrongs of

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[41] *LP*, XIII(1) no. 1493 and *ibid.*, no. 115(part 2).
[42] *LP*, XIII(1) no. 1235. Military action against the dales was no new approach to policing; in the 1520's there was a considerable effort to place a garrison of archers at Tarset castle, although this met with disaster.
[43] *LP*, XIII(1) no. 1366.

Liddesdale.[45] In 1539, Sir William Eure, the Vice-Warden of the East March, suggested

stronger action. First, it was proposed that a pardon be granted to those inhabitants who

were not directly involved with criminals, in order to distance any potential allies the

rebels might have. At harvest, a raid from all points of the compass would beset Tynedale,

execute all men, and arrest all women and children.[46] The plan never came to fruition, as

the logistics proved to be too much for completion by the end of the fall. Most

importantly, Henry really showed little support for an all out invasion as he thought it

might further alienate the militarily significant families of Northumberland. At a time

when the king faced invasion from France, Scotland, and the Habsburg Empire, all military

resources were needed. Thus, Henry had strictly forbidden the use of fire against his

Northumbrian subjects to 'burn their houses like as in extreme war between strange

realms.'[47] Without the authority to raid into the dales, little action occurred in Tynedale

that year. Further complications arose when Carnaby and nineteen of his retainers were

kidnapped by the very men whom they had imprisoned after the Chollerford parley,[48] men

who were supposed to have tendered their submission to the king were it not for Sir

Reynold's ham-fisted law enforcement.

The Robsons of Falstone and 'Topping' Charlton thus forced the king's hand. In

January 1540, the government finally granted the authority to the new Keeper, Little John

Heron (who was freshly sprung from the Tower), to burn certain houses, but only as a last

resort in a siege.[49] This signalled the first true military action in Tynedale in many years,

[44] PRO, SP 1/140 ff. 131-33.
[45] PRO, SP 1/126 ff. 148-49; *ibid.*, SP 1/136, ff. 161-64.
[46] *LP*, XIV(1) no. 1303.
[47] PRO, SP 1/157 ff. 67-8.
[48] This occurred in July 1539, and was no doubt looked upon the by the king as the final straw in a long list of failures. Details of the abduction are listed in PRO, SP 1/152 ff. 215-7.
[49] *LP*, XV no. 85.

although the king was much more interested in seeing the malefactors brought to justice than killed in the taking. Little John helped plan the expedition, most likely with the assistance of his old friend, Edward Charlton of Hesleyside, who had managed to wrangle a pardon for his role in Fenwick's murder, in exchange for his help in bringing the kidnappers to justice.[50]

In their descent upon Falstone, which was a mere stone's throw from Hesleyside, Heron's troopers managed to capture some prisoners, but the expedition on the whole was unsuccessful in scouring Tynedale.[51] Most of the rebels targeted in the raid had already fled to Scottish Liddesdale, which was under the ineffectual Wardenship of Lord Maxwell. The clumsy advance of the English through the tangled woods of the North Tyne had only given them ample warning to flee from their shielings and lairs. The Warden of the West March, Sir Thomas Wharton, who was directed by the government to help in the co-ordination of the raid, was plaintive about the lack of results. In addition, Wharton resented that Heron had acted in virtual secrecy due to the powers as Keeper, which the king had personally given to him.[52] Given the lack of response from the king and Cromwell, Wharton lost interest as he was chasing fugitives in his own jurisdiction for most of 1540.[53] That Heron in due course secured a pardon for the Falstone gang no doubt infuriated Wharton.[54]

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[50] Edward Charlton was pardoned for his role in the Pilgrimage with a blanket pardon, which took exception to the actual Fenwick murderers- not their abettors-and Carnaby's captors. Charlton also helped to secure the release of Carnaby, and he obtained a pardon for all the offenders. PRO SP 1/152, ff. 215-17.

[51] *LP*, XV no. 120.

[52] *LP*, XV no. 119. Heron was official Keeper of Tynedale and Redesdale, which gave him a unilateral power to deal with all of the clans. It is likely that Heron saw Wharton as too extreme in his enforcement, as the Keeper was much more complementary of the king's policy of indulgence and leniency.

[53] *LP*, XV nos. 131, 160, 175-6, 191, 198, 219 and 384.

[54] BL, Harl. MSS 6989 f. 88.

In the end, the king and Privy Council grew tired of chasing outlaws and were able to save face with a direct audience with the offenders. Several of the chief heidsmen, including those responsible for kidnapping Carnaby, travelled south to London and tendered their submission in person, and the king was all too ready to indulge them.[55] Such a volte-face came more from a concern with keeping the dalesmen in line, so that they might be of use during the impending conflict with the Scots. Offering pardons was the only workable option to subduing the surnames, and this was done from time to time so long as they submitted and professed their loyalty to the crown.[56] Such reluctance to persecute the clans did not sit well with the gentry, whose tenants clamoured for redress. This never materialised, as the king insisted on sending pardons to the dalesmen via the Lieutenant Norfolk, Heron and Sir Cuthbert Radcliffe, who had recently replaced the ineffectual Widdrington as Vice Warden of the Middle Marches.[57] Overall, it was a clumsy approach to establishing royal authority in the Marches, but the crown really had no other option since it was plainly dependent upon the Marchers for security in the frontier.

When English brigands and their Scottish allies bestrode the frontier in 1540, it was clear that law enforcement in Tynedale would necessarily involve operations across the Border, which dangerously courted war with Scotland. However, since the surnames usually had cross-border relations who would give them shelter, the Tudor government did not see another option other than tactical police raids. The clans, especially the Charltons of Hesleyside, formed the *schwerpunkt* of the English police effort in 1540-41. Their usefulness in the coming actions was most likely a direct result of Little John's return to

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[55] *LP*, XVI nos. 172 and 780; *Proceedings and Ordinances of the Privy Council*, vol. 7 ed. Sir Harris Nicholas (London: HMRC, 1831), pp. 66-8. *St.P.*, I, p. 652.
[56] K.J. Kesselring, *Mercy and Authority in the Tudor State*, (Cambridge: CUP, 2003) p. 192.
[57] BL, Harl. MSS 6989 f. 87.

Chipchase. No other Keeper could claim a prominent heidsman as a relative, and Heron used his Charlton relations to good effect.[58] The first strike initiated by Heron came as a raid, a 'small matter' in which his probationary Keeper and other assorted officers killed two suspected Scottish liaisons to the North Tynedale rebels, confiscated fifty cattle, and burned three houses.[59] The limited results suggest that Heron and his ilk were unwilling to fully engage the Scots of Liddesdale, since the Robsons, Dodds and Charltons enjoyed a working relationship with most graynes of the Armstrongs and Elliots. Most likely goaded onward by their governor, the clans of Tynedale and Redesdale instead burnt two towns in Scottish Teviotdale as a means of deflecting any action against their allies, now motivated by the king's demand of 'three hurts for oone' against the Scots and the resettled English.[60] This infuriated the local Scottish lords, who clamoured for war with England. Not to be outdone, elements of Liddesdale, most likely the Elliots of Thorlieshope who had protected the English fugitives, passed through North Tynedale unmolested and burnt Little Whittington, near Halton castle.[61]

In response, Henry and Sir William Eure devised a scheme to bribe the loyal elements of Tynedale and Redesdale to murder prominent Liddesdale heidsmen.[62] Little John Heron thought this was a foolish endeavour; being from Tynedale, he knew that the surnames would rather betray their governor than spark a deadly feud with the militarily

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[58] PRO SP 1/116 f. 219; Ibid. SP 1/119 ff. 94-104. The Laird of Hesleyside was related to Heron through Cuthbert Charlton, who had married Heron's daughter. The Fenwicks, who had served as Keepers, were a prominent surname in their own right, although it was reported that they were prone to squabbling and feuding amongst themselves, which undercut their power.

[59] BL, Add. MSS 32646 f. 238; *LP,* XVI no. 1250.

[60] BL Add. MSS, 32646 f. 237; BL, Add. MSS 32646 f. 251; *LP,* XVI no. 1202.

[61] BL, Add. MSS f. 237; *LP,* XVI no. 1259.

[62] There was no accepted convention for such action, which was clearly outside the accepted boundaries of sixteenth-century armed conflict. The assassination of prominent Scots borderers was probably viewed as an easier solution to open warfare, and Henry would not have been the first European monarch to order the killing of a troublesome rival.

powerful Armstrongs and Elliots of Liddesdale, with whom both the Robsons and Charltons already shared an alliance.[63] The English dalesmen preferred to continue raiding into Teviotdale since the Scots there were not allied with them, while Heron was already entreating the Liddesdale men as a means of bringing the rest of the Falstone Robsons and Dodds back into the fold.[64] Heron's precarious arrangement would suffer from any incursions into the Armstrongs' territory. Although the confederation of the three dales— Tynedale, Redesdale and Liddesdale—would have brought the Tudors significant military resources, the monarch clearly disapproved of any alliance when Liddesdale men slaughtered a group of Fenwicks who had ridden in pursuit of stolen property.[65] The government's attempts to divorce the Northumbrians from their Scottish ties, and to bring them into royal service, were at this point only partially successful because the king and his officers had underestimated the strength of the cross-border bonds. At the same time, if Henry was to have a decent supply of Border horse for the looming war, a certain amount of indulgence towards the clans and their Keeper was required.

Nonetheless, cross-border violence by the Scots gave the English commissioners a reason for decisive action against Liddesdale. In November 1541 a group of Liddesdale men—most likely supported by the men who had connections to Heron—burned William Carnaby's hay and barns at Halton, escaping into Scotland. Two royal commissioners, Sir Rafe Ellerkar and Sir Robert Bowes and their sizeable armed retinue, happened to be in the vicinity compiling a survey of the Northumbrian defences. Bowes and Ellerkar used the power of their commission to order Little John Heron to gather the loyal men of Tynedale

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[63] *LP*, XVI no. 1264.
[64] BL, Add. MSS 32646 ff. 235-237
[65] *LP*, XVI nos. 1203 and 1211; Nicholas (ed.), *Proceedings*, VII, pp. 248-249; BL, Add. MSS 32646 f. 251.

and Redesdale by firing one of Heron's abandoned barns, creating a beacon in the night sky.[66] By blaming the conflagration upon the Liddesdale men, they were able to arouse the indignation of locals and muster a sizeable force. A quick raid into Liddesdale against the Thorlieshope Elliots produced the overall results that the Council had anticipated. No fewer than thirteen fortified houses were destroyed, the inhabitants of which either perished from exposure or were captured, although the action appeared to the Council as somewhat restrained.[67] Amongst the victims were most likely some of Heron's allies and double agents. Still, these were expendable colleagues, especially since the Council required quotas. The raid had another effect that would soon come to light: it precipitated an end to the Tynedale-Liddesdale confederation, as the clans of Liddesdale blamed the Halton raid on the Tynedalers, who they claimed had harboured the real perpetrators.[68]

After the raid, Ellerkar and Bowes rode back into Northumberland, with the success of their mission bringing them accolades from the 'honest denizens of the county', and forcing reconciliation between Heron and the Carnabys, who had been rivals since the rebellion of 1536.[69] Above all, the government had unwittingly prevented the Tynedalers from maintaining their confederacy with the Liddesdale heidsmen, an arrangement that probably would have resulted in more preying upon the Marcher gentry. Henry's ultimate goal, the subjugation of Scotland and the removal of French influence in Scottish politics, was dependent upon the co-operation of his subjects in Northumberland; hence, the policy of placating the dalesmen complemented the Tudor drive to build national defence. By

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[66] *LP*, XVI no. 1404.
[67] *LP*, XVI no. 1404. Oddly enough, there were no Scottish casualties reported, only prisoners, which angered the crown. The Council was expecting at least some casualties amongst the Liddesdale heidsmen, and probably wanted to engender a deadly feud in order to justify an invasion. The lack of casualties also suggests that Heron was not willing to engage in such extremities.
[68] BL, Add. MSS 32646 f. 270.
[69] *LP*, XVI no. 1404.

tasking the surnames with military duty, the crown achieved more order in the Marches,

yet it was not a guarantee of good behaviour from the surnames, especially now that their

former Liddesdale accomplices would be looking for revenge.

Reiving was still a problem, though, the blame for which was placed squarely upon

the shoulders of Little John Heron.[70] Heron had formed ties in Liddesdale, without which

his efforts at law enforcement would have collapsed. This technically was treason since it

was done clandestinely without the express permission of the king. Although there was

never any real indicting evidence, there was enough circumstantial proof to condemn

Heron for going too far with his trysts.[71] The chief accuser was no less than 'Topping'

Charlton, brother to one of the Fenwick slayers, and a chief supporter of the Liddesdale

alliance, who claimed that Heron intended to use the confederation as a means of sparking

a war from which he would profit. The council was wary of Charlton's accusations, as it

was possible that his testimony could have been fabricated in order to seek better favour

for his outlawed brother. It is thus impossible to determine the extent of Heron's guilt, and

R. Robson's account gives no real insight since he assumes that the singular testimony of a

thief has merit.[72] Lord Dacre's plight in the 1520's already demonstrated that it was

unrealistic to expect chief March officers not to entreat Scottish clans, as most were in

league with at least some English Border families. Regardless, the Tudor government

could not stomach the means by which Little John had achieved stability in the

Northumbrian dales. But before he could be arrested, Heron was captured at Haddon Rigg

in 1542, along with one of his chief accusers, Sir Robert Bowes. His removal, along with

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[70] BL, Add. MSS 32646 f. 259. It was mentioned as early as autumn 1541 that the raiding was most likely done with the full knowledge of Heron.
[71] *St.P*, V, p. 203.
[72] See Robson, *English Highland Clans*, p. 93.

that of his son George, who stood in disastrously as a replacement Keeper for 1542-43,[73] allowed Sir Ralph Eure to step into the office. Problems with criminality died seemingly down, but only because Eure was in the position to indulge the English clans and turn them fully against the Scottish Borders.[74]

When Little John was eventually ransomed from captivity in Scotland, he and his son were put into house arrest in Northumberland whilst the king prepared to make an example of him once and for all. The ex-Keeper was accused of treating with King James V and Lord Maxwell, the Warden of the Scottish Middle March, which amounted to the capital crime of March treason. Charges never materialised into a trial since it was found that no jury would convict either father or son for fear of the Herons' Tynedale allies.[75] The two Herons nevertheless were incarcerated until the intervention of Sir Robert Bowes, who found them 'not so culpable as was reported.'[76]

The government had demonstrated the limits of its patience regarding acceptable behaviour from the Northumbrians. The dismissals of Sir Reynold Carnaby and Sir John Widdrington in 1540, and those of the Herons and Sir Cuthbert Ratcliffe in 1543, demonstrated Henry's tendency to blame officers for any disorders under their watch. Henry VIII's largesse towards the dalesmen of Northumberland and Cumbria, and his frustrations towards the officers, who could not keep them under control, only exacerbated the cultural divide between highlander and lowlander. Many of the men in royal pay were at one time implicated in serious crimes, only to have their transgressions pardoned by the

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[73] *LP*, XVII no. 808. George Heron's tenure as Keeper saw a brief explosion of chaos after the aftermath of the disastrous Haddon Rigg raid. This is telling of Little John's ability to control the clans, even if he was guilty of receiving stolen property and resetting fugitives.
[74] *St.P.*, V, p. 295. Parr reported to the Council that any crime in the dales was "ponishethe as sharpelie as the cace doth require" by Eure and his deputies.
[75] BL, Add. MSS 32651 f. 247.
[76] PRO, SP 1/227 f. 79.

king. Justice was sacrificed for military power, and Bowes grimly remarked that this only

encouraged lawlessness in the king's soldiers.[77]

By incorporating the Border horse into the armies that invaded Scotland, Henry

temporarily solved the problem of royal power in the Marches. After Hertford's campaigns

of 1544-45, there was a notable decrease in negative reports regarding the dalesmen, as

many of them had become royal soldiers for the time being. Little business was of much

urgency to report to the king, although some of the surnames were still raiding their

English neighbours, and using the dales of Scotland to hide their stolen goods.[78]

Appeasement in the end was more effective in establishing royal control, as the crown

simply did not have the resources to keep Northumberland in check by force. To some

extent, the Tudors were forced to give in to the military power of the Northumberland

yeomanry, as the surnames simply outnumbered the Warden's men. Wardens were usually

allowed a retinue of only one or two hundred men,[79] which meant that when the call to trod

went unheeded there was little military action that the Warden or his men could effect.

According to Bowes, the dales of Northumberland could yield hundreds—if not

thousands—of horsed men, clearly outstripping even the escorts of Hertford and Suffolk.[80]

Yet, in taking royal pay, the surnames in turn yielded some of their independent military

power, for they were then firmly under the yoke of their Keepers and constables.

Henry's death in January 1547 meant that he did not enjoy the re-established order

in the north for long. Royal control of the Marches resumed under his son, Edward VI,

and the Protectorship of Hertford, who had recently received the title of Duke of Somerset,

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[77] BL, Calig. B VIII f. 106 (Bowes' Survey of 1551).
[78] *LP*, XXI(I) no. 940
[79] PRO, E 36/173 ff. 114-15.
[80] *LP*, XVI no. 1399. The musters of 1539 show that at least 500 dalesmen had answered the royal muster.

along with a promotion to Earl Marshall.[81] Wharton immediately asked the Privy Council

about their plans for the Marches, and was quick to offer some suggestions regarding the

strengthening of the borders in order to keep the surnames active as royal servants.[82] The

reply was amenable, demonstrating their initial faith in his abilities. Langholm, a key

position in the Scottish West Marches, held the Council's interest, and they authorised

Wharton to occupy the keep.[83] Most important to the Council was that Wharton should

convince the Scots Borderers in those areas to serve the English crown.[84] Although the

letters do not specify what remuneration they might receive, the council was clear that they

would support any Scottish subject who served England.

Throughout 1547-51, the Northumbrians and their allied Scottish Border horse

served in Scotland as garrison troops, and as escorts for supply trains that struggled to

reach the remoter English garrisons. With the collapse of the garrisons in Scotland in

1549-50, and the eventual retreat of the English troops back to their native soil, the

dalesmen who had once found careers as soldiers resumed their old ways when military

livelihood faded. Bowes' survey of 1551, which was essentially a re-commission of his

earlier survey, again condemned the activities of the Northumbrian dalesmen, who again

were reportedly confederated with some elements of Liddesdale.[85] With the disappearance

of the stability that the soldier's salary brought to the dales, violence was once again a

problem, but one should not overestimate the problem,[86] as the violence was nowhere near

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[81] SP 10/1/10.
[82] *Addenda*, I, no.1.
[83] *APC*, 1547-50, p.690 and pp. 699-700.
[84] Marcus Merriman, "The Assured Scots", *The Scottish Historical Review*, vol. 67 (1968) pp. 142-155.
[85] BL Calig. B VIIL f. 106.

the levels that it reached just after the Pilgrimage. There were no more powerful Charlton or Dodds heidsmen; after 1547, the heidsmen who had served the crown no longer appear in the records. It appears that the surnames had begun to fracture in the aftermath of their heyday, which made the depths of their criminality less offensive than they had been in the 1530's and early 1540's. There was also a sincere interest on the part of both crowns to keep the peace along the borders, so the approach to law enforcement was not as militaristic as the punitive raids of the later 1530's.

With the minor upswing of violence in the dales since 1551, Border law became an obsession of the crown throughout the 1550's, signalling willingness by the crown to ensure effective justice for all Marchers. This code of laws essentially dealt with days of redress, guiding officers such as Lord Eure during the truces of 1539 and 1540. At the end of Edward's reign, Thomas Wharton, deputy Warden-General, sought to codify and enforce border laws, proclaiming harsh penalties for transgressions and outlining specific crimes that entailed March treason.[87] Most were concerned with border security, and keeping of the watch along the border. Sir Robert Bowes, who had traded his Wardenship for a much more prestigious counsellor's post, released a commissioned report in 1553 that attempted to regulate the proceedings during days of redress, as well as the establishment of juries for trials.[88] The fixation with border law was justified since rebellion was seen as a constant threat in the North, but it seems that the crown was much less willing to take military action against the dales after 1550. Border law thus became increasingly the

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[86] Robson has dedicated a whole chapter to the supposed "relapse" into criminality that was a consequence of the end of Anglo-Scottish warfare. However, the evidence is only spotty, suggesting that perhaps the author had overestimated the recidivism of the clans.

[87] *Addenda*, IV, no. 14 and 17.

[88] *Addenda*, VII, no. 6.

means by which the Northumberland dealt with the problems of reiving. It was also cheaper than providing assurance through the use of garrisons.

Co-operation with Scottish wardens was most important since it prevented the type of feuds that had precipitated war, as in 1542, so that justice became more of a deterrent, despite the prevalence of perjury and false swearing during the meetings.[89] Throughout 1555, both Wharton and Lord Conyers attended redresses at Ridingbourne, which seems to have defrayed any war.[90] During the next year, the power of redress was in the hands of the Border Commissioners, who in October 1556 created a list of instructions for the wardens.[91] In February 1557, Wharton held Warden Court at Alnwick, delivering four indictments for March treason. The old liberties of Wark, Tynedale and Redesdale were now much more subject to royal justice as well, their resumption by the crown more apparent in the regularity of the Wardens' Court.[92] Although itinerant assize courts were still unwilling to venture into such dangerous places, Wardens courts and redresses under Mary became increasingly scrutinised by the crown and Council, providing more justice than they had done since the decline of the Percys.

Complementing the change in law enforcement methods was a shift of power from Tynedale to Redesdale. More fertile than the North Tyne, the River Rede had always supported a healthier economy.[93] This translated to more horses and armour, especially after 1550 when the Halls became more volatile. Bowes reported in 1551 that several

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[89] Bowes noted that perjury was a problem at redresses, which had undermined the Wardens' justice in the past. There was more stringent burden of proof after 1552, although the Scots were still accused by the English of filing false claims, or "back billing". See Tough, *Frontier*, Chapter 4.

[90] *Addenda*, VII, no. 36 & 41. The frequency of the days of redress appears to have shot up during the 1550's, indicating that the Wardens' Courts were gaining momentum.

[91] *Addenda*, VII, no. 54.

[92] The issue of the liberties is tied closely to the political identity of the surnames, and is discussed in more detail in Chapter 7.

[93] *LP*, XVI no. 1399. See Chapter 2 for a description of the economy of Northumberland.

graynes in Redesdale were already at odds with each other for unresolved slaughters.[94]

More disturbing was the collusion they enjoyed with the local garrisons, some of the

soldiers no doubt being kin of the surnames. In 1553, the Scots accused the Captain of

Harbottle of bringing Redesdale men into Scotland,[95] while ten years later the same parties

lifted five score of cattle and several hostages from Liddesdale.[96] Ensuing violence along

the borders occurred mainly in the Redesdale and Coquetdale districts during the spring of

1557, beginning with the increase of Scottish raids into the Marches, which had already

despoiled Northumberland of nearly £11,000 worth of moveable goods.[97] The Percy

brothers retaliated in kind when they inflicted considerable damage upon the Scottish

garrison of Langton. This was welcome news in the south, although it signalled the

possibility of another war.[98]

Lawlessness was still an issue in Tynedale and Redesdale, to the discomfiture of

the Council, although it did not reach previous levels. Much of the upland clans' power

had been undermined in the wars, especially after the Thorlieshope raid, which ushered in

the downfall of the Herons. Regardless, there were still active reivers operating in the

dales. It was also rumoured that the Percy Earl was unpopular with the whole of

Northumberland, and this might have contributed to his lack of authority in the dales of his

earldom.[99]Again, the Marchers whose lands abutted the dales complained that their

neighbours handled them more roughly than the Scots did. Royal displeasure with both

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[94] BL, Calig. B VIII f. 106.
[95] *Register of the Privy Council of Scotland*, I (1545-69), John Hill Burton (ed.), (Edinburgh: HM General Register House, 1877), pp. 148-50.
[96] *CSPF*, (ed. 1869) no. 602(5).
[97] *Addenda*, VIII, no. 10.
[98] *Addenda*, VIII, no. 88 & 93.
[99] *Addenda*, VIII, no. 92 (part ii).

Warden and Lieutenant was apparent, and it was suggested that both men put things right

in the border and appoint suitable officers although the Council only went so far as to

deliver vague threats if justice were not served in the future.[100] By June 1557, the crown

was aware of a deepening division between some of the prominent families of

Northumberland, including the Percys, and William Lord Eure,[101] the current Warden of

the East March. Of particular interest was the violence that had been linked to the Herons

of Ford and the Carrs, two of the most powerful (and therefore rivals of each other) Border

families that served the English crown.[102] This was to be settled outside the Wardens'

courts, albeit through trial, and the Master of the Rolls, Sir William Cordell, was

commissioned to make an accord between the two families.[103] The breakdown of authority

in the Middle March reached only problematic levels when the crown commissioners went

north to mend the rifts between the clans so that the violence between the English

Borderers would cease. Tynedale and Redesdale at one point appeared poised to war with

each other when the latter assisted men of Liddesdale in retrieving cattle that Tynedalers

had lifted.[104] Thus internecine border violence, which constantly seethed, remained a

problem despite Lord Wharton's administrative capabilities as the leading March officer

during most of the decade.

However, there are signs that some of the clans had begun an irreversible march

towards permanent employment by crown. The dalesmen were not utterly left out in the

cold when the military ambition of a subjugated Scotland disappeared. In the mid 1550's,

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[100] *Addenda,* VIII, no. 91.
[101] This was the second Lord Eure, son of Sir Ralph Eure and grandson of the first Lord Eure.
[102] Maureen Meikle, 'Northumberland Divided: Anatomy of a Sixteenth-Century Bloodfeud.' *Archaeologia Aeliana* 5th series, vol. 20 (1992), pp. 79-89.
[103] *Addenda,* VIII, no. 106.
[104] *CSPF,* (ed. 1865) no. 426.

the Charltons oversaw the watch of North Tynedale no less, the residents of which were

co-operative with their Keeper, the rehabilitated George Heron, son of the irascible Little

John.[105] A Hall of Otterburn was in fact Keeper of Redesdale for a brief time in 1558,

mustering 300 horsemen for the royal musters, thereby demonstrating the military power

that the Redesdalers had retained.[106] Tynedale, on the other hand, never recovered its

former military power after the fall of the garrisons in 1551; part of this was due to the

sheep slump that witnessed a drastic fall in the price of mutton, upon which the Tynedale

economy thrived, whilst corn prices rose.[107] Many of the clansmen also began to emigrate,

as many of the Robsons moved to the areas around Coquetdale.[108] However, most of the

blame for the military decline, and the subsequent inability to wage either deadly feud or

legitimate warfare was blamed squarely upon the system of customary tenure, gavelkind,

which had thoroughly impoverished Tynedale by Elizabeth's reign.[109] Without the pay of

the garrisons, which disappeared completely after 1560, the Tynedalers were left to their

own devices. Rather than turning back to theft, which some did,[110] many Border surnames

remained 'good true and suffiycient men',[111] essentially trading their militarism for a less

hostile livelihood. Such a twist only invited trouble. Beginning in 1568, the Laird of

Buccleuch began a pattern of revenge by which the Charltons and Robsons suffered for the

rest of the century.[112] The remaining Tynedale Robsons soon reaped their whirlwind at the

hands of the Liddesdalers; probably a knock-on effect of the Thorlieshope raid that

[105]William Nicholson, *Leges Marchiarum or Border Laws*, (London, 1747), pp. 260-62.
[106] *CScotP*, VIII no. 653.
[107] Peter Bowden, 'Agricultural Prices, Farm Profits and Rents', in Joan Thirsk (ed.), *The Agrarian History of England and Wales, Volume IV: 1500-1640* (Cambridge: CUP, 1967), pp. 593-695.
[108] *CBP*, II no. 913.
[109] *CBP*, II, no. 267.
[110] BL, Harl. MSS 643 f. 225.
[111] *CBP*, I, no. 162.
[112] Robson, *English Highland Clans*, pp. 218-220.

witnessed the end of Heron's attempted confederation.[113] But despite the apparent

vulnerability that rode on the coattails of their newfound honesty, Tynedale, Redesdale and

Coquetdale were reported to have made contributions of 700 horsemen to the 1569

uprising.[114] Some Marchers paid dearly for the treachery of the few participants, especially

the Barony of Langley at the geographical confluence of Tynedale and Allendale, where

'five score and od' tenants were no longer able to find horse and harness after having their

holdings despoiled by royal troops in the aftermath of the rebellion, further decaying the

military capabilities of the Northumbrian uplands.[115] Their participation in the abortive

rebellion, though, was by this time an aberration, and it is likely that the crown viewed it as

such; as Robson has noted, no clansmen were indicted for their role.[116] For their part, the

clansmen had become more familiar to the crown after their increasing role in Marcher

defences,[117] and the occasional blight by the minority was in no way a sour reflection of

the services rendered by the more respectable heidsmen. It was for this reason that

Warden's courts and days of redress marked the sole intervention of the crown for the

remainder of the sixteenth century.

By Elizabeth's reign, the Marches, although still vulnerable to violence from within

and without, were significantly reduced in their ability and eagerness to threaten the

crown's officers. It was clear that the heidsmen could no longer fob off royal authority,

although Sir Ralph Sadler complained that there were still 'naughty, evil, unruly and

misdemeaned' elements in the shire.[118] Such behaviour, according to Sadler, was a direct

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[113] *Ibid.*
[114] *Sadler Papers*, I, pp. 38-55.
[115] *CBP*, I, no. 50.
[116] Robson, *English Highland Clans*, p. 205.
[117] *CScotP*, XIII, no. 31.
[118] *Sadler Papers*, II, p. 16.

result of the unscrupulous border officers that served Dacre and the Earl of

Northumberland, who forced the clans into thieving through their rapine.[119] Compared to

the chaos that plagued the Marches after the Pilgrimage, things were relatively quiet. This

was the result of three distinct phases of royal policy: the taming of the North from 1536-

42; the installation of military organisation from 1543-1547; and the emphasis upon

Warden's courts rather than provocative armed conflict from 1552 onwards. All phases

contributed to the falling independence of the surnames, but the most effective was

undoubtedly the flow of royal money into the dales, which cut short the temptation to

pillage the surrounding countryside. On the other hand, the strengthening of Marcher law

in the 1550's allowed the Wardens to apprehend all those who did not answer the fray or

respond to musters, which forced even the most reluctant persons into the hands of the

local officer. The courts of the Wardens and the Keepers aided in securing more peace, the

condition being entirely dependent upon the abilities of the local officers to enforce laws,

and the effectiveness of the local courts. The militarised northern society was still separate

from southern society, but the installation of royal officers, ranging from the Lord

Lieutenant of the Border counties, to the deputy wardens of the marches, brought the north

under a semblance of political control. The wild and untamed areas of the borders still

presented some problems to the wardens who resided there, but by 1560, there were clear

legal apparatuses at the Wardens' disposal that could contain border violence. These were

certainly not as effective as the Wardens wanted them to be, as Ralph Sadler had reported

in 1559.[120] But after Elizabeth's first few years as Queen, the crown and its officers could

act much more decisively against disorder, and in times of crises, as they did during the

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[119] Ibid, pp. 441-44. Tough, *Frontier*, p. 190.
[120] *CSPF*, 1559, no. 1409.

rebellion of 1569, although the defeat of the Northern Earls was most likely due to the

military decay that had set into the Borders in the years that immediately followed

Somerset's retreat. In part, the highlanders crippled themselves in keeping such a closed

society, but effective royal policy succeeded in prying open the gates of highland culture.

By handing the heidsmen the power to police the dales, the Tudors succeeded in

incorporating the once independent clans into royal service, thereby making them

dependent on royal commissions, and eventually, royal troops[121] for their own surety.

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[121] *CBP*, I, no. 162.

Chapter Five: Military Obligation and Service in the Borders

John Goring's thesis has remained a cornerstone in the study of Tudor military obligation since its completion nearly fifty years ago. Goring argued that while a universal military obligation existed for all of England it was rarely invoked on a national scale. The county militia, which was the basis of national defence, was not mustered on a sweeping scale but instead drawn from a pool of active men. While the militia served within the county limits, either mustered as a response to insurrection or invasion scare, the militia was not obliged to serve overseas as it was not a professional force.[1] Thus the militia was of little use against large invasions or massive armed risings, such as the Pilgrimage of Grace. In such instances, the king raised armies by letters signet, a 'quasi-feudal' system that utilised the tenants of major landowners.[2] Most studies of Tudor armies have incorporated Goring's thesis. C.G. Cruickshank's work on the Elizabethan armies supports Goring's thesis,[3] as does Gervase Phillips' work on Anglo-Scottish warfare.[4] However, some scholars have noted that a different style of military obligation existed in the borders. D.L.W. Tough has described briefly the nature of border tenure, mainly that all tenants, whatever their tenures, were liable to fight for their lands.[5] Thomas Rae also suggested that a similar form of tenure existed in the Scottish Marches, although feudal military duties seem to have been much more prevalent there than in the English borders.[6] Still, the requirement of all able-bodied men between the ages of

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[1] John Goring, 'The Military Obligations of the English People, 1511-1558,' (Univ. of London Ph.D., 1955), *passim*.

[2] Goring, 'Military Obligations', pp. 279-80.This two-fold system, the "national" system—through the commissions of array—and what Goring described as the "quasi-feudal" system, whereby leading members of the aristocracy mustered their households and their tenants for military service, often clashed. This double system was a product of custom, parliamentary law and royal prerogative; by no means was it a Tudor invention, instead it was a practise that had evolved for centuries.

[3] C.G. Cruickshank, *Elizabeth's Army*, (Oxford: Clarendon, 1966).

[4] Gervase Phillips, *The Anglo-Scots Wars, 1513-1550* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1999).

[5] D.L.W. Tough, *The Last Years of a Frontier*, (Oxford: OUP, 1928), pp. 57-8.

16 and 60 to serve in the militia during times of crisis provided an overall structure for military obligation in the Marches. Yet unlike the crown's subjects in southern areas, Borderers owed military service on a regular occurrence; all men were expected to serve if they held land. This is a complex problem that was peculiar to the Marches, one that Tough described as a 'special and perplexing subject, any detail of which is outside the province of general history.'[7] Consequently, Tough avoided the subject almost entirely.

Nevertheless, the Tudors remained aware that Northumberland owed military service beyond that of general obligation. This chapter analyses how Border military obligations evolved over a period that witnessed the administrative efforts of four successive monarchs. It will discuss the unique form of military obligation within the Marches, which was preserved by the inherently conservative Marchers, and it will assess the overall effectiveness in providing England with a suitable defence against its enemies. This chapter will examine the obligations of the three sections of Northumbrian society that formed the basis of the military community: the king's pensioners and gentry, their tenants, and the surname groups that inhabited the uplands of the Marches. Each of these formed its own distinct military group, and it is with this distinction in mind that this chapter will treat the effectiveness of border service and Marcher military obligations, as well as additional obligations that were placed upon the Marchers by the Tudor monarchs. In the end, it will demonstrate how this trifurcated system of military service both complemented and clashed with the Tudor effort to utilise the military skills of the Marchers.

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[6] Thomas Rae, *The Administration of the Scottish Frontier*, (Edinburgh: University Press, 1966), pp. 6-8

[7] D. L. W. Tough, *The Last Years of a Frontier*, (Oxford: OUP, 1928), p. 57.

Local studies have argued that the requirements of an armed frontier

necessitated forms of military obligation that were quite different from those of

southern England. Known as border service, it obliged all Marchers to serve against

the Scots at their own charge, at the pleasure of the Warden. Yet how obligation was

assigned has provided good ground for debate. R.W. Hoyle contends that border

service was not an important feature of border tenant right, which was only a recent

development. Instead, border service was a local custom based in the common law

obligation to defend the border.[8] J.A. Tuck argues that constant raiding and feuding

changed the nature of Border society by 1500, creating a militarised area in the

uplands of the Middle and West Marches, where all tenants owed military service as

a part of their tenure.[9] Michael Bush refines these assertions by demonstrating that

military service was split into two camps: freeholders who owed service through

cornage, and customary tenants who owed through tenant right. For the former,

military service was but an obligation; for the latter it was an intrinsic part of their

tenure since non-fulfilment of military obligations resulted in ejection.[10] J. Linda

Drury has shown that this practice extended to the remote dales of the Bishopric of

Durham, which were subjected to raids, although on a lesser scale than the

Northumberland frontier.[11]

Absent from these works is a detailed explanation regarding the necessity,

and the specific requirements, of Border service. The need for border service is plain

enough. The sluggish system of county commissions of array, which gave the

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[8] R.W. Hoyle, 'An Auncient and Laudable Custom: The Definition and Development of Tenant right in North-Western England in the Sixteenth Century,' *Past and Present* 116 (1987), p. 25.

[9] J.A. Tuck, "War and Society in the Medieval North," *Northern History* 21 (1985).

[10] M.L. Bush, 'Tenant Right in Tudor England: A Revision Revised' *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* 77 (1995), p. 166.

[11] J. Linda Drury, "More Stout than Wise: Tenant Right in Weardale in the Tudor Period," *The Last Principality*, ed. D. Marcombe (Nottingham: UNP, 1987). This issue of military obligation and tenant right in the sixteenth-century Borders has been only briefly discussed in this article. Also see Tough, *Frontier*, pp. 57-8.

government a body of fencible, if unprofessional, soldiers, was far too impractical

for the Anglo-Scottish Marches, where troops of experienced men were often

needed without delay. If Tough is correct, then perhaps the complexity of the subject

has proved daunting to scholars. No doubt the scarcity of source material in the

National Archives has also discouraged any investigation into the mechanics of

border military obligation, and even the records that have survived suggest a

confused practice. Tudor statesmen widely debated the particulars of border service,

and government records suggest that this form of military obligation was anything

but systematic. Most of these debates were likely to have taken place in front of the

Council of the North, the records for which are now lost. In an era when England

was purportedly reforming its military, Marcher military obligations often

befuddled, and even contradicted the military schemes of the crown.

Pensioners and Gentry

That the pensioners were created long before the fall of the Percys in the mid

1530's suggests that the king's enlistment of the gentry was not necessarily paired

with a policy of undermining the Northern magnates.[12] Rather, it appears that they

were tapped in order to assist leading officers in their functions. Pensioners were

newcomers to the Marches, in terms of military organization. The Cotton MSS,

Caligula B. II and III contain the State Papers that bear the earliest evidence of the

pensioners, the first of such appearing in 1512. Most were prominent gentry.

Pensioners came from the Marcher gentry families, such as the Herons, Carnabys,

Ogles, Delavals, Horsleys, Collingwoods and Ratcliffes, amongst many others, and

their numbers fluctuated throughout the wars with Scotland. A list drawn up in

1528 numbered roughly fifty men, amongst whom were Lord Ogle, John

Widdrington, Cuthbert Ratcliffe, Reynold Carnaby and Sir John Heron of

Chipchase.[13]

The Wardens held ultimate authority in military matters, except in the

1540's, when Warden-Generals began to appear,[14] but the king's pensioners were

ultimately obliged to serve as the immediate leaders of the general population of

Northumberland. Most pensioners were freeholders in the Marches, and were

intricately tied to the men that occupied their lands. Yet the military obligation of

the pensioners, which was essentially to serve the king in all manners military at any

time, differed from the military obligation of their tenants. Rather, the pensioner

acted much more like a mercenary or armed retainer, receiving money for his

assurances of loyalty and service. There is no evidence to indicate that this affected

his tenure. Instead, his services fulfilled the duties imposed upon him by cornage.

In developing pensioners to serve as minor military leaders, the Council in

London catalogued its resources in order to keep better control over disbursements.

The fluctuation of the pensioners' numbers suggests that this group was managed

with some detail.[15] In 1540, a crown officer completed a book of tenures that listed

all principal landholders in the county of Northumberland, the overwhelming

majority of whom had served as pensioners or officers.[16] This document is

important in understanding the nature of military service for the Marcher gentry

since it specifically described that each freehold was still bound by military service.

The preamble states that all major tenures, those of the baronies and lordships, were

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[12] M.L. Bush, 'The Problem of the Far North.' *Northern History*, vol. 6 (1971), pp. 42-3.
[13] BL, Calig. B. III f. 65.
[14] See Chapter 6.
[15] BL, Calig, B. III ff. 203-4. In 1528, there were fifty pensioners on the payroll. By 1536, the crown had a body of only thirty pensioners in the Northumberland Marches, a fluctuation that was most likely a result of the truce with Scotland.
[16] NRO, MSS 1147/f.9. *Book of Tenures, c. 1540.* This folio was prepared in the wake of the fall of the Percys. Most entries list the manor or locale, and the surname of the individual who held it. The identity of the author is unknown, although Sir William Eure or Sir Cuthbert Ratcliffe, the current March Wardens, probably produced it with the aid of their officers or Warden clerks.

freeholds that owed service directly to the crown. Freeholding guaranteed the

military ascendancy of the king's pensioners, as they held the responsibility for

mustering all of the tenants within their holdings. As tenants-in-chief, they provided

the crown with a connection to Borderers who held land from them. More detailed

muster lists complemented the list of tenures.[17] In this fashion, the crown was able

to keep an accurate total of the policing force for Northumberland. Such record

keeping facilitated military administration and it presaged the better military

organisation that would take root under Elizabeth.[18]

The pensioning scheme further guaranteed that the principal landowners

would render their military service as required. It might suggest that the king needed

to pay the gentry to perform what they ought to have performed freely, under the

obligation to defend the realm. In the end, all it was a means of subsidising the

Warden, whose salary had been drastically cut during the first Tudor

administration.[19] With the Tudor government paying the salary of the pensioners, it

reduced the need for the Warden to fee the gentry. That they were to aid the Warden

is plain enough in Henry's exhortation to all gentlemen of the Northumberland

Marches to 'considre how and in what sorte you be bounde to serve Us by the

dewtie of your allegiaunce,' and 'gyve your attendaunce uppon hym'.[20] Aside from

leading landowners and landlords, there were also royal officers in the form of

March Wardens, the Governor of Tynedale and Redesdale, and the captains of the

major castles and towns of the East and Middle Marches, all of whom wielded the

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[17] Most are located either in PRO E/101, various accounts, or in E 36/173.
[18] Paul E.J. Hammer, *Elizabeth's Wars*, (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave-MacMillan, 2003), pp. 259-264.
[19] R. L. Storey, 'The Wardens of the Marches of England towards Scotland 1377-1489', *English Historical Review*, LXXII (1957), p. 615.
[20] *StP*, V, p.114.

authority to call upon the services of the pensioners as well as the entire gentry.[21]

Their sole purpose was thus military.

Always underpinning the incentive of salary, though, was the direct

relationship that the pensioner shared with the king. The king often created new

pensioners as a reward for service, their remuneration coming directly from his

coffers. In 1528, many of the pensioners who had helped to quell Lisle's revolt in

North Tynedale were given a fee ranging from ten to twenty marks.[22] Of the roughly

two-dozen men listed as pensioners in 1537, over half were either current or future

officers.[23] Robert Collingwood served as constable of Wark in the late 1530's,[24]

while collecting a pensioner's salary of 8l.6s.8d. Lord Ogle received 50l. in 1537,

having already contributed as a military leader in 1533 during a daring raid.[25] In

1543, he served as vice-Warden to Sir Ralph Eure, although it is unclear whether the

king personally appointed him.[26] Another reward for the pensioners was first choice

for official appointments, usually as Warden or Keeper, whom the king personally

selected after the downfall of the Dacres and Percys. This royal patronage no doubt

boosted the credibility of the king, more than the combined benefaction of Norfolk

and Cromwell; Norfolk simply despised the Marchers, while Cromwell never really

had their full trust. On the other hand, the pensioners answered directly to the king

for any shortcoming in their obligation. Whenever the gentlemen pensioners

disappointed the king in military leadership, his approach was to leave them to the

wolves. When gentlemen regularly refused to answer the call during the fallout

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[21] The major castles of the East and Middle marches were Wark, Etal, Norham, Alnwick, Warkworth, Harbottle and Prudhoe. Bamburgh and the ramparts of Holy Island defended the coastline, but the former was in a state of severe decay. Other stronghouses included Ayden, Chipchase, Hexham, Elsdon and Wooler, but these were owned and administered privately by border families. However, it should be noted that all towers and fortified houses were held of the king by knight's service.

[22] LP, IV(2) no. 3689.

[23] BL, Calig. B. III., ff. 203-5.

[24] PRO, E 36/173 ff. 114-15.

[25] BL, Calig. B. VII f. 264.

[26] LP, XVIII(2) no. 236.

between Tynedale and Liddesdale in 1543, the king threatened to look the other way when their properties were ravaged.[27]

Apart from their own obligation to serve, they were obligated to provide leadership. Pensioners were responsible for ensuring the upkeep of their tenants' military obligations according to the custom of the borders. All of these principal families enforced border service amongst their tenants while themselves serving as pensioners and officers, and it was usually royal musters that empowered these men to gather their tenants for war. In February 1541, a typical muster called for pensioners to muster all 'servauntes tenauntes and others within any your rowmes and offices,' and to be ready to march at an hour's notice.[28] As many as possible of those mustered were to serve as cavalry, 'every horsman to have his spere or his javelyn,' the rest as archers and billmen.[29] Overall, the military leadership of the pensioners was only determined by the obligations placed upon them by custom, or according to their patents and commissions when they became officials. Thus the gentry who mustered their tenants became 'captain' of that band, no matter what size. A typical band, mustered by John Ogle of Kirkland, numbered only eight horsed and harnessed men,[30] though Ogle no doubt had immediate command over them even when folded into a larger number of light cavalry. This ability to operate in small, familiar groups, either as a part of large armies or small raiding units, gave the pensioners' bands versatility.

Pensioners provided two vital functions: defence from the Scots, and policing the uplands. Retained gentlemen guided strategic raids into Scotland, as they did in 1543 when they burned Kelso.[31] The following year witnessed other

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[27] PRO, SP 1/178 f. 53 (May 17, 1543).
[28] StP., V, p. 184.
[29] StP., V, p. 184.
[30] PRO, E 36/173 ff. 114-15.
[31] LP, XVIII nos. 243 and 298.

raids led by pensioners, most of which complemented the royal policy of the 'rough wooing'.[32] In organising their tenants into small units of light cavalry, they held the key to the defence of the Marches against raids, even if, like Ogle, they only had recourse to a small handful of men. Small units led by loyal Marchers were more appropriate for countering minor incursions as large units of horse often proved unwieldy, although small bands were often more vulnerable. For the most part, pensioners were to assist in policing operations. Apart from owing military service through cornage the pensioners were required to stand against the rebellious surname groups. Large police raids would require the combination of all bands, which required the permission of the Warden or Keeper, at very least. As the royal governor of Tynedale, Sir Reynold Carnaby often invoked the authority to conduct raids against English rebels and their Scottish allies, and he suggested that all gentlemen pensioners living in the East and Middle March should participate with their tenants.[33] Large raids often took the form of a chevauchée, as officers usually used to cut a swath of destruction through the removed parts of Northumberland and Scottish Liddesdale in order to counter the threats of the rebellious surname bands.[34] The Council of the North fully backed the employment of the king's pensioners to keep the inhabitants of Tynedale in check, as royal retainers were supposedly available to serve the Wardens and Keepers.[35] The pensioners thus not only provided an active police force for the area, but also were at times authorised to take pre-emptive action against the opponents of the crown. These are but a few examples of how the border pensioners functioned as a military entity.

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[32] *LP*, XVIII(2) nos. 209, 262, 263, 319, 339 and 422.
[33] *LP*, XIII(2) no. 371; BL Calig. B. III ff. 251-3.
[34] PRO, SP 1/152 ff. 215-7; BL, Titus F III f. 97.
[35] *LP*, XIII(2) nos. 404, 414, and 415.

However, the overall effectiveness of border pensioners during the Anglo-Scots wars is questionable. Pay seems to have been one of the largest obstacles. Expenses for maintaining the Marcher defences were supposed to come from the king, yet there clearly was no standard for the disbursement of pensioner wages, nor was there even a consistent wage for the king's officers. The Keepership of Tynedale was subject to vast wage discrepancies; in 1537, Roger "Hodge" à Fenwick received only 40 marks for his office, a thirty-percent decrease from ten years before, while in 1541 John Heron of Chipchase received 100 marks.[36] After his dismissal from office, Lord Dacre swore that he would rather 'lose a finger on each hand than meddle with Tynedale,' not only because of the inherent danger but due to the enormous cost.[37] The death of Sir George Lawson in 1543 meant that there was nobody available to pay the king's pensioners on the borders until another treasurer could be appointed, though the Council had allowed his office to lapse.[38] This caused some grumbling amongst the king's tenants, as they went without compensation for the extraordinary services that fell outside of their customary obligations. In turn, the poorest pensioners could not afford to compensate their tenants, whilst others dug into their own pockets. At one point, Heron was owed over two months' wages for his thirty-man garrison in Tynedale.[39] His predecessor in Tynedale, the ineffectual Sir Reynold Carnaby, complained of the great expenses that he was obliged to pay as a military officer.[40] In 1543, Sir Thomas Wharton admonished the king regarding the reform of the Marchers, wasting no time in pointing to the relationship between ineffective royal servants and their poor

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[36] PRO, SP 1/122 ff. 212-13; BL Calig. B VIII f. 63 (Feb. 12, 1541)
[37] PRO, SP 1/124 ff. 234-37 (Sept. 15, 1537).
[38] *LP*, XVII no. 580.
[39] PRO, E 36/121 ff. 12-27.
[40] PRO, SP1/129 ff. 138-39 (Feb 27, 1538); ibid, 1/154 ff. 96-97.

salaries; Wharton simply suggested that higher pay would produce better results from the gentry.[41]

There was yet another startling weakness in the pensioner scheme. Even the most active pensioners who also served as officers found it difficult to enforce Border service amongst all of their tenants. Lord Ogle, who ranked amongst the wealthiest, was heavily endowed with lands and manors—over twenty smaller manors throughout Northumberland, as well as the Baronies of Southall and Hepple. His position as Vice-Warden under the Percys should have further strengthened his military base. Yet in his barony of Hepple, fewer than half of Ogle's tenants were able men with horse or harness.[42] Without men who were able to serve or equip themselves with proper military equipment, Ogle's vast estates remained militarily inadequate. Lord Dacre, whose principal holdings lay across the Pennines in Gilsland and the West March, held the important Barony of Morpeth, along with a collection of several other manors and tracts. Dacre's tenants were no better armed than were those of Lord Ogle. The Grays of Chillingham, who also accounted for large tracts throughout Northumberland,[43] were also weak. This is surprising, considering that Sir Roger Gray, the lord of Chillingham, was a leading military figure in the East Marches, often representing the English during days of redress.[44] Despite his political clout, muster returns from his lands were far inferior to the results from either Dacre or Ogle. In Wooler, only 10 men out of sixty-four were suitably equipped. Hetton was worse, as not one of the eighteen men who appear in

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[41] PRO, SP 1/179 ff. 151-157.

[42] John Hodgson, "Muster of Tindale, Redesdale, Bambrough and Glendale Wards", printed in John Fenwick, ed. *Tracts Relating to the Counties of Northumberland and Durham*, vol. 4, (Newcastle, 1856).

[43] These included Aykeld, Humbledon and the strategic tower of Wooler.

[44] PRO, E 36/254 ff. 245-67.

the muster carried any weapons at all. The Gray manor of Coupland faired the best, with eight fully armed men, and one unarmed tenant.[45]

The Ratcliffes, Herons, and Lord Tailboys also figured in the pensioning scheme as prominent landowners, with each of these families holding lands scattered throughout Northumberland.[46] Their tenants were similarly equipped, although their unconsolidated holdings added yet another disadvantage. While the possession of scattered lands is not untypical of the Tudor aristocracy, in a militarised area like the Borders it became a liability. Small holdings were easy prey, as demonstrated by the Liddesdalers' successful raid against Capheaton in 1543. The Fenwicks and Swinburns, the primary landowners, were powerless to stop the raid, while no trod was organised. This encouraged a lady of the Milburns, whose farm had been ransacked, to appeal to her kin in North Tynedale for revenge.[47] Such small plots of land were difficult to defend against raids, and were unable to support the number of horsemen that such defences normally required, forcing lords and tenants to depend upon their neighbours for military support.

Furthermore, a lack of cohesion amongst the pensioners and gentry undermined the government's attempts to raise armies in the Marches. When it came to broader issues of national security, Border pensioners were only sometimes able to leave aside their differences and serve as their tenures had commanded. The enmity between Lord Dacre and Sir Thomas Wharton did not stop the men of Bewcastledale and other Dacre strongholds from answering the call to arms in October 1545.[48] Yet musters took place in all Border shires in April 1547,[49] which

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[45] Hodgson, "Muster", pp. 37-51.
[46] NRO, 1147/f.9. *Book of Tenures*, c. 1540.
[47] BL, Add. MSS, 32649, ff. 146 (December 12, 1543). The Milburns ranked as one of the four surnames of North Tynedale.
[48] *StP.*, V, p. 552.
[49] PRO, SP 10/1, no. 36; SP 10/2, no. 5.

many Marchers failed to answer; the Council sent Lord Dacre a warning regarding his tenants' reluctance to serve with the king's army, which was an extension of their hatred of Lord Wharton, who was Lord Dacre's natural rival.[50] Neither was this was not the first occurrence. In 1542, Wharton tried to eclipse Dacre's contribution to the victory at Solway Moss, since Dacre had failed to muster for a raid the week before.[51] Thus the nature of Border tenures, which necessitated the leadership of an immediate landlord or pensioner, could be pulled into a feud, an inherent weakness in the military strength of Northumberland.

While serving as pensioners, some of these families conducted feuds with each other; being far removed from any court, Borderers settled their differences through personal means, ranging from informal meetings to outright violence, the latter being a preferred option. The Heron-Carr feud of 1557 is a prime example of this as it threatened to undo the whole of Northumberland. In a bid to regain Ford castle from Thomas Carr, who had come into possession of Ford by marrying Elizabeth Heron, the Herons of Chipchase enlisted the help of the constable of Berwick, John Dixon, an arrangement that was facilitated by Giles Heron, treasurer of the Berwick garrison.[52] The plan was simple: Dixon and his men would forcibly evict Thomas Carr, and the Herons would march in to regain possession of their important familial seat. The dispute degenerated into violence, with several deadly frays.[53] By the end of the feud, Giles Heron, the Mayor of Berwick, and Thomas Carr were dead, and several important members of the gentry were implicated, leaving the defence of the countryside wide open to Scottish inroads.

[50] *APC*, 1547-50, p.473.
[51] S.G. Ellis, *Tudor Frontiers and Noble Power*, (Oxford: Clarendon, 1995), pp. 247-48.
[52] Talbot MSS, Vol D. ff. 5, 6, 10.
[53] Maureen Meikle, 'Northumberland Divided: Anatomy of a Sixteenth-Century Bloodfeud.' *Archaeologia Aeliana* 5th series, vol. 20 (1992), pp. 79-89.

Sometimes, the gentry clashed with each other when one party refused to carry out his obligations as a pensioner or leading person. In June 1543, Sir Rafe Ellerkar and Sir Robert Bowes arrested the bailiff of Wooler, Roger Gray, for refusing to issue musters as commanded.[54] Gray refused to cooperate since neither he nor his men desired to be conscripted for service in France. Not all the gentry were of the same mind when it came to military service.

Fear of the deadly feud was equally debilitating to military obligations of the gentry. During the rampages of the Hesleyside Charltons and their Liddesdale friends during the summer of 1538, many of the gentry simply abandoned their houses in order to keep out of the feud.[55] Many also avoided their obligation to follow the hot trod, or even to see through with the prosecution and execution of a malefactor lest their actions or testimony engender a deadly feud with the relatives of the persecuted individuals.[56] When kinsmen set Gerard Charlton free during a Hexham jailbreak in 1538, it was probably allowed to happen as the pensioners in charge of the watch did not care to tangle with a surname that could raise far more light cavalry than all of the pensioners in the South Tyne valley. Their complicity in the jailbreak is only suggested by their surviving the event unmolested,[57] as the surnames had a reputation for knifing uncooperative sentries.[58] By 1543, Lord Lisle, the Warden General, remarked that 'there is such envy, hatred, disdain and malice amongst them that one of them would see another's throat cut rather than they will rise to go out of their doors to save their neighbour's goods.'[59] In part,

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[54] *LP*, XVIII(1) no. 775.
[55] PRO, SP 1/134 ff. 140-41.
[56] BL, Calig. B. VIII f. 106.
[57] PRO, SP, 1/140 ff. 77-8.
[58] PRO SP 1/5 ff. 229 and 730; BL, Calig. B. VI f. 407. It was reported after the battle of Flodden that the surnames had neutralised English sentries so that they could smuggle prisoners from the English camp. Their treatment of the Tynedale garrison in 1525, in which the entire garrison was put to flight and Tarset Castle razed, gave the dalesmen a reputation for killing both whitecoats and sentries.
[59] LP, XVIII(1) no. 141

according to Lisle, their feuds were responsible for their inaction if the Scots were targeting a rival. Their own confession of their inability to resist the Tynedale thieves is much more convincing, as they wrote the Council of their 'pains' suffered from the 'malice of the said Tynedales.'[60] The connection of kith and kin amongst the dalesmen thus gave them a distinct advantage over the pensioners, and it was well known that their blackmail was much less painful than their wrath.

There exist numerous other examples of the military inadequacies of the pensioners. The numerous plots by the surnames of Northumberland often overwhelmed meagre resources. In late spring 1538, Sir Robert Collingwood and John Horsely rode into Tynedale to reconnoitre the growing unrest between the surname groups, only to report that the men residing there were wild, without rule, and plotting against their keepers.[61] In spring 1541, Sir John Widdrington was unable to repel immediately a raid at his castle at Houghton, and a few weeks later a group of Tynedalers—Charltons and probably their Heron allies—grievously assaulted William Carnaby and two others.[62] These actions went unpunished.

Further evidence suggests that the military capacity of the pensioners had suffered a decline in the years leading up to the wars of 1542-60. With this decline came a breakdown of law enforcement, as the king's pensioners were unable to control the military might of the Border surname groups. In 1538, the Warden of the English Middle March, Sir John Widdrington, reported that rebels from the Pilgrimage of Grace were the cause of certain troubles in Tynedale and Redesdale, which was within his jurisdiction, yet no help from his gentlemen pensioners ever materialised.[63] When Richard and Gilbert Carnaby along with two dozen members of their household did mobilize against an incursion, all were taken prisoner while

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[60] Robson, *English Highland Clans*, p. 124.
[61] *LP*, XIII(1) no. 913.
[62] *LP*, XVI nos. 843 and 982.

they followed the trod;[64] it is improbable that the gentlemen pensioners of the South

Tyne valley were eager to descend upon Liddesdale in order to retrieve them. Sir

Reynold Carnaby appealed directly to Cromwell, and stated that the king had been

far too soft on the rebels and surname groups, although the reality was that the

pensioners had not made effective contributions to policing for fear of reprisals. Sir

Reynold, ever the proponent of punitive expeditions, was convinced that the

surnames were hardened criminals; only a swift and powerful raid would dislodge

them from their fortified houses and hideouts.[65] The opposite occurred, as the

surnames overpowered the gentlemen Marchers. The fact that the Charltons could

spring Gerard Charlton from jail at Hexham was an indictment of the pensioners and

the watch that they were supposed to regulate.[66] Equally damning was the report that

the hue and cry had not been raised, a telling failure of the Marchers and their

creaking system of military obligation.[67] According to the Earl of Westmoreland,

who helped lead a commission to investigate the jailbreak, Carnaby's inability to

enforce any sort of obligation, as well as his own ignorance, was more to blame than

the actions of a few outlaws.[68] The inquest into the jailbreak at Hexham was stopped

short when the Tynedalers abducted Carnaby, a final insult to the man who could

not muster the strength of the marches despite his best efforts. Although he was set

free at length, there arose serious doubts of his ability to control Tynedale.[69]

    The bungling that marred such affairs was a wider problem than most

Marchers would admit to the king and the Privy Council. To be fair, Carnaby was

not alone in his failure to control the unruly elements within his jurisdiction; Sir

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[63] *LP*, XIII(1) no. 1366.
[64] *LP*, XIII(1) no. 1493 and 115 (vol. 2). All of the English Marchers were held by the Liddesdale Elliots and subsequently ransomed by Sir Thomas Wharton, Warden of the English West March.
[65] *LP*, XIII(2) no. 1010, 1030, and 1095.
[66] PRO, SP 1/140 f. 77; BL, Calig. B. III f. 98.
[67] *Ibid.*
[68] *LP*, XIII(2) no. 1101 & 1156.

John Widdrington was utterly unable to exact any service from the pensioners in the districts of Coquetdale and Redesdale, which were within his own jurisdiction. Even the Duke of Norfolk jeered at their military inadequacies:

> All the contres under my commission be aswell ordered as I wold wisshe, save only Tyndale and Ryddesdale, wich be under the governaunce of Wedrignton and Carnaby; and they so far owte of frame that of force I must ride to those parties. Wedrington wold fayne do well, but surely it is not in hym. Carnaby is so ferde of his person that he dothe nothing but kepe the house. Men dothe moche doubte of his hardyness, having yet shewed no parte of manhode sithe his first comming thither. I wold they were boothe in Paradise, so other good were in ther rowmes;[70]

Inevitably, Carnaby lost his position, replaced as Keeper of Tynedale by Little John Heron of Chipchase.[71]

Coordination was the key to enforcing military obligation, but since the pensioners were separated by district, and therefore answered to different officers, the surnames of the Northumberland dales would always gain the upper hand. Heron's appointment saw some reform to the military organisation of the Marches, and a partial solution to this disadvantage. Heron sought to relieve some of the problems related to the lack of power amongst the pensioners by residing in the heart of Tynedale with a company of light horse, offering his own house at Chipchase, which was already fortified and suitable for such purposes.[72] Heron was also better-connected than the previous Keepers. His numerous relatives included the Herons of the Hallbarnes, Roger Heron of Corbridge, and the powerful Herons

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[69] *LP*, XIV no. 50.

[70] *StP.*, V, p. 104.

[71] *LP*, XV, nos. 57 and 94.

[72] When he took leave of his office, he would try to arrange for another house in a "quieter" locale, underscoring the Marcher gentry's desire to live in the more settled areas of Northumberland.

of Ford.[73] Heron also believed that the keeper of Tynedale ought to act as the keeper

of Redesdale as well, since he personally used Redesdale men to police Tynedale.

Furthermore, he suggested that the liberty of Tynedale should annex the Regality of

Hexham, the Barony of Langley, and Ridgedale in order to coordinate all military

activity and organize raids in a more coherent fashion.[74] His words had some effect

with the Privy Council, as he received the keepership of Redesdale in summer of

1540, although the other lands remained out of his grasp for the time being.[75] Thus

the Keeper of Tynedale *and* Redesdale effectively became the commander of the

largest cohesive body of armed men in Northumberland. This arrangement of double

governorship survived Heron's tenure, as Sir Ralph Eure and Sir Robert Bowes

became the successive governors of both Tynedale and Redesdale. As a result, larger

bodies of men were drawn into service, with many of the Tynedale and Redesdale

serving as soldiers in the king's band.[76] Most importantly, it led to greater

coordination of the gentry and pensioners for law enforcement, as the Keeper

reported that he was now able to rely on 'the most active men' for the policing of the

dales.[77]

Although the gentry and pensioners eventually experienced better

coordination of their efforts, there was yet another aspect of Border defence that

some of the gentry had neglected. Much of the Marcher gentry had ignored their

implicit obligation to keep their towers and barmkins in good repair for the benefit

of their tenants. In 1542, when Sir Ralph Ellerkar and Sir Robert Bowes returned the

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[73] The Herons were in fact an old March family, so the numerous Heron graynes that had settled the North and South Tyne and Ford castle provided an excellent network of kinship. Hodgson's *Northumberland* contains a complete family tree of the Heron family.

[74] *LP*, XV no. 487.

[75] *LP*, XV no. 987.

[76] Both Eure and Bowes were able to send large contingents of Northern Horse to garrison and to France. See *LP*, XIX(1) no. 227 and BL, Add. MSS 32654 f. 207 for a description of a typical company raised in the dales.

[77] PRO, SP 1/158 ff. 72-3.

results of their survey, it reflected a growing trend of decaying fortresses.[78] Their

survey demonstrated the frustrations of the gentry: most had abandoned their

holdings in the uplands and in the areas that were prone to raids, and had opted for

the quieter and more settled areas of the East and Middle Marches. The hardest hit

area in the East March were areas abutting Glendale and Tillmouth. Biermore,

Barrington, Twizel and Duddo towers were utterly wasted, having been destroyed by

the Scots. Wark castle, the 'key to relief and succour,' according to the survey, was

in ruins. The areas surrounding the castle were 'utterly wasted,' while many of the

towers had been left to decay.[79] Even Ford castle, the seat of the Herons of Ford,

required repairs to its walls, which were damaged in the campaigns of James IV.

Horton, Fenton and Nesbit, all owned by the powerful Grays of Chillingham, were

decayed despite their strategic value, and much to the dismay of Bowes. The

depredations of border warfare were the main cause for such wastage, and for the

neglect of the peles and stronghouses that had secured certain areas in earlier years.

As a solution, Bowes suggested that the king should order absentee landlords back

to the strategic holdings of the uplands, so that the troubled areas of Tynedale and

Redesdale could be settled once again.[80] Bowes went as far as drafting a letter which

the king might send to his pensioners, the gist of which reminded the recipient of his

military obligations as county leader.[81] The letter itself does not invoke any specific

obligation; it simply implied that all March gentlemen, especially leading lords and

pensioners, had a duty to keep their towers in good condition. However, that

absentee landlords left their tenants open to the ravages of border warfare led to

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[78] *LP*, XVI no. 1399. Also see Chapter 3 for a discussion of towers and fortifications.

[79] PRO SP 1/168, ff. 19-54 (*Bowes' Survey of the Borders, 1541*).

[80] Ibid.

[81] This letter was penned only half way through Bowes' circuit. It seems that many of the towers in the English countries opposite Teviotdale and Tweedale had been abandoned after the Anglo-Scottish conflicts of the early sixteenth century.

strained relationships between the pensioners and their tenants, causing breakdowns in tenant obligations.

The Middle March fared much better in Bowes' assessments. Nevertheless, Harbottle castle, which commanded the troublesome area of Redesdale, was in extreme ruins. Lord Tailboys, who held the castle from the king as part of the ancient Umfraville inheritance, was entirely absent from this upland holding, and had allowed the surrounding area to become wasted over the previous two decades. This was the exception as more active gentry and pensioners appear to have resided in the Middle March. Sir Cuthbert Ratcliffe's towers at Cartington and Thropton were both in good standing, as were the towers of the Blekensopps and Thirlwals. Widdrington strongholds of Great Swinburne and Haughton were decayed, although Sir John's properties had been subject of recent attacks. Offsetting this blemish were the towers at Hartington Hall, 'Sawnes' and Wallington, all of which Sir John Fenwick kept in 'good repair'. So why was the Middle March so much better fortified? Part of the answer lies in its proximity to the lawless dales. Tynedale and Redesdale were all within striking distance, and it was general prudence that caused most of the pensioners to keep their bastles and barmkins in reasonable good repair. The East March, on the other hand, had not suffered an invasion in almost thirty years, and although there was still the threat of Scottish invasion, the area was much more stable, especially in the coastal plain, as Maureen Meikle has argued.[82] While the Haughton raid suggested a lack of prepared defences amongst the gentry, the real culprits were the magnates and the king himself, as the main castles of Harbottle, Etal and Wark, as well as the jail at Hexham were all dangerously decayed.

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[82] Maureen Meikle, 'Lairds and Gentlemen: A Study of the Landed Families of the Easter Anglo-Scottish Borders c. 1540-1603,' (Edinburgh Ph.D., 1988) pp. 1-8

Complaints regarding the pensioning system continued throughout the 1540's. In the English East and Middle Marches, an account of the available military resources led to an examination of border service. The dismantling of the pensioning scheme was closely tied to the occupation of Scotland, when Northumberland ceased, albeit temporarily, to share a frontier with Scotland. It was clear as early as November 1547 that Somerset intended to utterly reform the pensioning structure when he ordered Lord Grey de Wilton to audit the pensioners who resided within Northumberland, resulting in their temporary dismissal.[83] The pensioning system seems to have been revived the next year, but in 1549, all Wardens were ordered to examine whether or not pensioners serving as light horsemen on the borders were an unprofitable burden, as the garrisons of Scotland were then providing the screen for Northumberland.[84] There was also a call for the reforms of any abuse regarding soldiers. In April 1549, Viscount Lisle voiced his distaste for the pensioners, his opinion informed by the dismal service they gave during his service as Warden-General in 1543. Invoking "the auncient discipline of war", Lisle refused to tolerate the slackness that had penetrated the garrisons, although much of his criticism was aimed at inland men who had fled south to their home counties.[85] Although the reforms suggest that the pensioners were no longer serving their purpose, it is likely that most of the eligible Northumbrian gentlemen were exhausted by the constant Anglo-Scottish conflict. Still, in 1552, the gentry were warned for their uncooperative behaviour, indicating that many were still unwilling to fulfil their military duties.[86]

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[83] *Addenda,* I, no. 52.
[84] *Addenda,* III, no. 55.
[85] Paul L. Hughes and James F. Larkin (eds.), *Tudor Royal Proclamations*, II, London: Yale University Press, 1964); Grafton's Proclamations, 33v. and London Journals, 16, 13.
[86] APC, III, p. 473.

Although the gentry no longer received fees for their military activity after 1550, the system of watch and ward provided a more effective substitute. Although this was not regulated directly by the crown, at least it provided the gentry with a better-defined job than acting as a pensioner, and it was better suited given the nature of the Marches. The pensioning system was at first a workable plan, but the rift between the average Marcher and the gentleman who was supposed to ensure his support in military affairs had grown too wide as a result of the tension between royal service and local feud.[87] Whereas custom was the driving force behind obligation, the pensioners with their newly created military powers clashed with a local community that was already gravely fractured. Resentment towards the pensioners grew as many expected Border defence to be performed by those who had received the king's salaries, which caused many to forgo the obligation of traditional Border defence. However, the pensioners were not directly responsible for the decline of Border defence, as has been claimed.[88] Border military obligations suffered most heavily from both fear of the deadly feud, and the actual pursuit of feud. The enmity that existed between some of the pensioners, such as the feuds between the Herons and the Carrs, in part undermined the military strength of the Marches. Underlying this tension was that the pensioners relied utterly upon their tenants, retainers and family members for military strength. Witness the difficulty that even the militant Sir Thomas Wharton had in mustering men from the lordships of the Earl of Cumberland and Lord Dacre, both of whom despised Wharton for his ambition and political success with the king.[89] Yet, Dacre's men had no objection in serving the next night with Sir William Musgrave in the clash at Solway Moss.[90]

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[87] See Chapter 7.
[88] Meikle, 'Lairds and Gentlemen' p. 183.
[89] *LP*, XVII no. 1119. M.E. James, *Change and Continuity in the Tudor North: The Rise of Thomas First Lord Wharton,* Borthwick Papers, vol. 27 (York, 1965), *passim.*
[90] *LP*, XVII no. 1121.

Marcher loyalties could be fickle. When loyal, marchers served their lords fiercely. As rebels, they could spoil the grand designs of the council in London. Still, many of the pensioners served dutifully, but their authority within their own lordships declined whenever they pursued their own agendas.

Retinues, Border Service and Tenantry

Border landholding dictated the terms of one's military obligation in the Marches. Even though all men were expected to serve the warden during brief raids and to answer the call to the fray, this was not the sole foundation of military service in the Marches. The only men who could be reliably tapped on a regular basis for border service were the gentry and their tenants, and even this proved difficult as many tenants were too poor to afford arms, or were infirm. This made it nearly impossible to raise forces by quota, so muster-masters were virtually useless in the Marches, which meant that royal musters made only rare appearances in Northumberland.[91] In general, the crown was not as active in enforcing military obligation amongst the rank and file of Northumberland since its primary concern was forging ties with either the pensioners or gentry. Occasionally, the Tudor monarchs made queries and criticisms regarding border service and tenure, although their participation in the routine of raising bands was limited. This in turn gave the leading March officers a principal role in ensuring compliance, and a carte blanche to introduce new methods of enforcing border service.

The primary mark of qualification for military leadership was a sizeable retinue that one could raise at will. At the core of each retinue was the gentry household; the numbers of fencible men in each household obviously fluctuated, but

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[91] The Marches were generally exempt from most musters. The only national muster that included Northumberland was in 1538/9. See NRO MSS ZAN m.13/d.15.

in the Borders they rarely rose above fifteen horsed and harnessed men. In the 1539 musters, Sir Reynold Carnaby's household accounted for twelve men, with each man suitably armed as a light cavalryman.[92] Sir Cuthbert Ratcliffe also produced twelve fencible men in his household, but two, Thomas Marcam and Pat Hopkiss, were both unhorsed, but harnessed nevertheless.[93] Most of the gentry had much smaller households, with correspondingly smaller retinues. The Captain of Wark could claim only five men in his personal retinue, while Lord Ogle had only eight men. Although each member of the household was expected to join his lord in the field, the overall military contribution of the gentry's retinues of the East and Middle Marches was quite small. On royal muster lists, the gentry households looked small even compared to the smaller hamlets of Northumberland, many of which produced a dozen or more men. However, the muster of 1539 showed that households were much better armed in general than the levies of each township. The quality of the soldiers that served in personal retinues of the Northumberland gentry even surpassed the quality of garrison soldiers, as Lieutenant-General Hertford noted that the retinues were better horsed.[94]

Retinues were comprised of both family members and tenants or neighbours. Included in Reynold Carnaby's household were Gilbert, Anthony, and William Carnaby. Cuthbert Ratcliffe's household only contained one family member, Edward, his eldest son.[95] Instead, Ratcliffe's household utilised connections to leaders of local bands. In the Tynedale wards, some of the dominant families in the musters included the Gallons, Shaftoes, and Harbottles. These families comprised most of Cuthbert Ratcliffe's household, their ties giving Ratcliffe a substantial

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[92] NRO MSS ZAN m.13/d.15
[93] NRO MSS ZAN m.13/d.15
[94] *LP*, XVII no. 1083.
[95] NRO, ZAN m.13/d.15

military base.[96] In the garrison at Wark castle, the constable, John Carr, employed no less than seven family members, all of whom served as cavalry chiefs.[97] Retinues of the Northumberland gentry thus appear to be typical of the English gentry as a whole. The combination of immediate family members and members of local society provided an affinity, which equated to military power. Like any armed retinue, military obligation owed to the chief householder was heavily influenced by this personal relationship. However, the diminutive retinues of the Northumberland gentry meant that both pensioners and regular gentry looked outside of their core retinue for broader military support, when needed.

Both the gentry and pensioners were mostly dependent upon their tenants to flesh out their muster returns. A large number of tenants equated a larger pool of military resources, which provided scattered results for Northumberland in general. An assessment drawn up in the late 1530's shows that typical band sizes for the Northumberland gentry during this period ranged between five and 200 men, the upper number being well beyond what a mere household might supply.[98] The chief officers of the marches, namely the wardens and the sheriff, supplied upwards of 100 horsed men, most of whom were part of their permanent, fee'd *posses*. Lord Ogle, one of the wealthiest landowners in Northumberland, could also supply 100 horsemen. Since Ogle was probably only a minor officer at this time,[99] the majority of these men were most likely his tenants who were not regular soldiers; nevertheless, they were still listed as being mounted, which suggests at least some level of military skill.

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[96] *Ibid.*

[97] *Hamilton Papers*, II, no. 431.

[98] PRO, E 36/173 ff. 114-15. This document is not dated but lists Sir John Widdrington as the Warden of the Middle March, a position that he retained only three years: 1537-40. It is very likely that this list was created as a part of the 1537 survey of the chief Northumberland castles.

[99] Ralph Robson, *English Highland Clans*, p. 85. Lord Ogle was Vice-Warden under the Percys in the mid-1530's.

John Hall of Otterburn, who in true Marcher fashion rode the fine line between ruffian and respectable, could muster only six men from his holdings in 1538. His ability to call upon his kinsmen and surname during feuds made him much more powerful than the list suggests, although most riders in Redesdale were already freeholders and answerable only to their governor for military services. Thus when acting as assistant to the Keeper of Redesdale, Hall of Otterburn raised 300 horsed men, fifty of which were from his own surname.[100] On the other hand, military officers such as the Captain of Wark were able to call upon the surrounding country by virtue of their offices. This was a unique arrangement as it was out of place for men to serve a garrison captain as part of their tenancy. Forty-two horsemen from the Barony of Wark were answerable to the chief officer of the castle, aside from the fifty-five men that he could call from his own lands.[101] A later survey describes the ancient military obligations of Harbottle, whereby 'the tenants owe their service to Harbottle castle to be commanded by the captain there for his Majesty's service; to serve in field, either on horse or foot, for the defence of the border land.'[102] This evidence alone suggests the heightened military obligation of all Marchers when even freeholders were responsible for furnishing at least one harnessed man when answering the fray.

Although the tenants of the gentry formed a decent sized body of armed men—sufficient at least for launching raids into Scotland—the majority of the borderers owed limited service as a part of their obligations. The origins of this style of military service were relatively new, despite the Marchers' insistence that

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[100] *CScotP*, VIII, no. 653.
[101] This document enters Robert Collingwood's contingent above the line where the Captain of Wark is entered. According to *LP*, IV(3) no. 2830, Collingwood held the captaincy of Wark until December 1538, when he surrendered the office to John Carr. The two retinues were no doubt listed separately in order to distinguish military offices from chief landlords, even though the two were often one and the same.
[102] PRO, SP 14/10/59 (*Border Survey of 1604*, f. 85).

they were ancient custom. Since many tenants were customary tenants, and many of those by tenant right, there was no obligation to serve as a freeholder. M.L. Bush suggests that border service was merely a form of cornage that was extended to include customary tenants.[103] Given the necessities of border defence, this assessment seems reasonable.

Typically, pay and even fresh mounts and armour were not afforded the Border soldier. Border tenants were bound to serve without wages in daylong raids, or when answering the call to fray.[104] They could not be expected to serve freely in Scotland for lengthy periods. Instead, the duties were more akin to police action. Custom obliged all Northumbrian households to supply one suitably horsed and harnessed soldier, an expensive burden; typically, this meant that a Northumbrian was expected to provide horse, armour, bow, spear or bill, and follow the hue and cry within an hour's notice.[105] For their limited services, Borderers received certain advantages. The widespread practice in the sixteenth century was that Borderers, or those who owed Border service, served freely in exchange for tax exemptions.[106] Both Henry and his children upheld this privilege, although the Privy Council and the March officers constantly debated the specificities of the exemptions and obligations. Just before his raid against Kelso in early fall 1542, the duke of Norfolk reminded the Privy Council that the Borderers were bound to attend the Warden at their own cost in all sudden raids, and were thus exempt from all Parliamentary subsidies. In 1543, Sir Thomas Wharton suggested making a catalogue of men who were bound to serve so that the government could affirm their tax exemption.[107]

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[103] Bush, 'Tenant right', pp. 166-67.
[104] *LP*, XVII no. 957.
[105] BL, Calig. B IV f. 258; BL, Harl. MSS 643 f. 169; *LP*, XVII no. 750 and XX(1) no. 772. Many more examples of specific military requirements can be found in *Calendar of Border Papers*.
[106] BL Add MSS 32647 f. 162 (Sept. 16 1544); BL Harl. MSS 643 f. 267 (Sept. 19 1558). In addition to reduced rents, Borderers were exempt from all parliamentary subsidies.
[107] LP XVIII(1) no. 799.

Such tenants formed a special group of soldiers that required careful

consideration when incorporated into campaign armies. The Duke of Norfolk, as

Lieutenant of the North, recognised their status and prohibited all leading lords and

landowners from "meddling" with this group of tenants, meaning that their rights

should not be disturbed at the expense of their services.[108] This privilege led to much

confusion during the crown's complex schemes against Scotland, yet the Tudors

were eager to exploit this group; in 1542, the king wanted a complete list of all

'laws, constitutions and orders' of the Borders, and how the inhabitants were bound

to serve.[109] Henry VIII was more generous in supplementing his borderers with

wages,[110] while his heirs generally tried to expand the limits of Border service to

include all military service. Both Bowes and Wharton, veterans of Henry's

campaigns, knew from experience that at least some form of remuneration was

effective treacle for augmenting royal influence.[111] Bowes, though, was in favour of

extending Border service to cover seven nights and one day.[112] Even he vacillated on

the issue, which caused friction with the government. While serving as Warden, he

was criticised by Northumberland's administration for allowing the borderers to

have wages during the Scottish wars.[113] In general, it was recognised that the crown

would have to pay for this service at times, as more often than not a military

operation could last for any number of days. Without compensation, borderers

would be reluctant to answer any call at all, and the king's officers knew this all too

well.[114] Failure to answer the fray was rampant as many petty officers and

pensioners were powerless to enforce this obligation. It was only in 1547 that the

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[108] LP, XVII no. 799.
[109] LP, XVII no.1123.
[110] Henry's tendency to throw money at the Borderers for military service was more prevalent in the 1520's. See LP, III(2) no. 3040; Ibid, IV(1) no. 161; Ibid, VI no. 113.
[111] William Nicholson, Leges Marchiarum or Border Laws (Leges), (London, 1747) pp. 341-42.
[112] PRO, SP 15/8/72.
[113] APC, III, p. 202.

penalty of death was proscribed for any failure to answer the muster; in 1552 failure

to answer the call to the fray was made punishable by death under March Law,

though later in the century this was commuted to fine and imprisonment.[115] These

laws were, for the most part, created by the Wardens as responses to the complaints

made by the Privy Council regarding Border service. Consequently, Border service

remained an issue that was affected by both central and local agents.

Not all military service was given in the usual custom of the Borders. The

creation of the royal bands in 1523 provided an opportunity to serve full-time with

pay, with some attending as light Border cavalry, others as mounted footmen.[116]

Creation of such bands was necessary as an alternative to the short, two-day service

that limited most border tenants. It was also a necessary step in order to give the

pensioners and officers a pool of men from which they could select their soldiers for

lengthier raids. Signalling the introduction of military bureaucracy, captains of the

bands now reported all use of their troops to the king as a regular course, resulting in

exact records that detail unit strengths, leadership and movement. Although the

strength of the bands fluctuated from season to season, each company contained 100

men, led by a captain who was often a pensioner. These numbers would remain

faceless were it not for the monthly musters that the king required of his fee'd

Border soldiers. In the early stages of the 1542-1550 wars, Sir Rafe Ellerkar and Sir

Robert Bowes both led such companies.[117] Ellerkar's service on the borders and in

France eventually earned him the rank of Captain-General of the Northern

Horsemen by 1545.[118] Bowes earned distinction as well, serving as deputy Vice-

Warden of the East March in 1542, and becoming Warden of the Middle March after

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[114] PRO, SP 1/124 ff. 67-72 (August 20, 1537)
[115] Nicholson, *Leges*, pp. 143-7; NRO, MSS 1228; CRO, Bell MSS, ff. 180-82.
[116] *LP*, III(2) no. 3363.
[117] *LP*, XVIII(1) no. 832; XIX(1) no. 693.
[118] LP, XX(1) no. 1049.

Sir Ralph Eure's death in combat. During Hertford's invasion of Scotland in September 1545, Bowes led as many as 1000 men from his jurisdiction.[119] Royal bands thus provided at least some military power in the Marches, especially in turbulent times, when resources became scarce.

Moreover, the style of more permanent military service glimmers through the muster lists: Garrison duty seems to have prevailed above all other forms of service. The need for stronger policing of the borders resulted in an overwhelming increase in the numbers of garrisons that royal officials proposed to build. Still, it took the Pilgrimage to ensure that royal garrisons sprouted throughout the Marches, with towers, castles and barmkins used to house small units of cavalry. Marcher horsemen contributed 700 men to English garrisons at Wark, Norham and Berwick castles, and at Chipchase and Haltwhistle in Tynedale, most of whom served for wages despite their traditional obligation to serve as an auxiliary police force that was off the official payroll.[120] English Borderers from the Middle and Eastern Marches also captured Kelso late in 1544, and in January 1545, Sir Ralph Eure sent a garrison of Marchers to occupy the town and castle.[121] In 1547, captains in the Eastern March received instructions to keep garrisoned those Borderers who had no home, thus reducing outlawry and mischief.[122]

The salary that came with extended duties, either serving in the bands or in the garrisons, soon became familiar to the Border soldiers. It was not unheard of to be paid for service that was within the limits of one's contract; Surrey and Dacre were well-noted for giving pay to their marchers.[123] However, it was a different situation when one went into garrison, or on an extended excursion with the king's

[119] LP, XX(2) no. 603.
[120] LP, XIX(1) no. 283.
[121] LP, XX(1) no. 129.
[122] APC, 1547-50, p. 710.
[123] LP, III(2) no. 3515; LP, IV(1) no. 161.

bands. Even the warlike Sir Thomas Wharton of the West Marches was forced to concede that an iron fist would not persuade men to serve beyond their normal obligations; on one occasion in October 1545, he brought satchels of victual and wages to the mustering point when he knew that a foray would run for nine days.[124] Taking the conflict to Scottish soil meant that borderers were necessarily tapped for lengthier service in Scotland, with many going overseas to serve the king at Boulogne and Calais. Putting borderers into wages not only guaranteed the military leaders a supply of men; it gave the king and his council a more exact inventory of the forces available to them. Typical garrison pay was 6*d.* per day for each soldier, 8*d.* if mounted. Tempted by regular income, Borderers—including men from Tynedale and Redesdale—flocked to the garrisons. Although it was admitted that the addition of Marchers to the garrisons gave the armies more of an edge, Henry VIII was displeased to see so many in wages.[125] By 1545, there were many Border soldiers in garrisons, the legality of which was debated by Henry's officers only haphazardly as they realised that pay was sometimes a necessity. Under Mary Tudor, the government went as far as prohibiting the retaining of any Borderer by the garrison captains, 'uppon payne of grevos punneshmente and wante of wages of such persones shalbe retained.'[126] In January 1558, the government again changed its approach and allowed the garrisons to retain Borderers, although at two-thirds the normal wage, and only after ten days of free service.[127]

A muster of the Marian garrisons of the East March, and of Norhamshire and Berwickshire in Northumberland, reveals a typical arrangement for Marcher companies.[128] Most were organized into groups of twenty, which suggests that the

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[124] *St.P.*, V, p. 552.
[125] LP, XIX(1) no. 293; PRO, SP 1/199 f. 161 (March 1545).
[126] BL, Calig. B IV ff. 258-59.
[127] PRO, SP 15/8/72.
[128] PRO, E 36/173 f. 116.

larger companies of 100 contained individual petty captains, corporals or vintners that led each garrison. While no garrison held more than 80 men, the garrisons themselves peppered the map, giving each neighbourhood the support of at least a full company's worth of troopers. At times, a single garrison in troubled areas like Tynedale would swell to 500 troopers 'to keep good rule on the Borders.'[129] Although the organisation of the garrison companies was not as layered as a more modern unit, the presence of officers and petty officers demonstrated that the English Borderers had at least some knowledge of military organisation.

When garrisoning efforts shifted north of the Scottish border in 1547, there was a drain on the amount of troopers readily available in Northumberland, yet there was usually provision to allow some to remain for defence against the renegades of the dales, even if it only amounted to a few garrisons. For the most part, all military resources in Northumberland were prioritised for the Scottish garrisons. It was Wharton's opinion that Borderers would be more appropriate for garrisoning in Scotland, as other Englishmen might not be so keen to leave the comfort of the South.[130] As more Marchers entered the garrisons, it became obvious that Northumberland could not sustain the war effort by itself. By November 1547, Lord Grey de Wilton, Warden-General of the Marches, complained of lack of money and munitions, as Newcastle did not have enough in its stores for all English garrisons, and like his predecessors, Grey asked for supplies from the south.[131] By November, the costs of the garrisons became outrageous, with the payment of English garrisons some three months in arrears. The ultimate destruction of the English garrisons in Scotland in 1550-51 meant the Borderers of the English Marches would once again

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[129] BL, Add. MSS 32649 f. 175. (Feb. 23, 1543)
[130] *Addenda*, I, no. 49.
[131] *Addenda*, I, no. 47.

serve in their own country, although the government's upkeep of its Northumberland garrisons slackened off, with the exception of the Berwick garrison.

In modern armies, such inconsistent payment and employment arrangements would spark mass desertions and mutinies, but the Border soldiers of sixteenth-century England were driven to their task by an obsession with plunder. Often the sole form of remuneration for their military services, the crown always indulged the Northumbrians when they plundered the Scots. At times, plunder was encouraged in order to secure more Border horse for a raid. When Sir Ralph Eure and Sir Brian Layton raided Teviotdale in February 1545, it was with the intention of carving out new lands for themselves, which the king had promised to all soldiers who would help quell the Earl of Angus.[132] Such a perquisite at times could outstrip any pay from the king's coffers. During the 1544 siege of Edinburgh, it was noted that the Northern Horse had amassed an obscene amount of loot during their overland forays.[133] The raid into Jedburgh in the same year also garnered numerous cattle, horse and sheep for the marauding Border soldiers.[134] As motivating as it might have been, the temptations of moveable wealth made some Border soldiers a liability for the English commanders. At Flodden in 1513, the border horsemen were accused of disposing of the English sentries, ransoming prisoners without the knowledge of the Lieutenant-General, and ransoming the English baggage train.[135] Again at Haddon Rigg in 1542, the flight of the Border horse from their commanders commenced only after their realization that all of their booty had been sent back into England.[136] To demand that soldiers serve without pay was out of place in sixteenth-century

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[132] Philips, *Anglo-Scots Wars*, p. 170; Robert Lindsay of Pitscottie, *The Historie and Cronicles of Scotland*, vol. II, ed. A.J.G. Mackay, (Edinburgh: Wm. Blackwood, 1899), p. 35.
[133] LP, XIX(1) no. 465.
[134] William Patten, *The Late Expedition into Scotland*, in A.F. Pollard (ed.) *Tudor Tracts, 1532-1588*, Westminster: Constable, 1903), p. 50.
[135] PRO SP 1/5 ff. 229 and 730.
[136] BL, Add. MSS 32647 f. 50 (August 25, 1542).

warfare, but border warfare necessitated such practices, especially when the crown

could not afford to maintain a standing army. Yet, the dependence upon loot to

offset one's wage losses only served to destabilise the English armies since there

was no clear and consistent policy coming from either the government or the local

March officers.

One element of Border service that did not seem to interest the crown, but

which immeasurably concerned the local officers was the watch and ward. Coupled

with the obligation to answer the fray and the hot trod, tenants also performed watch

duties, serving as an auxiliary police force within their own areas under the guidance

of the local gentry. [137] However, watchmen were normally paid for their duties,

usually from the coffers of the local gentry, but also sometimes from the townships

that they guarded.[138] Watch duty was an essential military function of the border

tenant, especially after the decline of the military pensioners, as it provided a

warning system against enemy incursions. This watch duty provided warning

against raids, and allowed the local population sufficient time to safeguard their

chattel from an impending incursion. Like the pickets that surrounded a bivouacked

army, the Northumberland watch took place at various locales that afforded an

unobstructed view of the surrounding area as it was essential to maintain visual

contact with other nearby sentries so that warnings could be raised throughout the

vicinity. Relics of this system can still be seen on modern maps in numerous place-

names of Northumberland.[139]

The effectiveness of the watch and ward was sporadic. The first register that

regulated the watch appeared, at the end of Bowes' survey of 1541.[140] Sir Cuthbert

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[137] Nicholson, *Leges*, pp. 241-313.
[138] BL, Calig. B VIII f. 63 (Feb. 12, 1541)
[139] Numerous hills north of the Roman Wall bear the name "Watch Hill" or "Watch Rigg". See Ordinance Survey Maps.
[140] PRO, SP 1/168 f. 50

Ratcliffe is credited with the creation of this catalogue, making him the first to systemize the watch and ward of Northumberland, although the watch had been in effect for some time.[141] Already the weaknesses of the system were decried in the report, as local communities were unwilling to pay for the watch since the surnames of Tynedale, Redesdale and Liddesdale were adept at slipping past sentries. Although Ratcliffe stated that the watch was mandatory, the assessment in the survey was defeatist in portraying a system that was bound to disappoint.

Due to the lack of regulation by the crown, at times even the best-organised watch would fail either through the treachery of the guards or through the actions of others. Regardless of its obvious importance, many Borderers thoroughly ignored the watch duties in 1542. The Earl of Rutland, as Lieutenant of the North, found such disorder in the ranks of the Northumberland tenantry that he could scarcely recognise any sort of system at all, since most tenants expected the pensioners to perform the watch by virtue of their charge.[142] The multiple jailbreaks from Hexham during the sixteenth century were in part due to a sympathetic watchman. At the very least, the less villainous members of the watch casually looked on whilst the jail doors were being kicked down; sometimes the jailbreakers even abducted them if they gave any sign of resistance.[143]

Despite large gaps in the early system of watch and ward, it was effective enough by 1543, when it prevented the theft of the Keeper's livestock.[144] In February of the same year, the watch near Thirlwall castle on the Cumbrian-Northumberland border repelled a Scottish raid.[145] The progressive pull of the

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[141] The first mention of the watch that I could find appears in PRO, SP 1/7 f. 281 (Feb. 27, 1514), although it most certainly had existed for a long time before.

[142] *Hamilton Papers*, I, no. 237.

[143] This is descriptive of the jailbreak that sullied Carnaby's reputation as a military leader. See above.

[144] BL, Add. MSS 32561 f. 101 (July 17, 1543)

[145] *LP*, XVIII(1) no. 253.

surnames into legitimate service meant that the watch was less burdened by the

troubles of Tynedale and Redesdale, a subsidiary effect of royal indulgence towards

the heidsmen which no doubt made the watch appear more effective by the first

years of the 'rough wooing'.

All mention of the system accordingly disappears from the records, until the

last years of Edward VI. By 1552, Border law mandated the setting of each watch,

naming each principal man as being responsible for setting watch and ward over his

immediate area.[146] As deputy Warden-General of the Marches, Lord Wharton was

eager to underscore the duties of each tenant, adding the penalty of death for any

watchmen who consorted with known felons, or for failure to answer the fray.[147] The

lack of intervention by the crown when it came to regulation of the watch is not

surprising, given the localised necessity of the watch. Scrutiny of border service

was inevitable, but the watch was a matter for the March officers, especially since

the Duke of Northumberland had specifically empowered Wharton to act with

unilateral authority.[148] As such, all violations in the setting of the watch eventually

became the concern of the Wardens' courts, with each court session preceded by

orders to find all who had failed to keep watch and answer musters, as well as those

who had otherwise interfered with the hot trod.[149] The enforcement of such service

for those who were exempted from taxes demonstrates the seriousness with which

March officers regarded tenant obligations. Under March law, any person who

refused to answer the call to fray or muster was declared a traitor and tried within

the Wardens' courts. By 1560, when wars with Scotland ceased to threaten the

Borders, the system of watch and ward concerned itself more with groups of

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[146] Nicolson, *Leges*, pp. 241-314.
[147] Nicolson, *Leges*, p. 319
[148] Wharton's designation as Warden-General was a means of alleviating the burden of personal rule, although Northumberland still kept abreast in border affairs.
[149] PRO, SP 15/1/16-18.

occasional marauders than with the inroads of Scottish armies. Nevertheless, it remained paramount in guaranteeing the security of the Marchers, and was upheld by Warden and gentleman alike, in spite of royal disinterest.

By contrast, the West March contained fewer tenants who owed service to a particular landlord's household, and more freeholders who were responsible for answering the royal musters. The West Marches also appear to have been more populous than their East and Middle counterparts. Muster returns for the West Marches indicate that the crown had at its disposal more than 8,000 men in 1584. This figure is significantly greater than the numbers for the East or Middle Marches, which numbered 3,000 and 7,600, respectively.[150] Surname groups were also very active in the West Marches, indicating fewer landlords, although the influence of the Dacres even after their disgrace was still significant.[151] Sir Thomas Wharton, Warden of the West March for much of the period in question, preferred the effects of personal lordship rather than relying upon the local gentry for manpower; in 1544 he requested that he be allowed to retain the best men within the March for defence.[152] Wharton preferred to use musters to summon the power of the Marches rather than the call to the fray; in 1547, he reminded all tenants who owed service to answer his musters under pain of death,[153] thereby suggesting that military obligation was now subject to March Laws. His method of Wardenship and the immediate availability of manpower in the West Marches meant that Wharton was

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[150] *CBP*, I no. 255.
[151] The Dacre family was able to recover the Wardenship of the Western Marches under Mary I, and they held it until William Dacre's death in 1563. See *APC*, 1556-8, p. 373. Their influence did not end there, but declined gradually until Leonard Dacre's rebellion in 1570. See Tough, *Frontier*, pp. 209-212.
[152] PRO, SP 1/179, f. 151.
[153] NRO MSS 1228, *The Letter Book of the West Marches*.

overall much more successful in raising troops within his jurisdiction when using a general muster.[154]

Border service also existed in the uplands of the Palatinate, most of which was prone to raids and reiving by the men of Tynedale, Gilsland and Liddesdale.[155] Thus, the ability to answer the call to arms was essential. Landlords were fairly quick to dispossess the tenants who failed to render this vital military service. In 1497, a group of Weardale men were dispossessed for shirking the call to arms.[156] The Lumleys, who were the military power of the county until their fall just after the Pilgrimage of Grace, gave way to the administrative talents of Bishop Cuthbert Tunstall. As an active member of the Council of the North, Tunstall recognised the value of military tenure in the areas of his lordships that were essentially Marcher in nature, if not in name. Even Wharton did not hesitate to consider the Palatinate part of the Marcher defensive structure, as Durham men often spent time in garrison along the border, some at their own expense.[157] Certainly, there is a wealth of evidence suggesting that parts of the Palatinate were used to reinforce the defence of the Marches against Scottish aggression. As early as 1543, Durham men had received instructions to participate in raids into Scotland; the Privy Council urged the Marcher officers to employ them so that they might become accustomed to active Border service.[158] Durham levies prepared to fortify Berwick in 1545 and were already in service in some areas of Scotland with Hertford.[159]

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[154] See James, *Change and Continuity, passim.*

[155] J. Linda Drury, 'More Stout Than Wise: Tenant Right in Weardale in the Tudor Period.' in D. Marcombe, (ed.) *The Last Principality: Politics, Religion and Society in the Bishopric of Durham, 1494-1660,* (Nottingham: University of Nottingham, 1987); D.D.R., CC 220198 f. 246.

[156] Drury, 'Tenant Right in Weardale,' p. 77; PRO, Durham Palatinate Records, Chancery Roll, 3/19 f. 74 *(Fox's Halmote Court Book).*

[157] Men from the areas near Allendale and Blanchland, although technically in the Palatinate, were responsible to the Warden of the Middle March.

[158] *LP,* XVIII(2) no. 324.

[159] *LP,* XX(1) no.1246, and *ibid* (vol. 2) no.128.

Escalating tensions with Scotland required the services of Durham, and tenures reflected this need. In 1548, William Hilton was required as part of his tenure to provide one Border horse, or two foot spears for service in the garrisons of Scotland.[160] In 1551, John Vasey leased Pinfold House with the agreement that he would provide the service of one horseman.[161] William Cornforth received Westhopeburn in lease, and owed rent and the service of one horseman.[162] These tenures are typical of those found within the Marches, suggesting that even relative proximity to Scotland made a tenant eligible for military service. Despite these stipulations, Durham's role in Border defence was still ambiguous. In 1557, Bishop Tunstall argued that the conditions of military service were strictly defensive, arguing that the 'cuntrey dothe deyne lying in garrions to tary the comyunge of the enemye but whensoever th'enemye doth invade the realme, they well upon warnyng, be reddy to go to repulse him of theire own coste'.[163] Even effective administrators were confounded by the tenets that underwrote Border service.

Service Abroad

The value of the Northern horsemen was known not only to the king of England but to the leaders of the Continental armies as well; even Emperor Charles V had commented on their abilities.[164] Their prowess in combat made them perfect skirmishers not only in the northern Marches, but in the Pales of Dublin and Calais as well. Henry VIII was all too eager to use them in his military ambitions across the sea, as he had during his campaign of 1513.[165] There were problems with this arrangement, chiefly that the borderers were not obliged to serve abroad; therefore

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[160] Drury, 'Tenant Right in Weardale,' p. 82; PRO, Durham 3/77 m. 41.
[161] Ibid.; D.D.R., cc 190172 f. 7.
[162] Drury, 'Tenant Right in Weardale, pp. 82-3; D.D.R., cc 190172 f. 9.
[163] Talbot MSS. D. f. 60; G. Scott Thompson, "The Bishops of Durham and the Office of Lord-Lieutenant in the Seventeenth Century," English Historical Review, XL (1925), pp. 351-52.
[164] LP, XVIII(2) no. 345.
[165] Phillips, Anglo-Scots Wars, p. 86.

they were exempted from most national levies.[166] In 1543, Henry sought to change

this by demanding a quota of horsemen from the Border counties. As southern

gentlemen called for their northern tenants to serve across the Channel, the king also

called for 200 of the best border horsemen to serve with him.[167] In a short time, the

king had doubled the quota to 400 border horsemen, despite the fruitless objections

of Thomas Wharton. Two hundred soldiers of the West Marches were requisitioned,

whilst the East and Middle Marches were ordered to provide the remaining 200. The

letter explicitly instructed that garrison troops were to fulfil the quota, probably as a

means of keeping more Borderers out of the paid, regular army. Conscripts from

Durham and North Yorkshire, or 'inland men', replaced those who went to

France.[168] Because many Border horsemen were too poor to provide sufficient

mounts for service, the king offered them fresh mounts from the commissariat, yet

another volte-face by the Tudor government regarding pay.[169] By 1543, the Council

in London had begun to incorporate them into the national scheme. Three

companies of border horsemen were sent to France in June 1543, whilst another two

companies followed in spring 1544.[170] In 1546, another company joined the

Northern Horsemen at Calais.[171]

Some soldiers went willingly. Several prominent Marchers stepped forward

to lead the bands, including Wharton's son, whom the king ordered to remain in

England in the end.[172] Rafe Ellerkar, though, was more successful, as he made the

rank of Captain-General of the Northern Horse by 1546. His ambitions earned him a

sticky end in April 1546, when he was mortally gut shot in an ambush and

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[166] Cruickshank, *Elizabeth's Army*, p. 29. Cruickshank has noted that Northumberland, Cumberland, Westmoreland and Durham were exempt from musters for foreign expeditions.
[167] *LP*, XIX(1) no. 227.
[168] *LP*, XX(2) no. 96.
[169] *LP*, XIX(1) no. 313.
[170] PRO, SP 1/179 f. 1 (June 10, 1543); BL, Add. MSS 32654 f. 98 (April 14, 1544); LP XIX(1) no. 271.

subsequently abandoned by his comrades on the French sands.[173] For the more

common soldier, there was money to be made in France if not prestige. The high

rate of pay for English soldiers in France was undoubtedly tempting with horsemen

receiving 9*d.* per day.[174] They were of considerable use, their wages reflecting their

value on the fields of Europe. Most were used as scouts and prickers, and many

seemed to relish this role, but according to Edward Hall, their ultimate desire for

booty and prisoners for ransom drove them to foreign service: "diverse tymes the

Northern light horsemen under the conduite of Sir John Nevell skirmished with the

stradiottes and take diverse of the prisoners and brought them to the Kyng."[175] Thus

some went to France seeking glory, others going out of obedience to their heidsmen

and officers, but many stayed in the Marches.

The war in France signalled yet another change for the military resources of

the Marches. No longer were the continental conflicts a burden for the southern

counties to bear; border counties now had to contribute more soldiers than ever.

National military obligation had always encroached upon the Liberties of the East

and Middle Marches, yet the Border soldiers had always been able to guard their

tenant right, which gave them leave to remain in their homelands. This precedent in

part signalled the end of tenant right in the Marches, as soldiers began to serve more

frequently as regular "white coats" than as irregulars, the latter being their normal

custom.

<u>Surnames and Military Service</u>

The state adopted an ambivalent attitude towards the Border clans; although

their criminal behaviour often warranted persecution, the concerns of the state and

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[171] *LP*, XXI(1) no. 300.
[172] *LP*, XIX(1) no. 313.
[173] *LP*, XXI(1) no. 694.
[174] *LP*, XIX(1) no. 273.
[175] Edward Hall, *The Triumphant Reigne of Kynge Henry VIII*, vol. 1 (London: Hack, 1901), p. 66.

its capability to defend the Border was given more weight. Henry VIII was insistent on pardoning members of the Robson and Charlton surnames only because their military capabilities had served the state, whereas their persecution would have placed the security of the Border in peril. Mary Tudor was even more protective of the Grahams of the West March, whose pillaging in part was responsible for the legacy of violence that has been attributed to the riding clans.[176] Even if the cycle of pardon and recidivism had become an empty political ritual,[177] the Tudors were not about to sacrifice the security of their Borders over issues relating to stolen property. In October 1542, Norfolk summed up royal policy regarding the employment of criminals as soldiers: 'and as for the reformation of thoffendors in Northombrelonde, we thinke it not convenient tattempte the same at this tyme, the warre beyng so hote as it is, but rather to wynke thereat for a tyme.'[178]

Despite the seeming immunity enjoyed by some of the surnames, the obligation to serve the crown in warfare was always a condition of pardon. More importantly, as subjects of the crown, the surnames were liable to the same obligations that affected the rest of Marcher society. In 1498, Bishop Fox of Durham reminded the clergy of Tynedale and Redesdale that the tenants of those areas owed service against the Scots, so that by 1550, tenants from these upland valleys claimed to hold their land through military service to the crown.[179] Some of the surname groups that inhabited the North Tyne, Rede and Coquet valleys were technically landless, despite their radical notions of ownership and propriety, and as such, they were rarely seen in the retinues of the gentry. However, their proximity to the Scottish borders (some of them living literally yards away from the recognized

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[176] BL, Harleian 289, f. 58; P.G. Boscher, 'Politics, Administration and Diplomacy: The Anglo-Scots Border, 1550-60,' (Durham University Ph.D., 1985), pp. 223-251.
[177] K.J. Kesselring, *Mercy and Authority in the Tudor State*, (Cambridge: CUP, 2003), p. 192.
[178] *Hamilton Papers*, I, no. 226.
[179] "Bishop Foxes Register", *The Surtees Society*, Vol. 147(Durham, 1932), p. 111.

border) made them indispensable to the March Wardens for conducting punitive raids into the neighbouring dales, especially since they were considered the best light horsemen in England. Thus the Tudors endeavoured to apply border service to the surname groups in the Marches, whose habitual reiving plagued the Wardens and officers.

Border reivers gave the impression of being lordless, incapable of following military discipline, and therefore prone to outlawry. There was a kernel of truth behind this observation. Until the 1530's, the border counties had been under the influence of two strong families: the Percies in the East and Middle Marches, and the Dacres in the West March. By a stroke of misfortune, both families suffered from disgrace and a sharp decline of power. By 1540, no northern magnate could gather the border families under a single standard, as Percies and Dacres had partially done. They had even bucked the Bishop of Durham and the Archbishop of York, their traditional patrons. North Tynedalers and Redesdalers were in the service of the Bishop of Durham by 1300, and even served in his household as ultra-violent armed retainers,[180] yet by the mid-sixteenth century there was no vestige left of this patronage.[181] The Archbishopric of York saw its power in the Marches gradually wane when Hexhamshire fell into the king's hands.[182] With that gone, the Archbishop no longer exerted any influence over the surnames. Were it not for the Northumberland gentry—the lengthy list of Vice-Wardens, constables, sheriffs and Keepers—there would have been little means of enforcing military service amongst the surnames. Military administration in Northumberland entirely depended upon county gentry, many of whom had roots in the border surnames. Northumbrian

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[180] Bishop Antony Bek used North Tynedale Archers to assault his rival, the Prior of Durham, in 1300. See C.M. Fraser, *History of Antony Bek,* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1957), pp. 130-64..

[181] J.A. Tuck, 'War and Society of the Medieval North,' *Journal of Northern History,* 21 (1985) p. 69.

[182] This was finally achieved through the dissolution of the monasteries.

gentry such as Roger à Fenwick, John Heron of Chipchase and Cuthbert Ratcliffe, who had dealings with the surnames, had entered royal service as leading officers. There simply were no other willing and able men. Importing leaders from the south was no real method of ensuring the compliance of the dalesmen. William, Lord Parr and John Dudley, Lord Lisle, often had little or no connection to the soil, so that Borderers regarded them with mistrust despite the power of their patents and warrants. Lord Lisle complained bitterly to the king when he discovered that certain gentlemen were practising with the men of Tynedale and Redesdale, without his knowledge or his permission.[183] Mustering the surnames of the uplands therefore required a sort of diplomacy that some leading statesmen did not possess. Although many of the gentry were also complicit in theft, kidnapping, extortion and murder, the fact that many came from reiving families gave them a superior edge when negotiating with the heidsmen. "Little John" Heron of Chipchase was one of these gentlemen.[184] After spending two years clapped in the Tower for his actions during the rebellions of 1536-37, Heron returned to the borders and was appointed Keeper of Tynedale in January 1540; later that summer, he snatched the Keepership of Redesdale from Sir John Widdrington.[185] During his tenure, Heron used Tyne-and Redesdale horsemen as regular soldiers, leading over 1,000 dalesmen during Bowes' raid upon Teviotdale in 1542.[186] As long as there were gentry whom the surnames trusted, they gave military service quite readily.

The men of the uplands were definitely a part of the English military organisation of the Marches by the beginning of the wars of 1542-1560, and the rewards for their service are evidential of their fulfilling their obligations. As mentioned in the previous chapters, the king developed a policy of employing

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[183] *LP*, XVII no. 1194.
[184] Heron was related to the Hesleyside Charltons through marriage.
[185] BL,Royal MSS 7/121 f. 136 (Jan. 21, 1540); *LP*, XV no. 987.

surnames, with some heidsmen becoming royal pensioners who served under the Keepers and Wardens. Since Border soldiers from the uplands played significant roles in the major campaigns against Scotland, some members of the surname groups served as royal officers in positions of actual authority. In the West March, an outnumbered body of reivers who served under the English banner routed a significantly stronger Scottish army at Solway Moss in 1542. Jack Musgrave, the captain of the border horse at Solway Moss, led a powerful surname group from the area near Carlisle. In 1596, this family was able to lead a force of 2,000 border horsemen into Scotland to retrieve stolen goods, thereby demonstrating its ability to field what amounted to a small army. The Musgraves went on to assist the crown as royal officers, eventually serving as Deputy Wardens of the West Marches.[187] In the Northeast, the Herons actively participated in raids against Scotland, when they were not feuding with their rivals, the Carnabys and the Carrs, both of whom also served as royal officials, as previously indicated.[188] Even Archie Dodd, who was mixed up in a deadly fray at Hexham in 1543,[189] served Sir Ralph Eure as the underkeeper of Tynedale only one year later.[190] All of the above-mentioned families and their border horsemen intimidated the Scottish borders with good effect.[191] Their obligations to the crown were clear, although the obligations of the rank and file of the surnames remains obscured for lack of evidence.

As a rule, the primary obligation of the Marchers, including the bands of surnames that populated the dales of the Rede, North Tyne and Coquet rivers, was to

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[186] BL, Add. MSS 32647 f. 162 (Sept. 16, 1542)
[187] Humphrey Musgrave was Warden of the Western March in 1582. See *CBP*, II, nos. 346 and 354.
[188] *LP*, XVII no. 219.
[189] *LP*, XVIII(1) no. 957 and 964.
[190] Robson, *English Highland Clans*, p. 170.
[191] John Heron, as Governor of Tynedale and Redesdale, commanded a garrison of fifty border horse, all of whom were stationed at his house in Chipchase. These men were from his own landholdings, as he was one of the few borderers fortunate enough to have consolidated properties that could support such a force. The Dodds had several members of their family serve the Earl of Hertford, with John Dodd leading a company in the invasions of 1544. PRO, SP 1/187 ff. 232-37.

render aid whenever there was an inroad by the Scots or by thieves, up to a length of one day and one night.[192] Such action did not require the written permission of the crown unless retaliatory raids were expressly forbidden, nor did it require the lengthy time of mustering county levies. Instead, this system could function freely without the constraints of court and county administration, and it seems that most military service was rendered on an *ad hoc* basis. Most service appears to have been set by custom. When asked to account for the customary service of the Tynedalers, John Morraley of Alllerwash in the lordship of Wark-in-Tynedale testified 'all tenants and inhabitants in the manor of Wark have attended the Keeper of Tynedale and have anciently been at his command.'[193] The fact that this testimony was given by a 104 year-old man in 1620 demonstrates the importance of memory and custom to military obligation in the Marches. Surname groups virtually ignored the fact that many of the old Marcher liberties were now in the hands of the king, with many still claiming in 1551 to serve in the custom of those ancient privileges.[194] Some surnames also indented with members of the Northumberland gentry, as did three of the Halls of Redesdale with Sir John Delaval. Their oath to 'adde strength him and them so ferre as ther power maye extend to him and his heres,' essentially enforced a private military function, although it gave them some connection to the crown, as Delaval was a royal pensioner.[195]

Surnames often found their way into the royal musters, and in taking the king's pay they obliged themselves to fight on his behalf. In 1539, a general muster of the Northumberland *manrede* listed nearly 400 'Northe Tyndell Theifs' who

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[192] *LP*, IV(2), no. 4882; *LP*, XVI, no. 497.
[193] PRO, E 134/18Jas1/Mich20.
[194] BL, Calig. B. VIII ff. 128; John Hodgson, *A History of Northumberland in Three Parts,* part iii, vol. ii (Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 1820-1825), pp. 223-4.
[195] NRO, Delaval MSS, 17 B; BL, Calig. B. III, ff. 203-5.

turned out for inspection, all of whom were horsed and suitably arrayed. [196] In North

Tynedale, the Charltons and the Robsons were by far the most powerful, judging by

their numbers in the muster roll, although leading the list as the primary gentleman

was John Robson, most likely of the Falstone.[197] It is remarkable that the Charltons

had formed such a substantial part of the Tynedale musters, as they had proven to be

the most troublesome surname in Tynedale. Ten years earlier, the Earl of

Northumberland captured and executed a Charlton heidsman and two of his

Liddesdale allies for March treason.[198] The previous year, Sir Reynold Carnaby

pursued and arrested several of the Charltons for failure to lay in their pledges.[199]

That the rest of the clan turned out for the musters suggests that familial loyalties

were not entirely impervious, although this is probably indicative of the inherent

differences between the marcher brigands and the actual clans, and the separation of

each of the graynes that comprised a single surname.

The appearance of a large band of horsed Tynedalers also suggests that

military leaders who were eager to earn a place in the royal armies had emerged

from the surname groups. This probably came on the tail of Henry paying £10 p.a.

to each of the loyal heidsmen who had acknowledged his supremacy.[200] In turn, the

heidsman collected his tenants or family to form a band that would serve the king.

The temptations of payment certainly made an impression upon John Hall of

Otterburn, who was a recipient of the king's annual gift.[201] His complicity most

likely ensured that the men of Redesdale also turned out in force, producing nearly

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[196] NRO, ZAN M.13/D.15. Robson has noted that this muster list also is listed in PRO, E 36/40 f. 29.
[197] Ibid. John Robson had just been released by the Duke of Norfolk from Morpeth castle jail, Halls and Redes appeared at the head of the Redesdale muster
[198] BL, Caligula B. VIII, f. 112.
[199] *LP*, XIII(2) no. 355.
[200] PRO, E 36/121 f. 32.
[201] Ibid.

200 horsed and well-armed men, 'beside all the foot theves.'[202] However, the military structure of the clans is remarkably disguised due to lack of hard evidence, as the muster does not list the leaders of the surname bands. At best, we can only suggest the means by which members of a surname owed military services to their heidsmen, but it is clear from the surviving evidence that military duties provided the heidsmen with sizeable bands.[203] As such, it was strategically prudent for the king to allow the dalesmen into royal service; the sheer numbers dwarfed the muster returns from each of the villages and townships of the settled areas. Even if this turnout was only a small portion of the dalesmen, especially if we accept Bowes' estimate that Tynedale alone supported 1500 well-armed men,[204] it still confirms that the crown had at least some success in recruiting regular soldiers in the far-removed areas of the Marches, although only because the surnames stood to gain both prestige and regular income.

Nonetheless, each band of reivers also had its own Achilles' heel that undermined the surnames' ability to act as light cavalry. Border surnames closely guarded their customary practices of tenure and warfare. Landholding patterns were influenced by gavelkind, a formula for diminishing returns. In 1580, this practice was blamed for the inability of the Tynedalers to serve the crown as light cavalry, as they had done in the past: 'Divers are unfurnished for they have ever had a custom if a man have issue of 10 sons, 8, 6, 5, or 4 and sits on a holding but of 6s. rent, every son shall have a piece of his father's holding. Their chief service therefore is on foot as bowmen, the place serving well for the same.'[205] It was certain that each surname also had footmen to accompany its riders, but the numbers of mounted men fell by

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[202] NRO, ZAN M.13/D.15. Halls and Redes appeared at the head of the Redesdale muster.

[203] H.C. Ramm, R.W. McDowell, and Eric Mercer, *Sheilings and Bastles*, (London: HMRC, 1970), pp. 70-71. Most bastles were in fact surrounded by shielings, which suggest that the poorer dalesmen looked to their social betters for protection.

[204] See PRO, SP 1/168 ff. 19-54 (*Bowes' Survey of the Borders*).

the end of the sixteenth century so that by 1597 Lord Eure complained that Tynedale could not raise more than 100 men, and of those less than 30 were horsed.[206]

Surname groups also seemed largely unwilling to adapt to new military practices. The riding families tenaciously clung to their role as light cavalry, and although they successfully served as such during the 1560 campaign, their role on the battlefield had been eclipsed by the more modern mounted arquebusier, and the demi-lance.[207] In 1580, despite the proliferation of firearms in the regular English armies, few dalesmen carried firearms.[208] As late as 1597, Border surnames protested having to pay £1 for a caliver, implying that bows and bills were still their preferred weapons. They warned the queen that if they were to buy firearms, many would have to give up their farms.[209] The earlier Tudors had avoided this problem, if only through their own innate military conservatism, by allowing the military establishment to cling to the longbow and the bill as primary infantry weapons.[210]

The loyalty of the surname groups to their royal keepers was a double-edged sword, and some regarded their obligations as optional once their lives were in imminent danger. Military disasters that fell upon the English at Haddon Rigg in 1542 and again at Ancrum Moor in 1545 suggest that Border service did not bind Marcher horsemen to their local officers or lords. At Haddon Rigg, 'Riddesdale with Sir Cuthbert Ratcliffe's company were the first to fly,' indicating the Marcher pattern of flight or pursuit.[211] At Ancrum Moor, some of the dismounted English Borderers fled in the face of their Scottish counterparts and in doing so undermined

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[205] *CBP*, I, no. 50.
[206] *CBP*, II, no. 245.
[207] PRO, SP 52/3/185 and 193; Phillips, *Anglo-Scots Wars*, pp. 23-30.
[208] *CBP*, I, no 50.
[209] CRO, PR 122/51.
[210] As late as 1544, Henry VIII had reissued the statues of Edward III that mandated the practice of archery.

any attempt of defence by their allies.[212] In the English campaign of 1547, William

Patten witnessed the Northern Horsemen bargaining for ransoms from the Scots

Borderers, rather than engaging them in combat:

> Some of their crosses [of St. George] were so narrow, and so singly set on, that
> a puff of wind might have blown them from their breasts; and that they were
> found, right often, talking with the Scottish prickers within less than length
> asunder, and when they perceived that they had been aspied, they have begun
> to run at one another ... they strike a few strokes but by assent and
> appointment.[213]

This evidence suggests that the government's interpretation of military obligation

had difficulties in overcoming the bonds of kith and kin in Marcher society. The

performance of the reivers at Haddon Rigg and Ancrum Moor also indicate that

Borderers often pursued their own agendas even when serving under the king's

banner. It is possible that tactical considerations may have guided the actions of the

border horsemen; most preferred the methods of pursuit and ambush, rather than set

battles. Their smaller ponies were also not desirable for charging the Scottish

schilltrons, although any wise borderer would alight from his mount before engaging

pikemen.[214] There were several battles where border horsemen dismounted for

combat, but were only successful if they were organised. At Haddon Rigg and again

at Ancrum, English borderers alighted in confusion. This might account for their

flight, yet it still indicates that they were unwilling to follow the orders of their

officers, or to show concern for their plight, when there was a slightest setback on

the field. In all instances where the Marchers fled the scene of battle, they left their

leaders behind to be captured or killed, a tendency that garnered numerous critics of

[211] Gainsford Bruce, 'The English Expedition into Scotland in 1542,' *Archaeologia Aeliana*, 3rd series, vol. 3 (1907), p. 195.
[212] *LP*, XX(1) no. 1046.
[213] William Patten, *The Late Expedition into Scotland*, in A.F. Pollard (ed.) *Tudor Tracts, 1532-1588*, Westminster: Constable, 1903), p. 135.

the English highland clans. Thus the gentry's collusion with the surname groups, while serving only the narrowest strategies, resulted in a highly unstable source of soldiers. This only furthered the decline of Marcher unity against a professed common enemy, who could be practically anybody.

Since Tudor policy towards Border service in general was inconsistent, isolated places like North Tynedale and Redesdale experienced an ebbing and flowing of Tudor authority. The most effective method of controlling the surnames, and ensuring their contribution to the war effort, lay in the combination of effective officers and loyal heidsmen. Although there exists no record or surviving document that would illustrate how surnames enforced military obligation amongst themselves, the reports from the March officers indicate that most followed their heidsmen into battle, and that the bands were organised by family groups. Bowes confirmed that surname groups mustered under their heidsmen, although there is no account of any further regimentation.[215] In all probability, none existed until they mustered under their Keepers, as the bands were described only vaguely as containing more than a good number.[216] What held them together as a unit was not so much obligation, but their direct ties of kinship and kindred. Not even the encroaching Tudor state could fracture this tie, although it could be persuaded if the rewards were propitious.

Despite the arrangement that all tenants serve *gratis*, the military quality of the Northumberland tenantry began to slip behind more modern approaches to warfare. The first indication that the north had fallen behind in the military revolution was the noted inferiority of the Northern Horsemen to the demi-lances of the royal armies.

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[214] During Haddon Rigg, it was reported that the English officers dismounted to face Huntley's infantry. See *LP*, XVII no. 662 and 663; BL, Add. MSS 32747 f. 48 (August 24, 1542).
[215] BL, Calig. B. VIII, f. 106 (*Bowes' Survey of 1551*).

The use of heavily-armed landsknechts and Spanish cavalry in the marches during the last years of the reign of Henry VIII heralded England's acceptance of the new style of warfare that had already taken foot in Europe. For Hertford's last campaign in 1545, the king personally sent north 1500 Spaniards, 4000 Germans plus several hundred horsed harquebusiers and lances, and demanded that Lieutenant-General Shrewsbury take stock of his supplies and store grain for the approaching army, which numbered almost sixteen thousand men.[217] The presence of mercenaries not only marked a shift in tactics, but also demonstrated the Northumberland tenantry were inadequate for subduing Scotland by themselves. In 1545, when 600 light horse of the Middle Marches received a thrashing at Millstone Edge, their failure was blamed on a lack of heavy cavalry that the foreign mercenaries had previously supplied.[218] By 1557, it was accepted as a fact that their heavier-armed comrades outmoded the light horsemen of the borders.[219] There was also a concern about the numbers of light horsemen that the Borders were able to furnish. In order to supplement the Marcher forces, there began a policy of assuring Scots borderers during the 1540's. This assurance brought over 7,000 Scots into English service, most of whom Sir Thomas Wharton had raised, although their loyalty was only guaranteed through the exchange of hostages.[220] This arrangement backfired several times, as it had at Ancrum Moor when the supposedly assured Laird of Bonjedward turned on Eure and Layton after things went awry.[221]

By the mid -1540's, Marcher officers began to develop new strategies for enforcing border service and strengthening the overall military strength of the East and Middle March. Without the tenantry to serve, border service quickly

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[216] BL, Calig. B. VII f. 440.
[217] *LP*, XX(1) no. 436, 513.
[218] *LP*, XXI(1) no. 58.
[219] BL, Harl. MSS 643 f. 165 (July 11, 1557); Robson, *English Highland Clans*, p. 203.
[220] *Addenda*, I, pp. 331-2.

disappeared from the map. The Wardens requested an act of Parliament and new fortifications for the borders that would put more Marchers into garrison, thereby ensuring their fulfilment of military obligation. Although this act never materialised, the king was sympathetic to Northumberland's plight, which he blamed upon the gentlemen who were slow to help their neighbours and themselves.[222] The king remained convinced that any decline of border service was a result of the gentry's squabbling and feuding. To some extent, he was correct in that landowners would often sit by while their neighbours suffered depredations at the hands of English and Scottish reivers.

Marcher officers also noted another disturbing development in the landholding patterns of the Marches: the strength of the county suffered greatly from the taking of fines and gressoms, and increased rents, which left the tenants without money for horse and harness.[223] It was also sometimes difficult to eject a tenant for non-fulfilment of military obligation. It appears that some tenants could sell their military obligation to others. If this obligation went unfurnished, the original holder could not be held responsible, and could not be evicted from his lands, nor could his kin be disinherited.[224] Nicholas Ridley of Eales commented under oath that 'the tenants do not forfeit their lands as refugees or for felony or treason.' Instead, the lands would descend to the next heir, thereby keeping the tenancy within the family.[225] There is no indication that lords attempted to amend this problem, something that would have been quite difficult given the nature of tenant right. Sir Thomas Wharton suggested redefining military obligation, arguing that the current practice did not work, and that it only created antipathy between the

[221] *LP*, XIX(2) no. 625.
[222] *LP*, XVIII no. 567.
[223] *LP*, XVIII no. 800 and part 2 (same volume), no. 146.
[224] *CBP*, II, no. 613 (4).
[225] PRO, E 134/18Jas1/Mich20.

gentlemen and the poor. Instead he proposed that tenants who owed rents of 20*s.* and upwards should provide 'good gelding, a harness, and a spear.' 10*s.*-20*s.* rent was responsible for providing horse, harness, bow and arrows, with less than 10*s.* rent furnishing harness, bow and arrows. In turn, every landlord should keep horse and harness according to his lands. Wharton expressly wished to forbid the farming of duties and specifically outlaw any taking of gressoms from those tenants who provided military service, and he requested an act of Parliament prohibiting any man in the border counties (Durham, Westmoreland, Northumberland and Cumberland) from taking fines from his tenants. Wharton explained that this act would help Northumberland and the Middle and Eastern Marches strengthen themselves.[226] Like other Parliamentary acts requested by his colleagues, it appears that this never passed. Wharton was adamant about other issues. Those who refused to provide harness were to be evicted by their lords, thereby reinforcing the relationship between border service and customary tenancies. Musters were to occur quarterly, and a book made and delivered to the Warden, which would have been a new development. Ultimately, there is no evidence that much came of this proposal, although Wharton continued his determined, stubborn drive to uphold the unique obligations of the English Marchers. Other makeshift measures attempted to buffer the failing system of Border service, which, according to Wharton, had witnessed a four-fold reduction in the numbers of available soldiers.[227]

Evidence suggests that border service did not fail inherently during the wars of 1542-1560; it functioned enough to provide some security. At times, though, it could disappoint. When it failed, it did so miserably, to the discomfiture of entire wards. To depend on the free services of impoverished tenants whose only reward

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[226] *LP*, XVIII no. 800 and part 2 (same volume), no. 146.
[227] *LP*, XVIII no. 800 and part 2 (same volume), no. 146.

was relief from taxes was an uncertain method of raising troops. Without money, it was difficult to secure any dependable military services from the Marchers. At the same time, the receipt of money set a precedent, and the border clans came to depend upon money to keep reiving from becoming a necessity. Bush claims this was a major reason why border service failed.[228] Another problem was that the border pensioners were often not powerful enough to put together a defence of a specific locale since their holdings in any one area were too divided. This hindered their ability to respond to the lightning raids from across the frontier. Quite often, by the time they managed to fire their beacons and assemble a sizeable force, it was too late and the damage had already been done. The only recourse they had was to launch a retaliatory raid, which only encouraged more violence and instability. On the other hand, the border surnames that owed service through their tenant right did not always fulfil their obligations due to feuds with the local officers. The Charltons and the Halls were the principal offenders here, as they often reproved their Keepers. When an accord existed between the surname groups, the Halls and Charltons turned up for musters as a means of receiving the good graces of their governors. They played this card well.[229] The bloodfeuds and antipathy that border warfare had engendered ensured a fractured military machine in the Marches, and the crown's policies of employing the surname groups only fostered the violence that the government had sought to placate. By 1547, when the government began to take stock of the forces in the North, and with the escalation of warfare in 1547, they called for an army that the Marches could not possibly supply under the current practice of border service. Without the lure of pay, the Northumbrian bands that had

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[228] Bush, 'Tenant Right,' p. 184.
[229] The Duke of Norfolk sought to pardon several surname groups for their service in the Marches in 1540-41. His reasons were that in pardoning them, the crown would have recourse to more potential soldiers. These men, Robsons from Falstone in Tynedale, had been accused of sundry March treason, for which they could have been executed.

served Henry dwindled shortly after his death, and their military practices were rapidly showing their obsolescence on the field. War had taxed the Marchers beyond what they could sustain in terms of manpower. If only the Tudors could have afforded the 7*l. per annum* that a mounted soldier required, there would have been a great possibility for raising and keeping a noteworthy standing army in the Marches.

Marcher military obligation was deeply characterised by over two hundred years of frontier violence. Marcher society was uniquely militarised, with practices that differed from the rest of England. Behind the warlike demeanour of the borders lay an acute sense of memory and a deeply conservative belief in continuity. Yet the focus of national military obligation, the perception of a common enemy, was skewed throughout the dales of the borders. For an English marcher, the enemy could be of any national origin: Scottish, French or English. Cross-border bonds of kith and kin perverted any rampant hatred of the Scots based on loyalty to the king in London. In addition, the gentry were often either related or lords to the quasi-independent surname groups, thereby drawing the military leadership of the marches into the complex web of feud and *familias*. These considerations must be weighed carefully when discussing any aspect of Marcher history.

Chapter Six: Military Authority and Office in the Marches

The sixteenth century heralded the arrival of military bureaucracy, and with it came the inevitable regimentation that produced rankings and a vertical chain of command. While English armies were slower to adapt such practices, it is clear that even they fostered a growing system of regulated military authority. C.G. Cruickshank has claimed that the gap between the English higher command and the rank and file produced a weak chain of command, which was eventually improved by the addition of middle-rank officers.[1] For the Anglo-Scottish Marches, an altogether different system of rank existed, one that included middle-ranking officers, although their authority was not part of a vertical military hierarchy. The chain of command in the Marches was loose. This was a result of the extraordinary Northumbrian military obligations, which produced bands that were irregular in both size and scope, some of which were only willing to follow a select echelon. Military authority ultimately depended upon personal influence in the Marches and interpretation of one's duties, which resulted in ambiguity instead of a clear system of rank.

Military ranking in the sixteenth century evolved with the creation of regiments. In France, the office of colonel appeared in the 1540's as a response to the rise of standardised military units, while captains led companies of 100 men, the composition of which fluctuated with the increasing use of guns and light cavalry.[2] Spanish *tercios* witnessed a similar development in military hierarchy, so that by 1600 there was a discernible effort to create multiple tiers of offices in order to facilitate battlefield leadership. The English mimicked their European neighbours to

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[1] C.G. Cruickshank, *Elizabeth's Army* (London: OUP, 1946) pp. 50-52.
[2] David Potter, *War and Government in the French Provinces: Picardy, 1470-1560*, (Cambridge: CUP, 1993) pp. 162-71.

some extent, but in the Marches there was little vestige of firm military ranking.

Skip-echelon occurred frequently in the Marches.[3] March administration witnessed

many instances where deference was refused. Some Marcher officers took this to

the extreme by feuding with fellow officers. The problem had potential to worsen,

especially after the fall of the Dacres and Percys. Armed rising in 1536 confirmed

the complete breakdown of authority. After 1536, Henry VIII was especially keen

to exert his personal authority in Border affairs, which resulted in a program of

rebuilding the March offices. However, Henry made himself part of the problem.

More often than not, the ability of an officer to work independently from the

supposed chain of command came from personal arrangements with the crown.

More often than not, leading March offices were political arrangements that the king

bestowed upon courtiers. Successive rulers also interfered with the loose structure of

Marcher military authority. No administration provided much continuity from the

practices of the previous administration, which undermined consistencies in military

authority. Despite the encroaching power of the state, there was no successful

restructuring of military administration in the Marches.

The crown was utterly dependent upon the Northumbrian gentry to lead their

military community after 1536. M.L. Bush states that 'the Crown had merely

groped for stop-gaps' when employing gentry officers, although this trend continued

well into the 1550's.[4] However, Bush argues the appointment of leading nobility to

the overarching positions of Lieutenant of the North and Warden-General were also

born of necessity, since the crown was unable to find any who could fill the office.[5]

The regular March command—March Wardens, Keepers and Captains—enjoyed a

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[3] Ralph Robson, *The Rise and Fall of the English Highland Clans: Tudor Responses to a Mediaeval Problem*, (Edinburgh: East Linton Press, 1989) p. 112.
[4] M.L. Bush, 'The Problem of the Far North,' *Northern History* 6 (1971), pp. 43- 45.
[5] M.L. Bush, "Far North", p 52.

pivotal role in military operations only under Henry VIII and Protector Somerset. Their status as military officers was eventually downgraded, and by Elizabeth's first year March officers were primarily police officials. The slowly decreasing military role of the March officers in the Anglo-Scottish wars of the Tudors coupled with the distorted chain of command to produce a very confused picture of military authority.

Lieutenants and Wardens-General

The English crown had appointed deputies to govern the Borders since the opening of Anglo-Scottish conflict under Edward I. Early Wardenships and Lieutenancies were usually wartime appointments, as most were designed to facilitate campaigns against the Scots. Their *ad hoc* nature meant that Lieutenancies lacked the definition of a more permanent administrative position. However, the office of Lieutenant of the North began to take more shape under the Yorkist administration. Richard of Gloucester served as Lieutenant in 1482, and was successful in taking Berwick from the Scots, which marked the last time the town switched hands.[6] Under the early Tudors, the Percys usually served as Wardens but the Howards claimed a key role as the dynasty's northern Lieutenants whenever war seemed inevitable.[7] After the risings of 1536, the continual presence of a Lieutenant in the borders policed the dales and kept the surnames in line. This was Norfolk's primary duty in 1537, when he promised to 'so sing them such a song that the like was not heard among them sith any of them was born.'[8]

Wardens-General, on the other hand, were also active since the beginning of the fourteenth century. This position simply coordinated the administration of all

[6] The best works covering Richard's Lieutenancy are in Rosemary Horrox, (Ed.) *Richard III and the North*, Studies in Regional and Local History, 6 (Hull: University of Hull, 1986).
[7] Gervase Phillips, *The Anglo-Scots Wars, 1513-1550*, (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1999), p. 112.
[8] PRO SP 1/116, ff. 108-111 (Feb. 24, 1537).

three Marches. Like the Lieutenancy, the office initially went to a Prince of the

Blood, but then usually to either a Neville or a Percy.[9] By Henry VIII's accession,

the Dacres had gained control of the office, and they remained there until 1525,

when the office went into abeyance after Dacre was accused of harbouring Scottish

surnames.[10] When the office was resurrected, it was closely tied to the Lieutenancy,

in order to bring it under closer scrutiny of the crown and Privy Council.

These offices were theoretically the highest rank in the Marches, outstripping

the authority of the Wardens when commissions expressly allowed them to do so.

Like their medieval predecessors, the responsibility of the Tudor-era Lieutenant or

the Warden-General was to supervise raids and lead armies across the Border into

Scotland. This task was more than daunting; grain shortages, logistical quagmires

ranging from lack of sufficient carts to deficient corned powder for the ordnance

made this post a nightmare at times.[11] Virtually all of the candidates for the high

offices were greater magnates, though most were from southern areas. As courtly

appointments, they could be highly unstable due to changing forces within the court.

From 1542 to 1544, there were no less than six different magnates appointed to lead

the Marches, some holding their offices concurrently.[12] In 1557, the earl of

Shrewsbury, who arguably was one of Mary's most experienced border

commanders, was eclipsed by the appointments of the earl of Westmoreland and

lord Dacre, whose Catholic leanings no doubt curried the favour of the queen. This

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[9] M.E. James, *A Tudor Magnate and the Tudor State: Henry, the Fifth Earl of Northumberland,* (York: St. Anthony's Press, 1966), p. 14.
[10] S.G. Ellis, 'A Border Baron and the Tudor State: The Rise and Fall of Lord Dacre of the North,' *The Historical Journal,* vol. 35 (1992).
[11] The *Letters and Papers* of 1542 are quite telling of supply shortages. This was a burr that Norfolk continually griped about in his letters to the king. In the end, Norfolk's "invasion" with an army of 6,000 accomplished little more than most raids due to grain shortages.
[12] These included the dukes of Norfolk and Suffolk, the earls of Rutland, Hertford and Shrewsbury, and lord Lisle.

compounded the multiple difficulties of the office, as many northern gentry treated strangers and new appointees with suspicion.

Garrisons and musters for the Scottish wars seem to have been the high command's greatest worry, especially for the Wardens-General, from 1542 until the end of Anglo-Scottish warfare in 1560. Lisle's primary duties in 1542 were monthly accounts and musters of the garrisons.[13] In April 1543, Lord Parr was told upon his arrival in office to ensure that the garrisons were operating as ordered.[14] Throughout 1544 and 1545, Shrewsbury constantly was remedying the lack of pay to the garrison soldiers, 'for the poure soudeours do not a little grudge and complayne for want of theyr wages'.[15] He was especially keen for more money after the defeat at Ancrum Moor in February 1545, when many of the soldiers came home 'unfurnished of horses and harnays,' forcing the Marcher officers to call upon levies from Yorkshire in order to fill the garrisons that had been depleted.[16]

The Lieutenants were responsible for the mustering of forces that filled the garrisons. As Lieutenant in May 1547, Shrewsbury mustered 200 men from all counties above the Trent, demanding that they send as many harquebusiers as possible to the Borders.[17] Ten years after the battle of Pinkie, the revival of the Franco-Scottish alliance required Shrewsbury to stand in readiness with 1,000 men, a move that proved frustrating as the Scots failed to materialise with an army.[18] Still, there was scare enough for a conference to be called with Lord Wharton and with Lord Eure concerning the garrisons to be maintained along the borders.[19] It appears that he acted as a royal intermediary, deferring to the opinions of the

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[13] *LP*, XVII no. 1064.
[14] *LP*, XVIII(1) nos. 464 and 468.
[15] *Hamilton Papers*, II nos. 316 and 406.
[16] *Hamilton Papers*, II no. 423.
[17] Talbot MSS, B f. 9.
[18] Talbot MSS, D, ff. 251-252.
[19] Talbot MSS, D., f. 256.

Wardens and never actually engaging in any sort of direct military activity with his own troops. This is a marked contrast to the tenures of the Duke of Norfolk and the Earl of Hertford, whose punitive expeditions into Scotland during the 1540's marked how much military power the Lieutenant could wield. Yet by the reign of Mary it became the duty of the Lieutenants to muster men within all counties north of the Trent in order to supply the Wardens with a quota of soldiers for the garrisons.[20]

The crown held the highest command culpable for any logistical failure, or any other setback that hindered military operations. Norfolk endured sharp criticism for his botched invasion of Scotland in 1542.[21] The defeat at Haddon Rigg, where Sir Robert Bowes and Little John Heron were both captured, had also occurred under his watch. Norfolk suffered low morale in his final military campaign, often complaining of his misery;[22] thus, his military leadership was suspect. His military inactivity in the North after the campaign of 1542 was very much a result of his failure in Scotland, though he went on to fulfil a brief and unsuccessful role as leader at Boulogne. Shrewsbury, like Norfolk, sank after defeat. The defeat at Ancrum Moor in February 1545 took place while Shrewsbury served as Lieutenant and Warden-General. Most likely, this setback caused the Earl of Hertford to return once again to the Borders.[23] Shrewsbury lost the Lieutenancy in May 1545; the office of Warden-General was temporarily disbanded that July until resurrected under Protector Somerset's administration.[24] Despite his ostensible fall from power, Shrewsbury went on to become the President of the Council of the North shortly

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[20] Addenda, VIII no. 31. During the summer of 1557, the Talbots controlled virtually all of the northern levies, with Shrewsbury again appointed as the Lieutenant-General for the northern parts.
[21] Gainsford Bruce, 'The English Expedition into Scotland in 1542.' *Archaeologia Aeliana* Third Series, 3 (1907), pp. 191-212 ; Philips, *Anglo- Scots Wars*, pp. 149-50.
[22] *LP*, XVII nos. 820, 866, and 940.
[23] *Hamilton Papers*, II, no. 436.
[24] Hist MSS Comm. *Rutland*, i, p. 33. The Earl of Rutland was made Lord Warden of the East and Middle Marches in April 1549, in a weak attempt to emulate the office of Warden-General, but it was not until February 1551 that the Marquess of Dorset was appointed full Warden-General.

after his dismissal as Warden-General, and eventually regained the Lieutenancy.

The Earl was also active in Protector Somerset's campaign, and had sole command

of an expedition into Scotland in 1548, when it became clear that new leadership

needed to bolster the faltering efforts of Lord Grey to relieve the siege of the

garrison at Haddington.[25] Although Shrewsbury was able to relieve the beleaguered

garrison and force the French forces to retreat to Musselburgh, he was unable to

engage the French commander in Scotland, Sieur D'Esse, and destroy his

expeditionary force. His failure incensed the Duke of Somerset, so that Shrewsbury

was effectively marginalized for the rest of the war. The consequences of failure

often meant dismissal or disgrace. This was coupled with the already daunting task

of running the March defences, or commanding an army.

The leading officers often stumbled over themselves. Commissions for the

post of Lieutenant and Warden-General demonstrate the wide-ranging authority that

was granted to the leading March officers, and how the offices overlapped each

other. Henry's initial Lieutenant in the Borders after the Pilgrimage, the Duke of

Norfolk, was selected primarily to quell the dalesmen, although his role rapidly

evolved over the next five years. In 1537, he was selected because of his expertise

in Border affairs,[26] which made him the perfect candidate to initiate hostilities

against Scotland in 1542. His commission in 1542 was vague, giving him the power

to raise all of the North, as well as the power to create subordinate posts.[27] This

overarching military power was typical of a Lieutenant.[28]

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[25] G.W. Bernard, *The Power of the Early Tudor Nobility*, (Brighton: Harvester Press, 1985), pp. 124-127.

[26] PRO, E 36/119 f. 137.

[27] *LP*, XVII, no. 714 (19).

[28] *Hamilton Papers*, II, nos. 290, 312. In 1544, the Earl of Shrewsbury received virtually the same powers to raise the militia of all Northern counties, but it appears that he only did so when the king required him.

At the same time the Duke was appointed to his Lieutenancy, the Earl of Rutland was created Warden-General with the power to raise all of the Marchers.[29] The government did not specify that Rutland was subordinate to Norfolk; instead, they gave him a free hand to consult with leading Borderers in organising raids into Scotland.[30] Norfolk's increasing infirmity, along with his general administrative incompetence,[31] meant that he was almost made redundant by Rutland's commission. At one point, the king was eager to let Rutland lead the army into Scotland, demonstrating his lack of faith in Norfolk's leadership.[32] Henry's faith in his chief officers, including Rutland, had also unravelled by the time he appointed first the Duke of Suffolk,[33] and then the Earl of Hertford,[34] to replace Rutland and Norfolk. The latter two stayed in the Borders to help ease the transition, but the presence of Hertford and Suffolk created some friction with Norfolk, whose plans for a raid on Liddesdale were utterly rejected by Hertford for being far too reckless.[35] Although the crown attempted to sort the chain of command by recalling Hertford and Norfolk and leaving Suffolk as the Lieutenant in January 1543, this manoeuvre failed to give the Lieutenancy any superiority over the Warden-General, or vice-versa.

When Lord Lisle came to the Borders in November 1542 to replace Rutland, he had little to do with the Lieutenant Norfolk, and when Suffolk entered office,

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[29] *StP.*, vol. v, no. 395.
[30] Ibid.
[31] Norfolk was designated to lead an army into Scotland in the summer of 1542. Delays caused by logistical problems hampered the army's departure, which did not happen until mid-October. Norfolk's bungling cost the invasion time, so that in the end, all that could be managed was a six-day raid. See *LP*, XVII, nos. 751, 786, 800, 820, 866, 919, 940, 953 975, 996, 1000 and 1031.
[32] *LP*, XVII, no. 778.
[33] *LP*, XVII, nos. 654 and 764. Hertford was probably meant to replace Sir Robert Bowes and Sir Cuthbert Radcliffe, both of who were still captive in Scotland.
[34] *LP*, XVII, no. 1002. Hertford refused the Wardenship, on the grounds that it was impossible for a southerner to lead Border soldiers. Instead, he appears to have acted as assistant to Warden-General Suffolk, although there was no commission drawn up for him during his brief stay from October to November.
[35] *LP*, XVII, no. 1031.

Lisle tended to work independently of him.[36] Lisle's commission gave him authority over all the garrisons, and the ability to wage war if he saw the need to do so, which directly clashed with Suffolk's authority to do the same.[37] As Warden-General, Lisle took advantage of his authority to essentially run the Borders on an almost unilateral basis, while Suffolk merely sent reports to the Privy Council.[38]

This tangled web of leadership was a direct result of the government's policy of appointing additional officers when one proved incompetent or unable to lead. Overlapping authority was frequently written expressly into the commissions of the men. In contrast, commissions could be so vague that their recipients would need the guidance and opinion of others to know the limits of their office. In June 1543, Bishop Tunstall had to remind Lord Parr, the recently appointed Warden General, that the Lieutenant 'hath the chief charge not onely in all places of his commission without your wardenrye, but also within the same, and muste give accompte to the Kinge for the hole countre; wher as your Lordship onely is charged with your wardenrye.'[39] The only real solution to this overlap was pluralism, which occurred when the Earl of Shrewsbury was first appointed Lieutenant to relieve Hertford, and then Warden-General to relieve Parr.[40]

To some extent, the crown expected the higher command to rule by council. As such, the Lieutenancy after 1546 became increasingly identified with the office of Lord President of the Council of the North. That the Lieutenant had become administrator to the militarily active garrisons partially explains Shrewsbury's

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[36] *LP*, XVII, no. 1081; S.J.Gunn, *Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk 1484-1545*, (Oxford: Blackwell, 1988), p. 188. The king personally instructed Hertford to stay in the Borders and coach Lisle in his first weeks of office.

[37] *LP*, XVII, no. 1064.

[38] *LP*, XVIII(1) nos. 1-435, passim. Lisle essentially ran all March business during his tenure. This may have been the result of his appointment in January 1543 as Lord Admiral (see *ibid.*, no. 19), which might have outstripped Suffolk's Lieutenancy.

[39] *StP.*, V, no. 438.

[40] *LP*, XIX(1), no. 656 & 671. Hertford and Lisle were recalled for service in France.

benching during a proposed invasion of Scotland in May 1557, though his eclipse by Catholic Northern magnates was probably more a result of Mary's religious preferences. The northern magnates who could significantly contribute men for an army received commands: Westmoreland for the forward, the Earl of Derby for the rearward, Northumberland as Marshall, Cumberland for the foot, and Lord Talbot for the horse. The Earl of Shrewsbury's conspicuous absence from this list was made up by his power to appoint officers as he saw fit, using the crown's suggestions as guidelines.[41] The rule by council held certain disadvantages when the Lieutenants were unable to assert their authority.

As southern magnates predominantly filled the office, the Northumbrian officials were bound to treat them with suspicion initially, so that rule by council sometimes resulted in the higher command being either ignored or overwhelmed. The Duke of Suffolk, one of Henry's best commanders, had experienced trouble in controlling the Wardens in his command.[42] Suffolk, who was brief in his role as Lieutenant from January 1543 to March 1544, remedied the problem with a liberal approach that made him seem superfluous at times, though it has been noted that Suffolk was partially successful because of his consultative approach.[43] Even the Earl of Hertford, arguably the most powerful of any Lieutenants, experienced trouble in bringing about a consensus regarding the fortification of the Borders.[44] Rule by council also marked Shrewsbury's career, which lasted on and off

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[41] *Addenda*, VIII, no. 8.

[42] M.E. James, *Change and Continuity in the Tudor North: The Rise of Thomas First Lord Wharton*, Borthwick Papers, vol. 27. (York, 1965), p. 41.

[43] Gunn, *Charles Brandon*, p. 190.

[44] *LP*, XIX(1), no. 223. During his first meeting with his Border officers, Hertford experienced some dissention coming from his constables, notably Sir Brian Layton, Ralph Collingwood and Sir John Horsely. Although they were eventually quieted, the event itself speaks of a general mistrust amongst the Borderers.

throughout 1544-1560.[45] Shrewsbury knew enough of Marcher politics not to meddle in the Wardens' affairs too much, so that the Wardens received some parity in military matters. Within a few months of receiving his first commission, Shrewsbury called them for a meeting in Morpeth,[46] where the topic of conversation centred on neutralizing the Laird of Buccleuch, 'oone of the Kinges majestes greatest ennemyes in Scotland'.[47] Shrewsbury spent much of his time writing reports of actions and inroads performed by the royal garrisons on the borders, and in general, his conciliating approach worked only by deferring to the Wardens.[48] However, in December 1557, Shrewsbury clashed with the Earl of Northumberland and Lords Eure and Wharton regarding reinforcements for the Marcher garrisons.[49] Shrewsbury was nearly powerless to prevent the Warden from protesting to the Privy Council. Northumberland's triumph in the matter resulted in a dramatic increase of Marcher garrisons,[50] which Shrewsbury would have to administer, but it also demonstrated that the high command did not have ultimate authority in matters of Marcher defence. His replacement as Lieutenant by the Earl of Westmoreland in 1557 signalled the end of an era in Marcher administration.[51] After 1560, peace with Scotland meant that the position of the Lieutenant of the North was eventually shelved and replaced by the growing importance of the Lords Lieutenants.[52]

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[45] Shrewsbury's lengthy career was tied to the fortunes of the English efforts on the Border and in Scotland. Despite setbacks, Shrewsbury continued this role as the head of the war council in the North, at times serving as President of the Council of the North, at times as the King's or Queen's Lieutenant, until his death in 1560.

[46] *Hamilton Papers*, II, no. 307.

[47] *Hamilton Papers*, II, no. 311.

[48] *Hamilton Papers*, II, nos. 301, 310, 312, 313.

[49] PRO, SP 15/8/41; Talbot MSS. D ff. 271-72.

[50] PRO, SP 15/8/46.

[51] *Addenda*, VIII, nos. 76 & 81. The appointment of the Earl of Westmoreland as Lieutenant-General of the North was probably not the result of the queen's dissatisfaction with Shrewsbury's performance, but rather a product of Westmoreland's presence in court and proximity to the queen.

[52] See Gladys Scott Thomson, *Lords Lieutenants in the Sixteenth Century: A Study in Tudor Local Administration*, (London: Longmans-Greens, 1923), *passim*.

Even as the Lieutenancy became increasingly oriented toward an administrative role, the role of the Warden-General retained its military function, although the office itself remained relatively ill defined and weak. Much of the problem with the office of Warden-General lay in its inability to appoint Wardens for each March. Henry VIII, or at least the Privy Council, had named each of the successive Wardens after 1537, so that Wardens-General were almost always governing strangers. Hertford thought that no southerner or stranger would ever serve effectively without being allied with the Wardens.[53] Lord Parr, the Warden General appointed in 1543, complained bitterly that the Wardens Eure and Wharton were ignoring him and refusing to inform him of their exploits, confirming Hertford's trepidations.[54] This practice of thrusting strangers together began to change under Protector Somerset, when the Marquis of Dorset was created Warden-General with the power to create new Wardens, although this power was undermined when the Privy Council ordered him to appoint Lord Ogle to the Middle March and Sir Nicholas Stirley to the East March.[55]

When Somerset's Scottish ambitions cost him his head, this signalled yet another change in March administration. When the Duke of Northumberland became Warden-General in October 1551, his patent also empowered him to appoint Wardens, but this is no surprise since he held penultimate power at court, directly under the king.[56] New royal patents were issued to the incumbent Wardens, a practice that Henry had embraced, but this time the authority of the Warden-General was explicitly preserved. Wardens were now barred from any action without the

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[53] *LP*, XVII, no. 1002.
[54] *LP*, XVIII(2), no. 146
[55] *APC*, III, p. 262; C.H. Hunter Blair, "Wardens and Deputy Wardens of the Marches," *Archaeologia Aeliana*, Fourth Series, 28 (1950), pp. 65-7.
[56] *APC*, III, pp. 379 and 385.

express authority of the Warden-General when he was present in the Marches.[57]

Dudley, though, could not uphold his border responsibilities, especially after the absolute fall of Protector Somerset in autumn 1551, which led him to appoint Lord Wharton as deputy Warden-General in July 1552.[58] Combined with the patronage of the leading Privy Councillor, Wharton's position allowed him the greatest amount of authority that the office had witnessed. A complete overhaul of the code of March Laws and the submission of the March officers were hallmarks of Wharton's tenure, and for the time being the office of Warden-General was secure in its near unilateral authority. However, the office was in abeyance after the accession of Mary Tudor.[59] Most of this was a result of the strengthening of the position of Warden,[60] which no longer needed an overseer in the form of a Warden-General.

Although the offices of Lieutenant and Warden-General were eventually separated by the mid-Tudor administrations, their reform did not secure their survival. The offices, like others, were heavily dependent upon the wars for their significance. With the dissipation of Anglo-Scottish war, and the rise of the power of the Wardens, the office became superfluous, and the joint control of the Borders was once again discarded for the individual Wardenships. Of more continual importance was also the Council of the North, which Shrewsbury himself had guided when he was not acting as Lieutenant. Its quarterly, month-long sessions were more than adequate in overtaking the role of the Lieutenant after 1560. The offices of the regional military high command, which for more than twenty years

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[57] *CPR, Edward VI*, IV, pp. 128-29; 184-85; 186-87.
[58] William Nicholson, *Leges Marchiarum or Border Laws*, (London, 1747), p. 208; James, *Change and Continuity*, p. 31. Wharton was dismissed as Warden of the West March in 1548, when he fell out of favour with Somerset. This drew him closer to Dudley, who used Wharton against Lord Dacre, Somerset's Lord Warden of the West March.
[59] PRO, SP 11/1/5.
[60] P.G. Boscher, 'Politics, Administration and Diplomacy: The Anglo-Scots Border, 1550-60.' (Durham University Ph.D., 1985), pp. 210-11.

had guided the English borderers during the conflict with Scotland, thus became a relic of the past, victims both of policy and of their own specialization.

Commissions and Councillors

From time to time, the crown designated special positions for its border officers in Northumberland. This status removed the officer from the standard hierarchy comprising the higher command, Wardens and their sergeants. Ad hoc military commanders in the Anglo-Scottish borders were a curiosity, but they were also rare. Special commissions were often granted as a means of filling the vacancies caused by logistical hiccoughs, especially in the confusion that reigned in 1542, when cross-border raiding marked the beginnings of war with Scotland as the kings of Scotland and England accused each other of violating the abstinence. With the earl of Rutland, the acting Warden-General, absent from the borders, the king's desire to punish the Scottish Borders for recent actions against the Northumbrian Borderers was essentially shelved until a temporary replacement could be found. Sir Robert Bowes was the immediate and natural choice. Although Bowes came from the southern Durham and North Yorkshire border, without holdings or tenant-soldiers in the Border area, Sir Robert was already an accomplished March administrator. He was a natural spokesman for the rebels in 1536-37,[61] having received a pardon for his role, since now the King saw further use for him. Sir Rafe Ellerkar, the co-author of Bowes' survey, also enjoyed the privilege of royal commission. In 1541, he and Bowes obtained a commission to act as a

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[61] Bowes was one of the men who met with the Privy Council and the King to present the list of rebel demands. He later escaped from the rebel camp when it became clear that their cause was crumbling. It is most likely that Sir Robert was forced into his role, although he most certainly identified with at least some of the rebels' complaints. See C. Newman, *The Bowes of Streatlam, Co. Durham: A Study of the Politics and Religion of a Sixteenth-Century Northern Gentry Family* (London: British Library, 1991), and M.L. Bush, *Durham and the Pilgrimage of Grace*, (Durham: Durham County Local History Society, 2000).

reconnoitring force along the Tweed,[62] a charge that they executed with some flair.[63]

This, at least, was how Sir Robert Bowes earned the privilege to lead troops into the

Scottish borders. They received an additional commission to retain 100 men each for

protection, marking Bowes' first official military command.[64]

The results of the first commission impressed Henry, which prompted him to

incorporate the use of irregular commanders into his provocative policy towards

Scotland. In July 1542, the king and council drafted a special commission for Sir

Robert. This granted him the extraordinary use of 600 men 'with their capitaynes

and peticapitaines, to be with all diligence conveyed to the same Bordures, and there

layd and employed from tyme to tyme, tyl the said Erles cummyng, as he the said

Sir Robert shal think best and most beneficiall for the surety and defence of His

Majesties subgiettes in those parties'.[65] Sir Robert was supplied with only a month's

wages, as well as coat and conduct money,[66] suggesting that these soldiers were

commissioned for a specific purpose. This is highlighted by Robert's explicit charge

to have 'good espial uppon the Scottes,' and to report his findings within five days

of arriving at the Border.[67] That the borderers were encouraged to bring in their

harvests upon the arrival of Bowes can only point to the king's intention of invading

Scotland.[68] It is quite apparent from the wording of the commission that Sir Robert

had the benefit of calling on the services of any Border pensioners, as well as the

services of the deputy Wardens. Henry in his original instructions to Bowes had

urged him to 'ayde them [Borderers] with his counsail and strenght, if need soo

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[62] *LP*, XVI no. 1274. Bowes along with Ellerkar had already received special instruction to survey the wastelands of the East and Middle Marches, to determine the military strength of Northumberland.
[63] *LP*, XVI no. 1279. Ellerkar and Bowes, whilst compiling their survey, were also responsible for directing several raids along the borders.
[64] *LP*, XVI, nos. 1205 & 1206.
[65] *St.P.*, V, p. 206; *LP*, XVII no. 540.
[66] *Ibid.*
[67] *Ibid.*
[68] *Ibid.* It was standard practice to harvest before invasion so that any counter-move by the Scots would be denied potential forage from the Northumberland fields.

require...[and cause] John Heron, and all the pensioners and active men inhabiting uppon the same, to be in suche aredynes...as they may be hable to doo that service'.[69] Altogether, the creation of this commission was as dangerous as it was unorthodox. Whilst in theory it gave Bowes some military leverage, his status clumsily grafted itself onto the already precarious rankings of deputy Wardens, Keepers and constables. His mission, which began on August 12 ended in the disaster of Haddon Rigg, where Bowes and the many border officers under his command were captured and ransomed by the Scottish leaders, was a disaster for Henry's war strategy.

The Haddon Rigg fiasco points to a specific weakness in the commissioning scheme set up by Henry: the inability to enforce one's authority amongst troops who were inherently mistrustful of outsiders like Bowes.[70] At the same time, Sir Robert seemingly lacked the ability to judge his troops, as well as his enemy. For the raid, Bowes employed the men of Redesdale, under the command of Sir Cuthbert Ratcliff, the Keeper and Deputy Warden of the Middle March. The force comprised roughly 3,000 men, although this varied probably at any one day. In sending the plunder away, Bowes' error came in failing to keep the surnames of Redesdale effectively pinned to their task. It was this first misstep that caused the Redesdale light cavalry to flee the field as soon as Huntley approached.[71] Their actions suggest that they were unwilling to risk capture or death if they were to be cut out from the spoils. The second weakness in the commission was the virtual unilateral power that it handed to Bowes. There exists no evidence that Henry or the Privy Council ordered Bowes to raid, but since the king granted him authority to do so, Bowes most likely interpreted his commission as a direct order to raid into Scotland. It was

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[69] *StP.*,V , no. 391.
[70] See Appendices for a description of Haddon Rigg.
[71] Bruce, 'The English Expedition,' p. 195.

his decision to launch the raid into Scotland, and it was his decision to split his forces, manoeuvres that would bear ill fortune for the English.[72]

Given that the Marchers, and especially the dalesmen, who accompanied Bowes, customarily served as guerrilla or irregular forces, it is probable that they treated his leadership with caution. Although Little John Heron was present, the Keeper had already demonstrated that he would defer to Bowes' authority,[73] so that the tactics of the chevauchée replaced the traditional method of the quick raid. In contrast, Wardens-General were encouraged to keep within confines of traditional Border warfare, a policy that was more enticing to the Northumberland gentry even if they sometimes treated the Warden-General with disdain. Both the king and Bowes had overlooked the fact that authority on parchment did not necessarily translate to authority in the field, especially when using irregular light cavalry in warfare that was more conventional. Thus, the commission's chief weakness was compounded by naïveté on the part of both Bowes and the Tudor government.

Bowes' mission in 1542 marked the last time in which such a general commission was given to an officer for the command of a military force in the borders. Henry had to admit his own error in giving Bowes such unrestricted power when James confronted the English king after discovering Sir Robert's written instructions on his person.[74] The force that entered the borders in August 1542 was nothing less than a specially designed military unit that was used to provoke war with Scotland; such sinister objectives ruptured the tenuous truces of the Borders. This put Henry at an immediate disadvantage; not only were many of his chief

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[72] There exists no letter commanding Bowes specifically to burn Teviotdale, although the "secret matters" referred to in *LP*, XVII no. 577 might have encompassed this military action. Regardless, the king's commission did give Bowes the power to organise raids, a privilege that was not even granted to the Wardens.

[73] Heron ultimately complied with Bowes' demand to raid Liddesdale in 1541, despite his reluctance to do so. See *LP*, XVI no. 1404.

[74] *StP.*, V, nos. 392-93.

border officers lost, but so were many of the horses that were needed for the conduct

of border warfare. Worse still, the Scottish king knew now of his intentions, as well

as his disposition.[75] Whilst scrambling to appease the outrage of James V, Henry

had to urge his Wardens caution and to 'forbear tattempt any further thing against

the Scottes,' and not to revenge 'every skegge or thefte, but uppon a notable rode or

hurte, soo to be doon as it maye appere to be attempted with the consent of summe

of the rulers on the Bordres of Scotland'.[76] Military action in the Borders returned

once again to the methodical, established custom of raid, counter-raid and

appeasement via redress, but most of all the government now put all trust in its

traditional March officers. Although Bowes managed to survive his captivity with

his credibility intact, the remainder of his career would not entail service via special

commission, but as Warden,[77] Councillor[78] or comptroller.[79] Bowes' future military

activity was accomplished under the guise of these offices. Bowes was also a skilled

diplomat, being a trained lawyer, and acting as a commissioner for days of truce and

as an envoy to the Scottish government. A thorough workhorse, Sir Robert's

multiple skills were still in much demand by the government.

Few men were able to experience the freedom of office to the degree that

Bowes did, perhaps with the exception of Sir Thomas Wharton during Dudley's

administration. The commission is a remarkable in that it demonstrated how the

Tudor war effort worked on a contingent basis. Bowes was sent on a very specific

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[75] *StP.*, V, no. 395.

[76] *StP.*, V, no. 395; *LP*, XVII, nos. 704 & 713.

[77] Bowes became the Warden of the Middle March after the death of Sir Ralph Eure in 1544. He also received the Wardenship of the East March after the death of Lord William Eure in 1548.

[78] *LP*, XVIII(1) nos. 464 and 623 (23). Released from captivity in 1543, Bowes returned as a councillor at York. That year, when Lord Parr was selected as Warden-General of the Marches, Sir Robert was appointed his councillor. Late that year the King granted to Bowes stewardship of Barnard Castle in Durham. All offices there were his to disperse as he saw fit.

[79] *LP*, XVIII (1) no. 683. Within a few days of receiving his patent for Barnard Castle, Bowes was also appointed comptroller of the king's wars in France, and was ordered to accompany the expedition to Boulogne.

mission, and the commission that sanctioned his military operations in Scotland is evidence of Henry's desire to provoke Scotland. Yet, Henry was clever enough to know that any military action on the part of the English would have to appear as a justified retaliation against Scottish aggression. The strategy was clumsy in its execution. The chain of command in the Borders could already be tenuous enough without the Privy Council grafting another military commander to its ungainly structure. Secret intentions, such as were laid out for Bowes, and the style of raiding that was unorthodox even when compared to the unconventional practices of the Borders, only weakened the English chance for winning allies in Scotland, despite the unbridled power that such officers could wield.

<div align="center">Wardens</div>

On the first tier of permanent or traditional Marcher leadership were the Wardens. At times, there was also a Warden-General or a Lieutenant of the North to whom the Wardens answered, with most of these superior ranks emerging during times of war. During the 1540's, most wardens were answering to men such as the Duke of Suffolk or the Earl of Hertford, both of whom served as Lieutenants-General during the campaigning seasons. When Henry VIII revived the office of Warden-General in 1542 with the appointment of the Earl of Rutland, the Wardens had an officer that could coordinate military operations throughout all three Marches. However, it is the Wardens of each March who guided the day-to-day business throughout the Borders.

The office of Warden, which began in 1297 with the appointment of Robert Fitz Roger, Brian Fitz Alan and Ralf Fitz William as Captains of the March, saw men of different ranks over the course of its three-hundred year existence.[80] This

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[80] The original commission sent to these men refers to them as *custodes marchiarum*. Nicholson, *Leges*, pp. 5-6.

history of the appointments suggests that Border magnates were the most suitable choice, although many of the appointments appear to have been given to Border gentry as well.[81] As with all offices under the Tudors, the military authority of the March Wardens came from their commissions. There are some examples of commissions for March Wardens in Nicholson's *Leges Marchiarum*, in the Bell MSS of the Carlisle Record Office and in the Papers of Lord Grey de Wilton, which list the duties of several mid-Tudor wardens, including Lord Grey and the reprehensible Sir John Forster. D.L.W. Tough has already noted that these commissions are almost identical to each other, so that there is no real point in discussing niggling differences.[82]

The specific powers of the Warden as set by their commissions were both judicial and military. Firstly, it was the duty of the Warden to set the watch against any enemy incursions, at the cost of the locality, and to monitor the garrisons in his jurisdiction. This was important to safeguard the locality from surprise attacks, which occurred at regular intervals in the Marches, but especially during the raiding season that extended from October to March. In 1545, Bowes' first act as Warden was an attempt to reinforce the border garrisons. Bowes suggested to the king that more archers and billmen should be stationed on the Border. Soon after, Bowes received special permission to lay a garrison of archers and billmen in Haltwhistle, on the edge of the Middle March.[83] The upkeep of fortresses was another essential military function. As Warden, Sir Ralph Sadler spent much of his brief tenure ensuring the defensive capabilities of the Marches and of Berwick, which became the launching port for most invasions into Scotland. Much like Bowes did in 1542,

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[81] C.H. Hunter-Blair, "Wardens and Deputy Wardens of the Marches Towards Scotland, In Northumberland," *Archaeologia Aeliana*, 4th Series 28 (1950), p.18.
[82] D.L.W. Tough, *The Last Years of a Frontier*, (Oxford: OUP, 1928), p. 78.
[83] *LP*, XX(1) no. 466.

Sadler travelled the length of the March to personally inspect the fortresses in order

to satisfy the queries of the Privy Council regarding the region's defensive

capabilities.[84] Although Sadler's career was brief, he managed to accomplish the

readying of Berwick for the last English invasion of Scotland, and he personally

oversaw the beginnings of the modern fortifications that sprang up around Berwick,

one of the few cities in the British Isles to receive any of the innovative, *trace

italienne*-style breastworks. Because Berwick held strategic importance for all of

Northumberland, the upkeep of its walls remained a high priority throughout the

sixteenth century. The Warden of the East March was usually the chief officer of

Berwick, which allowed the Warden to personally oversee any construction,

although by Elizabeth's reign separate commissions began to take over this role.

Most importantly, Wardens held the power to muster all fencible men, age

16 to 60, in the Marches and the liberties of Tynedale, Redesdale and Hexham, and

to ensure that all were properly furnished with arms and armour. Implicit in this

privilege was the authority to participate in the planning of operations, and to

request men from counties that traditionally supplied men for Border service. In

1544, Sir Ralph and Lord William Eure were both active in drawing up plans for

their march through Scotland to Leith to cover Hertford's amphibious operations.

Sir Ralph requested 1,000 horsed archers from Yorkshire and the Bishopric, to

accompany his 2,000 elite horsemen.[85] In a rare show of deference for his superiors,

Eure noted that he required 500 men from the Bishopric if he were to burn Jedburgh,

taking time to clinch his request with a sycophantic appraisal of Hertford's

generalship.[86] Wardens continued to play an important role in conducting troops for

invasions of Scotland in the first years of Elizabeth's reign. Sir Ralph Sadler took

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[84] *Sadler Papers*, I, nos. 581 and 584.
[85] *LP* XIX(1) no. 335.
[86] *LP* XIX(1) no. 601.

direct responsibility in preparing for the Leith campaign, calling for the Privy Council to stay in sending 4,000 fresh troops northwards until he could find adequate grain in Berwick and Newcastle.[87] As it stood, there were already 2,190 men under Sadler's command in December 1559.[88] In the end, Sadler spent his time as Warden preparing the way for a 4,000-man army that would later besiege the French at Leith regardless of his complaints.[89] Under all Tudor monarchs, the Warden was expected primarily to utilise his military skills in defending the frontier, and it was this expectation that imbued the office with its authority to wage war with Scotland.

As with any military office of the sixteenth century, the warden was empowered to create officers: two deputy wardens and two wardens-sergeants to serve under him, and any other necessary officers according to custom, all to be paid from the Warden's salary. In essence, this allowed the warden to use men well known to him in all military matters. Castles and their ordnances were also subject to inspection by the Warden, who, as the chief officer, was responsible for their upkeep. One of Bowes' chief responsibilities was to ensure the defensible array of the primary castle of the Middle March, Alnwick. He also received orders to see to the defences of Wark castle in the East March, which encroached upon the authority of William Lord Eure.[90] Wardens also held ultimate power to have the obedience of all lieges, including those residing within the liberties, and to use their help as he

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[87] *SadlerPapers*, I, no. 596.
[88] *CSPF, Elizabeth*, Vol. II (1558-59) no. 403.
[89] *Sadler Papers*, I, no. 638. Sadler was happily informed on December 16 that Lord Grey would soon replace him as Warden.
[90] *LP*, XX(1) no. 535.

saw fit. This last article remained intentionally vague so that it might prevent any attempt to undermine the taking of musters.[91]

Such powers were extensive, and were often interpreted broadly by the Wardens. Eure, much like his father, ran his March much like a fiefdom, at times virtually ignoring the authority of the Lieutenant that supposedly governed his own office. In 1543, Lord Parr received letters from the Eures stating that since the East and Middle borders were unable to defend themselves in the last war, they ought to now be fortified and garrisoned. It seems though that Eure already acted on this, as Parr complained to the Duke of Suffolk that the Warden was not forthcoming with news of his exploits.[92] Ralph Eure also had his fingers in his father's pie, as he had stationed at Berwick a sizeable garrison and all of their officers, under his own command.[93] There is no evidence that any other warden of the Middle March had control of the Berwick garrison. However, its governor, the newly ennobled William Lord Eure, Sir Ralph's father, was getting on in age and was probably all too willing to let his energetic son take the lead.

However, there were some limits to the Wardens' authority. For instance, the Warden of the East March could not conduct any policing operations against the Middle March without the express permission of the Warden there, but the Warden could act in conjunction with other wardens when it came to military or police action. Even then, their actions were often limited by the government. In 1540, Henry VIII expressly forbade the use of fire during raids into Tynedale and Redesdale.[94] Even in 1557, when Thomas Percy had regained the title of Earl of Northumberland and with it the Wardenship of the East and Middle March, the

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[91] *CPR Elizabeth, 1558-60*, pp. 37 & 411. These powers are described in the 1559 patent for William Dacre for command of the West March, and in the 1560 patent for Sir John Forster for the Middle March.

[92] *LP*, XVIII(2) no. 146

[93] Talbot MSS A. ff. 69-72

government still regulated his power when they refused his attempts to undermine the Forsters. In December 1557, Percy was reprimanded for removing a Forster from the Captaincy of Wark; in February 1558, the Privy Council ordered the Earl to stop investigating Sir John Forster for the homicide of Thomas Carr, the late Marshall of Berwick.[95] At times, this proved to be reciprocal, especially when it came to military activities. In 1543, the Northumbrian Wardens argued that logistics would prove an obstacle for any invading army, and their opinions effectively quashed the invasion that Henry had proposed.[96] Instead of invasion, the king was satisfied to allow the Wardens to continue raiding into the Scottish borders.[97] Although the Marchers had the benefit of Suffolk's influence upon the king, their authority still answered to a higher power. Even when the Lieutenants or Warden-Generals were unable to control the Wardens, it is clear that the Privy Council and the crown could do so with little difficulty.

The judicial power of the Warden to hold Wardens' courts was also limited, in that they were allowed to try cases of March treason. Many felonies were reserved for the judges of the assize since many of them were not specifically March treasons, which allowed the Warden to focus upon international matters. Despite the limits set by the specific nature of March Law, the Wardens proved to be indispensable in their knowledge. Sir Robert Bowes sat in the Privy Council by 1551, when he released a commissioned report that attempted to regulate the proceedings during days of redress, as well as the establishment of juries for trials.[98] As Warden-General, Wharton called upon his previous experience as Warden to codify March law. Paired with the judicial function was the power to conclude cease-fires, or

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[94] PRO SP 1/157 f. 67. (Jan. 19, 1540).
[95] PRO, SP 15/8/52 & 55; *APC*, VI, pp. 159-60, 221-22, 262, 264-278 *passim*.
[96] *LP*, XVIII(2) no. 236. Eure, Collingwood, and Horsley were the ranking Northumbrians to sign the letter to the king begging him to reconsider an invasion for that year.
[97] *LP*, XVIII(2) nos. 262 and 324.

abstinences, within the Marches in order to conduct days of redress. This allowed the Wardens to entreat directly with the Scottish Wardens, if it did not contravene March Law or upset acceptable diplomacy. First amongst Sadler's duties was the overseeing of the aid that was sent to the Scottish lords in their struggles against the Queen Regent and the French.[99] In the end, much of the judicial power was a logical extension of the Warden's power to conduct police operations in his March.

The crown and Privy Council appointed all Wardens. Royal patents set out the guidelines for the Warden, and the king kept close watch over each Warden to ensure his compliance. Although the temporary powers granted to the Wardens-General during the Duke of Northumberland's administration gave the higher officers the authority to appoint the Wardens under them,[100] royal appointment of Wardens resumed under successive regimes. Mary's first act in the Marches was to appoint her supporters as Wardens.[101] Royal interest in filling the offices demonstrated the crown's desire to see through all policies related to the defence of the Borders.

There was no template for the government's choice of Wardens, but most were from families that had a history in or near the Borders, and all had military power and some administrative experience. Sir Ralph Eure came from such a family that had Border connections.[102] As the eldest son of Sir William Eure, he became involved in Border matters at a young age. In 1537, he had seen the writing on the wall in Tynedale and Redesdale, petitioning Cromwell that he might be more suitable for the post of the Keeper of Tynedale as 'good service might best be done

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[98] *Addenda*, VII, no. 6.
[99] *Sadler Papers*, I, no. 556, 563, and 574.
[100] This was especially true of Sir Thomas Wharton.
[101] *CPR, Philip and Mary*, I, pp. 140, 170 and 177. Lord Dacre received his appointment as Lord Warden of the West and Middle March, and as the Keeper of Tynedale and Redesdale in January 1554. Lord Conyers replaced Ralph Gray as the Warden of the East March.

amongst evil persons.'[103] It was not until 1543 that Eure was appointed as Keeper, although by that time he had already established himself as a hawkish leader.

Sir Robert Bowes, Eure's replacement in the Middle Marches,[104] was one of the most active borderers under the Tudors, and although his family base was in Durham, Bowes satisfied royal criteria for the Wardenship. Although mediocre military leadership already marked his career, he had a talented capacity for administration. Undoubtedly the latter quality earned him his position. Thus by 1545, Bowes was back in the Borders from his commissioned posts in France and London, beginning his station with the industry that marked his career as Warden.[105] Bowes, after all, was a competent administrator if slightly un-soldierly. His training as a lawyer made him better for understanding such things as logistics and strategies, qualities that were not so useful for battlefield tactics and command. Political survival, rather than military savoir-faire, was Sir Robert's advantage.

Sadler had his Wardenship thrust upon him when he served as an emergency replacement for the Earl of Northumberland in 1559, and was also more of an administrator than he was a soldier, yet Sir Ralph was no stranger to military action. During the campaign of 1547, he acted as high treasurer for the army, a rank that gave more credit to his administrative abilities than to his soldierly attributes, but Sadler earned his banneret's spurs on the field at Pinkie. It was there that Sadler stayed the English foot during the Scottish rout, 'a thing not easily to be done, by reason they all, as then, somewhat busily applied their market, the spoil of this

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[102] Sir Ralph was an ambitious fellow, although during his and his father's tenure as Warden the Eures came into possession of a surprising amount of Northumberland land. *Northumberland County History* has given a brief history of their acquisitions.
[103] PRO, SP 1/126 ff. 80-81.
[104] *LP*, XX(1) no. 1085.
[105] *LP*, XX(1) no. 1085.

Scottish camp.'[106]   Sadler was thus a natural choice for a Border officer; his service

under Henry VIII as a commissioner, and his political shrewdness, earned him a

reputation as a sage statesman. Sadler reacted to his appointment with distress,

despite having been chosen for his uprightness and his good standing with the

Queen.[107] Sadler was not given a choice in the matter, however. He complained

bitterly to Cecil, complaining of the great wrong that was done to him.[108]

His lack of military power also left him feeling exposed. Sadler made a valid

point; he had neither money, nor men and horses. In the end, he was only able to

have twenty horsemen, although he reported that he knew of no southern gentleman

who had less than 100 horsemen in wages.[109] This undermined the military nature of

his office. Having no lands in the area or tenants that he could call upon to serve,

Sadler was left with no choice but to rely upon the Northumberland tenantry during

military emergencies. Worse yet, Northumberland still styled himself as Warden,

with Sadler as his mere deputy, which meant that the salary of the office would go to

the Percy coffers, leaving Sadler to soak up all of the expenses. It is no surprise that

Sadler wrote to Cecil that the Percys were unsuitable for any office in the

Marches.[110]

Pluralism was a key part of widening the military authority of the March

Wardens under Henry VIII, since it was believed that holding multiple offices would

allow the Wardens to cast a wider net. This was especially true for the Middle

March. From 1543 until the end of Henry's reign, the Keeperships of Tynedale and

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[106] William Patten, 'The Expedition into Scotland, 1547.' In A.F. Pollard, (ed.) *Tudor Tracts 1532-1588.* (Westminster: Constable, 1903), p. 128. He is listed as having received his title later in the text, p. 149.
[107] *CSPF Elizabeth I*, II (1559-60), no. 161.
[108] *CSPF Elizabeth I*, II (1559-60), no. 213.
[109] *Sadler Papers*, I, no. 615.
[110] *CSPF Elizabeth I*, II (1559-60), no. 274.

Redesdale were held by the Warden of the Middle March.[111] Lord Lisle, the king's

Warden-General in early 1543, used Sir Ralph Eure to replace the incompetent Sir

Cuthbert Ratcliffe, whom Lisle thought unfit for the momentous job of governing

the Middle March, which by 1543 also included the Keepership of Tynedale and

Redesdale.[112] Although Lisle considered splitting the position of Keeper and

Warden between two candidates in 1543,[113] Eure held all offices by royal

appointment. Bowes replaced Eure when the latter fell at Ancrum Moor in February

1545, and the practice of pluralism continued. It was not until the end of Henry's

reign that the Wardenship of the Middle March was separated from the

Keeperships.[114] In the East March, the Captaincy of Berwick had been closely

associated with the Warden of the East March. The Warden under Henry VIII,

William Lord Eure, also held the captaincy of Berwick, which gave him authority

over the garrison as well as the castle.

Pluralism unquestionably benefited the March Wardens under Henry VIII, as

the practice granted more connections to the Marchers, which in turn resulted in

better bands of light cavalry. To support multiple offices the Wardens—William

Eure, Bowes and Wharton—all received extensive land grants, ostensibly to

augment the income for their responsibilities and increase their *manrede*.[115] Bowes

received the farms of Hexham and Langley with his office along with wardships and

messuages throughout Northumberland, which secured problem areas and drew the

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[111] *LP*, XVIII(1), no 432(2); *LP*, XX(1) no. 1085. Both Eure and Bowes held the Keeperships, although they had deputy keepers serving under them as well.

[112] *LP*, XVIII(1) no. 432(2).

[113] LP, XVIII(1), no. 432(item 2).

[114] Historical MSS Commission, *The Manuscripts of His Grace the Duke of Rutland*, vol. I (London: Historical Manuscripts Commission [HMSO], 1905), p. 33. The Earl of Rutland's instructions in 1549 make no mention of the Keepership.

[115] For an example of this, see the patent rolls listed in *LP*, XXI(2) no. 648, whereby Thomas Wharton is granted extensive messuages and tenements throughout Yorkshire.

tenants closer to the military officers.[116] After the death of Lord Eure in 1548, Bowes was given the double Wardenship of the East and Middle Marches.[117]

Having the double Keepership meant that the Middle March officers enjoyed a pool of elite Border cavalry in the form of the surname bands. Ralph Eure spent much of his time as Warden collaborating with the roguish elements of the Middle Marches. There was justification for this, as the thieves of Tynedale and Redesdale supplied the royal bands with well over 2,000 soldiers at any given time during the 1540's. He was therefore reluctant to pursue any of them for crimes, which presented a problem. Although many of his followers were charged with robberies previously committed, they had insufficient goods to make amends with those whom they had spoiled, so that, if compelled to make redress, they would have to resort to thieving again in order to live. If any were executed for March treasons, the rest, knowing that they were identically culpable, would have become fugitives; though if nothing were done, those who were initially robbed by the Tynedalers would say that Eure favoured the thieves.[118] In the end, Eure preferred to let such iniquities slide. In 1544, he backed Archie Dodd, heidsman of the Dodds, over charges arising from a deadly fray at Hexham.[119] Again, in 1544, he conspired with Dodds and the Underkeeper of Tynedale, Giles Heron of Chipchase, to kidnap the Laird of Buccleuch.[120] Unlike many of his predecessors, Eure displayed some sympathy for his surname followers and was eager to protect their interests. In early 1544, Eure reported that the Scots killed one of his guides, a Tynedaler, in a raid because they knew of his role. In his anger, Eure demanded justice, inquiring whether the Lieutenant might conduct a raid. If not, Eure made it all too clear that he would raid

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[116] *LP*, XXI(2) no. 771 (item 26).
[117] SP 10/5/14. Lord Eure had been the Warden in the East since 1537.
[118] *LP*, XVIII(1), no. 580
[119] PRO, SP 1/180, f. 241;*LP*, XVIII(1),nos. 937 and 964.
[120] BL, Add. MSS 32655 f. 203.

on his own.[121] This reaction shows that Eure respected the Marcher pattern of vengeance, the deadly feud, especially when his own soldiers were affronted. For this, his soldiers proved loyal to their commander, who exploited their desire to lay waste to their deadly rivals in Scottish Teviotdale.

Sir Robert Bowes also keenly defended the interests of the men in his charge, much like Sir Ralph Eure, although instead of emphasising his connections in the dales, Sir Robert preferred to use his other positions as councillor and legal advisor to interpose for his men. When Robert Crouch, a captain of mounted harquebusiers stationed along the Borders, was ordered to appear before the king's justices, Bowes argued that his military service and wit was far more important than standing before the King's Bench on charges of breaking the king's peace.[122] Crouch never answered for his transgression as he went on to serve as a captain of the light horse in the Pinkie campaign of 1547, where he was captured by '[his] own forwardness, and not by the enemy's force.'[123] Bowes also recognised the strategic value of the Heron clan; he petitioned to have the chief offenders of the family removed from incarceration in Newcastle and stationed at Alnwick. The king grudgingly accepted this.[124] In 1546 John and George Heron went south to petition their release from ward at Alnwick, with Bowes's recommendations.[125] Both men were invaluable in their experience with border matters, and it was suggested that they should operate with Bowes at Alnwick Castle, where he was also constable, thereby placing them directly under a trusted royal servant.[126] Despite all of his patronage, Bowes never held the esteem of the men of the Marches as Ralph Eure had done. Perhaps his role

[121] *LP*, XIX(1), no. 170.
[122] *LP*, XXI(1) no. 827.
[123] Patten, 'Expedition,'p. 100.
[124] *LP*, XX(1) no. 466.
[125] *LP*, XXI(2) no. 543.
[126] *LP*, XXI(2) no. 804.

as royal commissioner caused certain misgivings amongst the Marchers who were already wary of the King's presence advancing into their former fiefdoms. Bowes was also not a true Borderer;[127] rather, he was appointed to the borders due to his experience and wit. All the same, the King's officers could not find fault with him despite his shortcomings as a military officer. Bowes also actively tried to govern the surnames. Even the trouble spots of Tynedale and Redesdale seemed relatively quiet under their new chief and his son, Richard Bowes, Captain of Norham, though the reasons for this are probably due to the large numbers of the surnames being in garrison in Northumberland and, after 1547, in Scotland.[128]

However, after the Bowes' tenure as Warden, the need for a large war budget for the Warden disappeared; along with it went the multiple offices, and most significantly, the two Keeperships. There was a consequential breakdown thereafter. Although the military contribution of the surnames had begun to wane after 1550 due to the government's increasing desire to keep them from entering the garrisons, and due to their landholding practices, their separation from the Warden meant fewer opportunities for the military administration to enforce military obligation. After the office of Warden was deprived of the Keeperships, law and order once again began to break down in the dales. In 1551, Bowes reported that the dales were filled again with 'wild and misdemeaned' people.[129]

The gradual separation of military offices in Marches targeted the nepotism that had grasped March administration, but it was seen as a means of improving the efficiency of the military structure. However, it only provided an opportunity for more incompetence to enter the offices. Sadler was keen to cashier some of the

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[127] The Bowes family was originally from County Durham. See Christine Newman, *The Bowes of Streatlam, Co. Durham: A Study of the Politics and Religion of a Sixteenth-Century Northern Gentry Family*, (London: British Library, 1991).
[128] *LP*, XXI(2) nos. 942 and 1279.
[129] BL, Calig. VIII f. 106.

officers that had served under the Percys, especially the captain of Norham, a man of

such corruption that Sadler could not bear the thought of working with him.[130] In

the same breath, the Keeper of Tynedale, Francis Slingsby, was also under attack

from Sadler, as he was unable to operate effectively in lieu of the Herons, who

despised him.

The separation of offices might have undermined corruption and nepotism,

but it also undercut the Wardens' ability to muster all men under their command,

which Sadler's tenure confirmed. Sadler experienced great difficulty in controlling

the dalesmen; the thieves of Tynedale and Redesdale were no better than 'very

rebels and outlaws,' for which the only remedy was the continual garrisoning of the

dales or the issue of a general pardon.[131] Still, Sir Ralph vowed to retain twenty

horsemen in order to patrol the outer reaches of his charge, determining to measure

the defensive capabilities of the frontier.[132]

Although the military power of the Wardens plummeted after 1550, the

abeyance of the Warden-General after Edward VI meant that the Wardens were able

to recover some of their power under Mary and Elizabeth. Rather than relying on a

strong high command to direct the Wardens, Mary's government saw fit to make the

Wardenships self-sufficient by partially resuming the pluralism that Henry VIII had

employed. When Lord Wharton was assigned the Wardenship of the Middle March

in March 1555,[133] he was also given both Keeperships, a clear reversal of the policy

that he had helped to instil in the Marches. Wharton also received the stewardship

of Hexhamshire and the constableship of Alnwick, as well as all other vacant royal

offices, which gave the Warden a stronger military base.[134]

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[130] *CSPF, Elizabeth I,* II (1559-60), no. 132.
[131] *CSPF Elizabeth I* , II (1559-60), no. 213
[132] *CSPF Elizabeth I* , II (1559-60), no. 274.
[133] *CPR, Philip and Mary,* III, p. 27.
[134] BL, Add. MSS 33591, ii, f. 46; *APC,* V, pp. 121-22 & 133.

However, the monopoly that the Warden of the East March had in the Berwick captaincy had unravelled just after the death of Henry VIII in 1547. Nicholas Stirley, whom Hertford had appointed captain of Berwick castle, had taken the position from Eure.[135] After Eure's death, the successive Wardens resided at Berwick, but the office was increasingly separated from the captaincy of the town, until the separation was formalised in 1552.[136] Although Wharton gained temporary possession of the captaincy in 1555,[137] Berwick had proved far too important for the security of the frontier, so its separation form the East March Wardenship was a matter of practicality, as well as strategy.

Aside from the experiments with pluralism, there was throughout the fifteen forties and fifties an earnest attempt to reform the office of Warden. In the summer of 1543, Wharton drafted a proposal for the governance of the Borders, calling for a better definition of the Warden's responsibilities, and for a codification of Border law.[138] Wharton called for two deputies in each march, a practice that was not unfamiliar to his contemporaries as there was usually a deputy appointed by each Warden.[139] Above all, Wharton desired to have a clear line of authority that began with the Wardens; Sir Thomas was eager to have the pensioners under stricter control of the Warden and his deputy. This speaks of the difficulties that the Wardens had in controlling the pensioners, many of whom were blamed for the decay of Border service.[140] Wharton in general was keen to see all Marchers placed under the yoke of the officers, including those who lived in areas where the King's writ did not run. The individual lordships that still exercised independence from the

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[135] *APC*, 1547-50, p. 681.
[136] Boscher, 'Politics', pp. 151-152.
[137] *CPR, Philip and Mary*, II, no. 299.
[138] *LP*, XVIII(1) no. 799.
[139] Robson, *English Highland Clans*, p. 115
[140] See chapter five.

crown should, in Wharton's opinion, be placed in the hands of the king through an exchange with the current lords. All tenants in such areas would be placed at the Warden's beckoning. Wharton suggested that if the king were to pay higher salaries to his wardens, then a continual presence might be felt in troubled areas like Tynedale and Redesdale. Wharton obviously felt that simply allowing the Warden to act as a continual hammer upon the Scots could solve the problems of the Marches, if only the scheme of Marcher authority would allow them to do so. This was not the last of Wharton's opinions regarding the ordering of the Marches. Again in 1553, he compiled the minutiae of the search and watch of the East and Middle Marches, dedicating nearly ten pages in calling for the reinvigoration of Border service and the augmentation of official authority.[141] It was also proposed that Hexham serve as a base for the Warden-General, who could have access to all Marches without much trouble. For all of his unpopularity with his fellow Marchers, especially the Musgraves and Dacres, it appears that the government heeded many of Wharton's suggestions but only in the last quarter of the century. It was only then that the crown was able to place its own officers on the lands and lordships of the Dacres, which had forfeited to the crown after their participation in the rebellion of 1569.[142]

There remains the question of how the constant tweaking of the Warden's power affected his ability to lead soldiers into actual combat. Military authority did not come easily to all March Wardens, although there were some who particularly thrived in leading Northumbrian Borderers into combat. Sir Ralph Eure, whose family had long served in the North as soldiers and leaders, was one of the most active soldiers to serve as Warden.[143] Eure earned a reputation for having too much

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[141] Nicholson, *Leges*, pp. 339-349.
[142] *CBP*, I, no. 743.
[143] *LP*, XIX(1) no. 223.

forwardness in combat, personally leading his troops in charges. It is clear from the death toll at Ancrum Moor that Eure had a policy of leading from the front,[144] which in the end was as beneficial as it was harmful. Although casualty figures were comparatively light for such a rout, Douglas noted that the dead included a high number of captains, including Lord Ogle, all of whom had formed the front line of the English charge. That his deputy officers followed suit was only natural, given the affection that Eure's men had for him. Even his enemies acknowledged his and his officers' eager savagery on the field, as the Earl of Arran declared, 'He was a fell, cruel man, and over-cruel, which many a man and fatherless bairn might rue.'[145] Without his personal leadership, the English cause suffered a blow, but the Middle Marchers felt it most, regretting that 'we might as well have been slain ourselves for our great friends [be] gone.'[146] The warlike tendencies of the Marchers had fed off his own personal aggressiveness, enabling the utter destruction of Teviotdale over the course of eighteen months.

Other leaders were not as adept. Sir Cuthbert Ratcliffe showed no ability at all to control his Redesdalers at Haddon Rigg, although this was the first notable battle in which he had led such a large contingent of Marcher cavalry.[147] Sir Robert Bowes was also not as adept at controlling the Marchers under his command. Bowes exhibited a greater sense of self-control on the battlefield than his predecessor, but he also displayed a certain naiveté at different points in his military career. The disaster at Haddon Rigg was not the only time that Bowes was captured. In 1548, Bowes led a band of Border horsemen to the relief of the English garrison at Haddington in Scotland, which was under siege by a troop of well-trained French soldiers led by the colourful Sieur D'Esse. Both Bowes and Sir

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[144] *LP*, XX(1) nos. 95 and 301.
[145] BL, Add. MSS 32655 f. 203.
[146] BL, Add. MSS 32656 f. 195.

Thomas Palmer were confident of breaking the siege. Sir Pedro de Gamboa, a Spanish mercenary in service of Edward VI, advised against making a sortie against the besieging French forces, but Bowes and Palmer rejected his advice. Both men had been pressured by their men to press home a charge. The English horse bolted past the Spanish gunners, and ran headlong into a disciplined force of German *Landsknechts* and harquebusiers. Gamboa wrote that 'thies northern horsemen began to flye' when it became apparent that they had been ambushed.[148] In the rout, Bowes was captured, as was Palmer.[149] Despite his experience in France and in the Borders, Bowes had trouble in controlling his men in this instant. Bowes' charge at Haddington demonstrates his overestimation of his troopers' abilities to face a conventional army; the force at his disposal was Border horse and was unsuitable for charging established infantry positions. Bowes, in general, was keener on conventional tactics, and as such, he found guerrilla warfare distasteful, if not pointless.[150] Still, Bowes was experienced in combat leadership, even if he did from time to time display remarkable lapses in judgement. His actions put Liddesdale on the defensive in 1541, a move that essentially created enmity between the Armstrong-Elliot faction and the Robsons, which suggests that Bowes lacked an understanding of the deadly feud in spite of his supposed acquaintance with such affairs.[151] However, Lord Lisle commended Sir Robert's actions during the siege of Boulogne, where he and his light horsemen performed well acting as scouts and scourers for the rest of the English army.[152]

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[147] *LP*, XVII no. 662 & 663.
[148] *Hamilton Papers*, II no. 615; *CSP Scotland*, i, no. 293.
[149] PRO, SP 10/4/38.
[150] *LP*, XXI(2) no. 428. In July 1546, Scottish Borderers raided Coquetdale, but Bowes noted that the Scots did this out of necessity, so impoverished they were from Hertford's "rough wooing" and was ready to pardon them rather than to begin a series of stroke and counter-stroke.
[151] *LP*, XVI(2) no. 1264.
[152] *LP*, XIX(1) no. 949.

This personal method of combat leadership had its drawbacks, none as apparent as the disasters at Haddon Rigg and Ancrum Moor. Henry VIII often cautioned his March officers to avoid combat, mainly to avoid their capture by the enemy, although this policy was mainly directed towards the higher command.[153] Bowes' defeats came from ill-advised snap decisions rather than from impulsiveness. Eure, on the other hand, was criticised because he overstepped his obligations as a leader by acting recklessly. The Earl of Shrewsbury had instructed them to raid cautiously, and await reinforcements from Durham.[154] Eure and Layton chose to ignore this order. In doing so, Eure put the entire Middle March in jeopardy. At the same time, his hotheadedness on the field encouraged the warlike proclivities of the Marchers, although this produced disordered ranks, which were useless against a well-organised body of soldiers. Eure was a much better leader in guerrilla tactics of the Marches. His raids on Teviotdale put the Scottish on the defensive, his success coming from his willingness to employ the tactics that his soldiers preferred. This points to a problem of Marcher leadership—there was inadequate definition of the Warden's military protocol. Yet, Eure must have felt prodded by the warmongering spirits of the Earl of Hertford, and most of all, Henry VIII. In an era where personal lordship translated to personal military leadership, one still has to question whether Eure acknowledged or overstepped his authority in acting so rashly. Regardless of such judgements, the Wardens' commissions implied that they were to lead raids into Scotland, and with that task came the risks to which Northumbrian soldiers were liable.

Yet none of the Wardens was invited to participate in the campaign of 1547. Bowes was absent on the field at Pinkie, despite the large contingent of

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[153] LP, XVIII(1) no. 468; *Ibid.,* XVIII(2), no. 196.
[154] LP, XX(1) no. 272.

Northumbrian light cavalry.[155] Ironically, his only role was the entertainment of

Hertford's retinue at Alnwick.[156] Most likely, the Wardens were kept at home in

order to guard the Borders in case the invasion failed. The fact that they led troops

into Scotland after Pinkie was no indication of them recovering their former role as

battlefield commanders, as their actions were only meant to support the garrisons in

Scotland.

Wardens increasingly became Border guards after 1550, a role that was

already inherent in their duty, though this was now emphasized at the expense of

their power to take offensive action. Wardens were too important to expend in

military operations, and their increasing importance in stabilising the Borders meant

that they were encouraged to focus on domestic tranquillity, rather than warfare.

Although the collapse of the English garrison effort in 1550, and the ensuing treaty

of Norham, meant that mid-Tudor Wardens such as Lord Conyers did not take an

active role in leading Marcher soldiers into combat during their tenure, the

resumption of warfare in 1557 allowed the Marian Wardens a chance to flaunt their

combat leadership skills. It is unfortunate that the records remain rather silent, as the

flow of after-action reports from the high command is sparse. Still, there is enough

to suggest that the Wardens still led troops into combat. In August 1557, Sir Henry

Percy, the deputy Warden in the East March, personally conducted a retaliatory raid

into the Merse, in which his forces burnt 16 towns and captured over a dozen

Scottish prisoners.[157] Percy was active again on Halloween in 1557, once more

personally leading cavalry into the Merse and netting 40 prisoners.[158] Percy's

military fortunes continued the next year, when he led a raid against Langholm. In

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[155] Patten, 'Expedition,' p. 78.
[156] Patten, 'Expedition,' p. 80.
[157] Talbot MSS D. ff. 72-74.
[158] Talbot MSS D. ff. 268-70.

the ensuing battle against the Scots the English shot failed in the foul weather, but the light horse recovered to take the field under the personal leadership of Percy.[159] However, these raids were desultory compared to the great raids of the 'rough wooing', so that any comparison suggests either military decay or a change of policy. In reality, neither of these suggestions accurately reflects the situation in the Marches. Wardens still led their troops, although their reports on their military exploits have largely been lost or glossed over by those who answered to the Privy Council. Again, Wardens would not accompany the army northwards in the Leith campaign, a reiteration of the situation in 1547, confirmation that while the Warden was still important for frontier defence, he was no longer considered part of the regular English army.

When Anglo-Scottish warfare came to an official close in the 1560's, the Warden ceased to be a predominantly military leader. Already his superiors had begun to commute the military duties of the Warden. Sir Ralph Sadler is a perfect example of the Warden that characterised the leadership of Elizabethan Northumberland, somewhere between administrator and chief of police. Although there were exceptional excursions led by the Wardens, the peak of their military authority came during times of open conflict with Scotland. This in part explains their temporary subjugation under the Warden-Generals Dudley and Wharton during the lull in Anglo-Scottish warfare. As such, the Wardens' power came full circle with the resumption of conflict under Mary Tudor, and continued into the first years of Elizabeth. Always implicit in this was the power of the Privy Council to control the chief March officers, except when the crown desired to give the Warden more advantage.

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[159] PRO, SP 15/8/88.

<center>The Keeperships of Tynedale and Redesdale</center>

Just below the position of the Warden were the Keeperships of Tynedale and Redesdale. The Keeperships began simply as administrative stewardships of the old Liberties, but when raiding became a problem in the late fifteenth century, the office then involved internal policing. The office traditionally was filled by a local family, and thus the history of the Keepership of North Tynedale is closely bound up with the family history of the Herons from 1540 onwards.[160] In contrast, the Redesdale Keepership only came into the possession of the Herons for a brief time just after 1540, when it was paired with that of Tynedale. After 1543, Redesdale saw a variety of Keepers, although the increasing power of the Halls of Otterburn guaranteed that they always played at least a minor part in governing this problematic dale.

The Keeperships wholly involved policing the troublesome surnames of the Northumberland uplands. As such, the Keeperships required much of their incumbent officers, the most challenging of which was practising with thieves whilst keeping an honest countenance and satisfying the military needs of the Tudor government. For a brief period, the Keeper served as a military commander of the dalesmen, although this role rose and fell along with the participation of the surnames in Tudor warfare. The office was far from stable in terms of power; thus, the Tudors witnessed both brilliant success and dismal failure from their Keepers.

Like other offices, the Keepership of the dales was a royally appointed post, at least under Henry VIII. Unlike the position of Warden, there were specific

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[160] The Heron family had a turbulent history, feuding with John de Coupland and the Lilburns in the fourteenth century. At one point, the latter clan ransacked the Heron stronghold of Ford castle, which required Parliamentary attention before the feud was quelled. In 1428, William Heron of Ford was slain in an open feud with John Manners, the Lord of Etal Castle, and the quarrel was not settled until the case was heard in front of the priors of Durham and Tynemouth. Even then, the feud simmered for decades thereafter. In 1506, John Heron of Crawley, or "the Bastard of Heron", infamously slew the Warden of the Scottish Middle March, Sir Robert Kerr, igniting a feud that threatened the already tenuous peace between the Scottish and English crowns. See James Raine, *The History and Antiquities of North Durham* (Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 1852), pp. 210-211.

requirements that the crown looked for in its Keepers. The first quality was summed up by Lord Howard in 1619: 'neither will any man which hath not been bred in those highland countries come from a more civil place to interpose himself on such a business for any reasonable means that can be given.'[161] Thus, the successful Keeper had to be a Northumbrian, and reside close to the dales. As late as 1558, the Privy Council acknowledged this when they reminded Sadler and the earl of Northumberland that both Tarset Hall, which was in ruins, and Widdrington's tower at Haughton, which had been destroyed by Liddesdale in 1541, might be suitable for a Keeper with a garrison.[162]

The Herons were natural for the Keepership of Tynedale as their towers of Chipchase and Simonburn guarded the mouth of the North Tyne. Even the Council of the North were agreed that there was no substitute for a stronghold in the dale.[163] Sir John Forster, Sadler's appointed Warden of the Middle March in 1559, wasted no time in appointing George Heron as the new Keeper 'of that evil country.'[164] Sadler remarked that Heron was "meet" for the job, and that his house was most convenient for a Keeper.[165] The Fenwicks, too, had a strong presence near North Tynedale and Redesdale, with holdings at Hartington Hall, Gunnerton and Sweethope.[166] Their proximity to both dales allowed for them to dominate the Tynedale Keepership in the early sixteenth century until Hodge's murder in 1537.[167]

Any lack of residence near the dales created complications. The Tynedale Keeper from 1537-40, Sir Reynold Carnaby, had no power base in North Tynedale, having no relations to any of the surnames. Carnaby was the steward of the king's

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[161] PRO, E 134/James 18, Michaelmass 1620; Robson, *English Highland Clans*, p. 116.
[162] *CSPF*, I (1558-59) no. 1372.
[163] PRO, SP 1/35 ff. 61-3.
[164] *Ibid.*
[165] *CSPF Elizabeth I*, II (1559-60) no. 349.
[166] PRO, SP 1/168 ff. 19-54. Most of the Fenwick holdings were to the northeast of Tynedale and were centred in the Wansbeck valley.

lands in Hexham, where he chose to reside, while his father owned Halton near Corbridge, but this proved inadequate to support him as Keeper. The fact that the Robsons and Charltons kidnapped Carnaby in 1539 was partially due to his military weakness.

Hexham proved to be a problematic place of residence for the Keeper yet again under Elizabeth. When in 1558 the Percy Earl of Northumberland appointed Francis Slingsby as his Keeper in Tynedale, there was no convenient place in Tynedale to lodge him. The earl reluctantly admitted that proximity to the Keeper was the only means through which the Tyndalers could be stayed.[168] The only house that was suitable was the Hexham residence of Lady Carnaby, widow of the deceased Sir Reynold, according to Percy. Slingsby was keen to have it as well, as it would provide him a safe haven from the men whom he policed. Within a few months' time, Sir Ralph Sadler delivered to Lady Carnaby the queen's request that she give up the house,[169] but it is evident that neither the Queen nor Sir Ralph Sadler thought Hexham a convenient place for the Keeper since it was relatively far from the dales for immediate action.[170]Both Northumberland and his servant accused Sadler of ignorance.[171] Sadler replied, 'whoever says that Hexham is a convenient place for the Keeper of Tynedale understands not what appertains to that service.'[172] In the end, Sadler won the battle and Lady Carnaby was allowed to keep her house. Slingsby, whose fortune was tied to the commission and generosity of his master, was unable to fulfil his office properly by taming the countryside. Even the Earl described Tynedale as 'wild country' when he wrote to Sadler informing him that

[167] S.C. Dietrich, 'Liberties and Lawlessness : Reiver Society in Tudor Tynedale and Redesdale.' (Cornell University Ph.D., 1973), p. 150.
[168] *CSPF*, I (1558-59) no. 1054.
[169] *CSPF*, I (1558-59) no. 1140.
[170] *CSPF*, I (1558-59) no. 1292.
[171] *CSPF*, I (1558-59) no. 1314
[172] *CSPF*, I (1558-59) no. 1320

Slingsby would no longer be able to function as Keeper.[173] Hexham was not a

suitable residence; it was too far for immediate action. The system of watch and

ward in the dales required a resident Keeper as it had in 1552 when Keeper George

Heron was appointed searcher and setter of the watch along the Tyne.[174] Most of all,

the surnames needed a continual reminder of the crown's authority, although they

would only follow one of their own. It was for this reason that the Herons flourished

in Tynedale after the wars had ended.

In Redesdale, the Warden of the Middle March often served as Keeper since

the Warden often resided at Harbottle, which was the closest fortress to Redesdale.

For many years, the Herons controlled this Keepership as well. Little John had

served as the sixth Earl of Northumberland's deputy in Redesdale just shortly before

the rebellion broke out, although Heron's arrest in 1537 saw the office go to a

rival.[175] George Fenwick was briefly Keeper of Redesdale in 1537 before Sir John

Widdrington entered the office as deputy Warden.[176] Widdrington was a

Northumbrian knight but his incompetence in controlling the Redesdalers

demonstrated that having ties in the region did not automatically equate to sound

leadership in the dales. When Redesdalers sided with the Hesleyside company in

the chaotic aftermath of the Pilgrimage, Widdrington lamented the violence they

inflicted upon the Milburns, although little action followed his recriminations.[177]

It was highly desirable throughout the mid-Tudor years to have a resident

Keeper since proximity equated to control over the clans, and since Heron had

connections in Redesdale who were ready to obey him,[178] the crown prudently

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[173] *CSPF*, II (1559-60) no. 249.
[174] Nicholson, *Leges*, p. 256.
[175] PRO, SP 1/69 ff. 54-55; BL, Calig. B I f. 133.
[176] BL, Calig. B III, ff. 203-5.
[177] *LP*, XIII(1) no. 1366.

allowed him to govern Redesdale. Redesdale Keepership escheated to the Warden again when Heron was captured at Haddon Rigg in 1542, and for the next eight years it remained in the possession of the chief office of the Middle March, as Sir Ralph Eure, Sir Robert Bowes, and the Earl of Rutland successively held both dales with their Wardenship. In 1552, the dual Keepership of the dales fell back into the hands of the Herons, as their connections to the highlanders proved yet again to work in their favour.[179] Later in the decade, the crown divorced Redesdale from Tynedale, first with Robert Collingwood,[180] and then with John Hall of Otterburn, who as a Redesdale heidsman led a sizeable band of light cavalry, but only in a policing capacity.[181]

Association with the English highland surnames was another desirable quality as it provided the government with a large pool of light cavalry that was adept at the guerrilla warfare needed for the defence of the frontier. The Herons were actively involved with the notorious bands of the Charltons of North Tynedale. In 1537, Edward Charlton of the Hesleyside Band was implicated in the murder of his governor, Roger "Hodge" à Fenwick, the Keeper of Tynedale, and it is likely that John Heron of the Hallbarnes, Little John's illegitimate son, was also involved.[182] Charlton was still free in December 1538, when he helped orchestrate the escape of an outlawed priest from Hexham jail. Before the break, he sent a letter to the Herons, warning them to keep in their cattle, 'for the thieves and the outlaws would come in.' The next day, the jail was breached, and their fellow outlaws liberated all

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[178] Heron requested to have the Redesdale Keepership in 1540, just after he had become Keeper of Tynedale. His reasoning that he used men from one dale to police the next sat well with the crown, as it dovetailed with their plan to have one governor for all of the English dales. See *LP*, XV, no. 487.
[179] Nicholson, *Leges*, pp. 256-57. Although no patent exists, the *Leges Marchiarum* lists Heron as the Keeper of both dales.
[180] Dietrich, 'Liberties and Lawlessness,' p. 150.
[181] *CScotP*, VIII, no. 653.
[182] *LP*, XII(2) no. 772

prisoners inside.[183] This friendly warning from the Charltons alone suggests the

Herons' collusion with the surnames of Tynedale. The illegitimate activities of the

Charltons were thus at least partially screened from the king's justices since the man

who was supposed to dispense justice was directly involved with the men whom he

ought to have persecuted. It probably helped the Charltons that Edward of

Hesleyside had married into the Heron family. Yet without the Charltons, the

Herons would have had a much harder time, not only in defending their main

holdings which sat at the bottom of the North Tyne valley, but in the effective

execution of their office, which required the power of the local warlords. Thus in

1540 Heron was fished from his cell in the Tower and given a garrison of 170 men

altogether, for the express purpose of policing the dales, and later, using the

surnames to harass the Scottish dales.[184]

The Herons wasted no time in re-establishing their power and turned on the

Robson gangs with whom they had once shared a working relationship.[185] This put

Little John back into favour with the crown. As for the surnames, Heron sought a

pardon for Henry and John Robson of Falstone, as well as all of the abductors of

Carnaby in October 1540, all of this with sponsorship from the Duke of Norfolk,

putting himself in better graces with the heidsmen whom he had just hounded.[186]

The bands of North Tynedale provided powerful military leverage against the

Herons' rivals, and they filled out the musters when they were loyal, which

encouraged both the crown and the Keeper to treat them with clemency. When

George Heron became Keeper under Elizabeth, he imitated the behaviour of his

deceased father, Little John, as he was at least complicit in harbouring Kerr of

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[183] *LP*, XIII(2) nos. 1101, 1103, 1146, 1156, and 1159.
[184] *LP*, XV no. 319.
[185] BL, Arundel MSS 97 f. 85.
[186] *LP*, XVI nos. 785 and 832.

Fernihurst, who was on the lam from Scottish Wardens.[187] Even Sadler, who had

once commended Heron, was sure that he had received bribes from the thieves of his

patrimony.[188] Yet, like his father, George Heron obviously could not function

effectively as Keeper by persecuting the surnames of Tynedale; rather, he would

draw them closer to royal service through patronage and support.

Keepers who were not as lenient were generally not as successful. Hodge à

Fenwick lacked any sort of familial connection to the clans, and as such, he tended

to take a dim view of their activities. Sir Reynold Carnaby, too, lacked this

connection and although well-landed with the Hexham stewardship, he wanted for

power to enforce his many demands. There were few successes for men who had no

connection to the area. Despite his shortcomings, Francis Slingsby was able to

gather pledges from the Tynedale thieves in 1558, and to remand Gerry Charleton of

the Haw Hill into ward at Newcastle, who was then released upon bond.[189] His

tenuous connection to the clans through the Percy lordship of the manor of Charlton

in North Tynedale most likely worked in his favour this time, although the surnames

in general ignored this ineffectual Keeper as, in the opinion of Sir John Forster, he

had nothing to offer the surnames except his reproach.[190] That a successful Keeper

required the cooperation of the surnames highlights the fact that the Tudor war effort

was still largely dependent upon the goodwill of the Northumbrians for the defence

of the frontier. Moreover, in order to govern the surnames successfully, the Keeper

required inducement in the form of money or employment, for which only the king's

wars provided an opportunity.

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[187] *C Scot P*, V no. 238.
[188] *Sadler Papers*, I, p. 64.
[189] *CSPF*, II (1559-60) nos. 303 and 347.
[190] *Sadler Papers*, I, pp. 611-16 and 636-37.

The Tudor government initially sought to consolidate both Keeperships as well as numerous supporting lands in order to finance the raising of irregular bands amongst the dalesmen. Although Northumbrians in general owed Border service, it was widely recognised that withholding wages for extended service would net few men for the Keeper's bands.[191] Since the Keeper's wages fluctuated wildly between 40 and 100 marks,[192] subvention from the farm of lands was needed in order to attract more men to the Keeper's posse. Sir Reynold Carnaby used his stewardship of Hexham to finance his stint as Keeper, and he had recourse to the Barony of Langley, into which he installed his own family members.[193] Heron personally requested to have not only Langley but Hexham as well, even though Sir Reynold was still alive.[194] It is unclear how the king persuaded Carnaby to give up the farm of Hexhamshire, but it was in Heron's possession within a few months of his request.[195] Heron's alleged misdeeds as Keeper prompted Henry to split the lands again in order to reduce the power of the Keeper, but he reinstated the lands to the office in 1545 when Bowes became Keeper and Warden.[196] By the end of Henry's reign, the office controlled the zones that abutted the foot of both dales. This remuneration continued into the reign of Edward VI, although with the end of the rough wooing and the collapse of the garrison effort in Scotland, the Keepers began to diminish in their military importance. Most lands that supported the Keeper's military abilities began to disappear in 1552, when Sir Thomas Percy was granted the manor of Langley.[197] All trace of the lands that formerly supported the Keeper's

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[191] PRO, SP 1/124 ff. 67-72.
[192] PRO, SP 1/122 ff. 212-13; BL, Calig. B VIII f. 63.
[193] J.M.W. Bean, *The Estates of the Percy Family 1416-1537*, (London 1958); BL, Calig. B III f. 231.
[194] *LP*, XV no. 487
[195] *LP*, XV no. 984.
[196] BL, Add. MSS 32651 f. 269; PRO SP 1/199 f. 161.
[197] *CPR, Edward VI*, IV, pp. 195-96.; M.E. James, (ed.) 'The Estate Accounts of the Earls of Northumberland, 1562-1637', *Surtees Society*, 163 (1948), pp. 12-13.

retinue of heidsmen disappeared by 1559, when George Heron reluctantly took up the post again after the dismissal of the Slingsbys. Heron complained that there was no money left in the office.[198] This was a direct effect of the Tudors no longer retaining heidsmen and their bands for the wars, although Borderers still managed to join the garrisons, albeit under the command of appointed captains.

Much like that of the Wardens, the Keeper's military function was largely dependent upon the state of international relations. In the early years of the 'rough wooing', the government was desperately trying to provoke Scotland into an act of aggression; the Keepers in part complemented the unconventional warfare that essentially targeted all Scottish Border society. Consequently, in January 1540 Heron was free to act upon his office with virtual impunity, setting a course of violent action that ultimately resulted in an all-out war between England and Scotland. Heron's Tynedalers and Redesdalers were actively raiding by 1541, a deed that King James had considered an act of war.[199]

The military power available to the Keeper was considerable, despite the political and social factors that greatly affected the numbers of available men. The cavalry mustered in both dales numbered almost 400 for Tynedale and 200 for Redesdale in 1539.[200] The next year witnessed a fall in numbers, with only 180 for Tynedale and 140 for Redesdale.[201] This reduction was most likely a result of the kidnapping of Carnaby, which was perpetrated by the men who had acted as captains for Tynedale and Redesdale,[202] and the resulting raid into Falstone by Little John in a bid to capture John Robson. However, as soon as pardons were sent to the

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[198] *CSPF*, II (1558-59) no. 349.
[199] PRO, SP 49/5/29.
[200] PRO E 36/40 f. 29.
[201] BL, Calig. B VII f. 440.
[202] John Robson and Gerry 'Topping' Charlton of Wark were listed in the muster of 1539 as the heads of their surnames. A consequence of their outlawry was that their graynes were less likely to respond to the Keeper for service, if they had not already followed them in exile to Liddesdale.

principal offenders in October 1540,[203] the pool of available Borderers increased for the next four years. In 1542, George Heron employed 200 Tynedalers to pound Teviotdale in the aftermath of Haddon Rigg.[204] By 1545, Bowes as Warden and Keeper was able to muster 1500 men from the Middle March, the majority of them from the surname bands.[205]

After 1550, the dalesmen were exhausted, as the number of able men in Tynedale numbered less than 400, with less than 200 suitably horsed men.[206] This dovetailed with the Keeper's reduced military role in the Marches, as temporary peace with Scotland saw dwindling musters. Keepers' musters become sporadic after the peace with Scotland, and even during the wars of 1557-60. The heidsman's band no longer held any military value, which in turn cut the military significance of the Keeper. George Heron's appointment as Keeper of Tynedale gives a glimpse of how the office had begun to change its role. Since the 1540's when the heidsmen and their clans were inducted into the English armies, either through direct involvement as garrison troops or as irregulars, there seemed to be a new desire to look after this segment of former outlaws turned semi-respectable servants. By Elizabeth's reign, the Keeper showed signs of restraint, and a general hesitation to perform any military action against the surnames. In December 1559, a group of Scottish thieves, with the help of some elements of Tynedale and Redesdale, raided Cumberland but were forced to bivouac in Redesdale, when another band of Tynedale reivers, returning from similar activities in Scotland, happened upon the sleeping Scots and helped themselves to their cattle. Borrowing a hound from their

[203] *LP*, XVI no. 172.
[204] BL Add. MSS 32648 f. 179.
[205] *LP*, XX(2) no. 400.
[206] BL, Calig. VII B f. 106. Service over the previous ten years most likely took its toll on the dalesmen, especially after the disasters that befell the garrisons. Many returned home without horse and armour, while others simply grew weary of constant conflict. See Phillips, pp. 200-260, for an account of the dismal conditions endured by the garrisons.

allies in Redesdale, the Scots went on the trod to retrieve their lost booty.[207] Heron

pleaded to the Warden to see the malefactors punished, since collaboration with

Scotsmen was a matter for the Warden courts. This incident points to the

government's efforts to keep Tynedale and Redesdale loyal and to avoid the feud by

use of courts, whereas twenty years earlier there would have ensued a punitive raid

followed by executions and the exactions of pledges from all heidsmen, whether

guilty or innocent. Heron's actions regarding the retrieval of the Tynedalers' cattle

from the Uttenshop raid were not about embroilment with feuding clans; instead, his

concern was for protecting the men who had made good on their pledges to serve the

crown faithfully. On the other hand, outlaws, including English Tynedalers who had

committed unlawful robberies in Scotland, were sometimes handed over to the

Scottish Wardens via Heron's network, as was John Robson of Stonehouse, as days

of redress began to replace punitive raids into Scotland.[208]

The shifting of Tudor military enterprises only partially explains why the

Keepers evolved into a lesser military role. In general, the crown was less willing in

the 1550's to employ the chevauchée tactics that had marked the rough wooing, but

more importantly there was increasing wariness over the use of covert raids and

subterfuge, which defined the incursions at Thorlieshope and Haddon Rigg.

Initially, the role of the Keepers during the outbreak of war was devious. The

Keepers, but especially the Herons, were able to embark on raids without any real

consent from the Wardens, as Heron wielded more power than any other Keeper did

in the previous decade. Little John virtually assumed the power that traditionally

went to the Warden of the Middle March.[209] Aside from orchestrating the release of

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[207] *CSPF*, II (1559-60) no. 1426.

[208] *CScot P*, v, no. 226.

[209] Sir Cuthbert Ratcliffe was appointed the Warden of the Middle March in October 1540, although his commission gave him no specific authority in Tynedale or Redesdale, which undermined his ability to muster men there. See *LP*, XVI, *passim*.

Heron of the Hallbarnes, a matter in which Ratcliffe had little input, [210] the Keeper

also personally arranged pardons for any dalesmen who would serve him.[211] In late

summer and fall of 1541, Heron raided into Scotland with a free hand, causing over

£1000 in damage.[212]

However, Henry VIII is probably the guilty culprit here as his policy of using

a thief to police other thieves courted danger. Heron had already proved how volatile

he could be. Little John was never one to like his neighbours, the Carnabys and the

Widdringtons. Heron plotted to use not only Tynedale and Redesdale, but the Scots

of Liddesdale as well, in order to send his rivals scurrying for other parts, as he had

during the Pilgrimage. When he came back north in 1540, he was armed with a

patent that allowed him the power to tryst with the surnames, and although it was a

military necessity to employ him at the time, Heron demonstrated his eagerness to

cater to both the king and the outlaws of the dales. His military exploits were well-

received, but all disorders that occurred after his return suggest his duplicity, even if

the evidence is circumstantial. The Keeper most likely had prior knowledge of a raid

on the Widdrington home of Haughton by elements of Liddesdale,[213] and another

raid at the Carnaby house of Halton.[214] A grievous assault on Sir William Carnaby

by Tynedalers under the recently pardoned John Heron of Hallbarnes also blemished

Heron's record as most of the aggressors were members of his posse.[215] Evidence in

the form of Gerry 'Topping' Charlton of Wark served to damn Heron even more: the

Halton affair had been arranged by Heron to create war between the two kingdoms

so that he might have the chance to plunder Teviotdale.[216] Heron tried at every

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[210] *LP*, XVI no. 1179.
[211] PRO, SP 1/152 ff. 215-17; SP 1/153 f. 86.
[212] BL, Add. MSS. 32646 f. 237.
[213] *LP*, XVI no. 843.
[214] *LP*, XVI no. 1404.
[215] *LP*, XVI no. 982.
[216] *StP.*, V, no. 390.

chance to escape launching raids into Liddesdale, as Sir Robert Bowes had commanded him to do in retaliation for the Halton raid.[217]

In the end, Heron was forced to acquiesce. In addition, Sir Robert compelled Heron to reconcile with Carnaby in a public display of comradeship. That he only reluctantly complied with Bowes' demands demonstrates that he was unwilling to submit to the authority of other March officials. He had already managed to evade William Eure's plan of assassinating the prominent leaders of Liddesdale with the help of the Charltons, for fear of sparking the deadly feud with the men whom he had secretly entreated.[218] When the lid was off Heron's plans, he was already a prisoner of the Scots, being captured in the bungled Haddon Raid in 1542, which his tormentor, Sir Robert Bowes, had personally led. Though it would have been easy to condemn him for his questionable connections in Liddesdale, Heron could not have performed adequately had he not practised with the Scottish Borderers; even Sir Thomas Wharton was encouraged by the king to plot with the irascible Armstrongs of the Scottish West March.[219] The king needed March officers who had such connections, as cross-border intelligence would have been nearly non-existent without them.[220] Moreover, if Heron was trying to create a war, it only complemented Henry's own policy, so it seems unlikely that his arrest in 1542 was a direct result of his military activities; instead, his complicity in the Halton affair, which is barely discernible, was the prime cause of his incarceration. Even if his intentions complemented those of the king, the means by which he tried to achieve them were intolerable.

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[217] *LP*, XVI no. 1264

[218] *LP*, XVI no. 1264.

[219] *LP*, XVIII(2) no. 137.

[220] The spy networks developed by the Wardens required the employment of Scots Borderers. The *Letters and Papers* catalogue a vast network of spies, but Wharton and Lord Eure seem to have had the best results. Also see Merriman, "Assured Scots", *passim*, for a decent account of how cross-border ties served the English March officials.

Heron's son, George, was no better when he took up his father's post, with

Rutland complaining in September 1542 that Northumberland was in complete

disorder from spoil and robbery.[221] Later that year, Lord Lisle decried the men of

Tynedale and Redesdale, accusing their gentlemen keepers of practising with

them.[222] It was convenient, though, that George Heron was as skilled as his father

was in leading the Tynedalers and Redesdalers on raids, as he proved when he

sacked Jedworth that October 1542.[223] Even the critical Lord Lisle had to grudgingly

admit in the end that the younger Heron was doing well in catching thieves.[224] This

was short lived, when George ran afoul with Lisle after a botched, unsanctioned

raid.[225] He was arrested by order of the Privy Council and committed to ward in

Newcastle for his crimes.[226] Thereafter, the Keepership went to the Wardens in order

to avoid such conflicts of interest.[227] Upon Little John's release by the Scots, Lisle

suggested that both John and George Heron should remain committed to ward for

their indiscretions.[228] It was only after the intervention of Sir Robert Bowes that the

two men gained their freedom, and even then it was under the watchful eye of their

unlikely benefactor. George Heron made an impressive comeback with Sir Robert

Bowes's patronage, and he eventually gained a knighthood under Mary and served

as Keeper under Sir Ralph Sadler. This allowed the Herons to maintain their

influence in the region, albeit to the frustration of the senior officers in the Marches.

In this respect, Heron had much in common with Sir Ralph Eure, who also began a

private war when he invaded Teviotdale in 1545 in order to carve new lands for

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[221] *LP*, XVII no. 808.

[222] *LP*, XVII no. 1194.

[223] *LP*, XVII nos. 1083 and 1086.

[224] *LP*, XVII no. 1180.

[225] *LP*, XVIII(1) no. 161.

[226] *LP*, XVIII(1)no. 432.

[227] BL, Add. MSS 32655 f. 203 After the fall of the Herons in 1543, Sir Ralph Eure acted as the temporary Keeper of Tynedale. Eure was the first to hold this honour simultaneously with the Wardenship of the Middle March, although Eure admitted to the efficacy of the Herons when he used Giles Heron as his assistant, after George had been sent down with Little John.

himself at the expense of the Douglas clan. Nevertheless, Eure and his successors who also held the Keeperships proved to be much sterner in their services rendered to the crown. The Keeper's role as a coordinator of clandestine operations proved too much even for Henry in the end.

The office of the Keeper changed greatly from its role in 1542 when by 1558 it had reverted to the role of what amounted to a local constable. The brief role that the Keeper played in the Anglo-Scots wars not only underscored the relative importance to the military role that the English surnames were able to provide, it demonstrated that the Keeper could wield a considerable amount of power. When decay of border service began with the waning of the Scottish conflict, the Keepers lost much of their military importance through the simple loss of their furnished subjects.

Constableships and Captaincies

Constables and captains formed the basis of all Marcher leadership, much like junior officers of modern armies. The duties of each captain were simplified by ultimate power of the Wardens and Lieutenants, although in the chain of command—if we can even call it such—the constables rarely answered to the Keepers. As it was the lowest rung of command, captains were always exposed to combat during campaigns and raids. These were constant during the Anglo-Scottish wars, as the important castles of Norham, Wark, and Harbottle stood either near the frontier or near the dales. As such, the post was not a sinecure but chiefly involved active soldiering and serving the Wardens during expeditions. The relationship of any captaincy to the crown depended upon the particular captain's status, but many were pensioners who could directly appeal to the king for advice or aid. In turn, the

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[228] *LP*, XVIII(1), no. 161.

king communicated directly with them when a captain needed correction or when giving specific orders. For the most part, the daily business of the Marches required the captains to co-operate with either the Warden or Lieutenant, or the Council of the North. Many gave consistent service. Without their presence, the Wardens would have had little immediate military power to call upon, except through illicit dealings with the surnames.

With few exceptions, the captains of castles were all from gentry families. Such was the case for the captain of Wark. By the mid-16th century, the importance of Wark Castle was great enough for the king to have it in his own inheritance.[229] Keeper of the Castle in 1537 was Robert Collingwood,[230] but Collingwood resigned in December 1538, and John Carr of Hetton took over his position. Carr resided there as captain until 1551, despite a few temporary dispossessions, becoming known thereafter as "Carr of Wark." He was reputed as a "true sharp borderer,"[231] and his career seems to justify this description. Wark remained one of the most active garrisons in the Marches, undoubtedly a result of Carr's even-handed captaincy. As a result, Wark was one of the more stable neighbourhoods in the Marches throughout Carr's tenure, despite its position overlooking the Tweed. After John's death, his son, Thomas Carr, husband to the Heron heiress of Ford Castle, received the captaincy in 1551, but was forced to resign in 1554 when the rightful owner, Ralph Gray, came of age.[232]

Norham castle, which guarded the Tweed just a few miles from the mouth of the Till valley, was also dominated by gentry. Sir Brian Layton, who was to share Sir Ralph Eure's fate at Ancrum Moor, is first mentioned as Captain of Norham in 1542, as he was the first to report the defeat at Haddon Rigg to the Earl of

[229] PRO, SP 1/168, ff. 19-54; NRO MSS 1147/f. 9 (Book of Tenures, c. 1540).
[230] LP, IV(3) no. 2830.
[231] BL Calig. B VI f. 503.

Rutland.[233] Sir George Bowes, Layton's subordinate at Norham, took over the captaincy after Ancrum Moor, and the office stayed in the Bowes family for some time.[234] In 1553, Richard Bowes appeared in the watch and ward system as captain of Norham.[235] By 1557, the office had fallen into the hands of Richard Norton, who had command of the castle through the first years of Elizabeth.[236] Most captains thus came from leading Marcher families, or from families that had traditionally served in the Borders during the wars. All captains were members of the military community, and all had rendered services during the wars, as the gentry were expected to do.

Captaincies usually controlled the area surrounding the castle. Wark, for instance, was able to call upon the entire Barony of Wark, which in 1537 supplied Robert Collingwood with an additional 42 light cavalry.[237] Most of their authority centred on the garrison. The military authority of the Captains usually had the command of at least a full company. The garrison numbers of Wark in 1545 consisted of 25 horsemen and a small handful of artillerymen, which was a vast reduction of the 100 men who had served there previously, although many former garrison soldiers were most likely amongst the 200 pioneers who were still labouring there from the previous summer.[238] In 1547, Wark continued with a garrison of horsemen, which at times swelled to 200 active soldiers, although it was decreased to 100 by 1549.[239] Other castles also had fluctuating numbers. Norham castle garrison numbers tended to jump whenever there was escalating conflict. As

[232] APC, V, p. 201.
[233] LP, XVII no. 663. George Bowes signed the letter along with Layton.
[234] Talbot MSS, A f. 325-29.
[235] John Hodgson, A History of Northumberland in Three Parts, vol. I (Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 1820-1825), p. 359.
[236] Talbot MSS, D f. 56.
[237] PRO, E 36/173 ff. 114-115.
[238] LP, XX(1) pp.157 and 516. The 200 pioneers were to be used as soldiers in case of emergency, indicating their martial skills.
[239] CSPD, 1601-1603, p. 329.

a Franco-Scottish invasion loomed in October 1557, the Captain had a personal garrison of 100 light cavalry, with another 200 troopers sent in as reinforcements.[240]

Of all the March officers, captains were probably the only true professional soldiers. This is reflected not only in their power to lead Marchers into combat, but also in the structure of the bands that they led, and by their combat experience. Almost all captains had combat experience during their tenures, as they were expected to act as captains of bands under the Wardens. John Carr was a constant soldier, despite the setbacks he suffered; he was captured in the bungled raid near Haddon Rigg in 1542, and surprisingly released by his captors only a few days after the battle. In July 1543, Carr repulsed a raid, and in the ensuing trod his men netted 80 head, 20 nags and two dozen prisoners.[241] In 1544, he reported a successful raid to Eure.[242] Most likely, he was part of the vanguard that crashed on the Scottish spears at Ancrum, although he was spared the fate of his fellow captains. Carr soon returned, but later that year left for London so that he could recuperate his many wounds. Sir Robert Bowes commend him for 'so mauny a grete adventures in the kings honour.'[243] By 1546, Carr's record was impressive: he was twice wounded, being left for dead once on Ancrum Moor, and once captured. Certainly, he led his men from the front, much as Sir Ralph Eure did. Carr's military escapades seem to have halted with the establishment of English garrisons in Scotland, and the subsequent shifting of the front away from the Marches of England.

Sir Brian Layton was just as active in his captaincy. In January 1543, he raised 2,000 men with Ralph Eure for the defence of the Marches.[244] High summer

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[240] Talbot MSS D ff. 228-29.
[241] LP XVIII(1) no. 493.
[242] LP, XIX(1) nos. 736 and 741.
[243] LP, XXI(1) no. 804.
[244] LP, XVIII(1) no 19.

of that year saw Layton burn Kelso with 600 men from the East March.[245] As a reward for his services at Norham, and for his active leadership, Layton received his knighthood in May 1544.[246] Like Carr, he was present at Ancrum Moor, but being the friend of Sir Ralph Eure it is likely that he fought alongside the Warden until he fell.[247] Unlike Wardens, some captains accompanied Hertford on the Pinkie campaign, which suggests that the Protector valued their combat leadership. Sir John Horsley, the Captain of Bamburgh, earned his spurs after campaign, as did Sir John Forster.[248]

As the wars waned in the early 1550's, captains took a less active role in the county military leadership, so that all captains, except those from Norham and Berwick, were absent from a list of signatories in 1552.[249] When Franco-Scottish forces grouped their efforts towards Glendale and the neighbourhoods surrounding Berwick and Norham in 1557-59, the importance of the castles in the Middle Marches began to wane. Norham and Wark became of paramount importance, to the exclusion of other castles, so that the captains there were on constant alert.[250] Captaincies required a certain amount of risk; most captains saw more action than the Wardens did, since they often repelled raids that spilled into their neighbourhoods. In doing so, they remained more active in a military sense than any other March officer.

At times, the crown directly involved itself in the affairs of a castle and its captain. In 1542, after John Carr's return to Wark after having been a prisoner in Scotland, the king thought it best to deprive him of office since he was a prisoner on

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[245] *LP*, XVIII(2) no. 298.
[246] *LP*, XIX(1) no 531.
[247] *LP*, XX(1) nos. 281, 285 & 312.
[248] Patten, 'Expedition' p. 150.
[249] Nicholson, *Leges*, p. 212.
[250] Talbot MSS D ff. 83, 89, 98-99, 107, 211 & 228.

parole. Although he was allowed to keep the surviving 50 men of his retinue, the king instructed Rutland to move Carr to another location of his discretion.[251] In his place, the King sent northwards one Robert Raymond from London, a man with few connections in the Marches, a move carried by the fear that Carr was in collusion with the Scots.[252] Henry and the Council were also angered by the fact that several carts and their loads, quarried stones intended for the repair of the castle, were seized by a group of Scottish raiders, while Carr looked on and refused any succour.[253] Carr appears to have stayed at Wark in some capacity probably because Rutland recognised the value of having a veteran borderer within the castle; the frequent turnover of the King's Lieutenants hindered also any administrative efforts, working therefore in Carr's favour. By September 1543, Carr seems to have temporarily lost the captaincy to a Clifford, but was in command once again by April 1544.[254] By 1549 the Council reformed their opinions of Carr, personally thanking him for his services.[255] Although Carr was displaced as Captain once again in 1545, probably as a result of wounds suffered at Ancrum Moor, he still acted as Constable of the garrison horse.[256] His replacement, George Lawson, was only present for less than a year, being accused of incompetence when his retinue slaughtered over two dozen Scottish prisoners who were on their way home, under the safe passage of their parole. Henry was not pleased with this breach of convention, and ordered several men to be hung in chains so that the Scots would see their malefactors punished.[257]

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[251] *Hamilton Papers*, I, pp. 166-65.
[252] *Hamilton Papers*, I, p. 222.
[253] *Hamilton Papers*, I, p. 222.
[254] *LP*, XIX (2) nos. 736 & 741.
[255] *Hamilton Papers*, II, no. 466.
[256] *LP*, XXI(1) no. 401.
[257] *LP*, XXI(1) pp. 360, 684 and no. 719.

Mary was also took an active role in guiding her Northumbrian captains. Richard Norton, the captain of Norham, claimed that his captaincy there had impoverished him and thus sold his estates in Norham to the Percys for £300, reasoning that they could provide better financing of the castle than any other person. The bishop of Durham was highly dubious of Norton's authority to take such steps, but the captain threw himself at the queen's mercy regardless. The reply was icy, reminding Norton of his office, which he had made a 'matter of Merchandise, not regarding its surety.'[258] Regardless of ulterior motives, Norton was firmly commanded to stay and captain the castle. Sir John Foster, captain of Bamborough during the reign of Mary, received a rebuke for refusing to reside at his office, and for the general dilapidation of the castle itself. Regardless of the castle's defensive properties, the crown still urged Foster to reside in his office in order to keep a royal presence in the area.[259]

Despite the watchful eye of the crown and Privy Council, captains and constables were prone to take a central role in the feuding that characterised much of March society as the Border gentry struggled to assert itself. Most feuds did not surface until the mid-Tudor period, so at least the government of Henry VIII did not have to interpose amongst feuding families in order to ensure that the garrisons remained effective. The only real exception was the murder of William Reveley by William Selby, who was brother to John Selby, one of the king's Northumbrian pensioners.[260] Selby was the dominant tenant at Ford village in the 1530's, and the leader of the garrison stationed there.[261] His military importance as the captain of horse in Ford, his connection to the king via his brother, and the relative

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[258] *Addenda*, VIII, nos. 71 and 75.
[259] *Addenda*, VIII, no. 83.
[260] *LP*, XIX(2) no. 527(11).
[261] PRO E 36/173 f. 116.

unimportance of the Reveleys most likely prompted the Privy Council to pardon him in 1544. Feuds tended to emerge during lulls in the ongoing wars, as there was little to distract the gentry from their squabbles, but often they continued even after the wars escalated. The Ford dispute between the Herons and the Carrs, which began in 1551, involved most of the garrison of Berwick, so that the sheriff of Northumberland complained that 'wee have, god knoweth, lytle need of any cyvill or damestyque division or defection amongst ourselves,' as the garrison officers were pulled into the conflict.[262] Not all feuds involved bloodshed. In December 1557, Percy removed Roland Forster from the Captaincy of Wark castle; it came to light that many of the garrisons would not work with Forster, who had also made an unauthorised raid into Scotland earlier that summer, himself being captured thus undermining the authority of his office.[263] In reality, Percy was furthering his feud with the Forsters, replacing them with his brother-in-law, Francis Slingsby.[264] As captain of Norham, Richard Norton was involved in a fray against the Cliffords, although the scope of violence appears to have been quite limited. The reason for quarrel is unclear, but it most likely originated from a property dispute.[265] In July 1559, Elizabeth directly ordered Norton to refrain from violent behaviour against the Earl of Cumberland.[266] Although the instances where captains actually used their men to perpetuate a bloodfeud were relatively rare, the fact that they came from Northumbrian families who tended to feud often drew them into conflict with their rivals.

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[262] Talbot MSS D. f. 8; M. Meikle, 'Lairds and Gentlemen: A Study of the Landed Families of the Anglo-Scottish Borders, 1540-1603,' (Edinburgh University Ph.D., 1986), p. 382.
[263] *Addenda*, VIII, no. 52.
[264] PRO, SP 15/8/52-55.
[265] Talbot MSS P f. 95. For a description of the feud between the Cliffords and Nortons, see R.W. Hoyle, 'The Earl of Cumberland: A Reputation Reassessed,' Northern *History* 22 (1986).
[266] Talbot MSS E ff 45-6.

Although the captaincies and constableships of the garrisons in the East and Middle Marches presented different problems, it is possible to see some similarities. The garrisons were strategically important for the defence of the Marches. Almost all were subjected to the violence that was characteristic of the Marches. Yet Wark, which sat on the Anglo-Scottish borderline, enjoyed a relatively established captain. John Carr represents one of the few men who actually weathered the devastation of the Anglo-Scottish Wars, providing Wark with a stable captain; but the price he paid for doing so was high. Most Marchers would rather quit. It is clear that the captaincies and constableships suffered from the strife of the internal squabbling that characterised border society, which could effectively remove a garrison from royal service in order to pursue a deadly feud. Berwick suffered this fate when its Captain became involved in the Ford dispute.[267] The authority to command the soldiers in the garrison, coupled with the isolation from London, meant that the Captains would sometimes take certain liberties with their authority. Norham's captain, without regard to the royal commission that had established his captaincy, treated his commission as mere chattel. The problems that affected the captaincies were much more varied than those of the Wardens or Keepers were. Accordingly the solution to the problems required micromanagement, which the Privy Council could not afford to give. Still, the attention that each case received amply demonstrates the importance of the lowliest captain in the Marches, and the dire consequences that could result from even the slightest breach of etiquette.

The leadership of the Northumbrian military community was haphazard. There was little in the way of regulation when it came to military leadership. Personal lordship, as well as affinity and familial connections, affected the execution

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[267] This is covered in Chapter 7.

of a commission, which itself was usually left vague, especially for the higher echelons. The gentry who served as Wardens and Keepers wielded military authority as defined by their patents, although many had their authority augmented by a direct relationship with the king. As there was no means of bringing up a Warden on charges of insubordination, many of the Wardens operated with little consultation with their alleged superiors. That a Warden could fob off successful generals such as Suffolk, demonstrates the difficulty the higher echelon had in enforcing their own authority. Given the broad definition of acceptable military action under March Law, and the fact that Wardens shared a direct relationship with the king, it is not surprising that there was difficulty in establishing a system of effective command. This left the Marcher leaders to their own devices much of the time, but this problem disappeared when the March officers reverted to peacetime Border guards. Occasionally, the Marcher soldiers saw the regimented, continental-style authority that was still in its infancy, although this experience, in general, was only when they accompanied the troops of the Lieutenants-General in the Scottish campaigns. At Boulogne, there were many compliments made by Charles V regarding the strict ordering of the Northern Horsemen. At home, though, it seems that the Marcher leaders were content to leave such practices for the 'whitecoat' garrisons of Scotland and France. Procedure would have to remain both spontaneous and flexible in order to accommodate the complexities of Marcher military authority. Increasingly the Marcher officers began to perform more police functions, especially after the wars began to quieten. As a result, their military significance was reduced since they no longer played crucial roles in the Scottish policies of the crown.

Leadership also took a toll on the Northumbrian gentry. Many were either captured, wounded or killed in the line of duty. Other families, such as the

Carnabys, simply disappeared from active roles in the military community due to the incompetence of a particular family member. Survivors such as the Herons and the Eures went on to serve as Elizabethan officers, but for the most part the wars had failed to instil a sense of overall unity amongst the gentry. With its feuds and militarism, Northumbrian society proved to be a tough nut for the Tudor state, as we shall see in the next chapter.

Chapter 7: Identity, Militarism, and the Military Community of the

Northumbrian Borders

As noted in the previous chapters, the frontier that separated England from

Scotland was in a continual state of turmoil during the period just after the risings of

1536-37, and during Anglo-Scottish wars of 1542-60. When both kingdoms were

not engaged in open warfare with one another, guerrilla warfare and intriguing plots

of kidnap, murder and extortion rippled throughout the borders. Violence was

constant, and grew to epidemic proportions once the English government employed

harsher tactics. The result was that the borders of England and Scotland embraced

even closer their particular lifestyle, one that is best described as militarism. This

warring nature was closely bound up with familial identity, which was strong

amongst the clannish families, often overriding loyalties to the crown. Border

soldiers often confined their absolute loyalties to their own surnames, and

emphasised conquest and booty upon the battlefield, despite the strategies of the

government. Strong local loyalties fostered a particular resentment of southern

English officers. Yet when led by their heidsmen, Border soldiers performed well,

as witnessed through the successful charge of the light horse of Lord Dacre and John

Heron at Flodden in 1513. There is a strong indication that xenophobia reached

extreme portions amongst border soldiers, whilst familiarity and local identity could

spur them to perform very well on the battlefield.

Frontier militarism was not confined to the British Marches. Free peasants

known as grenzers settled in the Austro-Croatian borders to become the first line of

defence against the Turks, while Cossacks in the south-east Polish borders became

one of the most militarised societies that Europe had seen. [1] David Potter has noted

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[1] M.S. Anderson, *War and Society in Europe of the Old Regime, 1618-1789* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1988) p. 18.

that Picards developed a military identity that developed from provincial consciousness as well as royal inducements and impositions.[2] A similar identity reached deeply into Northumberland society. The surnames that comprised the most notorious reiver bands are certainly more extreme examples. Evidence indicates that the pensioners and even the local officers, too, exhibited this tendency to identify closely with their families, at the cost of the Tudor military apparatus. The result was that the military community of Northumberland was highly fractured, although there were distinct elements that were inherently tied to the Anglo-Scottish wars and the perception of a common enemy.

The effects of war on identity are difficult to detect in the early modern world, more so in political backwaters like the Anglo-Scottish Marches. At the same time, warfare has always given shape to identity, as Tim Thornton has suggested.[3] However, the nature of these identities remains obscured save for the scattered bits of evidence. The result is that recent scholarship has wrestled with this intangible concept. The main debate centres on the tensions between local and individual identities on the one hand, and growing nationalism on the other. John Lynn convincingly argues that the hierarchical military community that characterises modern armies was extant by the end of the seventeenth century, and with it grew the idea that the soldier belonged to the regiment and the state.[4] Western armies lost dependence upon personal connections of the nobility, and became an extension of the modern nation-state. This process was drawn out over centuries, and began as early as the late Middle Ages. The personal nature of medieval combat as set out by

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[2] David Potter, *War and Government in the French Provinces: Picardy, 1470-1560* (Cambridge: CUP, 1993) pp. 18-19.

[3] Tim Thornton, 'The Enemy or Stranger, That Shall Invade Their Countrey,' In *War: Identities in Conflict, 1300-2000.* Bertrand Thaite and Tim Thornton (eds.), (Stroud: Sutton Publishing, 1998), p. 60.

[4] John Lynn, "The Western Army in Seventeenth-Century France," M. Knox and W. Murray, (eds.) *The Dynamics of Military Revolution, 1300-2050,* (Cambridge: CUP, 2001), pp. 50-51.

Michael Howard has been thoroughly questioned by medievalists, suggesting that the personal ties of kith and kin, which had played an important role in medieval armies, began to unravel by the fourteenth century.[5] In tracking this evolution, it stands to reason that the Tudor armies were even closer to resembling modern armies than earlier English armies. Even so, seigniorial connections remained an important aspect of Western armies in the sixteenth century, especially in Britain.

Militarism on a national scale was plainly extant during the sixteenth century. J.R. Hale has noted the emergence of military science and the rise of the debate regarding the role of the military in regards to the state.[6] However, militarism and military identity certainly must have existed on a local level, especially in the Marches where warfare defined everyday lives. As Tim Thornton has stated, 'the County, the region, the sub-kingdom, the autonomous territory— all of these remained extremely significant foci for military identification.'[7] This chapter will quarry the tangible parts of this aspect of Marcher identity and try to reconstruct them in order to shed light upon its basic elements.

March Law as codified by Lord Wharton in 1552 and preserved in SP 15 collection, gives a glimpse of how militarism affected identity. This extraordinary code not only reinforced the military duties of each landholder, but also served to set border society apart from the rest of the country. D.L.W. Tough has capably described March Law, yet his account lacks analysis as to how this code treated militarism, or the military community of the Borders that it was supposed to

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[5] Michael Howard, *War in European History* (Oxford: OUP, 1976), p. 56; Clifford Rogers, 'The Military Revolutions of the Hundred Years War,' *The Journal of Military History*, 57 (1993), pp. 258-75.

[6] See J.R. Hale, *War and Society in Renaissance Europe, 1450- 1620*, (London: Fontana, 1985) and *Renaissance War Studies* (London: Hambledon Press, 1983).

[7] Thornton, 'Enemy or Stranger,' p. 61.

govern.[8] The purpose of the code was essentially to prevent any co-operation between English and Scottish surnames, thus indicating the severity of the problem.

There is a tendency to hesitate in employing Border ballads as a means of understanding military identity; in part, this is due to the disjuncture between the discourses of violence on the one hand, and the realities of war on the other.[9] Border society was simply not sophisticated enough to produce literature, art and architecture that actively reflected political or social identity: soldiering and literacy rarely went together in the sixteenth-century Marchers. Instead of bookishness, militarism became the means through which the young men of Northumberland were educated and indoctrinated into the martial society of the borders, as the men of the borders could not escape warfare. Every pele tower and bastle house that dotted the dales echoed the necessity of arms, while every hearth theoretically supported at least one moss-trooper. As with any group of soldiers, military identity lay in common experience, but in the Borders, this was the primary basis through which the men of the military community connected to each other. Ironically, it could also be the means by which it fractured.

Marcher Gentry and Military Community

The fact that Marcher gentlemen were expected to serve as full-time soldiers separated the average gentleman Borderer from his southern countrymen. At the same time, the Marcher gentry were expected to lead their tenants as part of their Border service. This system of leadership formed a community comprised of

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[8] D.L.W. Tough, *The Last Years of a Frontier*, (Oxford: OUP, 1928), pp. 147-165; William Nicholson, *Leges Marchiarum or Border Laws* (London, 1747), pp. 212-20.

[9] In retelling the case of Will Armstrong of Kynmonth, Tough entirely ignores *The Ballad of Kinmont Willie* in favour of contemporary documents from the men involved in Kynmonth's arrest and subsequent rescue from Carlisle Castle. As a result, the author is able to deliver a discussion of the event without wandering on the thin ice of literary hyperbole. There is some historical value in the ballads, but a discussion of this must be reserved for a separate work.

gentleman soldiers. The most prominent idiosyncrasy of the Marcher military community was the development of a cadre of officers. Yet, the Marchers were divisive so that a chain of command was nearly impossible to establish, so that the regimental camaraderie which marked later armies was still absent. There was also the lack of a distinct anti-Scottish sentiment by which the Marchers defined themselves through opposition. Without a common cause to unite against, military identity ceases to function within a particular body and fractures into individualism, the bane of all armies, both ancient and modern. While it is most certain that some elements of self-interest, whether directed towards one's immediate family or one's own gain, was a dominant motive for some Marchers, it is clear from the evidence that there were common *casus belli* that united the gentlemen marchers into one cohesive element. Regardless of their political and familial loyalties, it is apparent that at times gentlemen borderers forged their own identity, one with its own set of customs and behaviour. However, this was remarkably fragile, and was shattered by feuding and ambition.

In an era when the crown predominantly raised troops via letters signet to its chief nobles and certain members of the aristocracy,[10] it is difficult to argue that Tudor Northumberland possessed an early modern military system of hierarchically arranged officers, especially when commissions overlapped the military authority of its chief Border offices.[11] While the Border gentry did not band together in regiments, there is evidence that the Marches fostered elements of a military community, consisting of both notable gentlemen and royal pensioners. A document created in the late 1530's plainly lists the mustering abilities and 'other qualities' of

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[10] John Goring, 'The Military Obligations of the English People, 1511-58,' (London University Ph.D., 1955), *passim*.
[11] See chapter 6.

the leading Northumbrian military leaders.[12] The administrative purpose of the document is evident in that it lists the numbers of men available to each household. It is most likely that these gentlemen were part of the pool of Northumbrian gentlemen who raised their tenants by letters signet.[13] The implication of a military community remains uncertain, but what is implied is that these gentlemen were purposely utilised against the Scots during the wars. Moreover, their personal qualities are identical. The upper echelons of Marcher leadership—the Wardens and their sergeants—were all described as 'true gentleman' or 'true plain men'. Sir William Eure, the Warden of the East March, 'is a true gentleman and a good justice', while Sir Richard Ellerkar 'is a true plain man'. Sir John Widdrington, the disastrous Deputy Warden of the Middle March, faired well in his assessment, being characterized as 'a good housekeeper and a true man,' although his fortified house would later suffer from the depredations of the Liddesdale men in 1541.[14] Sir Cuthbert Ratcliffe, who eventually superseded Widdrington as Warden, also kept a good house and was a 'true gentleman,' a description that is also given to Sir John Delavale. While these qualities cannot be claimed as 'Northumbrian' traits, that the gentlemen were identically described gives weight to a notion of a specific community of gentry-soldiers, who, like many other English gentlemen, were responsible for leading the county to war.

Several references are made to the lesser gentry's specific function as Border guards. John Selby and John Carr, both of whom served the king in the East

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[12] PRO E 36/173, ff. 114-115. This document was drawn up to measure the mustering capabilities of the Northumberland officers. It is likely that this muster was drawn up in 1537-38, when the crown was reeling from the bad behaviour of several of its chief border officers. Personal merit was at a premium in much of Northumberland during this period, so this missive was probably used to show the king that he still could depend upon at least some of his men in the Marches.

[13] *St.P.*, V, no. 377.

[14] *Hamilton Papers*, I, no. 69.

Marches,[15] are each listed as a 'sharpe borderer', the Ogles 'sharp' and 'forward',

while John Horsely was listed as a 'true wise borderer.' Such depictions localise the

military function of Northumbrian gentlemen, to act as Border guards against the

Scots. The contrast between the shire knights, who are described more as typical

gentlemen, and the rest of the gentry, many of whom are depicted as 'Borderers', is

also striking in that the reader is presented with the perception that the indigenous

border soldier was much more experienced in localised warfare, but much plainer.

The higher-ranking knights such as Eure and Ellerkar came from Durham and

Yorkshire and were not true Borderers, yet they share the same gentlemanly

qualities as Sir John Delavale and Sir Roger Gray, both of whom were native to

Northumberland and experienced military leaders. Nevertheless, as primary

gentlemen of the Marches, their inclusion with a higher class of gentry officers is

appropriate given their roles as primary military leaders. The lesser gentry, such as

the constables, marshals, sergeants and captains that commanded the individual

garrisons of Northumberland, were expected to behave differently than their

superiors. The Selbys, Carrs and Ogles came from families that served as constables

and deputies, the third tier of local leadership under the Wardens and Wardens-

General, and their qualities were most likely indicative of their having spent time in

the front lines.[16] Families such as these provided the king with his largest pool of

allies and paradoxically his greatest source of trouble when they feuded. Their

militarised lifestyle made them perfect soldiers in the frontier, a quality that became

a liability to the king whenever a truce existed in the Borders.

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[15] PRO SP 1/168 ff. 19-54. This is most likely John Carr of Wark, the infamous constable who made a name for himself in the borders. Selby, on the other hand, leased the tower at Grimdon Rigg from the Herons, which is listed in Bowes survey of 1541, and is most likely the father or grandfather of John Selby of Twizzel, who later became the Deputy Warden of the East March under Elizabeth.

[16] The one exception to the Ogle family was, of course, Lord Ogle, who was Eure's deputy at the time of Ancrum Moor. According to the muster, Ogle was able to put 100 men into the field, which is comparable to the retinues of Radcliffe, Eure and Widdrington.

For the lesser gentry of the Marches, cunning and bluntness counted more than refined qualities. For Wardens, this quality could be a liability. After Sir Ralph Eure's defeat at Ancrum Moor in 1544, Shrewsbury noted that 'because we knew the fowardenes and courage of the man, we specyally did admonisshe him wysely to forsee things, and that in no wise he shuld give up to rasshe adventure, ne hazarde further then wysedom wold requyre.'[17] Thus the Marcher gentry's brazenness was unfit for a Warden, according to the judgements of the 'civil society' of the lowlands. Instead, the position required the tempering of the Border soldier's hawkish appetites. Yet wisdom and council would be at a premium for the Duke of Norfolk in 1542, as he desperately tried to patch together an invasion of Scotland. 'Cownsaille ne knowledge [we] can geit non, nor yet demonstration of good will to do any good service of any man there, salve only Robert Colingwode, John Horseley and Gilbert Swynowe, and sometyme of John Car,' complained Norfolk to the Privy Council.[18] Perhaps Norfolk preferred the coarseness that came to characterise the more common Borderer, as opposed to the temperance preferred by Shrewsbury and Bishop Tunstall. Their experience as soldiers, which brought them into close contact with the common Borderer, certainly gave them a rougher edge than the polished demeanour of the higher ranks. This differentiation appeared yet again when the earl of Hertford held his first meeting with the officers of the East and Middle Marches. After the ceremony that saw the creation of Lord Wardens, there followed a discussion of the impending invasion of Scotland. At some point, an argument broke out regarding the keeping of the borders during the invasion, with the leading March lords on the one side, and Brian Layton, Robert Collingwood and John Horsley, the captains of Northumberland's largest garrisons, arguing against them.

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[17] *Hamilton Papers*, II, no. 414.
[18] *Hamilton Papers*, I, no. 168.

The three dissenters, 'men of wit and experience', coarsely argued their point regarding the surety of the castles they kept, and were only placated when Hertford heard their opinions at length.[19] For Hertford, it was a rough introduction to the plain, soldierly qualities of the lesser Northumbrian gentry. Both Norfolk and Hertford viewed gentry captains such as Collingwood and Horsley as belonging to a loosely confederated group of Northumbrian gentry who had shown at least some cohesion in terms of military organisation. Although lacking the regimental chain of command, the cadre of gentry officers exhibited a willingness to form loosely confederated war councils when warfare provided enough distraction from their individual squabbles.

The immediacy of the Scottish threat was indeed a powerful force in the creation of an identity, although there is a disjuncture between the identity of the Northumberland Borderer as a guardian of the Anglo-Scottish frontier, and the xenophobia towards the Scots that was felt in other parts of the country.[20] Such elements not only separated Marcher society from that of the southern English, they reinforced a notion of independence that had attached itself to the existence of the former liberties that once had governed most of the Borders. Yet the contradiction of national and local or familial identity was clearly extant as Borderers saw themselves as interposed between conflicting states. Cooperation between English and Scottish Borderers was often times a necessity, despite inherent political tensions. When the gentlemen pensioners and March officers pondered the notion of conflict, it was only with caution that they set their designs northwards across the borders.

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[19] *LP* XIX(1) no. 223.
[20] Thornton, 'Enemy or Stranger,'p. 61. Thornton has argued that the immediacy of the Scots, and the damage done by them in previous raids, crystallized the military identity of Cheshire and Lancashire.

The Northumberland gentry did not always treat the Scot as an enemy. J.R. Hale notes that frontiers were ill-defined in Europe; that there was no indication that there was a perception of a firm border.[21] The opportunities for Scots and English to mingle were plentiful in the Marches. In 1541, when ordered to expel all Scots from the East and Middle Marches, Sir William Eure wrote that 'we have perceyvde and founde a varey greate nombre of Scottes that were householders within the same countie, whereof the most parte were hirdmen, laborers or artificers,' the likes of whom were expelled from the country according to the royal decrees.[22] Eure pledged to find 'Englishemen borne' to occupy all of the vacated tenancies. Despite the legal protection that allowed men to keep Scottish labourers by license, Eure forced the gentlemen and the heidsmen of the county to refrain from retaining or keeping more Scots in their households. However, Eure found that two Scots, 'Troylirs Tailoure' and 'Gilberte Cokelands', had performed services to the king as armourer and local scout, respectively. It was suggested that 'it wolde please youre majestie to make those twoo Scottyshemen dennysyns'.[23] This was not the only time that Scots were offered citizenship, or befriended by the Northumberland gentry.

Many Scots who had assured with the English were given the chance to become English denizens, and many more became familiar with the English Borderers. Sandy à Pringle, of the notorious Pringles of the Teviot, became a spy for the English, and was offered citizenship in return for his good services to the English crown, 'in hope that he will now be an honest trew man to his majeste.'[24] His reception amongst the Marcher leaders was most warm, although he belonged to a grayne of the Pringles whose laird, Jok à Pringle, habitually raided the English

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[21] J. R. Hale, *Renaissance Europe: The Individual and Society, 1480-1520* (New York: Harper and Row, 1971), p. 56.

[22] *Hamilton Papers*, I, no. 101.

[23] *Hamilton Papers*, I, no. 101.

[24] *Hamilton Papers*, I, no. 462.

Borderers on the east side of the Cheviots. Pringle's influence with the king belied

his recent appointment, when he unsuccessfully sued for clemency for Jok, whom

Robert Collingwood had captured while the laird was reiving into

Northumberland.[25] Suffolk, ever mistrusting of the Borderers, wanted nothing more

than to execute Pringle and his accomplices, despite Parr's suggestion that to spare

them would draw the entire Pringle clan closer to the English cause.[26] Despite Jok's

arrest, Sir Thomas Wharton, with the blessing of Suffolk, managed to indent with a

group of the Pringles and settle them at Coldstream, where they tended cattle and

horses for the captain of Norham.[27]

In the end, the gentlemen of the East and Middle Marches were not as adept

at assuring Scots border clans as Wharton was in the West March. There were many

reasons for this, the least of which was the unpopularity of the Wardens of the

Scottish West March.[28] Wharton was also willing to embroil himself in the deadly

feuds of the Armstrongs, Elliots and Grahams, powerful clans who took every

advantage of the weakened Scottish crown.[29] At the same time, the Scottish clans of

the East and Middle Marches were not as powerful, and tended to ally themselves

with the Kerrs, who often were at loggerheads with the English. The delicate

political landscape of the Marches determined the alliances, and even when the

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[25] *Ibid.* Jok à Pringle was the erstwhile captor of Parson Ogle, who was seized after the rout at Haddon Rigg. Ogle also sued for Pringle's life, recalling the splendid treatment he received at the hands of his keeper. The suits were all in vain as the evidence against Pringle was more than enough to justify death under March Law. Although no record survives, Pringle was most likely executed according to Marcher custom. News of the capture is also listed in *LP*, XVIII(1) no. 959.

[26] *LP*, XVIII(1) no. 978.

[27] *LP*, XVIII(2), no. 518.

[28] PRO SP 1/178 f. 85; SP 1/178 f. 53; *St.P.*, V, no. 433.The Earl of Bothwell, the Scottish Warden in 1543, was unpopular with the Armstrongs, Elliots and Croziers, who sued Wharton and Ralph Eure for protection.

[29] Wharton was continual in his abilities to draw Scots into English service. In 1543, he was instrumental in inducing the Armstrongs to spoil the Scotts, while in 1544 he indented the Pringles, Taits, Youngs, and Rutherfords. His plans for assuring the Maxwells backfired in February 1548, when the Maxwells turned on him during an ambush at Drumlanrig. Although Wharton escaped, his sway in the Western Marches was permanently damaged. See Gervase Phillips, *The Anglo-Scots Wars, 1513-1550*, (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1999), pp. 160-61, 214-17.

threat of the Scottish invasion loomed, the border gentry hesitated to label all Scots as enemies. In 1543, when the king had proposed to invade the Scottish borders, the gentlemen of the Marches hesitiated to 'taik all Scotishmen to be as ennemyes to the Kinge His Highnes.'[30] For lack of corn, the English army would have had to plunder the Scottish Borders for its victual, thereby driving the Scottish allies into the hands of the enemy. Lest they should 'maik ennemyes of friends,' the Marchers unanimously opposed any such invasion until the English could be assured of minimal collateral damage to their Scottish brethren.[31] Often times, it was necessary to declare Scotsmen outlawed when warfare had escalated. In 1558, the earl of Westmoreland proclaimed that 'noo Inglisheman have any talke or conference with any Scotte...privie or openlie aftere this proclamacion under payne of deathe', indicating that the amount of intermingling that had occurred between both English and Scottish Borderers proved disturbing to the Lieutenant General.[32] This indicates that there was at least some familiarity with the Scots, or at least with the Scottish border clans whose lifestyle was virtually identical to that of the English dalesmen. Thus when searching for indications of military identity, it is best to avoid the cliché that all English borderers identified themselves as an unflinching, opposing force.

However, the gentry soldiers of Northumberland and Cumberland saw their primary purpose as defenders of the frontier against Scotland. When asked to serve in France during the 1540's, few border officers relished the chance to do so, despite the orders given to them by the king's council.[33] Sir Thomas Wharton and Sir Ralph Eure complained that when bands of Northern cavalry served overseas there were not enough men left to police the Borders, a clear indication that the Marchers

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[30] *StP.*, V, no. 466.
[31] *Ibid.*
[32] BL, Calig. B IV f. 259.
[33] The only border officers to travel to France were Sir Robert Bowes and Sir Rafe Ellerkar, whilst the native Northumberland and Cumberland gentry refused to go. See chapter six.

associated their military skill with the Borders exclusively.[34] Lists drawn up in 1541

recounted the Englishmen of Cumberland and Northumberland who were 'cruelly

sleyne and murdured' within the realm.[35] Such catalogues were grim reminders of

the danger imposed by Scottish borderers, who faced the English across the easily

travelled borders. Moreover, it prompted the English officials to pursue their office

with rigour, and it underscored their purpose as leaders in a frontier world, where

violence was the norm. The stark realities of border warfare—the ridings, the

assassinations and the lootings—kept the English borderers from over-identifying

with their Scottish brethren, who seemed content to treat their English cousins as

targets of opportunity.

The welfare of the English Borderers was at very least closely guarded by the

officers of the March. Sir Cuthbert Radcliff sought good justice for his subjects

from such depredations, although he noted in 1541 that many Scottish criminals,

nearly all of whom the afflicted English had named as criminals, were not brought to

days of redress, as they ought to have been by their keepers.[36] Radcliff bitterly

complained to the king about this, and sought to further the interests of the English

borderers by asking for new procedures during redresses. Captains also regarded the

welfare of their men as part of their responsibilities, belying the stereotype of the

greedy muster captain who viewed his men as targets of opportunity.

At the same time, comradeship was strong amongst the garrisons and bands

of Northumberland, and a fierce local identity caused some suspicion and

resentment of outsiders. As late as 1597, the Keeper of Redesdale received warning

that if he staffed his garrison with foreign troops, the Redesdalers would resent it to

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[34] *LP*, XIX(1), nos. 562, 596 and 621.
[35] *Hamilton Papers*, I, nos. 106 and 110.
[36] *Hamilton Papers*, I, no. 108.

the point where they would betray the garrison to their riding clans.[37] When Norham

Castle was rumoured to have been betrayed by a spy, the captain, Sir Brian Layton,

held a Scottish turncoat 'in most suspexcyon of all oder.'[38] The chief suspect was a

native of the Merse, and was known to have connections to a Scottish courtier,

which caused most worry. That he was a Scots Marcher was no cause for alarm; that

he was allied with a Scottish courtier, thereby becoming a political outsider, was

almost unforgivable. In the end, the unfortunate accused was found guilty and was

most likely put to death under March Law, although there are no surviving records

of his whereabouts after he had been clapped in Norham's dungeon. The perception

of a common, Scottish enemy was more palpable in London, whereas the Borderers

perceived the enemy in nearly nation-less terms. The ease with which the royal

border officials practised with the Scots was as unnerving as it was treasonous. Like

Lord Dacre was in the 1520's,[39] Little John Heron was active with both English and

Scottish Border clans when he was the Keeper of Tynedale and Redesdale.[40]

Nonetheless, the border officials often saw no other route for the preservation of

peace, as the typical Border officer strove to keep the wild elements within his rule

from tearing apart the individual Marches, even if it resulted in cooperation with

Scottish Borderers.

Part of the Marcher identity, or at least what separated the Marchers from the

rest of English society, was that their domestic lives and their military careers were

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[37] *CBP*, II, no. 650.

[38] *Hamilton Papers*, I, no. 225. Layton's judgment seems to have been borne by Coke's testimony, which was far too detailed in its description of the castle walls for a mere soldier to know. The other testimonies of the garrison soldiers show the deponents' ignorance of the castle's weaknesses. The last names of the deponents also show that the garrison was comprised of Northumbrians, and many from the Selby family. Although the Selbys were a riding family, their loyalty to the crown of England was never brought into question. In the end, Coke was either guilty of treason or spying (and was extremely reckless given that he was the only Scot in the garrison), or he was more observant of the castle's deficiencies than his fellow soldiers, and was just unfortunate.

[39] See S.G. Ellis, 'A Border Baron and the Tudor State: The Rise and Fall of Lord Dacre of the North,' The *Historical Journal* vol. 35 (1992).

[40] *St.P.*, V, no. 390.

often indistinguishable, the obvious outcome of which was to produce a highly

militarised society. Although actual warfare with the Scots was not necessarily a

regular activity, the constant threat of a devastating raid from both English and

Scottish surnames put the Marches of England in a continual state of military

preparedness. Military obligation reflected this perceived threat. In spite of their

martial disposition, the gentlemen soldiers of the Marches did not fully appreciate

the conventional warfare proposed by the crown in 1543. Rather than invading

Scotland with a proper army, the Marchers proposed 'exploytes by small nombres of

light horsmen' to destroy the settlements of the Scots who had not assured

themselves to the English cause.[41] Guerrilla warfare seems to have been more

appropriate for Marcher soldiers, as it was the main military activity that most

identified with in terms of practicality and ability; the Northumbrians could not

afford to wage pitched battles. Even outsiders identified the Marchers as most

suitable for skirmishers; southern men, according to one observer, were 'not used to

the skirmish' and were generally inexperienced in guerrilla tactics.[42] The

unwillingness of the March cavalry to linger during the Scottish advance at Haddon

Rigg underscores the Marchers' trepidation regarding set engagements. By allowing

the borderers to pursue this form of unofficial warfare, Henry allowed the marcher

gentry a continuity of their lifestyle, which they saw as a deterrent to Scottish

aggression. Even when French and Scottish troops threatened the frontier in 1558

and reportedly raided as far south as Morpeth,[43] the Warden only suggested

reinforcements 'so as our force to countervail th'other.'[44] Ironically, official war

between Scotland and England contradicted the military practices of the English

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[41] *St.P.*, V, nos. 466-68.
[42] PRO, SP 15/4/32.
[43] PRO, SP 59/1/12.
[44] PRO SP 59/1/83.

Marchers, as the national armies of the Tudors sought to engage the Scots, whereas

the Marcher officers realised that this only incurred retaliation. Although the raids

by the English Marchers during the rough wooing demonstrated their willingness to

engage in open warfare, the consensus was that Marchers identified themselves

increasingly as Border guards.

Quite often, one catches glimpses of how militarism influenced

Northumberland society in other practical aspects, as each element sought to

preserve its own interests from the depredations of its neighbours. There were other

expressions of the martial tendencies of the Marcher lifestyle. Most Marchers tended

to live either in bastles or in some form of fortified housing. A.C. King has argued

that members of the Northumberland aristocracy used their castles to convey a sense

of authority during the fourteenth century, status symbols without much military

practicality.[45] However, the survey of 1541 demonstrates that the role of such

structures changed dramatically by the sixteenth century: the bastles and peles that

existed in Northumberland (especially in the outer dales) were in fact used for

military purposes and for the defence of the countryside. The sheer number of

towers, barmkins and castles that dotted the landscape of Northumberland suggests

its violent history. The need for defensive structures to protect the welfare of the

border inhabitants permeated the mentality of the March officers. Bowes saw the

role of the gentry as providing suitable defences for the countryside, and those who

owned land in the frontiers should be held accountable for their military protection.[46]

It was thus suggested that all towers should have barmkins made for the safe

keeping of livestock, and that townships should be assigned to the fortresses

adjoining them. Each tower was recommended to keep a garrison of 40 men, paid

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[45] A.C. King, 'Fortresses or Fashion Statements,' paper delivered at the University of Durham, December 2003.
[46] PRO SP 1/168 ff. 19-54.

for by the neighbourhood; above all, Bowes suggested that the king should give rewards to the gentlemen who made repairs on their own towers. It is apparent from the survey that many of the gentry saw themselves as the first line of defence against the Scots, although the key castles of Harbottle and Etal stood in ruins. Collectively speaking, the frontier gentry managed to keep up many of their duties, which aided in reinforcing their authority. As symbols of power, the towers and fortresses of Northumberland undoubtedly served as reminders to the countryside that the neighbourhood was not entirely without a military community. Their actual effectiveness is another question, though one only has to see the ease with which Widdrington's tower at Halton was destroyed by a comparatively small group of raiders. Tarset Castle, too, suffered the same fate in the 1520's. Yet, since there is no report of any other significant destruction of the towers and peles, one can assume that they were indeed effective as both shelters, and as symbols of the authority and power of the Marcher gentry. At the same time, one must use caution in assuming the building of fortifications in the frontiers was the result of identification with any anti-Scottish sentiment. Many towers, such as Roger Hangingshawe's tower at Harclay, were built in defence against the English Borderers as much as the Scots.[47] Such outward displays of militarism occurred on both sides of the border, demonstrating that although a political line ran through the Marches, the average Marcher mistrusted his neighbours as much as the national enemy. This, of course, further complicates any explanation of a collective border identity amongst Northumberland society.

The gentry of Northumberland were no strangers to feuding; in fact, they had nearly perfected the feud so that their political identities became a mixed jumble. This feuding character had its roots as far back as the early fourteenth century, when

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[47] *Ibid.*; W. Percy Hedley, *Northumberland Families* Vol. II, (Newcastle, 1968), p. 5.

most of the surnames saw their genesis under the leading feudal lords of the dales.[48]

Yet for all of their individualism, the Northumberland gentry showed an unwavering loyalty to the Lancastrian cause during the Wars of the Roses, usually in the service of the Tailboys and the Percies.[49] Some, like the Ogles and the Carnabys, became fiercely loyal to the crown in the sixteenth century, despite the former family's support of the Yorkist cause during the Wars of the Roses. The Yorkist sympathies of Lord Ogle of Bothal ensured that this rising family annexed the Heron possessions in Ford and Tynedale, after Heron of Ford fell at Towton. Also garnered were the Tailboys' castle at Harbottle and their holdings in Redesdale. Others were loyal to the local magnates, the Percys, and were constantly striving to augment the power of that household, and always looking to make a name for themselves in doing so. The Herons were reinstated with their inheritance within fifteen years of losing it to the Ogles, and although still allied to the Percy cause, they became less dependent upon that house as time wore on; it was only a matter of time before the Herons began to operate as royal officers in their own right, without Percy patronage.[50] Likewise, the Ogles, Shaftoes, Erringtons and other gentry families found new power in direct service to the king, a sign of the retreating power of the Percys. Yet the Percy ascendancy kept the more powerful surnames in check and without the barrier of such patronage, the result was a power grab in Northumberland, which in turn sparked much of the gentry's internecine squabbling.

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[48] R. Robson, *The Rise and Fall of the English Highland Clans: Tudor Responses to a Mediaeval Problem*, (Edinburgh: East Linton Press, 1989), pp. 31-47.

[49] Robson, *English Highland Clans*, pp. 58-59.

[50] By 1500, Heron's power was unquestioned and he was referred to as "Captain of all Redesdale" by Bishop Fox. In this fashion, Heron served both the King and local magnates. 'Bishop Foxes Register,' *Publication of the Surtees Society* vol. 147 (London and Durham, 1932), p. 129.

The case of Ford is indicative how prone the gentry were to the inter-familial violence that characterised Marcher relationships.[51] Ford Castle was built by permission of Edward III, the construction beginning in 1338, with William Heron as its heir.[52] Ten years later, William arranged for the marriage of one of his sons to the heiress of the Lisles of Chipchase, thus securing their legacy in the jurisdiction of Hexham.[53] By 1533, the chief executor of the Herons, Sir William Heron, owned several important strongholds, including Simonburn, one of the keys to the wild North Tynedale area.

However, by 1534, there arose a dispute between the Herons of Chipchase and the Herons of Simonburn and Ford. Sir William had apparently settled his lands in tail male with his two brothers, Henry and Odinel, and also with Sir John Heron of Chipchase, his cousin, in 1500.[54] Although it is unclear exactly when the two brothers died, it is probable that they had done so by 1534, when John of Chipchase put in a claim for the entire Heron inheritance. As it turns out, Sir William had already granted the castles of Ford and Simonburn to his granddaughter, Elizabeth, who, being a minor at the time of her inheritance, became the ward of Sir Thomas Audley.[55] Little John of Chipchase tried to pursue his right of tail male, but his involvement in the Pilgrimage of Grace undercut his case, and Elizabeth was allowed to keep her inheritance, albeit with one of her cousins as captain.[56] This set

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[51]M. Meikle, 'Lairds and Gentlemen: A Study of the Landed Families of the Anglo-Scottish Borders, 1540-1603,' (Edinburgh University Ph.D., 1986), *passim* and M. Meikle, 'Northumberland Divided: Anatomy of a Sixteenth-Century Bloodfeud,' *Archaeologia Aeliana* 5th series, vol. 20 (1992), pp. 79-89; P.G. Boscher, 'Politics, Administration and Diplomacy: The Anglo-Scots Border, 1550-60,' (Durham University Ph.D., 1985), pp. 283-86. Meikle's take on the feud is deeper than Boscher's analysis, although Meikle is not as quick to appreciate the military ramifications of the feud.
[52] *Ibid.*
[53] *Ibid.*
[54] Meikle, 'Northumberland Divided,' pp. 79-89.
[55] *LP*, IX, no. 374
[56] *LP*, IX, no. 216; *ibid.*, XII(1) no. 513.

the stage for the ensuing feud. Thomas Carr, son of John Carr of Wark and Hetton,

had married the heiress of Ford, and in doing so had become the new owner of Ford

Castle, and acted as its Captain. John Heron of Chipchase immediately revived his

claim on the Ford estates, as did several other members of the Heron family who

claimed possession through tail male, a move that set the wheels in motion for yet

another feud.[57] The matter was further complicated by the fact that Elizabeth's

mother was now the wife of John of Chipchase.

By March 1557, the feud had come to a head when the Herons forcibly

ejected Carr and his servants from the castle. The following day, a group of border

soldiers, including Sir Ralph Grey, Giles Heron and the mayor of Berwick were en

route to Ford when they were ambushed by a group of men lead by Robert Carr,

brother of Thomas. The mayor was slain immediately, and Giles Heron was mortally

wounded.[58] Lord Wharton, the deputy Warden-General of the Marches, straight

away held the Carrs and their allies, the Collingwoods, responsible for the

bloodshed.[59] The Collingwoods were the only family to support the Carrs, as the

Herons were now related by blood or marriage to virtually every other household in

Northumberland. The Herons' support from Wharton, and their allegiance with the

Northumberland gentry soon had a polarising effect in the Marches, and the Privy

Council was eager to settle the matter.[60] After all, the crown could not have its

border officers slaughtering one another to the detriment of their charges. Despite

the intervention of the central government and the exaction of sureties from both

parties, Thomas Carr was murdered in January 1558.[61] Although the immediate

suspects were of course the Herons of Chipchase, the murderers remained at large.

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[57] James Raine, *The History and Antiquities of North Durham*, (Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 1852), p. 208
[58] Talbot MSS D f. 8.
[59] Talbot MSS D ff. 15- 18.
[60] *APC*, VI, pp. 72-73.
[61] *APC*, VI, pp. 86-87.

The feud continued between the Herons and the Carrs, resulting in the neglect of Ford castle and subsequent decline of its garrison. In April 1557, just after the initial fray, it was reported that all Northumberland Marchers rode 'suerlye upon [their] garde as if [they] rode against the enemye of Scotland',[62] a situation that undermined the defence of the Borders. Since the military community of the Borders was inextricably tied to the gentry, feuds that involved large sections of Northumberland society often turned violent, exposing one of the primary weaknesses of a militarised Border culture.

Much of the bickering centred on former Percy lands and those who would attempt to make away with the largest parcel of the former earldom. There is no better example than the feud between the Carnabys and the Herons, which amply demonstrates how a prominent Border family coveted the scraps of the Percy legacy. The Herons, who had been long-time servants of the Percy family, did not overtly feud with their Halton neighbours until 1536. In that year, Sir Reynold Carnaby began to use his authority as Bailiff of Hexham to increase his own lands with those that were formerly in the hands of the Earl of Northumberland, who had disinherited his heirs. As bailiff, Carnaby was about to see through the dissolution of Hexham Abbey, and to receive for his own profit some of the Abbey farms; this made him a natural target. At the same time, Little John had been unsuccessful in his lawsuit after the death of his father, Sir John of Chipchase, to become the heir of the Herons of Ford, his cousins who held Tynedale land in the manors of Chirdon and Simonburn. Jealousy accelerated the growing ill will of the Herons and disinherited Percy brothers towards the rising Carnaby. Sir Thomas Percy, who would later be executed for his role in the rebellion, wrote that Carnaby was 'the destruction of all

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[62] Talbot MSS D. f. 9.

our blood, for by his means the king shall be my Lord's heir.'[63] It was in this manner that the Heron-Carnaby feud became tied to the misfortunes of the Percys.

The Herons, especially the Chipchase grain, were never content unless they were at the front of the enterprise. As such, Little John Heron was most likely one of the prime agitators of the Pilgrimage of Grace.[64] Seeing the chance to despoil Carnaby and to increase his wealth in doing so, Heron joined with the rebel Percy brothers to rebel against the king. Upon meeting the Hexham canons, it was most likely that they agreed to resist the king's commissioners, while seizing the chance to do away with the parvenu Carnaby, who stood to gain the most from the dissolution. Heron then conspired to have their support in raising the surnames of Tynedale, which they apparently had agreed to give by hiring them as soldiers. When the day came that the armed canons of Hexham confronted the royal commissioners, the road to rebellion had already been paved. Hearing of the resistance of the canons of Hexham, Heron rode over to Halton to warn William Carnaby, father of Sir Reynold, that he should seek terms with the rebels, since the Carnabys were not powerful in men and retainers. Heron offered to act as mediator for Carnaby, who was too happy to have Heron intercede on his behalf, displaying a too-trusting tendency that Heron was willing to exploit.

When he returned to Halton, Heron's jovial attitude suggested to Carnaby that Halton was safe from the rebels. Nothing could have been farther from the truth. While dining that afternoon, news came that the Tynedale men had risen in support of the canons of Hexham, and that the dalesmen had already mobilised for war. Heron then confessed to his naïve host that his diplomacy with the canons had come to nothing, and that the rebels were intent on pillaging all of Hexhamshire,

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[63] PRO SP 1/119 ff. 94-104.
[64] PRO SP 1/119 ff. 94-104. The following paragraphs are based upon this deposition given during the trials of the Tynedale rebels.

especially Carnaby's holdings. Carnaby was understandably shocked; why had Heron failed to warn him? Incredibly, Heron then persuaded Carnaby to vacate his house, stating that 'all the goodes in the world wold not sayf his lyf,' offering to take Carnaby to his own house of Chipchase. As they rode away, a servant of Carnaby's son, who by chance had met the very Tynedale men whom Heron and the canons had previously raised, approached them on horseback. He managed to disclose quietly the intentions of Little John to Carnaby, who was able to make good his escape, although he spent the rest of the rebellion hiding from the rebels. Heron returned to Halton, but his attempts to spoil the house were frustrated when Nicholas Errington, whose kin were bound closely to the royalist, Carnaby-allied Ogles, spirited away Carnaby's money chest for safe keeping.[65] The Herons of Chipchase were but one gentry clan on the royal payroll that plainly exhibited their loyalties to their family, going as far as open rebellion in 1536. Other families, including the Swinburns, Fenwicks and Ridleys managed to avoid taking a leading role in the rebellion, although their families would engage in inter-familial violence throughout the sixteenth century.

Not only does this case demonstrate the guile that was needed to conduct a Border feud, it demonstrates the flexible loyalties of the Marcher gentlemen who in 1536 were in the trough formed by the eclipse of the Percys and the eventual domination of the English state. Heron was an opportunist; his judgement formed throughout many years' experience of exhausting border conflict, which required exploiting every advantage. It is doubtful, though, that a person as myopic as Heron could have foreseen the rebellion that would have resulted from his actions in Tynedale. One cannot assume then that the Herons were anti-royalist, especially in

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[65] PRO SP 1/119 ff. 94-104.

light of their service to the crown both before and after the Pilgrimage of Grace. Nevertheless, Little John at times exhibited a shocking lack of respect for the King's authority. His family's feuding in general seemed to hold utter disdain for the King's peace, at times perverting royal justice until called upon by the Tudor monarchs to answer for their transgressions. Instead, it is more probable that the Borderers cautiously viewed royal authority as a tool with which one could build a career. More importantly the gentry were wholly aware of the military power that they wielded, and that which the crown had empowered them to exercise, and they often used this to reinforce their family's standing.

The gentry of the Tudor Marches strived to achieve dominance in the power vacuum that the fall of the Percys had created. With gentry serving as Wardens, and as lesser officers, social standing began to lose its prestige, especially where military leadership was concerned. In essence, the military community was ruptured by the absence of leading lords. The establishment of a hierarchy was therefore impossible given that the social structure of the Marches had inverted with the decline of the Percys. Gentlemen such as the Eures, who had once served as deputies, now controlled Marches while men of equal standing, such as the Collingwoods and the Carrs, served lesser offices under the control of the Warden. Although the crown repeatedly exhorted the gentlemen of the Marchers to remain at the beckoning of the Warden, this often went ignored. At the same time, officers exhibited the occasional conciliatory effort, suggesting that a commonality underpinned the community of gentlemen soldiers. However, the military community that the gentry created in the face of foreign aggression fractured due to feuds and the consolidation of power within a network of kith and kin.

Reivers, Surnames and Clashing Identity

The closed societies that inhabited the outer dales of Northumberland

formed a military community in contrast to that of the Northumbrian gentry. The

heidsman of the surnames exhibited at least some characteristics of Eric

Hobsbawm's peasant hero, who as an outlaw became the champion of his own

community.[66] Yet the surnames were more than just bandits; their contributions to

both English and Scottish crowns during the wars were considerable. The skirmish

that occurred at Fawside Brae the day before the battle of Pinkie was symbolic of

the surnames' reformation on both sides of the Anglo-Scottish frontier.[67]

The riding families of Northumberland occupy a special niche in English

history, and in the historiography of the Tudor Marches. The study of Border reivers

has proved popular in the past, with the local history societies of Northumberland

and the Scottish borders producing a wealth of pamphlets, guided tours and

museums. George MacDonald Fraser's book, *The Steel Bonnets*, is descriptive of

the military activities of the riding families, even if it mainly focuses upon the late

sixteenth-century Scottish surnames.[68] The work of Ralph Robson attempts a

thematic study of the Tynedale surnames, although in the end the narrative

swallows the development of themes such as military culture.[69] However, both

works avoid the quagmire of political and military identity, with only a few

acknowledgements of the reivers' independence from the English crown. Instead,

Robson has opted to portray the heidsmen as individualists, or as mere opportunists

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[66] Eric Hobsbawm, "Social Banditry," in H. Landsberger, ed., *Rural Protest: Peasant Movements and Social Change* (London: Routledge, 1974).

[67] While the clash itself was unspectacular, the fact that most of the participants were from surname groups who were under the command of appointed captains demonstrated that erstwhile bandits had, albeit slowly, become a regular part of the Anglo-Scottish military establishment.

[68] George MacDonald Fraser, *The Steel Bonnets*, (London: Barrie and Jenkins, 1971).

[69] Robson, *English Highland Clans*, Chapters 15-19.

with no real separate identity from established "Englishness". This approach is certainly justifiable given the nature of the evidence.

Another more obvious aspect of the recalcitrance of Border society was the continued and conservative observance of Catholicism. Despite the break from Rome in 1533, most Northumbrians clung stubbornly to the old religion. This confessional break with the English church permeated all levels of Border society, from the aristocracy who participated in the two main northern rebellions of the sixteenth century, to the lowest moss trooper who embraced the antiquated practices of medieval religion. Borderers closely identified with northern religious cults, and the closure of the chantries and the subsequent banishing of the cult of saints from the English Church never wholly ruptured this tie. A Northumbrian soldier admitted that the mere mention of St. Cuthbert on the battlefield was enough to stir action amongst Northern soldiers.[70] The banner of the Durham saint had already accompanied most major expeditions into Scotland, as it had done since the Middle Ages, where it made its martial debut at the Battle of the Standard in the twelfth century. Held by the household retainers of the Bishop of Durham, this banner provided a rallying point for all northerners, as its presence was rumoured to work miracles on the battlefield.[71]

The religion in the Borders is a perplexing issue, especially when one considers the decidedly unchristian activities of many riding clans, who seem to have pursued their religious beliefs with the same warlike obsession that characterised their day-to-day behaviour. Their role in the Pilgrimage of Grace is

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[70] David Lang, ed. "The Trewe Encountre or Batayle Lately Don Betwene Englande and Scotlande: In Which Batayle the Scotsshe Kynge was Slayne", *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland*, vol. 7 (1866-68), p. 150

[71] Michael Bush gives a detailed description of the banner in M. Bush, *Durham and the Pilgrimage of Grace*, (Durham: Durham County Local History Society, 2000) pp. 13-15.

well documented,[72] although their motives were suspect as they merely used to the opportunity to lay waste to the settled areas of Northumberland.[73] Still, their outward religiosity was intertwined with their militarism as it was rumoured that the clansmen never said their beads so fervently as when they embarked upon a raid.[74] Even the hardboiled cases could not escape the desire to bring at least some element of religion into their lawlessness, presumably to justify their depredations. Their observance of religion could be used to control them as in 1498, when Bishop Fox of Durham determined that the only way to control the surnames was to threaten them with excommunication. These measures appeared to have some effect, as Fox was able to receive sureties from the chief offenders. Sandy Charlton and three Milburns—'Atkin, Crysty and Howy'—along with nearly a dozen others, were absolved from the threatened excommunication, provided that they cease their warlike lifestyles, and refrain from attending the mass whilst heavily armed.[75]

The authority of the Bishop was often not enough to stop the families from taking matters into their own hands. As Bishop of Durham, Wolsey had laid the churches of Tynedale under interdict, when it was reported that a member of the Charlton band 'took the sacrament forth of the sepulchre in Bellingham church and one firkin of wine and 800 breads and carried them to a place called Tarset Hall but next day brought them back to Bellingham where they got a Scotch friar to give the Sacrament to a number of evil disposed persons.'[76] The Charltons were also responsible for breaking the jail at Hexham in 1538, in which they rescued a priest,

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[72] M.H. and R. Dodds, *Pilgrimage of Grace 1536-7*, 2 vols. (Cambridge: CUP, 1915). This contains the best account of the rising in Northumberland, and the participation of the surnames.
[73] The Percy brothers Thomas and Ingram, who used the dalesmen to despoil their rivals in the Marches, most likely prompted this.
[74] Tough, *Frontier*, pp. 61-75.
[75] 'Bishop Fox's Register,' *Surtees Society* vol. CXLVII pp. 80, 110 & 126.
[76] *LP*, IV no. 1429.

Father Robert More, from the clutches of Sir Reynold Carnaby.[77] R. Robson has

noted that the underground smuggling operations were used for more than just

smuggling persecuted clergymen and women; letters to and from the Pope and the

renegade Cardinal Pole often found their way through the surnames.[78] In this

fashion, the old religion persevered in the North Country, so that in 1595 Sir

William Bowes reported to the Privy Council that 'False and disloyall religion hath

taken deipe root', a telling deficiency of the English Reformation in the Borders.[79]

There is sufficient data to indicate that there was something alien about the

reivers, both in the way that they regarded themselves, and in the way that the rest

of English society portrayed them. Despite the service that many heidsmen and their

graynes rendered, our understanding of Border reivers is still hampered by a dearth

of primary evidence. While ballads, poems and folklore abound, many of these are

no older than late-seventeenth century, and are more telling of the atmosphere in

which they were authored. The sixteenth-century documents that exist in the State

Papers archives are primarily government correspondences—observations made by

the organisation that actively sought to incorporate Border society into the

community of the realm. Opinions of the borderers are predominantly negative,

given the fact that the crown was in a near constant state of conflict with various

powerful border clans at any given time until 1541, when their military skills

proved useful enough for the government to pardon their earlier offences. Even the

dales horsemen who turned out for royal musters were labelled as thieves by the

muster master; both Tynedale and Redesdale suffered such categorisations,

although many of the new royal recruits did come from the more notorious

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[77] BL, Calig. B III f. 156.
[78] Robson, *English Highland Clans*, p. 91; *LP*, XIV(1) nos. 455 & 481.
[79] *CBP*, II, no. 171.

families.[80] Part of the problem, according to southern prejudices, was that the Border clans were not under the thumb of a local landlord, and thus answerable only to their clan. Both dales were former liberties, and although the Tudors had endeavoured to bring royal justices into these areas, they remained steadfast in claiming the old liberties, and refused to recognise royal warrants.[81] Given the fact that most gentry families, including the Carnabys and the Widdringtons, could exercise little control over the surname bands, by the 1530's it seemed that the surnames were a law unto themselves. The presence of the March Wardens and especially the Lieutenants and Wardens-general, had at least some positive effect in controlling the surnames. Even then, many royal officials sent from the south often had little or no connection to the men of Northumberland, so that borderers regarded them with mistrust, despite the power of their patents and warrants. Royal officials responded invariably with heavy-handed techniques, including a form of military government that harshly punished offenders. The ultimate goal of the government was to take away the reivers' livelihood—their military power. Although the dalesmen expressed a unique military identity, one that was bound up in unconventional warfare, it was seen as a threat to the stability of the crown and was eagerly hemmed in by men such as Hertford and Dudley.

The survey of Tynedale and Redesdale made by Sir Robert Bowes and Sir Rafe Ellerkar in 1541 provides significant insight into the clannish society of riding families of Northumberland, as does Bowes' second survey of 1551, but the surveys

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[80] NRO ZAN M.13/D.15. For North Tynedale, most of the men mustered were from the Robson and the Dodd families, both of whom were engaged in a feud with the Hesleyside gang. Some Charltons also appeared, mainly Gerry 'Topping' of the Haw-Hill-in-Wark as well as Gyb of the Boughthill. The men of Redesdale included mostly Halls, with many Redes and Potts.

[81] Redesdale, Coquetdale and North Tynedale had always presented a problem for the English king's authority as it was a liberty where his writ did not run. By 1536, the sheriff of Northumberland had the power to serve royal warrants in the dales. However, the lack of any sizeable sheriff's retinue, and the military power of the surnames, was sufficient deterrent from doing so.

also demonstrate the local gentry's morbid fascination with their sullen neighbours. As outsiders, both Bowes and Ellerkar did not venture into the dales themselves in order to survey the peles and bastles. Instead, they relied most likely upon the testimony of the Northumbrian gentry, most of whom held negative views of the riding families. The terms 'wild peoples', 'odious offenses' and 'from evil to worse' coloured Bowes survey of 1541,[82] while the latter survey reported that Tynedale and Redesdale were 'now plenished with wild and misdemeaned people'.[83] S.G. Ellis notes that these observations reflected the attitudes of 'civil society', which blamed Borderers for the problems that plagued Northumberland.[84] Instead of seeing the lack of effective policing, Bowes saw only moral decline. This attitude was confirmed again. Most were probably illiterate, as Bernard Gilpin had discovered in the latter sixteenth century, when their adherence to the Catholic Church underscored their reputation as being backward and ignorant.[85] Ironically, many of the officers who offered such opinions were themselves from families that had once also engaged in reiving and criminality in earlier generations, either as Percy servants or as militarised tenants.[86]

Some observers tended to have a more insightful view of their neighbours and cousins; royal officers who had been born and raised along the border counties could thus act as a medium through which the crown communicated with this alien society. There was some reluctance amongst the Northumberland officers to do away with reivers and their military power, which was responsible for providing the

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[82] PRO, SP 1/168, ff. 50-54.
[83] BL, Calig. B VIII ff. 106-7.
[84] S. G. Ellis, *Tudor Frontiers and Noble Power*, (Oxford: Clarendon, 1995) p. 59.
[85] G. Carleton, *The Life of Bernard Gilpin*, 1629. When Gilpin arrived on the Borders, he found 'there was neither minister nor bell nor Book, there was red hand put on a spear point in defiance of a deadly feud.'
[86] It was only in 1510 that the Ratcliffes became royal servants, when Sir Edward became the king's Lieutenant of the Middle Marches, with a royal salary to boot. *LP*, I(1), no. 380.

gentry with their best soldiers since border tradition kept the clansmen militarily prepared. Sir Ralph Eure showed more sympathy towards border surnames. His correspondences with Warden-General Lord Parr revealed a particular predicament of the recently pacified Tynedalers in 1543. Because they had been charged with robberies before their pacification, yet not having sufficient moveable goods and cash for redress, they would have to resort once again to robbery and extortion if they were compelled to make redress for their crimes. Eure was in the midst of conducting military operations against the Scottish Borders, and he ran the risk of alienating the largest pool of soldiers at his disposal. Yet, if Eure were to do nothing, those Borderers whom the Tynedalers spoiled would say that the wardens favour thieves.[87]

The militarised and clannish families that inhabited the dales enjoyed a modicum of independence from the crown, which they maintained through their own military power. The claim that the Borderers never thought of themselves as 'anything but Englishmen' seems to lack weight.[88] As late as 1583, it was noted that the surnames were 'Scottishe when they will, and Englishe at theire pleasure'.[89] In the same letter, it was noted that the Robsons of Tynedale and the Fenwicks of Northumberland were at deadly feud with their Liddesdale neighbours, the Armstrong and Elliots, suggesting that at least the Northumberland surnames had limited their allegiances to their English kith and kin. Yet, the dalesmen were all too aware of the power that they held. In opposition to the efforts of the government to bring them into royal bondage, the border families of Tynedale and Redesdale resisted pressure by relying instead upon the strongest grayne to guide the bands of that surname. In the early sixteenth century, it was common for the most powerful

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[87] *LP*, XVIII(1), no. 580.
[88] Robson, *English Highland Clans*, pp. 73-74.
[89] *CBP*, I, no. 197.

family to rise to the top and dominate all political affairs in the dales. The most powerful in the regions of Tynedale and Redesdale were the Charltons and the Halls, respectively. The Charltons of Hesleyside were the undisputed rulers of the North Tyne valley by 1536, as far south as Chipchase where the Herons often courted them. It was well acknowledged that Edward Charlton, the Laird of Hesleyside, was chief of the Tynedalers; his power in the area also gave him a large body of armed followers, known to the Marchers as the Bellingham, Shitlington and the Bower graynes of the Charlton surname.[90] John Hall of Otterburn, who himself eventually became a royal servant, was the undisputed heidsmen along the River Rede; during the Doncaster meetings of 1536, he alone represented the surnames of Redesdale.[91] By 1558, either he or his son acted as the Percys' deputy Keeper in their native dale, which suggests that his military power stabilised his position as leading heidsman.[92] Clan leadership revolved around the heidsman's ability to promulgate border-style warfare, and to safeguard the practices thereof. Although many of the dalesmen entered royal service when they subscribed to the musters of the late 1530's,[93] this was a part-time occupation, since the king had limited the numbers of surnames in the full-time garrisons. For much of the time, the surnames looked to the heads of their family to lead them against their enemies.

Border clans acted in defence of their community rather than in the name of a particular chief, although the chiefs considered defence part of their responsibility. Eure and Bowes both observed that the entire area would defend against true men seeking to retrieve their stolen goods 'as if it were their common matter.'[94] The

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[90] BL, Calig VIII B f. 106; ibid, Add. MSS 24965 f. 119; PRO SP 1/7 f. 281; ibid, 1/30 ff. 334-35; ibid, 1/31 f. 123.
[91] PRO, 1/111 ff. 235-240.
[92] CScotP, VIII, no. 653.
[93] NRO, ZAN M. 13/D. 15.
[94] PRO 1/168, ff. 19-54, Bowes' Survey of 1541.

military corporation of the surnames was a problem on both sides of the Borders, where any incursion was an issue 'nocht of ane in ane, or few in few bot of thame ilk ane and al, quha ar of that familie stock or tribe.'[95] Heidsmen coordinated defences for their kindred and tenants as they lived in strongholds—bastles and towers, mostly —that were usually set in inaccessible locations.[96] These houses served as fortification against seizure and provided kith, kin and livestock with security from reiving enemies or royal officials. Since heavy artillery proved too cumbersome for the blanket bogs and thickets that blocked passages into the Tyne and Rede dales, the chief stronghouses remained unassailable by siege weaponry thus increasing the prestige of the clan. Hesleyside was a prime example of the difficulty the border officials had with such strongholds. This made the recovery of stolen goods well nigh impossible, and the only course of action for honest men was to attend a day of redress. The redress itself became useless if the particular thief had not paid any previous sureties, nor gave any mind to attend such redresses. Tynedalers and Redesdalers thus viewed theft as a legitimate means of acquisition. Any attempt for men to retrieve stolen goods through force only incensed the fury of the surnames.

Because proper lordship had no place in the marches, hierarchical relationships between clan or familial leaders and their customary tenants filled the void. The military organisation of the surnames is unclear, but it has been suggested that members of a surname owed services and dues to the heidsmen.[97] Given the customary allegiance of kinship that typified the dales, this is most

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[95] John Hodgson, *A History of Northumberland in Three Parts*, III(2) (Newcastle, 1820-25), pp. 233-34.

[96] Ibid. This survey is printed in full in Hodgson's *Northumberland*.

[97] S.C. Dietrich, 'Liberties and Lawlessness: Reiver society in Tynedale and Redesdale,' (Cornell University Ph.D., 1973) p. 36; H.C. Ramm, R.W. McDowall, Eric Mercer, *Shielings and Bastles*, (London: HMSO, 1970), pp. 70-71.

plausible, since this is how the heidsmen would have afforded to build their towers

and bastles. This network would have formed the basis of the surnames' military

community, as the heidsmen would then act as Captain to all who owed them

services. This quasi-feudal approach bound men through both landholding and

blood relationships; thus, the bands that folded into the musters of Northumberland

would have been incompatible with the other bands, which were bound solely by

tenant-landlord relationships. It is unlikely that the surname bands split up and

folded into the regular bands, unless they served either in garrison or in France.[98] It

was generally difficult to incorporate the dalesmen into the regular English armies

as they proved to be heavily specialised as light cavalry, and difficult to command

when not under the thumb of their heidsman. It was for this reason that they only

went on expedition with men who were familiar with their *modus operandi*, usually

their Keepers, or another experienced officer like Bowes or Ellerkar.

The military importance of the heidsmen is well demonstrated by the

lengths that the dalesmen would go to in order to protect their leaders. When Sir

Reginald Carnaby arrested several of the heidsmen, namely Edward, John, and

Renny Charlton, for refusing to lay in their sureties, the entire horse and foot of

Tynedale assembled and demanded Carnaby's reasons for attaching the men.[99] For

the most part, this was a reaction against the perceived abduction of one of their

most powerful allies and kinsmen. This is very telling of the reivers' ability to unite

around their leaders. The Tynedale men even offered hostages for the release of the

Charltons, but Carnaby refused, stating that he would not consort with men who had

so traitorously risen against the king. Again, the importance of the Charlton

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[98] BL, Add. MSS 32654 f. 98. Sir Ralph Eure was able to form two groups for the king's wars in France in 1544, where they were split into the rear guard and the main body of the English army. During the operations at Boulogne, the Northern horse predominantly served under Sir Rafe Ellerkar, the Captain-General of the king's Band of Northern Horse until his death in action in April 1546.
[99] *LP*, XIII(2), no. 355.

heidsmen to their surname becomes very distinct; the tenant reivers of North

Tynedale were prepared to make sacrifices on behalf of their leaders.

Members of a surname did not always render their services blindly to their

chief heidsman. While familial identity amongst the border clan was strong, there

was the tendency to side with immediate family or one's grayne rather than with the

surname, which split the military resources of the dales and often times turned

surnames against their own. At times minor heidsmen would raise their kinsmen in

order to pursue a feud with other graynes of the surname. Such situations could

escalate into a minor civil war since minor chiefs sometimes petitioned the crown

for support. This was a reciprocal relationship, as the crown would often use

surnames to police the dales. Moreover, those border surnames that entered royal

service brought with them a distinct knowledge of border warfare, which was a

useful tool in the wars against Scotland and against the untouchable clan heidsmen.

This was the case in 1537, when some Charltons, including Tom of Carriteth,

Gerard of Wark, and Gyb of the Boughthill, turned on their relatives when they

opted to lay in pledges with the government and cooperate against the Pilgrimage

rebels. In seeking the favour of the government, the minor Charlton chiefs agreed

to help subdue the Hesleyside gang, as well as Little John Heron's rebel comrades

in the Tyne and Rede valleys. [100] It was a nice distraction from their guilt for having

rebelled in 1536. This manoeuvre put them at odds with the Hesleyside gang, who

with their Scottish allies from Liddesdale, wasted no time in spoiling Tom of

Carriteth's herds, as well as those of other Charltons who had sided with the English

crown. [101] The Halls of Otterburn also contributed a small band to the royal forces in

1537, though they were powerless to stop their own surname from raiding their

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[100] BL, Calig. B III f. 239.
[101] PRO, SP 1/134 ff. 142-153; SP 1/118 ff. 235-6.

neighbours.[102] During the same period, the Milburns of Tynedale suffered similar thefts by the hand of Redesdale, which is significant since Tynedale and Redesdale usually let each other alone.[103]

Attempts from royal officers in both dales to subdue the Hesleyside gang reaped retribution from Edward's band as well as his Liddesdale and Armstrong allies, prompting his sub-chiefs to reconcile with him. Although a small force of whitecoats finally chased Edward from his Hesleyside tower, Carnaby failed to secure Charlton's permanent exile. After ejecting him from Hesleyside, the bailiff of Hexham found no other willing tenants amongst the Charltons to reside in North Tynedale, for fear of provoking a deadly feud with their kindred.[104] Thus, Edward Charlton was back in North Tynedale within a short amount of time, having retained his power so that he became the right hand man of Heron when he became the Keeper in 1540.[105] Although Edward still resented the Charltons who had sided against him, his death in 1541 smoothed over the enmities that had divided the family for over four years.

Full-time employment as a royal official was more popular in the dales after 1550, when it became clear that the royal assault on the old Liberties was well underway. Certain Charltons remained loyal to the throne, and some were listed as officers of the watch in 1553, while others became commissioners of enclosures in the same year.[106] The Halls of Otterburn in Redesdale were some of the highest-ranking surnames on the royal payroll, especially under Elizabeth. Fractures began

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[102] PRO E 36/173 f. 115.

[103] PRO SP 1/118 ff. 54-8.

[104] PRO SP 1/125 f. 13.

[105] Robson, *English Highland Clans*, pp. 141-42. Robson has some trouble with his dates here. His evidence suggests that Charlton reoccupied the tower at Hesleyside in March 1537, some nine months *before* he was evicted. It is likely that Robson forgot to adjust for the Julian calendar dates, which would have listed the March of 1538 as part of the previous year. Regardless, it is not clear from Robson's evidence exactly when Charlton regained Hesleyside, but it is clear that he did so by the time of Little John's return in December 1540.

[106] Nicholson, *Leges*, pp. 260-62 and 335.

to appear in some of the clans, with many leaving the traditional reiving lifestyle to serve as garrison soldiers,[107] and in some cases, as officers. Such cracks in the loyalties of the dale families undermined any consolidation of military power, although the working relationship between Tynedale and Redesdale on the one hand, and Scottish Liddesdale on the other, could always revive, as it did during 1541. The royal coffers could not permanently replace the temptation to consolidate power, nor could it overcome the traditions of feuding and clan warfare. It is key that the reiver considered his soldierly identity as most important. Whatever the state of affairs, the reiver continued to pursue his role as raider, guerrilla and sometimes conniver.

At times, their presence on the field could ensure victory; the light horse of Cumberland was primarily responsible for the defeat of the Scottish army at Solway Moss in 1542. Yet, they could also be a liability; in 1545, Sir Ralph Eure and Sir Brian Layton mistakenly led a force of Border horse into an ambush at Ancrum Moor.[108] The surnames in the bands turned and fled in time to save themselves, leaving the two knights and their immediate retainers to be slaughtered by an overwhelming Scottish force. It is significant that at Haddington just three years after the defeat at Ancrum the surname bands did the same to Sir Robert Bowes.[109] This points to the disjunction between reiver practice and military orthodoxy: Border raids organised by royal officials such as Wharton and Eure were meant to shed blood. Raids made by the surnames were, for the most part, intent on amassing booty. In 1548, Wharton requested that no more Borderers serve in Scotland, as they 'only look for pillage'.[110] In part, reivers were unwilling to commit to battle if

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[107] The numbers of Tynedale and Redesdale men in garrison during the 1540's was of concern to the crown, but after 1547, many served in the garrisons of Scotland. See chapter five.
[108] For a fuller description of this battle, see appendices.
[109] *Hamilton Papers*, II, no. 452.
[110] *CSP Scotland*, I, no. 287.

they did not possess overwhelming odds. In general, their goal was not royal victory, but self-preservation, and if they could manage it, plunder—even if it meant stealing the English army's baggage trains, as they did at Flodden.[111] Even when they received pay as regular soldiers, they often behaved as if they were engaging in clan warfare.

It is indisputable that the surnames brought their own agenda to the battlefields with them, in spite of their place in the royal armies. This earned them some disdain from regular soldiers, one of whom during Protector Somerset's administration described them as 'the refuse of men'.[112] Their strict adherence to their conservative military ideology and identity was most likely responsible for their diminished role in the English military effort in Scotland. Their behaviour on the battlefield and their association with the Scots Border clans reflected their unwillingness to abandon their own pragmatic needs, which underscored the value of kith and kin amongst Border clans. This left little hope of incorporating the surnames into the English military organisations in any permanent manner. Instead, like the gentry that had used them during the rough wooing, the surnames identified more with the Northumberland military community of Marian and Elizabethan England, where leading heidsmen policed the dales as searchers and setters, or as deputy Keepers. However, their interests remained strictly focused on their own niche. Much like the gentry, the external pressures of cross-border violence combined with an emphasis on familial ties to create a military identity by which the surnames viewed themselves as an interposing force between two powerful military states.

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[111] PRO SP 1/5 ff. 229 & 730. Bishop Ruthall of Durham denounced the dalesmen as thieves despite the role they had in securing English victory, and in saving Lord Edmund Howard from being annihilated.
[112] *Hamilton Papers*, II, no. 459; BL, Add. MSS. 32657 f. 52.

Border Law and Militarism

The reformation and codification of March Law was an attempt to strengthen the military organisation of the Marches. Because the Northumberland military community had divided into distinct groups, there was a renewed effort under the mid-Tudor administrations to enforce Border service and limit armed conflict amongst the Northumbrian Marchers. The Marcher government of Edward VI began a thorough review of legal procedure and powers of the Warden, which reflected the ongoing attempt to bring justice into the liberties; this was the first attempt to reform March law in twenty years, and strict ordinances began to relieve the confusion that had hampered prior Marcher administrations. Border garrisons also came under harsher codes that reinforced discipline, and although these strictly speaking were not a part of March law, they, too, echoed a concern for regulation. Truce breaking, failure to follow the fray, and practising with Scots in thieving and raiding, which were already March treasons, formed the basis of the new code and gave definition to infractions that fell into the morass between March law and common law. Most of these laws dealt with border security and keeping of the watch along the border, proclaiming harsh penalties for transgressions. Specifically targeted were English rebels and traitors who actively worked or conspired with others against English interests in Scotland and along the frontier separating the two kingdoms. Within this code, a list of felonies labelled 'border treasons' forbade any attempt to undermine royal authority within the jurisdictions of the March Wardens. Criminality consequently received a renewed special treatment in the Marches, with harsher penal codes and a style of military government that sought to undermine all quasi-military activity that March law did not sanction. By enforcing Border service and the call to the fray, March law only condoned bloodshed against criminals, and it set a level of tolerable deadly violence. Unfortunately for the March officials, this

only encouraged the culture of violence that underpinned the Northumbrian military community. Moreover, the Northumbrians in general had a meshed military identity formed by the internal factors of kith and kinship, and the external factor of the Franco-Scottish threat; the two were mutually supportive. Feuding and internecine violence were inseparable from the military capabilities of the Marchers, and this greatly complicated the enforcement of March law.

Although March treasons specifically attacked any direct attempt to confederate amongst the surnames, they also targeted the bonds that made such actions possible. Wardens had the power to enquire 'if any Englishman have contrarie his dutie of allegeance entred into any unlawefull assurance, rebellious promisse, condition, or bond with any Scottsman.'[113] Most of these associations resulted in the breaking of the peace, a problem that had overwhelmed the ineffectual English wardens of the early 1540's. This led to the declaration of such action as March treason, although it is likely that this was not done until the reign of Mary Queen of Scots.[114] With the creation of this treason, any association with Scots, and the very act of entering Scotland with the intention to conspire with others, gave the king's officers ample cause to arrest, detain and even execute any person who had upset the delicate truces that political settlements tried to impose. Where March Law failed to bring justice against cross-border confederacies, common law usually obliged since March law was too specific in its scope to award the Wardens sole legal authority, even in the Liberties. When John Heron was acquitted of March treason after his arrest in 1543, he was still jailed for receiving stolen property and conspiring with the thieves of Tynedale to reset English

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[113] *Bell MSS*, ff. 168-69.
[114] *Bell MSS*, f. 167.The clause specifically mentions the Queen of Scots. Before this law, it was essentially up to the Scottish Wardens to see that bills were filed against all English truce-breakers, without which there would have been no grounds for arrest.

fugitives.[115] The lack of any regular, itinerant courts in Northumberland meant that the administration of the king's justice was spotty, so that when the men of Northumberland found themselves despoiled by their Tynedale and Redesdale compatriots during the embroilments of 1537-41, there was little that the Warden could do since it was technically a matter for the common law courts.

Even the enforcement of both March law and common law was an ineffective means of calming the Marcher highland clans, or deterring feuds amongst the rest of Northumbrian society. According to Suffolk, March law and common law were mutually exclusive so that the Warden was not allowed to try any common crimes, including manslaughter, unless the accused involved a Scots Border clan in the commission of their crime.[116] Still, the Warden often found himself included in the Commission of Peace, or *oyer et terminer*.[117] After the Hexham jailbreak, Bowes and Ellerkar were part of the *oyer et terminer* that was supposed to investigate the assault.[118] It was through this inclusion in the common law courts that Border officers tried Cuthbert Charlton for a murder in his native dale.[119] It was also the eyre courts that sent Little John Heron of Chipchase south to London in 1537.[120] Robson holds these up as examples of the efficacy of royal law,[121] but in fact these trials were far fewer than the offences that had been committed. Even when there was an arrest under either set of laws, the burden of proof was upon the accuser, who often failed to give witness for fear of retribution.[122] Offenders caught in the commission of the crime were often executed

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[115] BL, Add. MSS. 32651 f. 247.
[116] LP, XVIII(1), no. 964 (March 7, 1543).
[117] LP, XVIII(1), no. 964 (March 7, 1543).
[118] *LP*, XIII(2), no. 1101. (December 1538).
[119] PRO, SP 1/125 ff. 21-2 (Sept. 23, 1537).
[120] PRO SP 1/124 ff. 113-114 (August 27, 1537).
[121] Robson, *English Highland Clans*, p. 159.
[122] See below concerning the Wardens' courts and the empanelling of the juries.

summarily, which at times could generate the deadly feud with the family of the justice.[123] The jury system was just as vulnerable. Aside from unwillingness amongst the surnames to testify against their former Keeper in 1543, there was also the problem that the jury assembled by Suffolk was plainly in favour of acquitting Heron simply because of his broad connections.[124] Many of the jury simply feared the military power that would visit their properties upon conviction.

Wardens' courts were far from perfect, and their increased usage in the sixteenth century did little to stem the blood feuds and the contempt for legal structure. First, the use of juries amongst those who pursued the deadly feud as an alternative to royal justice was problematic. The fact that Tynedalers and Redesdalers were not dispossessed when the head of the household was convicted of *any* crime within or without the Liberty meant that the deadly feud could be easily pursued against the members of the jury. This was a prime concern in 1543 when Suffolk was trying to administer justice amongst the dales.[125] Plaintiffs were unwilling to show their faces in court. Any attempt at all by royal officials to enforce the law was seen as an invasion of border life, as witnessed by the murder of hapless 'Hodge' à Fenwick in 1537. This speaks of a certain resentment towards the gentlemen of the Marches, as each court was supposed to have a jury comprised of principal men and their tenants, which meant the segment of society that was most adversely affected through Border ridings acted as judge, jury and executioner. Although this put broken men at a distinct disadvantage in seeking a favourable outcome, the Wardens' courts allowed justice to be served in an area that most of England considered wild and without rule, although in many respects, the accused were already convicted before the first inquest was held. Another problem was that

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[123] *CBP*, II, no. 103, 374 and 881.
[124] BL, Add. MSS 32561 f. 269.
[125] BL, Add. MSS 32651 f. 247 (August 21, 1543).

the Wardens' courts appeared at irregular intervals; it appears that the wardens preferred to direct most of their attention towards days of redress since these provided a stabilising factor after cross-border raids had occurred. Moreover, in the instability of the 1540's, March Wardens were probably more concerned with the direct action of open warfare and the pursuit of Scottish reivers and English rebels across the border than with the humdrum administration of everyday justice within their own jurisdictions. Border justice and its outlet, the Wardens' courts, was limited.

Many northern officers viewed a relentless administration of justice as the answer to the problems of the Marches but some voiced their certain misgivings about the ability of a single Wardens' court in each March to control lawlessness. Parr, for example, feared that Suffolk's judicial enthusiasm would only drive the Tynedalers into the arms of the Scottish.[126] Wharton, on the other hand, was well known as a hanging judge, putting pledges to death when the families they stood for reneged on their assurances of good behaviour.[127] As a complement to royal justice, raids and chevauchées into Northumberland became commonplace during the strife of the 1540's and 1550's, when the government realised that the far North when left to its own devices could develop its military power independently from the crown. The king desperately desired to keep the borders under English control. Continual and sharp policies regarding the marches soon coloured royal action in the north when individual rebels and criminals proved too wily to capture; the king's men would ruthlessly hunt down their settlements and burn their houses.[128] If an entire population of marchers had raised the ire of the king, their lands and crops became targets of destructive chevauchées that left entire regions barren. In the end, these

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[126] PRO, SP 1/178 f. 85 (May 24, 1543).
[127] PRO, SP 1/179 f. 151 (June 1543).
[128] See chapter 4 for a wider discussion of police actions.

were limited in their success in bringing offenders to justice, mainly due to their ability to slip over the border. No police raid into Tynedale was ever truly successful in arresting men for the Wardens' courts since there were ample escape routes into Scotland, and with them Scottish lairds who were all too willing to resettle their English brethren. That the laird of Hesleyside and his Charlton relatives went unmolested by the king's officers was due to their sometimes residency in the shelter of Liddesdale, with the Armstrongs no less.[129] This shelter prompted Bowes to order Heron into a raid against Thorlieshope, in the anticipation of breaking up the cross-border ties of Tynedale and Liddesdale.[130] Even when such raids dropped on unsuspecting customers, there was still the task of locating and assaulting the houses of the individuals in question. According to Bowes' survey, these were all placed in strong, inaccessible locales,[131] while Lord Wharton commented that the woods of the dales ought to be felled so that the thieves would have no place to hide, suggesting that the Warden was simply not powerful enough to capture chief offenders.[132] With such difficulties, the arrest of fugitives was nearly impossible, despite the power of the sheriff and the Warden to make arrests within and without the former Liberties.

The keeping of arrested suspects was even more difficult. The contempt with which the men of Northumberland treated the gaol-houses and their incumbent garrisons was not a matter for the Wardens' courts since it was not considered March treason to interfere with an individual soldier (unless he was in the course of performing a hot trod, or was acting as the watch); neither was it March treason to hamper the function of any of the border garrisons, although it could be treated as a

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[129] PRO, SP 1/117 ff. 181-82 and 1/123 ff. 214-15; *LP,* XII(2) no. 291 (July 7, 1537).
[130] BL, Add. MSS 32646 f. 270, (Dec. 2, 1541).
[131] PRO SP 1/169 ff 19-54 (*Bowes Survey of 1541*).
[132] *LP,* XVIII(1) no. 799 (This is listed as June 1543, although it could be dated up to two years earlier or later.)

felony. Yet, there was ample enough reason to fear for the security of the king's

soldiers, as many were subjected to violence by the surnames. The burning of Tarset

Hall in 1525 by the dalesmen, the liberation of the prisoners inside, and the

subsequent chasing of the garrison from Tynedale, emphasized the dangers of such

posts.[133] Although there were no ambushes against gaol deliveries in this period,

such actions were not unheard of in Northumberland.[134] This puts into context the

jailbreak at Hexham in 1538, which, while underscoring Carnaby's ineptitude, only

contributed in a small way to a long history of jail breaking and escape in the

Marches of Northumberland. Such assaults on the gaols were often done in collusion

with Scottish allies; Tarset Hall, Hexham, and the burning of Halton in 1541 were all

done with the help of Liddesdale.[135] These indeed were March treasons due to the

involvement of the Scots surnames, although the Wardens were powerless to stop

them. It is ironic that the military and policing infrastructures provided some of the

softest targets in Northumberland, but without the power to try common felons with

immediacy, Wardens could only wait and hope that apprehended felons would

remain in custody. This issue was never successfully addressed, and as late as 1566,

Redesdalers, led by the Halls (who were beginning to come into their own power),

attempted to break open the jail at Harbottle, only to be foiled by the guards.[136]

Border law only received more scrutiny after the collapse of the last English

garrisons in Scotland in 1550. The Northumbrians who had served the English king

as whitecoats soon found their old ways again once they were dismissed from

service, a stark contrast to the last years of Henry VIII, when the dalesmen "teetered

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[133] *LP*, IV (1) no. 1427 (June 17, 1525).
[134] In 1518, Lord Dacre lost several prisoners to an ambush at Rothbury by the men of Redesdale, who also slew one of his baronial officers. PRO SP 1/117 ff. 223-24; Robson, *English Highland Clans*, pp. 155-56.
[135] *LP*, IV(1) no. 1427 (June 17, 1525); PRO SP 1/140 ff. 77-8 (Dec. 11, 1538); BL Add. MSS 32646 f. 270 (Dec. 2, 1541).
[136] *CSPF*, (ed. 1871) no. 110 (Feb. 19, 1566).

on the edge of respectability."[137] After the resumption of the old borders after the

English Pale had collapsed, there were more opportunities for the surnames to spoil

the honest inhabitants of England and Scotland, so that by 1551 their former

commanders once again employed the pejorative terms that in the late 1530's had

described their 'wild and misdemeaned' ways.[138] The surnames' tendency to feud

was a prime target of the customary March Laws, which meant that it was the duty

of the Warden to curtail the warring and feuding of the surnames. The codes drawn

up by Wharton in 1552, when he served as deputy Warden-General under the Duke

of Northumberland, stated that any man who slew another from the opposite realm

should be arrested and brought to a day of redress with the Scottish Wardens,[139]

where they would receive their punishment. It was March treason to conspire with a

Scot in murder, burning, robbing, rustling, and riot, within the English Marches, and

Wharton added the penalty of death to these offences.[140] Of most concern were the

cross-border confederacies that defied national loyalties. Collaboration with the

Scots, and with rebels and felons, especially during times of open conflict, was a

severe problem for the crown and its border officers. The mere existence of

prohibitions did not necessarily mean that they were obeyed or enforced; infractions

only increased when Wardens were occupied with other business. Riding with or

receiving a Scot into one's household whilst in the commission of a March crime

was therefore one of the March treasons that Wardens were eager to squash, usually

by executing ringleaders. Supplying any Scot with armour or artillery or horses

earned the transgressor a death sentence as well. Unlicensed trysting with the Scots,

to the hurt of the realm, was part of Bell's code as well, which was left intentionally

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[137] Robson, *English Highland Clans*, p. 199.
[138] BL, Calig. B VIII f. 106 (*Bowes Survey of 1551*).
[139] Nicholson, *Leges*, pp. 56-71; *Bell MSS*, f. 62; *Foedera*, xv f. 265.
[140] *Bell MSS*, ff. 166-70. The power to try these crimes is listed by Bell as the main prerogative of the Wardens Courts.

vague so that any cross-border confederacy could be treated as a March crime.[141] According to the Privy Council, such trysts were the most common infraction within the Marches.[142]

Part of the problem with Northumberland was that its domestic security was either decrepit or non-existent. Domestic March law was designated to secure the frontier, and to provide at least a nominal *posse comitatus* for the watch and ward of the frontier. The foremost problem of crimes relating to defence were failure to answer the call to a muster or a fray, and interfering in the 'hot trod', or pursuit of reivers and thieves. The borders were expected to keep some degree of military preparedness, and any failure to answer a muster amounted to an open door for all reivers and foreign armies. Before Wharton addressed the problem, this particular offence often went unpunished. During the Solway Moss campaign of 1542, some of Lord Dacre's tenants failed to respond to Wharton's muster.[143] Dacre himself was soon accused of not performing his military duties, as he should have. Although Dacre was never brought up on formal charges, several letters from the king expressed displeasure over such callousness. Dacre eventually pleaded ignorance and to soothe the king's anger, supplied him with the names of several traitors that the lord's men had arrested. Desertion from the Wardens' rodes, too, shared a special place in border law, with all offenders receiving summary executions. In 1542 and again in 1545, English raids into the Scottish middle marches met with disaster when their escorting border horsemen fled in the face of the enemy,[144] resulting in the deaths or captures of many valuable royal officers and pensioners. On both occasions, Henry VIII personally ordered the capture and punishment of all who

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[141] *Bell MSS*, pp. 166-70. These crimes are listed by Bell as the concerns of the Wardens' Courts.
[142] *APC*, XXII, p. 552.
[143] *LP*, XVII, no. 1119.
[144] At Haddon Rig in 1542, the Redesdale men were the first to flee, while at Ancrum Moor in 1545 the assured surnames under the Laird of Bonjedward turned coat on their erstwhile English allies.

fled.[145] For all of his effort, none of the men who refused to attend their Wardens were brought up on charges as the penalty of imprisonment was too difficult to enforce since jailbreaking was commonplace. Wharton sought to amend the problem by adding the death penalty to any failure to respond to the fray, which made it tantamount to mutiny.[146] Although no records of Wardens' courts survive from Wharton's tenure as deputy Warden-General, there were no complaints from the gentry regarding the refusal to follow the fray. Wharton's measures seem to have had at least some effect, although the death penalty was later removed from this offence.[147]

March law reinforced Border service, and although there is no penalty listed in Wharton's code, it was common punishment for negligent soldiers to compensate the bereaved.[148] Night watches fell under this same code regarding border defence, with similar punishments of fines and imprisonment at the officer's pleasure for non-compliance, although negligent watches still fell under the category of March treason.[149] The law code specifies weaknesses throughout the Marches that were most susceptible to incursions, and ordered sentries to be posted at dark. Many of the posts guarded fords across the Tyne, Coquet, Rede and Tweed rivers, as well as passes through the uplands of the Pennines and Cheviot.[150] The most significant clause of domestic March law regarding the military strength of the frontier covered the keeping of horse and harness. Wharton required that every landlord should appoint sufficient ground to each of his tenants so that they could afford horse,

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[145] Had there been any trial over the actions of the dalesmen, it would have been difficult to successfully prosecute. The English after all had been caught off-guard, and there was no real precedent for executing soldiers who fled in a rout. At best, it was a stretch for Henry to consider this a matter for the courts. Bowes, who divided his force while in hostile territory, committed the real mistake.

[146] Nicholson, *Leges,* passim.

[147] Bell MSS, ff. 180-82.

[148] *CBP,* I, no. 834.

[149] Nicholson, *Leges,* ff. 143-47.

[150] For a fuller discussion of this obligation and the placement of the watches, see chapter five.

armour and weapons 'according to the auncient use and custome of the borders.'[151]

Despite the law, unfurnished men appeared at every muster. In the muster of 1539,

the heads of each village were for the most part armed, yet the numbers of ill-

furnished men were substantial, with some villages having neither horse nor harness

for any tenants, although most of these were in areas that were not subject to constant

raids, or feuding.[152]

The enforcement of March law was problematic in dealing with the

unconstrained militarism of the Northumbrians since the enforcement of Border

service, and the custom of the hot trod encouraged impulsive violence without the

guidance of local military authority. There were times when even garrisons became

embroiled in the same problems that plagued Northumberland society, so that

military law tried to alleviate the problem when March law proved inadequate.

Often, there were cases that were difficult to classify. An incident involving the

porter of Berwick, Lionel Gray, could have been tried as an offence according to

military, common and March laws. In 1538, a rumour circulated Berwick, suggesting

that Gray had secretly offered the Scots entry into Berwick in return for a substantial

amount of money. Gray allegedly had plotted to kill the town's officers, usher in the

Scots and use the city as a bargaining chip to regain his lost lordship of Brandford in

the East March. Gray vehemently denied the charges but was sent to York, and

imprisoned while suffering interrogation at the hands of the Council of the North.[153]

The king personally intervened in the matter, vouching personally for Gray's honesty,

as Gray was one of the king's Border pensioners.[154] The council could not exact any

confession from Gray, even after he was put to the question, and suspicions

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[151] *Bell MSS*, ff. 180-82.
[152] NRO, MSS ZAN D.25.
[153] *LP*, XVIII(1) no. 237.
[154] *LP*, XVIII(1) no. 277; BL, Calig. B III, ff. 203-205.

immediately fell upon his accusers, who eventually confessed to fabricating the story

in order to seek revenge upon Gray for a past slight.[155] The matter was eventually

settled as a common law violation, since there was no actual involvement of Scots,

and the crime did not contravene any existing statutes that regulated the garrison.

Statutes in the border towns of Berwick, Newcastle and Carlisle declared harsh

penalties for entreating with rebels and Scots, while seriously hindering the ability of

any Scottish person to reside within the English marches. In Carlisle, for example, no

Scots residing in the city were allowed to wander the streets after the watch had been

set, while unlicensed Scots were immediately imprisoned.[156] In 1542, Lord Lisle

proscribed a list of ordinances for Berwick that included strict regulations for all

soldiers in the garrison.[157] In theory, the Marshall dealt with offending soldiers, but it

seems that at least in Berwick the Marshall courts shared power with the courts of the

mayor, although the Warden might also intercede in any particular case if the Privy

Council ordered him to do so.[158] In general, the garrisons remained difficult to

control. The fact that the Berwick garrison had joined the Heron-Carr feud

demonstrated that even the crown's soldiers were liable to embroil themselves in the

internecine violence of the Marcher community. By the end of the Anglo-Scottish

conflict, it was reported that the soldiers of Berwick were daily involved in feuds and

disputes, so that the Captain reported 'some seyvere punishment by losying a hand or

a member muste be used for the terror of those whiche nowe daylye desythe and

otherweys offend th'offycers'.[159] It was also reported that bands of soldiers had also

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[155] *LP*, XVIII(1) no 432 (3). The two conspirators were charged with the common felony of sedition and sent to the pillory to have their ears cropped, a gruesome example of the efficacy of the common law courts in York and Berwick.
[156] CRO, CA 2/17, *Carlisle City Dormont Book.*
[157] *LP*, XVII, no. 343(1).
[158] Tough, *Frontier*, p. 164.
[159] PRO, SP 59/3/32.

roamed the Northumberland countryside, often taking the opportunity to despoil their rivals even when they wore the uniform of the king's bands.[160]

The law codes that existed in the Marches were inadequate in quelling the feuding and violence of the Marchers. On the one hand, the crown encouraged the military community to take an active part against the Scots, encouraging 'them of Tindaill and Riddisdail for th'annoyance of Scotland—God sende them all good spede!'[161] Yet, when the Marchers feuded with each other, the crown reacted with surprise, as if it were out of character. By attempting to instil law and order in the Marches, the Wardens were charged with an impossible task. The Northumberland families were entirely willing to forget their allegiances in order to pursue their own interests, and they often did this by means of violence, so that their militarism that was used against the Scots soon turned inwards. The military community of Northumberland was a paradox. Although the two kingdoms of Scotland and England were in theory unified with the accession of James I in 1603, feuding and criminality remained a problem well into the seventeenth century.[162] Border law, though, eventually faded away as the counties of Northumberland, Cumberland and Westmoreland, plus the uplands of the Palatinate became "middle counties", losing their status as a frontier. There was no perfect solution to the northern problem; endemic violence and instability ensured this.

Militarism manifested itself in two distinct ways in Northumbrian society. The gentry's role in the defence of the Marches reinforced their almost instinctive networking that provided military power. The military role that the gentry played

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[160] PRO, SP 59/3/33.
[161] Edward Charlton, *Memorials of North Tynedale and Its Four Surnames*, (J.M. Carr: Newcastle, 1871), pp. 38-9.
[162] PRO, SP 14/9A (1604).

depended upon this network of family and tenants. However, this also made the military community vulnerable to feuds and violence. The surnames, on the other hand, were militarised out of need for survival. After 1536, this became a means of support for the clans who were willing to turn on their heidsmen and provide an active policing force. After the ritual of recidivism and pardons played itself out by 1541, the majority of the clans found that their feuding tendencies had been redirected towards Scotland by the crown. At the same time, the clans soon found that they had been outclassed on the battlefield. Combined with the feud with Liddesdale that erupted after 1541, the dales clans became bogged down by their poverty and their innately conservative brand of militarism.

March law attempted to at least reduce the local military power of the Northumbrians during Dudley's administration. At the same time, it tried to amend the weaknesses that militarism introduced into Northumbrian society. It specifically attacked the surnames' tendency to rely on cross-border ties. It also addressed internal security by attempting to stem the Northumbrians' idiosyncratic feuding, so that the gentry and their tenants also found themselves targeted by Warden's courts. Ultimately, March law proved too difficult to enforce when the Warden could not guarantee the safety of plaintiffs and witnesses.

Most of all, the powerful connections of kith and kin which provided the foundation for military power proved too powerful for March law to work effectively. The Ford Castle dispute and the Heron-Carnaby feud were hallmarks of militarily powerful Border families. The Wardens simply did not have the military resources to put an end to this type of internecine feuding, except during the first half of the 1540's, when troop concentrations skyrocketed in Northumberland. Violence and militarism continued to act as a stumbling block for Tudor authority,

and the attempt to harness the Marchers' aggression for the wars against Scotland only made matters worse for the Northumbrians in the 1550's.

Chapter 8: Conclusion

The Tudor responses to the Border conflicts of 1542-60 demonstrate the limitations under which the English operated. The wars themselves were nothing but a series of destructive raids of varying sizes, punctuated from time to time by either a major battle or similar catastrophe. Yet the Tudors were unable to secure the border. The conflict lasted for nearly twenty years longer if we count the years of covert warfare that preceded the escalation, and Northumberland absorbed most of the blows that Scotland delivered. The wars of Henry and Somerset had taxed the Northumbrians so that they were incapable of effective military action after 1550. Poverty and ineffective leadership undermined border tenure. Many of the gentry were left open to depredation because their tenants could not afford to arm themselves, while others funnelled military resources into private feuds. In the absence of cash, many common Marchers resorted once again to theft, usually from their neighbours.

The political ambitions of Henry VIII and Protector Somerset provided a possible avenue for military reform in the Borders. The war with Scotland had left open the chance for an overhaul of their frontier defences. For a moment, it appeared as if the Marchers might transform themselves into modern soldiers while serving in the Tudor armies, but especially in the garrisons. The plan suffered from logistical flaws. Marchers deserted the garrisons since both frequency of pay and living conditions were less than desirable. In addition, Northern cavalry were wasted in an arena that required trained gunners, and there were no provisions made for training the light Border horse to use firearms. Tudor governments squandered their chances to reform Northumberland's military institutions. Instead, the

Northumberland military community was dangerously dilapidated by the end of the wars.

The fighting that occurred during the 'rough wooing' period of the conflict (1542-51) also depleted the military power of the dalesmen. Ironically, their service to the king resulted in a serious setback whereas it should have provided an advantage. The English troops defeated at Haddon Rigg, Ancrum and Millstanes were predominantly Border horse, the majority of them from North Tynedale, Redesdale and Bewcastle. Further casualties were suffered at the hands of the Elliots, Nixons and Croziers of Liddesdale, who never forgave the Robsons and the Charltons for turning coat in 1541. The surnames never were the same after the heavy fighting, which incurred heavy casualties. Although they were able to field a small body of light cavalry for the Northern Earls in 1569,[1] their numbers were nowhere near the 2,000 that they could raise in 1541. By 1597, Lord Eure commented that Tynedale could not muster even six able horsemen, while two-thirds of Redesdale could not afford the most basic weapons.[2] They were still capable of foiling the plans of their governors, as they did when they broke the jail at Harbottle in 1566 and 1567,[3] so depletion that resulted from the wars did not cure the problematic criminality in the dales.

The main weakness in the Tudors' military schemes was the constant seesawing regarding the employment of Marchers. As seen in chapter three, myopic policies ignored the financial needs of the Northumberland borders. The duke of Northumberland's administration was determined to recoup the financial losses incurred by the collapse of the garrisons, and the Northumbrians were the first to feel the pinch. In the reign of Queen Mary, King Philip of Spain's conflict with the

[1] *Sadler Papers*, pp. 38-55; *Archaeologia Aeliana*, vol. 3, p. 366.
[2] *CBP*, II, no. 168.
[3] *CSPF*, (ed. 1871), no 110; *CSPF* (ed. 1871) no. 917.

Valois meant that most money earmarked for defence by Parliament went towards

the war effort on the continent. Once again, Northumberland defences played a

secondary role to other military ambitions. In a bid to cut military expenditures

along the border, the garrisons of Northumberland were emptied of Marchers,

leaving most to twist in the wind. This was coupled with the resumption of Border

service, which ensured the Marchers received no pay for their services. For the rest

of the century, Border service remained a nebulous concept that frustrated those who

were obliged to serve, as well as those who supposedly led them.[4]

The disappearance of military service for the Northumberland Marchers and

Border clans prompted the Tudor governments to come full circle in their policies

regarding internal security. The lack of pay forced many Marchers back to their

former roles as raiders, or as victims of brigandage. Without income, the

impoverished tenants of North Tynedale and Redesdale resorted to preying upon

their neighbours, although not to the extent that the region had witnessed just after

the Pilgrimage of Grace. Still, by 1558, Mary Tudor's administration was again

authorizing punitive raids against the dales in lieu of royal justice, just as her father

had done in 1537-38.[5] Instead of reforming the reiving clans, as Henry had desired

to do, the Tudors generally used them as fodder in their military ambitions and then

left the decaying remnants of the North Tynedale and Redesdale surnames to their

own devices after the conflict. Even the Charltons of Tynedale and Halls of

Redesdale suffered, despite being the only reiver clans to register at least some

success by gaining positions in the established military community before the end of

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[4] P.G. Boscher, 'Politics, Administration and Diplomacy: The Anglo-Scots Border, 1550-60,'
Durham University Ph.D., 1985. See appendices I and II on military obligation.
[5] BL, Harl. MSS 643 f. 312B.

the wars.[6] The attempted reformation of the surnames was hardly a measure of success for Tudor state building; by the end of the century all were in desperate need of protection from the Scots of Liddesdale and Teviotdale.[7]

By 1560, there remained the question whether Marchers were counted as professional soldiers, although their performance as light cavalry might remove any doubt of their professional capabilities. Their exclusion from the garrisons may have been a matter of expediency for Tudor finances, or at least, it was a means of keeping the Border cavalry stationed at their homesteads in the dales, which were most prone to Scottish raids. Nevertheless, this reinforced their ambivalent, semi-mobilised status, although the government always insisted that their status as Border tenants implied extraordinary military responsibilities. Other than this insistence, the government was not forthcoming enough with a scheme to enforce military obligation. Without firm and consistent policy, the Northumberland March soldiers could hope for nothing better than treatment as either specialist or irregular troops, and even then only in emergencies. Even then, they still required money for armour.

Some of the Northumberland families who were active Borderers just after the Pilgrimage of Grace managed to survive the wars and maintain their ranking. The Eures, despite their reputation as parvenus, retained their substantial roles as military leaders and governors. The Herons also retained their power in Tynedale, interposing between the king and the rougher border families. Part of this resulted from the dynamics of leadership: character, connections and charisma have always been integral factors of military leadership. Ambition and courtly connections, like

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[6] *CSPF* (ed. 1869), no. 602 (5). The Halls of Otterburn were deputies of the Redesdale Keeper by 1560; they often consorted with their governor, Sir John Forster, in relieving the Scots of cattle and sheep, much as they did during the raid described in this particular document. Halls of Otterburn were also setters of the watch, and for a time being, they were also Border pensioners under Henry VIII. The Charltons, as relatives of the Herons, were able to tie their fortunes to Chipchase.

[7] *CBP*, vol. I, no. 162. The Scots Borderers enjoyed a much more prosperous economy beginning in the middle sixteenth century, mainly due to the mixed farming that survived the ravages of the wars.

those that favoured Bowes in the 1540's and Wharton and during the 1550's, were more viable in securing military offices than simply being a Marcher or a border pensioner. That Bowes was able to lead men again even after the disaster at Haddon Rig demonstrates that the crown appreciated his talents—mostly as a lawyer for the court—despite his shortcomings as a military leader. Political survivors who had other obvious talents to offer the crown could afford a military blunder and as such, Marchers who only knew soldiering did not always rise to the top when it came to military leadership.

Yet even before the wars had ended, many of the Northumbrian families lost their military importance. Many of the gentry disappeared from the military community during the last phase of the wars. Most notable were the Ratcliffes and the Carnabys, who by coincidence had supplied some of the least talented military leaders. Sir Cuthbert Ratcliffe poisoned his military career at Haddon Rigg, as his command was the first to flee the field. Ratcliffe was never allowed another position that entailed combat leadership; instead, he was shuffled off to Berwick under the watchful eye of Sir William Eure, where he enjoyed a sinecure until his death.[8] It is no surprise that Ratcliffe lost his Wardenry to Sir Ralph Eure, although any blame for the defeat should have been pinned upon Sir Robert Bowes. Many Marchers were unfit to lead. The numerous complaints that the Duke of Norfolk lodged against Sir John Widdrington and Sir Reynold Carnaby demonstrate that residence in the Marches did not necessarily translate to military skill.[9] Although these families eventually regained their standing in Northumberland society, the military incompetence of their predecessors kept them from achieving leading roles in the military community.

Able to afford better weapons and equipment, the Scots were soon able to run roughshod over their impoverished English rivals.

[8] *LP*, XIX(1) no. 79 (item 51).

Other families, such as the Greys of Chillingham and the Delavals of Coquetdale, simply stagnated. Instead, the crown looked to the gentlemen of Durham and North Yorkshire to act as March officers. From 1548-60, only two of the fifteen Wardens appointed to the East March were from Northumberland.[10] In the same period, four of the fourteen Wardens of the Middle March were from Northumberland. The rest were either seasoned soldiers like Sir Robert Bowes and Thomas Lord Wharton, or inexperienced failures such as the Marquis of Dorset. Politicians and lawyers displaced the Northumbrian gentry from the leading offices, leaving them to play minor roles as deputies and sergeants.

The Anglo-Scottish frontier was not immune to the ripples in the court, and as such, it was subjected to the same political wrangling witnessed by five separate administrations in eleven years. Most March officers whose appointments were a matter of political expediency were incompetent military leaders and incapable of policing the Marches. Lord Conyers, who received his office as a Catholic adherent to Mary's reign, was virtually ineffective in controlling the dales since he was ordered to consult the government in all matters, a sign that the government did not necessarily have utmost faith in its recent appointee.[11] Lord Wharton complained greatly of Conyers' inability to control his jurisdiction throughout his tenure.[12] When the Percys were able to regain the two Northumberland Wardenships after Mary restored them to power in 1557, the Earl proved disastrously unfit to lead. His Catholic colleagues, the Earl of Westmoreland and Lord Dacre, were supporters of Mary's policies. Both Earls failed as March leaders. Leaders appointed solely on their political connections had no real support if they were not able to act effectively

[9] See chapter 6 for a description of their military inadequacies.
[10] These were Ralph Grey of Chillingham (November 1552 – December 1553) and Thomas Percy, Earl of Northumberland (August 1557 – October 1559). See CPR, Edward VI, vol. 4, no. 258, and Foedera, vol. 15, ff. 468-77.
[11] APC, III, p. 443.

and independently. Political appointments to military offices thus fostered an atmosphere of incompetence when it came to matters of security and defence. This glaring lack of professional military leaders in the Marches only underscored the fact that the Tudors had failed to reform many English military institutions with any effectiveness. More importantly, the politicisation of March offices showed that they were still awkward extensions of the crown, neither fully developed as proper military institutions nor rewarding enough to guarantee the full military support of the Marchers.

The wars highlighted the central government's ineffective control over Marcher affairs, even though major campaigns always included the consultation of the Privy Council and the crown. When Lieutenants and Wardens-General began to direct the war effort, the Tudor government appeared almost powerless to contribute any real strategy. Although the crown and the Privy Council ostensibly controlled the March officers, there was relatively little that the government could do from 300 miles away. Thus, the specificities of Hertford's brilliant amphibious operations in 1544 and 1545 were hardly construed by the Privy Council. If the Council interfered, it usually hampered the war effort. The court-ordered raids at Haddon Rigg and Ancrum Moor both ended in disaster when the March leaders proceeded without the involvement of the Marcher high command. When Mary's government interfered with Shrewsbury's preparations in 1557, the result was a fiasco, which ended up costing the English the chance to invade Scotland. The awkwardness imposed by London's distance from the Borders demonstrated that at least some devolved authority was required if the government wanted effective leadership.

Effective March leaders were either capable, almost savage military leaders, or diplomatic enough to deal with the clannish families of Northumberland. The

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[12] Talbot MSS C ff. 111-113, 145-49 & 165-67.

Eures and the Herons were experienced enough to lead the Marchers in the campaigns of 1542-45. Sir Ralph Sadler, on the other hand, was not sufficiently conniving to contend with Tynedale and Redesdale in 1559. His successor, Sir John Forster, was adroit enough to remain Warden for over thirty years, although a choir of doubters in the Council constantly criticised him, including Sadler.[13] Ruthless military leaders in the Marches were always prepared to do the worst; Forster did when he betrayed John Hall of Otterburn to the Elliots for a cool £1000 in order to undermine Otterburn's military power.[14] War did not change the requirements of March leadership. If anything, the instability that the wars brought to Northumberland required March officials to be as vigilant as they were in the months just after the Pilgrimage.

The role that kith and kin played in the military community was unaffected by the war effort. Blood ties trumped royal authority, which made the surnames more powerful than any other community in Northumberland, though their poverty by the middle of the sixteenth century meant that they required access to wealth in order to maintain their military capabilities. The clan structure and the dues given to the heidsmen staved off decimation, at least until 1580, when only 134 men mustered for North Tynedale, with many bearing decrepit equipment and arms.[15] Other families of Northumberland continued to enjoy the military strength that numbers and family connections provided. The Herons were able to exert their influence as officers in the Marches since they had kin in both the East and Middle Marches. That the Herons of Chipchase were related to the Charltons of North Tynedale foreshadowed violence when they called to their extended family for military assistance. The Carrs enjoyed some affinity, as they received the support of

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[13] Maureen Meikle, 'A Godly Rogue: The Career of Sir John Forster, an Elizabethan Border Warden', *Northern History* 29 (1992), p. 128.
[14] *CScotP,* VIII, no. 351.

the Collingwoods during the Ford castle dispute in 1557, though they were not as well connected in military offices as the Herons were. The violence brought on by family feuds was something that Elizabeth's justices and March officials had no real power to control, a remarkable continuation of the status quo despite the best efforts of the government. The violence that erupted between the Herons and the Carrs was well beyond the control of the Warden, as the parties were summoned to court to air their grievances, and even this had no staying power in the conflict.

Although the Wardens had the power to hold court, the specific nature of March law prevented Wardens from actively intervening in feuds, as most were matters for either the Star Chamber, or the Council of the North. Some officials were even involved in the feuding, and used their position to placate both crown and Council, while conspiring with their kith and kin to undermine their rivals.[16] As families patrolled their districts whilst heavily armed, there were times when Northumberland seemed on the verge of civil war, especially during the Ford Castle dispute. Ironically, it was only during times of war that the military community was able to unite in a common cause since war seemed to be the only element that could make the Marchers forget their grudges with their neighbours. Under Henry VIII and Somerset, feuds declined since the Northumbrians were occupied with the wars. Feuding blossomed in the 1550's, at the time most young Marchers were sent home from the wars, although since many were militarily depleted, their destructiveness nowhere equalled that of the earlier years.

The few Northumberland soldiers who participated in the disastrous siege at Leith in 1560 were the last from their county to fight against the Scots in a formal war. Still, even after the end of the wars, the Marches continued to function as

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[15] *CBP*, I, no. 50.
[16] The Herons and the Forsters were especially adept at this.

military districts until the unification of England and Scotland rendered the militarised frontier meaningless. This allowed the military community to survive, although by 1580 it was seen as both decayed and of little use to the government in maintaining the defence of the Borders. Moreover, there was still the same problem of incorporating the March defences into an overarching national military organisation. Overall, Northumbrians remained markedly resistant to the new style of warfare that had blossomed on the continent. Gunpowder weapons began to appear sporadically in the musters, but remained a rarity even as late as 1595.[17] The Scots, on the other hand, were increasingly likely to use firearms in Border disputes after 1560. In 1611, a group of Armstrongs and Elliots dropped on some unsuspecting Robsons at Leaplish in North Tynedale, and used their cavalry pistols to good effect in wounding or killing nearly all of the heidsmen who were present.[18] The Robsons were defenceless against such tactics, despite the seeming safety of their bastle house.

War brought little change to Northumberland's military community in terms of organisation. The overall approach to warfare remained the same, as the terrain and the economic climate constrained the Marcher to the use of nags and lighter weaponry. The dalesmen who embarked to Ireland in the initial years of James I were perfect for the Irish marches and fighting against the kerne, although they would have been out of place anywhere else.[19] The more ordered English regiments that witnessed action in the Low Countries in the later sixteenth century were far more organised than the Band of Northern Horsemen who had served at Boulogne. The appearance of sergeants and colonels under the regimental system was a new

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[17] *CBP*, II, no. 168.
[18] Ralph Robson, *The Rise and Fall of the English Highland Clans: Tudor Responses to a Mediaeval Problem.* (Edinburgh: East Linton Press, 1989), p. 219; PRO, Londesborough MSS, May 28, 1611.
[19] *CSPD James I*, XXVII, p. 358; Godfrey Watson, *The Border Reivers,* (Bury St. Edmunds, 1974) p. 195.

step for the English, but these officers were utterly absent even from the royal garrison of Berwick.[20] Without a more modern structure of authority in Marcher military institutions, the stratification that existed during the Anglo-Scots wars was bound to survive, even if the Warden was no longer a military leader but a governor with military powers.

Without any further attempts by the Tudors to modernise the defences of Northumberland, the nature of the frontier and mere threat of constant violence meant that after 1560 the Marchers had to rely on their custom of familial defence networks. The royal centre of control and authority was too far from the frontier to bring about any real defence for Northumberland. The king's Lieutenants and the President of the Council of the North tended to be either too ephemeral or hamstrung by the limits placed upon their power to act as a power for effective change. While the problem of the Marches constantly dogged the Privy Council, there was a distinct lack of consistent policy. Without a solid commitment from the government for military reform, the Northumberland military community was destined to experience decay.

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[20] C. Cruickshank, *Elizabeth's Army*, (London: OUP, 1946) pp. 41-60.

Appendix I: Wardens of the Northumbrian Marches, 1536-60

	Middle March	East March
Robert Lord Ogle	Assist. Deputy Warden, 1532-45	
Henry, Earl of Northumberland	Lord Warden General, 1527-37	Lord Warden General, 1527-37
Sir William Eure, Lord Eure		Deputy Warden, 1537-1548
Sir John Widdrington	Deputy Warden, 1537-40	
Sir Cuthbert Ratcliffe	Deputy Warden, 1540-42	
Sir Ralph Eure	Warden, 1543-45	
Thos. Manners, Earl of Rutland	Warden-General, Aug.-Nov. 1542	Warden-General, 1542
Edward Seymour, Earl of Hertford	Warden-General, Sept.-Nov. 1542	Warden-General, Sept.-Nov. 1542
John Dudley, Viscount Lisle Earl of Warwick Duke of Norhtumberland	Lord Warden-General, 1542-43 Warden, 1550 Lord Warden-General, 1551-53	Lord Warden, 1542-43 Warden, 1550 Lord Warden-General, 1551-53
William Lord Parr	Lord Warden-General, 1543	Lord Warden-General, 1543
Sir Robert Bowes	Assist. Deputy Warden, 1542 Warden, 1545-49 and *temp.* 1550-54	Warden, 1545-49 and *temp.* 1550-54
Henry Manners, Earl of Rutland	Warden General, 1549-51	Warden General, 1549-51
Henry Grey, Marq. of Dorset	Warden-General, 1551	Warden-General, 1551
Thomas Lord Wharton	Deputy Warden-General, 1552 Warden, 1555-57	Deputy Warden-General, 1552 Warden, 1555-57
Robert Lord Ogle	Deputy Warden, 1551-62	
Sir Nicholas Stirley		Deputy Warden, 1550-51
William Lord Eure	Warden, *temp.* Edward VI, Mary and Elizabeth	Deputy Warden, *temp.* 1551-62
Ralph Gray of Chillingham		Warden, 1553-(?) Deputy Warden (?)
William Lord Dacre	Warden, 1554-55	
John Lord Conyers		Warden, *temp.* Mary
Thomas Percy, Earl of Northumberland	Warden, 1557-59 **Lord Warden-General, 1557-59** (Middle Marches only)	Warden, 1557-59
Sir Ralph Sadler	Deputy Warden, 1559-1560	Deputy Warden, 1559-60
William Lord Grey de Wilton	Lord Warden, 1560	Lord Warden, 1560

Appendix II: The Battles of Haddon Rigg and Ancrum Moor

Although they ended in defeat for the Northumbrian Marchers, the battles of Haddon Rigg and Ancrum Moor initially demonstrate the primary purpose of light cavalry: to reconnoitre and perform swift, lightning raids. Because they had failed to properly perform as light cavalry, the English Marchers were handed a stunning defeat on both instances.

The Haddon Rigg raid began in earnest, typifying the Border custom of firing villages as Sir Robert Bowes and his men burnt several towns with impunity, dividing into smaller groups but keeping Haddon in Teviotdale as their base. Much has been made of this division of force,[1] but this was common practice in the Borders, and Bowes cannot be faulted for employing the tactics that had become the standard. Bowes' error came in failing to secure the services of the men of Redesdale. After several successful raids around Teviotdale, Sir Robert had ordered all plunder, including livestock, to be sent across the border for safekeeping. Sensing that their officers had duped them, the Redesdale bands of light cavalry began to slip quietly away from the English camp. When Scottish forces led by Lord Huntley suddenly appeared on the horizon, the rest of the Redesdale light cavalry fled without delay.[2] Their actions suggest that they were unwilling to risk capture or death if they were to be cut out from the spoils. Bowes and his remaining party tried to meet Huntley's forces on foot, but the 8,000 Scottish soldiers easily overwhelmed the outnumbered English. The route ended with the capture of Bowes and the rest of

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[1] George MacDonald Fraser and Gervase Philips both have criticised Bowes for splitting his force. Yet, both admit that this was common practice, and that it had worked well before. Both authors neglect to discuss Bowes's lack of intelligence, which would have allowed him to track Huntley's movements. This, it seems, was Bowes's chief undoing, rather than his use of a tried and true method of Border warfare. See George Macdonald Fraser, *Steel Bonnets*, (London: Collin Harvels, 1989) p. 248 and Phillips, *The Anglo-Scots War, 1513-50* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1999), p. 148.
[2] Gainsford Bruce, 'The English Expedition into Scotland in 1542.' *Archaeologia Aeliana* Third Series, vol. 3 (1907), p. 195.

his captains, with the loss of several hundred dead and wounded. Sir Robert had made a desperate error in focusing upon securing his plunder. Removing booty from the English camp undercut the morale of the men who were hoping to supplement their meagre wages with the spoils that they had collected. Although he most likely had intended to split the spoils, his actions certainly would have looked suspicious to the experienced Marchers. Bowes' real blunder, though, lay in lack of information regarding the enemy's whereabouts. This suggests that Bowes was not adept at gathering intelligence, a practice that was essential for any successful Warden.[3] By 1542, there were assured Scots working with Bowes, including the Earl of Angus, who barely escaped from Haddon with his life. That Huntley utterly surprised Bowes with a cumbersome force of 8,000 men suggests that Bowes failed to properly utilise his Scottish allies for information gathering. It is possible, though, that Bowes received faulty information regarding Huntley's position, but it seems unlikely that such a large force could move through the populated dales of Southern Scotland without advertising their intended route.

Sir Ralph Eure, on the other hand, was probably the most successful English Border raider during the initial stages of the 'rough wooing.' Eure exhibited certain flexibility, raiding either with small parties or with large troops of light cavalry. Eure also demonstrated his grasp on the strategies of Anglo-Scottish border conflict. In 1544, Eure proposed that he should march through Scotland to Leith to cover Hertford's landing, thereby launching a two-pronged assault into Scotland that would keep the Borders pinned down while Hertford conducted his amphibious landing near the Scottish capital. Eure requested 1,000 horsed archers from Yorkshire and the Bishopric, to accompany his 2,000 elite horsemen, a telling

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[3] Sir Thomas Wharton was adept at gaining information. Wharton had a special talent for maintaining adequate spy rings, which he maintained through the application of bribes and promises.

comment on his desire to utterly destroy the Scottish Borders.[4] Making good on his

promise, Eure and his father burnt Jedburgh and sacked the abbey on 9 June 1544.[5]

Eure earned a reputation for having too much forwardness in combat,

personally leading his troops in charges. By 1544, Eure had made quite a mess in

the Marches, raiding up and down the Borders, taking time to spoil even the lands of

the Scots who had assured themselves to Henry VIII. The Duke of Suffolk spent

much of his time as Lieutenant trying to placate Sir George Douglas, who had allied

himself with the English, and whose friends were continually raided by the Berwick

garrison. It would have been almost criminal to allow Eure to oversee the days of

redress with the affronted Scotsmen, and to file the bills that were presented as a

result of his own actions. In place of Eure, it was George Bowes who went to

redress the Scottish allies, since he was impartial, unlike Eure, whose men it was

who raided the borders.[6] The warlike tendencies of the Marchers fed off of his

aggressiveness, enabling the utter destruction of Teviotdale over the course of

eighteen months. Yet this personal method of combat leadership also had its

drawbacks, none so apparent as the disaster at Ancrum Moor.

In late February 1545, Eure and Sir Brian Layton, the captain of Norham

castle, set off with several thousand men, for the purpose of burning Melrose and the

surrounding area. The Earl of Shrewsbury instructed them to raid cautiously, and

await the power of the Bishopric.[7] Eure and Layton acted rashly, utterly ignoring

Shrewsbury. For four days, the Marchers spoiled and plundered the countryside of

the Douglas family, who had renounced their loyalty to England as a result of Eure's

actions. Whilst marching out of Melrose along Dere Street, the English spied a few

of Douglas's horsemen racing over Lilliard's Edge. Smelling blood, Eure and his

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[4] *LP*, XIX(1) no. 335.
[5] *LP*, XIX(1) no. 684.
[6] *LP*, XVIII(2) no.423.

mounted contingent galloped furiously up the hill in pursuit. By the time they had reached the crest, Eure's men were in frenzy—Douglas would make good quarry. As a prisoner, his ransom would bring decent money, but his death would give the Middle Marchers a free hand in carving up Teviotdale for themselves. Yet upon cresting the hill, they encountered a schilltron of 2,000 Lowlander spearmen blocking their way. Undaunted, Eure and his men wanted battle, and they immediately alighted and charged in disordered ranks. Crashing against the disciplined Scottish spears, Eure and his men fought furiously in the initial moments but ultimately broke. Eure and Layton were cut down almost immediately. Seeing that their leader had fallen, the Marchers fled, some on horse and others on foot, running directly into their own footsoldiers who had been running to catch up.[8] Although casualty figures were comparatively light for such a rout, Douglas noted that the dead included a high number of captains, including Lord Ogle, all of whom had formed the front line of the English charge. As reports of the battle flowed in, it became apparent that control in the borders had been lost. The extent of the damage was clear: all of the good horses and all of the garrison captains of the Middle Marches had been lost in Scotland.[9]

The raids at Haddon Rigg and Ancrum Moor demonstrate that the Marchers were much more suited for chevauchées rather than set battles. Light horse were not mounted infantry; when they met with heavier armed soldiers, they could expect serious casualties. Running battles, such as that at Fairnington in 1546, were much more suitable for light cavalry. Although both raids at Haddon and Ancrum Moor ended as battles, the bands of light cavalry attempted to avoid such costly encounters.

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[7] *LP*, XX(1) nos. 272, 332 and 395.
[8] *LP*, XX(1) nos. 281., 285, 312
[9] BL, Add. MSS 32656 f. 172 and 195; *LP*, XX(1), nos. 95 & 301.

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