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**‘If The King Had Asked For An Ass, He Would
Have Received His Wish, This Time’:**

**A Study of the Career of Thomas de Hatfield,
bishop of Durham (1345-1381), as a Royal
Servant, 1336-1357.**

**Nicholas Andrew Barker, MA (Research) in Medieval History,
University of Durham, 2003.**



- 4 OCT 2004

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'If The King Had Asked For An Ass, He Would Have Received His Wish, This Time':
A Study of the Career of Thomas de Hatfield, bishop of Durham (1345-1381), as a
Royal Servant, 1336-1357.

'If the king had asked for an ass, he would have received his wish, this time.'

[*Chronicon Angliae*, ed. E.M. Thompson, Rolls Series, vol. 64. (London, 1874), 20.]

This was the reported reply of Pope Clement VI to his cardinals, after they had expressed reservations regarding Thomas de Hatfield's provision to the see of Durham in 1345. Whilst the authenticity of such a comment is clearly doubtful, it does provide a useful starting point from which to study Thomas de Hatfield's rise to Edward III's episcopate, and then assess his achievements up until 1357. Through a career in royal administration, Hatfield followed the typical path to the English episcopate, and by the time of his provision he was Edward's keeper of the privy seal. However, Clement's comment has indicated to historians that Hatfield's personal relationship with Edward and Anglo-Papal relations in the mid-1340s, were the dominant factors in the clerk's acquisition of Durham. Therefore, there is temptation to take this as a measure of Hatfield's unsuitability for the office. However, in this dissertation I hope to illustrate that this was not the case. Hatfield *did* establish a close relationship with the king, and this *did* subsequently play an integral role in his ascent to Durham's episcopal throne. Yet this was precisely because, as a royal servant, Hatfield showed himself entirely worthy of royal trust. His promotion was no unwarranted rewarding of an unworthy favourite and from 1345, until the end of this survey, the bishop continued to serve his king with zeal. Hatfield was a warrior bishop, the bishop Odo of his time, and hence, much of this thesis focuses on the part he played in Edward III's achieving, by 1357, of a dominant position in northern Europe, and how this was linked to his role as bishop of Durham.

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Importantly, Hatfield appears to have been in no way embarrassed by the support he received from his monarch. In fact, in later life he was keen to visibly acknowledge both this debt and how he continued to see himself as a servant of the crown. Hatfield ordered a depiction of Edward III's crowned head and heraldic device, to be placed at the foot of the steps to the episcopal throne, which he had constructed and incorporated into his funerary monument. This provides a graphic depiction of how his path to the episcopal chair lay in his serving his king.¹

The highly sought after 'flesh-pots'² of Durham were a great reward for a royal servant. Yet Hatfield was in no sense receiving a retirement present, as his service of his king did not end upon his installation. However the king's purpose in raising Hatfield to the bishopric was rather different from William Edington's, for example. Edington was provided as bishop of Winchester a few months after Hatfield was to Durham.³ Whilst Hatfield left Edward's civil administration once he had secured Durham,⁴ Edington spent almost 'his entire episcopal career as either treasurer or chancellor'.⁵ Durham and Winchester were two vastly different sees, and Edward had vastly differing agendas in securing them for two of his favourite clerks. By this period, Winchester held no great political or geographical significance. For Edington it represented a continuation, albeit the pinnacle, of his monarch's method of paying those in his civil service, by dispensing ecclesiastical patronage.

Durham was very different: its location was all important. By the mid-fourteenth century the office of bishop of Durham had long since developed a very particular importance as a bulwark against the Scots. Hatfield was not merely being invited to sustain himself from the temporalities, as Edington surely was. Edward went to great lengths to secure Durham for Hatfield. This was because the bishop of Durham had a real job to do, and in Hatfield the king believed he had found a man more than capable of doing it.

¹ N.A. Barker, 'Death and the Bishop: the Salvation and memory of Thomas Hatfield (Bishop of Durham 1345-1381)' (BA Dissertation, University of Durham, 2001), 19.

² Tout [*Chapters in the Administrative History of Mediaeval History of England*, iii, (Manchester, 1928-33), 436.] used this term when describing bishop Fordham's removal to Ely in 1388.

³ Edington was bishop from 1345-66 [*Handbook of British Chronology*, eds. F.M. Powicke and E.B. Fryde, 2nd ed., (London, 1961), 258.].

⁴ Hatfield was finally provided to Durham by Clement VI on 9 June 1345 and his last identification as keeper was on the 3rd. Tout wrongly suggests Hatfield remained keeper for sometime after his provision [*Chapters*, v, 20.].

As the title indicates, this thesis is limited in its scope. Hatfield enjoyed a long pontificate, being bishop for just less than thirty-six years, having spent just under a decade in Edward III's civil service. Therefore this thesis is restricted to a consideration of Hatfield as a servant of the crown, from 1337 until 1357. This incorporates [approximately] the decades that preceded and succeeded his provision to Durham. The choice to study Hatfield as a royal servant was not a difficult one. His service to his king is most striking in uniting his career before and after his provision. This was how Hatfield both became bishop and sought to justify this promotion, and it therefore facilitates the greatest insights into his life.

Clearly as bishop of Durham Hatfield's role was multifaceted. He was the head of civil government in the palatinate of Durham, also its universal landlord, head of justice and its ecclesiastical head. Much work has been done on the nature of the palatinate of Durham in general, and this thesis does not attempt to greatly expand upon this debate.⁶ Except in that it provides another example of how a bishop of Durham could be both personally close to his monarch but also hope to uphold his rights against him.⁷ Nor has it been possible to study in any detail Hatfield's ecclesiastical workings within his diocese, though his relationship with the priory of Durham is addressed briefly.⁸ And also because of its potential to stand in the way of the defence of the north, Hatfield's part in the on going dispute between York and Durham has been considered. Additionally, it is worth noting how in recent times, many important insights into the lives of notable figures have been provided by thorough investigations of both the activities and make up, of their administrative departments, retinues and other adherents.⁹ Clearly such a survey for a military man such as Hatfield would be most advantageous, and indeed it would appear to be possible from available extant documentation, yet it is sadly beyond the scope of this dissertation.

⁵ J. Aberth, *Criminal Churchmen in the Age of Edward III: the case of Bishop Thomas de Lisle* (Pennsylvania, 1996), 11.

⁶ See particularly G.T. Lapsley, *The County Palatinate of Durham: A Study in Constitutional History* (New York, 1900). J. Scammell, 'The Origin and Limitations of the Liberty of Durham', *EHR*, cccxx (1966). For Hatfield as a landlord see R.H. Britnell, 'Feudal Reaction after the Black Death in the Palatinate of Durham', *Past and Present*, 198 (1990).

⁷ For a more detailed survey see S.S. Martin, *Richard D'Aungerville de Bury, 1287-1345* (Emory University Ph.D. Thesis, 1986).

⁸ Hatfield's visitation of 1354 has been the focus of an article. See B. Harbottle, 'Bishop Hatfield's Visitation of Durham Priory in 1354', *Archaeologia Aeliana*, 4th Series, xxxvi (1958). A highly useful general survey that includes many of the activities of northern bishops in this period is A.D.M. Barrell, *The Papacy, Scotland and Northern England, 1342-1378* (Cambridge, 1995).

⁹ For two notable examples see Aberth, *Lisle.*, and the work of Andrew Ayton, as seen in A. Ayton, *Knights and Warhorses: Military Service and the English Aristocracy under Edward III* (Woodbridge, 1994).

Before embarking on the main body of the dissertation, and assessing first how Hatfield convinced his king that he was capable of it, it is necessary to look briefly at the particular nature of the office of bishop of Durham. The temptation to see the palatinate of Durham as a 'microcosm of the kingdom', and its bishop as its king, should be resisted.¹⁰ Such an interpretation elevates the bishop to a level, which after the troublesome pontificates of Bek and Beaumont, he not only failed to achieve but never truly actively sought.¹¹ Dobson suggests that though 'in terms of geography, administrative autonomy, wealth and prestige', the bishop of Durham was peerless in his potential to injure the English monarchy, after Beaumont 'it would be hard to find a series of bishops... who gave... fewer grounds for concern.'¹²

This paradox should not be surprising. Great efforts were made not only to neutralise the potential threat of the occupant of the bishopric, but beyond this to utilise his potential power to the crown's advantage. However to do this it was essential that the king trust the bishop completely. Also English kings, as a rule, chose southerners for the see of Durham to ensure that they had 'no previous vested interest in the north.'¹³ Hatfield is said to have been the second son of Walter de Hatfield, from a knightly family of Holderness, near Hull, though his exact ancestry is not clear.¹⁴ Therefore, though a northerner, he lacked the degree of ties and interests in the region that later made the ascent of various Nevilles to the northern episcopate so dangerous.¹⁵

The later successes of Edward III, and the unity of purpose they engendered, should not fully disguise the king's position in 1345. The English king had himself taken the naval victory at Sluys in 1340 as a sign that times were changing for the better. Yet the victories of 1346-7 were as yet only dreams, with the reality being one of immense financial burden and relative failure. For all his great labours 'Edward III seemed but little closer to his stated goal of recovering his rightful heritage of France.'¹⁶ Therefore, though Durham had been a royal stronghold since Beaumont's death and the young king had fostered a sense of unity amongst his nobility and administration, a return to the disharmony of 1341 cannot have seemed a total impossibility. Hence

¹⁰ Quote from Lapsley, *Palatinate*, 2. Scammell ['Liberty of Durham', 449 n. 2.], for example, suggests how Lapsley's interpretation goes too far.

¹¹ For quick summary of the problems, see Martin, *Bury*, 89-96. See below for discussion of some signs of tensions between Hatfield and Edward III, over palatinate rights.

¹² R.B. Dobson, 'The Church of Durham and the Scottish Borders, 1378-88', *War and Border Societies in the Middle Ages*, ed. A. Goodman and A. Tuck (London, 1992), 129.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 130.

¹⁴ *DNB*, xxv, 154.

¹⁵ Dobson, 'Durham and the borders', 130.

¹⁶ Rogers, *War Cruel and Sharp*, 221.

Edward could ill afford to allow such a see as Durham, to fall into the wrong hands, no matter how much later historians have suggested that the potential power of the bishop was limited. However Edward was far from just filling a potentially dangerous see with a loyal servant in the hope of maintaining domestic calm.

It is as guardian of the north of England that the choice of Hatfield makes the most sense. Though, as noted above, the bishop had many other duties, most were transferable to deputies, and cannot have had much influence upon Edward's choice. Indeed the appointment of one of Hatfield's predecessors, Lewis de Beaumont, provides evidence of the integral part played by the ideal that 'the bishop of Durham enjoyed his franchise at the service of defending the borders.'¹⁷ If a letter sent by Edward II to Beaumont in 1323 is factually true in detail,¹⁸ it is likely that by this point in time such an ideal was widely held, and was not merely part of the rhetoric used, in 1318, to secure Beaumont's election.¹⁹ Some five years after he had first written to the pope proposing his wife's blood relation as a 'wall against the Scots', an angry Edward II was hoping to spur his negligent bishop into action. The king sought to do this by reminding Beaumont how he had put himself up for the office by offering the opinion that a man of noble birth was needed against the Scots.

By 1345 Edward III's main focus had long since shifted from the northern frontier, to France. However in order to avoid full-scale war on two main fronts it was vital to control the Scots. Hence Hatfield was being given a very specific task to carry out. In order to understand this Edward III's war policy needs to be studied. The English king had devoted much of the early years of his reign to fighting the Scots but in 1336 had failed to get a peace agreement sealed.²⁰ Although the *Anonimalle* and Lanercost chronicles are surely correct to point to Scottish pride as a reason for the failure, Knighton's highlighting of French influence is important.²¹ The Scots could be broken militarily but in the French they had a vital ally. It was in French interests to stop the Scots withering completely, and hence Edward had to take the *auld* alliance very seriously.²²

Diplomatically the *auld* alliance was a great hindrance to both potential Anglo-Scottish and Anglo-French agreements. In this period the most notable example of this

¹⁷ Lapsley, *Palatinate*, 305.

¹⁸ *Foedera*, ii, i, 506.

¹⁹ For 1318 letter of Edward II to the Pope see *Script. Tres.*, 98., and Lapsley, *Palatinate*, 305.

²⁰ Campbell, 'England, Scotland', 205-09.

²¹ Rogers, *War Cruel and Sharp*, 111.

²² *Ibid.*, 128. Campbell, 'England, Scotland', 208.

was in 1334. With the agreement already being proclaimed in the streets, the French delegation informed their English counterparts that they, of course, demanded the inclusion of the Scots before the treaty could be ratified.²³ However French aid was not limited to the negotiating table, as some efforts were also made to supply victuals, arms, and men. Though it is unlikely that French assistance actually ever amounted to much, the potential was always there. This could help convince the Scots to fight on and leave the English legitimately fearful.²⁴

Nevertheless by the end of the 1330s Edward III seems to have had a clear understanding of the nature of his problems to the north. He knew that through swift raiding the Scots could inflict a great degree of damage to the north of England. Though it never reached the disastrous depths it had during his father's reign, the state of the northern frontier upon Hatfield's appointment must have been a profound concern for Edward III, as will be discussed below. Hatfield's predecessor, Richard de Bury, had been reduced to paying off the Scots in order to protect the bishopric.²⁵

After concentrating his focus on France, Edward's holdings in Scotland had dwindled. The English king's greatest advantage over his brother-in-law, David II, had been that he could raise far greater forces. He could then take them across the border, and overpower the Scots, inflicting terrible damage, as the Scots were unable to muster an army sufficient to challenge the English in battle. Yet with his efforts on the continent Edward had insufficient money left in his coffers for such additional efforts in Scotland. Hence the north of England was left largely to defend itself, both in terms of the raising of men and supplies, and also the funds needed to maintain them.²⁶ In 1345 Hatfield was being sent to join forces with the likes of Ralph Neville and Henry Percy in creating a wall against the Scots. The magnitude of the task should not be underestimated.

Raiding created a lawless frontier and was very bad for morale, especially north of the Trent. It also drew potential resources and troops away from France. However, from the mid-1330s this had arguably been the most that the Scottish could threaten. The Scots lacked the internal cohesion to do much more than cause destruction within English territory. As Campbell succinctly notes; 'while the Scots could, easily, almost naturally, keep the borders in turmoil, their effectiveness for war on a grander scale was

²³ Sumption, *Trial by battle*, 136.

²⁴ For information on French supply ships sent to Scotland and plans for the landings of French armies in the British isles see Campbell, 'England, Scotland', 209-10.

²⁵ Martin, *Bury*, 151. Campbell, 'England, Scotland', 211.

²⁶ Campbell, 'England, Scotland', 211-12.

impaired by the weakness of the Scottish Crown.²⁷ So, whilst in his early years as king, Edward III used Scotland to establish and prove himself, the English monarch's situation had changed.²⁸ Hence, Hatfield's role as bishop of Durham was essentially a defensive one; to allow his king to focus on France by securing his northern frontier.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 213.

²⁸ Rogers, *War Cruel and Sharp*, 28.

The Sources

Historians have strangely neglected the career of Thomas de Hatfield. He appears to have been the English warrior bishop of his age, and his magnificent tomb situated in Durham Cathedral reveals a bishop who clearly thought himself a man of no small import.²⁹ One apparent explanation of the dearth of work upon Hatfield is the relative lack of primary source information. Thomas de Hatfield's pre-1345 career in the king's service was clearly illustrious enough to secure him the bishopric of Durham, yet historians are left with little to distinguish Hatfield from his civil service peers.³⁰ But furthermore it seems that Hatfield's very importance is the cause of his elusiveness to the historian.

In early December 1344 after Thomas had rendered his chamber accounts to Edward III, the king had them burned, so 'that they may not again come in demand'.³¹ In addition to this, the chamber's secretive nature has meant that in addition to the dearth of account records, subsidiary documentation is also all but non-existent.³² Therefore, whilst the papal and chancery rolls, and wardrobe account books³³ do provide many insights, we are denied the most potentially fertile window into his pre-Durham career. Even had Hatfield's chamber account been extant, our task would be far from straight forward. As Tout laments, 'the hardest problem in dealing with medieval records is to disentangle the human element from the dull forms, and tell what manner of men they were'.³⁴

Regarding his first decade of his pontificate in Durham we are once again frustrated to a degree. Unfortunately the strong tradition of local historical writing in Durham was collapsing by the fourteenth century. Whereas writers the likes of Symeon produced 'narrative discourse' that offered many insights into events, Hatfield is only

²⁹ The tomb uniquely incorporates the episcopal throne. For discussion of the tomb see Barker, 'Death and the Bishop', 14-23.

³⁰ *Chapters*, v, 20. As Cuttino ['King's Clerks and the Community of the Realm', *Speculum* xxix (1954, Massachusetts), 397.] points out there was some 'specialisation of functions... but never to a point where it is unusual for a clerk to be reassigned or to be taken away from his customary task for a special mission'; clerks had to be all-rounders.

³¹ *CPR*, 1343-45, 371.

³² J. Vale, *Edward III and Chivalry - Chivalric Society and its Context, 1270-1350* (Woodbridge, 1982), 82.

³³ E36/204. BL MS Cotton Nero C VIII [The Wardrobe Book of Robert Ferriby, 1334-1337]. *The Wardrobe account book of William de Norwell: 12 July 1338 to 27 May 1340*, eds. M. Lyon, B. Lyon and H.S. Lucas (Brussels, 1983).

³⁴ T.F. Tout, 'The English Civil Service in the Fourteenth Century', *Collected papers*, iii (Manchester, 1934), 214.

served by a brief episodic biography.³⁵ This concentrates almost entirely upon Hatfield in a local sense, though this is perhaps not surprising, as it was a product of the monastery. Raine wrongly attributed this eulogy to the monk William de Chambre. Offler has since illustrated how the true author was Prior Wessington, although it is believed he wrote this before he gained this office in 1416.³⁶

The eulogy is highly generic: 'a mosaic of literal borrowings from earlier parts of the Gesta'.³⁷ In order to create links to the past, and probably for the lack of remembrance and creative ideas, Hatfield becomes a hybrid of the good qualities of earlier bishops of Durham. As the monks needed to justify the descent from St. Cuthbert, they sought to laud even the most oppressive bishops.³⁸ Clearly this eulogy's use in this dissertation is limited, as Wessington was writing over half a century after its scope, and was not focusing on Hatfield as a national figure. Whilst various other chronicles provide some helpful details, Edward III's court and friends were not well served by chroniclers with 'sufficient personal contact...to give accurate assessments or vivid insights'.³⁹ Ultimately references to Hatfield need to be regarded with caution.

Hatfield is the only medieval bishop of Durham with an extant register that is as yet unavailable in printed form, and this is surely explained by its frustrating nature.⁴⁰ The register is incomplete, preventing the production of a priceless itinerary that could be all important in deciphering, for example, whether Hatfield was in fact at Crecy, as the chroniclers suggest. The register is mainly useful for the ecclesiastical historian, rather than one predominantly looking at Hatfield as a royal servant. For example it lacks any material other than ordination dates for the period before 1350, with a second break occurring between 1355-59.⁴¹ Hatfield's survey of the lands of his bishopric was not undertaken until the end of his pontificate.⁴² As such it is only useful for this thesis in suggesting Hatfield's lack of desire to change the workings of the palatinate. Such a survey soon after his consecration could have provided a basis for reforming measures.

³⁵ R.B. Dobson, 'Contrasting Chronicles: Historical Writing in the Middle Ages', *Church and Society in the Medieval North of England*, 294.

³⁶ H.S. Offler, 'Medieval Historians of Durham', *North of the Tees* (Durham, 2000), 14-17.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 16. *Script. Tres.*, 136-138.

³⁸ Dobson, 'Contrasting Chronicles', 288.

³⁹ Quote from W.M. Ormrod, 'The personal Religion of Edward III', *Speculum*, 64 (1989), 851. For details on chronicles see A.Grandsen, *Historical Writing in England*, ii (London, 1982). J. Taylor, *English Historical Literature in the Fourteenth Century* (Oxford, 1987).

⁴⁰ Hamilton-Thompson did make extensive notes on it for that purpose. I would like to thank Alan Piper for providing me with access to these notes.

⁴¹ D.M. Smith, *Guide to Bishops' Registers of England and Wales: A Survey from the Middle Ages to the abolition of the Episcopacy in 1646* (London, 1981), 268.

⁴² W. Greenwell, *Bishop Hatfield's Survey*, Surtees Society, XXXII (1856), vii.

As a result this dissertation is generally the product of various calendars of documents, hopefully enlivened by those scraps of information gifted by other sources, and from the use of secondary source material. But, it is worthwhile noting at this point that, as Dobson notes, the personalities of episcopal figures of this period are notoriously difficult to penetrate even after a good deal of research.⁴³

⁴³ R.B. Dobson, 'The Authority of the Bishop in Late Medieval England: The Case of Archbishop Alexander Neville of York, 1374-88', *Church and Society in the Medieval North of England*, ed. R.B. Dobson (London, 1996), 186.

Chapter I – Hatfield’s path to the episcopal throne of Durham.

Part I – 1337: Hatfield’s entrance into Edward III’s paid service

The Dictionary of National Biography asserts that Hatfield entered the king’s service as a young man.⁴⁴ Whilst Hatfield’s career before the autumn of 1337 is unclear, and there is no definite indication of Hatfield’s age at this point, it does seem reasonable to infer this. That Hatfield had a long pontificate of just less than 36 years (1345-1381) may suggest that he received promotion earlier than many of his fellow members of the episcopate. One factor that would slow the path of the majority of clerks into the king’s service was the attendance of a university beforehand, however Hatfield’s learning has long been doubted.⁴⁵

On the 26 October 1337 Hatfield was admitted to the king’s wages in the roll of marshalsea of the household, as a clerk of the king’s chapel.⁴⁶ This was the day he stopped being paid for supervising the king’s works at Stirling. His promotion seems to be a reward for his activities in Scotland, particularly in co-ordinating the works at Stirling. Indeed after his appointment he moved to works at Bothwell. In 1337 the Scots had succeeded in destroying many of Edward’s bases in Scotland. The tower of Bothwell had itself been almost entirely destroyed in March 1337, and most recently Edward’s three most remote strongholds had been flattened.⁴⁷ Hatfield’s tasks were of some import, and are entirely in keeping with the basic perceptions we have of Hatfield as a militarily minded man, and later a building benefactor.

At Stirling, Hatfield was in charge of approximately 150 workers. This number was made up of masons, carpenters, and ditchers, who worked under various master craftsmen, and all received different levels of pay. It is interesting to note that whilst Edward did employ local men, some jobs were seemingly important enough to demand

⁴⁴ *DNB*, xxv, 154.

⁴⁵ Hatfield’s learning is discussed below. Notably, the examples of Geoffrey Chaucer and John Gower highlight how clerks could become cultivated intellectuals without having attended university [Tout, ‘English Civil Service’, 212.].

⁴⁶ *Ferriby*, fos. 215. Hatfield first received 20 shillings as royal robes payment in summer 1338, presumably winter robes had already been distributed by late October [*Ibid.*, fos. 230v.].

⁴⁷ Sumption, *Trial by Battle*, 179. Rogers, *War Cruel and Sharp*, 123.

that men be brought up from England specifically. For example Robert of St. Albans, a master carpenter, came with 37 of his own men. For his efforts at the Stirling peel Hatfield obtained 1s a day from 25 August to 26 October 1337. Further reward was given to the new royal clerk a month and a half later, when on 16 December 1337 he received the church of Staneford from the king.⁴⁸ Having just taken him into his employment the grant was to provide for Hatfield's maintenance. After Stirling Hatfield's attention turned to reconstruction work at Bothwell, where work lasted from 20 October until 5 December 1337. The transition between the two sites would not have been difficult; both are found in the central part of the western lowlands, and it is possible that from 20-26 October the clerk ran both concurrently.⁴⁹

Edward's personal supervision of Bothwell until mid December would have given Hatfield plenty of time to prove his aptitude to his king.⁵⁰ Indeed Hatfield's work north of the border surely gained him his more senior role in Edward's move into the Low Countries, half a year later; the planning of which necessitated Edward's move south before Christmas 1337.

Hatfield had possibly come to the attention of the king's government during the court's long stay in the north, which was just coming to an end by early 1337, as Edward began to switch focus from Scotland to the continent.⁵¹ More striking and intriguing is the visit to Hatfield's birthplace of Edward and his Queen over Christmas 1336. The stay was not a happy one for the royal couple. Remaining in the north for longer than necessary was not generally in the king's inclination but this time Edward was left with little option; Philippa was heavily pregnant. She produced for him a son, William of Hatfield but the father's joy was swiftly extinguished as the prince soon died and was buried in York Minster.⁵² The coincidence of Hatfield's entrance into royal service a year later and this rare royal visit is interesting. It may indicate that though the king was saddened by the loss of his son, he was still able to note something special in the second son of a local knight. It is perhaps just possible that the Royal court even lodged with Thomas's family.

Yet such a personal link is not needed to explain Hatfield's career path, as by the place of his birth Hatfield was an entirely typical royal clerk. Hatfield originated from

⁴⁸ *CPR, 1340-43*, 559.

⁴⁹ *Ferriby*, fos 215.

⁵⁰ Rogers, *War Cruel and Sharp*, 123.

⁵¹ *Chapters*, iii, 60-1. T.F. Tout, 'The Household of the Chancery and its Disintegration', *Collected Papers*, ii (Manchester, 1934), 152.

⁵² W.M. Ormrod, 'York and the crown under the first three Edwards', *The Government of Medieval York – Essays in commemoration of the 1396 Royal Charter*, ed. S. Rees-Jones (York, 1997), 24.

'a region on the north bank of the Humber some fifteen miles wide and five or six miles deep',⁵³ which Grassi notes as having provided an especially high proportion of royal clerks since Edward I's accession. In fact as a Holderness man, 'Hatfield was *born*, so to say, for chamber work'.⁵⁴ Tout notes that the king 'always bestowed special favour on men sprung from manors on the royal domain',⁵⁵ and Holderness was a great chamber estate that had just been restored to the crown.⁵⁶ Although direct links to Yorkshire clerks already established in royal service are not evident in Hatfield's case, this was also a common way into the civil service. Therefore there is no reason to suppose that neighbours or kinsmen were not additionally instrumental in securing for Thomas an administrative role in royal government.⁵⁷ Indeed chamber clerks Molyns and Bokeland, for example, were also Holderness men.⁵⁸ In fact it is possible that for some time previous to his appointment as a clerk of the king's chapel, Hatfield had been working under either of these or another 'king's clerk' as a type of apprentice.⁵⁹

By the end of June 1338 Hatfield was appointed 'as receiver of certain sums of money to be received for the expedition of certain secret business of the king, so that he render account thereof and answer thereof to the king.'⁶⁰ The 'secret business' was simply the private affairs of the king, the term not then having such subversive connotations as today. Likewise the term 'to the king' means 'to the chamber'.⁶¹ Hatfield succeed William de Kilsby as receiver of the chamber, with Kilsby being promoted to keeper of the privy and great seals. Together the two would share the duty of running the household in the Low Countries and the administration in England.

The speed of Hatfield's rise to receiver of the chamber is still perplexing, even though there are many possible interpretations of how he came to the king's attention. Having spent just over half a year in the king's service, his appointment came from outside the chamber. Therefore he was presumably not entirely groomed in its methods. However it is quite possible that he had previously gained much experience in the

⁵³ J.L. Grassi, 'Royal clerks from the Archdiocese of York in the fourteenth century', *Northern History*, v (1970), 14.

⁵⁴ *Chapters*, iv, 257., [italics added].

⁵⁵ Tout, 'Civil Service', 204.

⁵⁶ *Chapters*, iii, 60.

⁵⁷ Grassi, 'Royal clerks', 15.

⁵⁸ *Foedera*, iii, i, 982.

⁵⁹ Cuttino, 'King's Clerks', 396.

⁶⁰ *CFR*, 1337-1347, 85.

⁶¹ *Chapters*, iv, 257.

employment of some major territorial or spiritual magnate,⁶² and this could explain why he was initially in Scotland in late 1337.

One potential - but as yet unsubstantiated - linkage is with William Montague, Earl of Salisbury. Montague was placed in command of Stirling, and perhaps insisted on his own man being given responsibility for the works, only for King Edward to then take Hatfield into royal service. Salisbury may long have been a close friend of Edward III's, having been taken into the court circle of Edward II at 18, when his own father had died. He was certainly heavily involved in the coup of 1330, and seems to have remained a friend of the king until his death in 1344.⁶³ Montague's willingness and ability, to help his men into important royal positions is illustrated by the career of John Molyns, who was a knight of the chamber and had in 1337 been made surveyor of the chamber.⁶⁴ Importantly Molyns was possibly another Holderness man, and Tout describes him as Salisbury's protégé.⁶⁵ The suggested link between Hatfield and the Montague family is strengthened by the grant to Hatfield, of the benefice of Hadenham. William's brother Simon Montague, then bishop of Ely, made the grant some time between 1337 and 1344.⁶⁶

Still a comparison is most illuminating; the lauded William Edington, who had previously been a personal clerk to Bishop Adam Orleton, spent 1335-1340 as a simple king's clerk after switching employers.⁶⁷ Clearly Edward had seen something special in Hatfield either before and/or during his efforts in Scotland in 1337.

⁶² Given that he later joined the episcopate Hatfield's appointment into the king's chapel is interesting. It raises the possibility that like Edington, Hatfield could have previously worked for a bishop. Hatfield has too frequently been dismissed as irreligious, mainly because of his warlike tendencies. We must strive not to impose our modern Christian interpretations on medieval minds; the two were not mutually exclusive. Nevertheless we should not read too much into Hatfield's assignment to the chapel. It was short in duration, and importantly, jobs of apparently religious name did not necessarily go to the most devout. For example, Philip Weston, a man with much the same outlook as Hatfield, was king's almoner for a far longer period.

⁶³ R. Douch, 'The Career, Lands and Family of William Montague, Earl of Salisbury, 1301-44', *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research*, xxiv (1951), 85-87. Douch rejects the suggestion of a breakdown in relations as portrayed by M. Galway, 'Joan of Kent and the Order of the Garter', *University of Birmingham Historical Journal*, i (1948).

⁶⁴ *Chapters*, iii, 89

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶⁶ The grant is dealt with below.

⁶⁷ *Chapters*, iv, 203.

Part II – 1338-44: Hatfield and Edward III’s hopes for the chamber.

Edward III’s court has been seen as a loosely knit congregation of different groups around the king. Nevertheless, the most important of these groups was certainly the king’s household, of which the chamber formed the core.⁶⁸ Yet the household was not simply the focus of the pomp of the king’s domestic affairs; it was becoming increasingly important for his administration. Throughout 1338 Edward had been planning to finally move the theatre of war to the continent after the failure of the previous year.⁶⁹ So it was vital for him to surround himself with administrators who had proven themselves skilled organisers of war. In such a situation the chamber was no different from any other department. Indeed it dealt with the king’s most intimate business and when Edward was absent from England this was clearly the waging of war. Hatfield’s appointment, as receiver of the chamber, came at the time the Walton ordinances were being drafted. It being but one of a number of personnel changes that the king made in the period either side of the promulgation of the ordinances.⁷⁰ Knowing he was about to leave his realm for a lengthy period of time Edward needed a strong administration, and seemingly in Hatfield he had found a man whom he could trust.

Nevertheless was Hatfield’s entrance to the chamber merely chance? Was Edward simply filling the vacancy to be left by Kilsby’s promotion with one from a pool of up and coming clerks? Or did Hatfield possess particular qualities that made him a perfect choice for the chamber? Such questions are almost impossible to answer with any great degree of certainty. However a cogent case can be made to suggest Hatfield was seen as a ‘chamber man’.

If he was nothing more than a ‘very good clerk’ why did he achieve such a position so quickly? Edward had other loyal and able servants whose store of service credit would have been much weightier. In fact it is possible that Edward had long planned to reshuffle his administration when he was to head abroad, and had ‘head-hunted’ Hatfield to a degree. Had the plans of 1337 come to fruition, and Edward left England a year earlier Hatfield may have received his promotion then, from a position

⁶⁸ Vale, *Edward III and Chivalry*, 1.

⁶⁹ Rogers, *War Cruel and Sharp*, 145.

⁷⁰ *Chapters*, iv, 78.

outside of direct royal service. Although it must be noted that such an argument certainly demands that before 1337 Hatfield be in the service of a notable magnate: evidence for which we are as yet lacking. Whilst in times of conflict Edward III wanted the chamber's efforts to be focused on war, he also hoped to keep it as a separate and private department. If it was to remain his 'special instrument of prerogative' despite the war he needed its receiver to be a man with whom he had developed an intimate relationship.⁷¹ Once again this seems to make Hatfield's sudden rise through royal ranks, to this position, all the more remarkable.

To place Hatfield's role in the context of its development, the history of the chamber during the early part of Edward III's reign needs to be addressed briefly.⁷² After its integral part in the tyranny of the Despensers, the chamber's revival did not begin until 1332-1333. Its true rebirth not coming until William de Kildesby's appointment as receiver in 1335. The chamber was once again provided with an income when it re-received much of its former landed estate; as for example, the Burstwick estate in Holderness was returned, and later the Isle of Wight.⁷³ An indication of Edward's wish to assert his prerogative claims were the attempts made to assign to the chamber, not the traditional exchequer, many of the alien priories to be seized after 23 July 1337.⁷⁴ Therefore by the time of Hatfield's appointment Edward had already succeeded in making the chamber 'an integral part of the administrative machine.'⁷⁵ The question that is posed is whether the king was able to develop the chamber further, and how far he was able to do this through his receiver, Thomas de Hatfield?

Tout was of the opinion that in intention the Walton Ordinances of July 1338 were Edward III's most important administrative act, as the king hoped to run the war through his household.⁷⁶ They were drawn up before the move across the channel, to allow the king and his household clerks to control the chancery and treasury back in Westminster. The hope was to allow them to achieve the efficient mobilisation of war resources from home, without strenuous questioning.⁷⁷ Sadly the wording of the

⁷¹ For quote see *Ibid.*, 289.

⁷² For a more detailed account see *Chapters*, iv, 227-311.

⁷³ The profits of the lands were paid in to the chamber e.g. *CPR*, 1343-45, 23.

⁷⁴ *Chapters*, iv, 246-48.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, iv, 254.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, iii, 69.

⁷⁷ For detailed general discussion of the Walton Ordinances see *Chapters*, iv, 69-84. *Chapters*, v, 11-14. Tout, 'Conflicting tendencies', 231-232.

ordinances is somewhat ambiguous.⁷⁸ However, one of the more 'novel proposals' was that a certain chamber clerk, along with a skilled supervisor, should produce a counter-roll, for the warrants of the keeper of the privy seal which were to be necessary to validate chancery writs demanding out payments from the exchequer.⁷⁹ It was not stated that Hatfield was to have held either of the positions available to chamber clerks, but it is highly possible. And this would further suggest that Hatfield was also regarded as an administrator, and not only as a loyal soldier with organisational skills.

Importantly the effect of this ordinance would have probably been to make Kilsby and Hatfield check all payments made both at home and abroad.⁸⁰ In addition, according to Tout, the 10th ordinance would have given the chamber additional control over the wardrobe.⁸¹ Ultimately the importance of the ordinances should not be exaggerated, as the reality fell far short of the ideal, denying the chamber 'an even more eminent position than the important one which it actually occupied'.⁸² However they do help suggest Edward's plans to develop the chamber and hence his faith in Hatfield.

The emphasis placed on the chamber in the ordinances, and especially the concurrency of his appointment as receiver and the court's relocation to the Netherlands, raises the strong probability that Hatfield was made the custodian of the secret seal from the inception of his office.⁸³ The secret seal was the successor of the privy seal, which had increasingly become the general, and importantly public, administrative instrument. For Edward the secret seal was his instrument of personal affairs. As Tout puts forward, it is almost axiomatic that its custodian would be a member of 'some high domestic household in constant attendance of his person'⁸⁴; from mid-1338 it is apparent that there was no-one who fitted this billing better than Hatfield.

However contemporary documents do not corroborate this claim. Perhaps unsurprisingly given the nature of the seal, neither Hatfield nor his successor Richard Burton, are noted in English sources as keeper of the secret seal. Though after this 'subsequent receivers are regularly called clerks of the secret seal.'⁸⁵ The evidence before Hatfield suggests that during Edward II's reign, and the early years of his son's,

⁷⁸ *Chapters*, v, 262.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, iii, 69.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, iii, 71.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 74.

⁸² *Ibid.*, iv, 254.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 261-262.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 72.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 262.

the secret seal was held by a chamber secretariat. However it is unlikely that custody was then stringently ascribed solely to the receiver.⁸⁶

Without the later entries in papal records there could be no great suggestion that Hatfield took the secret seal to the Low Countries. Whilst Hatfield is not noted as custodian until a papal letter of 1344,⁸⁷ the very recognition that he did at some point hold it makes it likely that he was custodian from 1338. Indeed, as is noted below, until Bradestan's visit to Avignon in autumn 1343 Hatfield was probably considered by those at the papal court as nothing more than a royal clerk, albeit a troublesome one; only after this visit would they have been in a position to note him as custodian. So whilst this does not prove a date pre-1344, it does at least explain its possibility. Tellingly, 1338 was a time of rapid change and it is most likely that it was then, rather than at any point later, that Edward III decided to make one man custodian of the secret seal.

For the duration of his time as receiver Hatfield was a constant companion of his king during Edward III's time abroad.⁸⁸ Hatfield had the assistance of 'the stronger section of the chamber staff' in the Low Countries on Edward's first venture 1338-1340.⁸⁹ In the summer of 1340 Hatfield returned with a far less experienced and numerous body.⁹⁰ Clearly during this time the chamber was split; the home administration running the estates in England, and then sending out the moneys and stores to Hatfield.⁹¹ The job of running the chamber in England was assigned to John Fleet, who was also responsible for the privy wardrobe.⁹²

Hatfield may have been responsible for some significant innovations, even though his absence from chamber service before he became receiver may seem to count against him being ascribed too integral a role in the detailed proposals made in the Walton Ordinances. It would be interesting to discover the authorship of the petition to the king, drawn up on 9 July 1338, that requested, and achieved, the provision for the

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 261.

⁸⁷ *CPL*, 1342-63, 11.

⁸⁸ See *Norwell*. Low Countries: July 1338-Feb. 1340, June 1340- Dec. 1340. Scotland: Nov. 1341- early 1342. Brittany: Oct 1342-Feb. 1343.

⁸⁹ *Chapters*, iv, 87,

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 114. A notable absentee was the colourful John Molyns.

⁹¹ When Hatfield was in England he received monies under the griffin seal, which generally remained in England. For example 7 May 1343 the bailiff of the king's manor of Brustwick paid to Hatfield money owed to the king 'as appears by a letter of acquittance under the king's seal of griffin' [*CPR*, 1343-45, 23].

⁹² *CPR*, 1338-1340, 257, 163. *CPR*, 1340-43, 503. *CCR*, 1339-41, 138. In 1340 Fleet was referred to as 'receiver of the chamber at the Tower of London' [*Chapters*, iv, 447.].

griffin seal to provide the sole warranty for all acts concerning chamber lands.⁹³ Maxwell-Lyte simply notes that a chamber clerk was responsible. Hatfield had been in office a little over a week, and it is therefore tempting to suggest an innovative role. The same attitude is revealed in this petition and Hatfield's later insistence on accountability only to the chamber and the king.

It is the burning in 1344 of Hatfield's chamber accounts that means we are left somewhat in the dark as to his exact activities in this important period, and it is to this event we must turn. It would be all too easy to simply assume that this illustrates that Hatfield was a favourite of the king's and was using his position to reward himself in ways that would be unjustifiable should they become known. In fact the burning was the result of the 'doctrine of chamber unaccountability', whereby access to the king's most personal accounts was to be restricted to just himself and his receiver. It is important yet sadly highly difficult, to ascertain the parts that Hatfield, Fleet, their predecessor's, and Edward III, all played in this doctrine's development, and most importantly use.⁹⁴ Tout has seen the end of Hatfield's receivership as the zenith of the chamber autonomy with the burning of his accounts.⁹⁵ However it is unlikely that Hatfield and his king would have shared his sentiment. What for Tout was the zenith was actually symbolic of Edward's admittance of the fundamental limitations of his chamber.

The 'doctrine of unaccountability' seems to have been resurrected by Edward III, before Hatfield's time. His immediate predecessors Trussell and Kilsby were not called to account to the chamber auditors until well into Hatfield's time as receiver,⁹⁶ and in mid 1341 Fleet rendered his account for the period since 1324.⁹⁷ Therefore Hatfield was not setting a precedent in not accounting to the exchequer. Nevertheless Hatfield's insistence in not accounting was more forceful, particularly in a time of extreme financial tension.

Hatfield's case is unique in that it is *noted* that the accounts were burnt after audit. There is however a possibility that Trussell, Kilsby, and Fleet all had their accounts destroyed in some way as none of them is extant. This interpretation may be strengthened by the subsequent problems experienced by Trussell, after he finally

⁹³ *Chapters*, v, 188. Maxwell-Lyte, *Documents Relating to the Great seal* (London, 1895), 110.]

⁹⁴ See *Chapters*, iv, 286-289.

⁹⁵ *CPR*, 1343-45, 371.

⁹⁶ *CPR*, 1340-43, 448.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 256.

accounted in late 1345. Edward had ultimately to make grants protecting Trussell and later his heirs, from the exactions of the exchequer.⁹⁸ This may indicate that by then the records were no longer extant, raising the possibility of their purposeful destruction. Alternatively, and perhaps more likely, is that this is simply an example of the exchequer-chamber bickering, with the accounts as yet being extant but Edward just determined to keep them hidden. Importantly had Trussell's accounts been burnt like Hatfield's only a year earlier, surely the king would have stopped exchequer pressure by informing them that the accounts had been destroyed. Though fragmentary, much of Hatfield's successor, Burton's, accounts have survived. And Edward indeed had him render them to the exchequer.⁹⁹ From this it would be easy to over estimate Hatfield's importance, given that his accounts were burnt, however by Burton's receivership times had certainly changed.

In fact the burning and noting of 1344 should be viewed as an early indication that the chamber was struggling to meet Edward's expectations; expectations that by Burton's time had been modified. In 1344 the king had already realised, and admitted to himself, that he would ultimately have to make the chamber less secretive in order to wage successful large-scale war. Consequently he sought to prevent problems in future years by destroying Hatfield's accounts immediately upon his relinquishing of the office, and most importantly making this known within his administration. In light of this there could be no question that they should later go before the exchequer. Tension between the exchequer and the chamber had long existed, but the issuing of notifying mandates to the other administrative departments appears unprecedented.¹⁰⁰

Edward's financial position in late 1344 appears to bear out the hypothesis outlined above. Edward had planned to personally lead a campaign into Brittany but this had had to be abandoned, largely due to problems in raising money in time to finance it. Parliament could not be convened until June 1344, and the money it was to provide would not arrive until November; too late for a major campaign. The government seems to have admitted that campaigning that year was doomed by late August.¹⁰¹ Parliamentary taxes were now the ingredient vital to Edward's logistics, their failure to arrive in due time ended the prospect of campaigning. Vitally, with its current limitations the chamber could not cope. How fervently Edward III had initially

⁹⁸ *Chapters*, iv, 299.

⁹⁹ *Chapters*, iv, 288.

¹⁰⁰ *CPR, 1343-45*, 371.

¹⁰¹ See Sumption, *Trial by Battle*, 434. The wardrobe accounts for this period are sadly not extant, denying us a clearer picture.

desired to mould the chamber into a special instrument of prerogative and a new war department is debatable. Nevertheless from the mid-1340s Edward started to abandon his dream. The task of the raising the enormous capital needed to maintain the war effort could not run hand in hand with the secrecy, which both the king and his clerk apparently demanded for chamber dealings. Clearly for it to provide such vast financial concessions, parliament demanded to be kept well informed of how its money was being used.¹⁰²

Though they are explained by the financial situation and are in no way as sinister as they could appear at a casual glance, these events do highlight the close bond that had developed between the king and his trusted servant. After 1344 Hatfield's subsequent promotions reveal that Edward read the situation correctly; he did not blame the problems on his receiver. Without such a bond one feels that Edward could have made Hatfield a scapegoat, if not impeaching him at least labelling his receiver so in his own mind, in order to absolve himself from any feelings of failure. Instead through the mandates Edward was expressing his affection for Hatfield openly.

An insight into why Edward felt he had to make this gesture in 1344 is found three years previously, in mid-April 1341. Hatfield had had 'all his goods and chattels... taken... by the Sheriff of Dorset by virtue of the king's order under the exchequer seal because Thomas did not come before the treasurer and the barons at the exchequer to render account for the money and jewels received by him in the king's chamber'.¹⁰³ This initial order appears to have been made by the exchequer not the king, as Edward later demanded that Hatfield should now have, 'restitution thereof his special favour'.¹⁰⁴ As there is no indication that Hatfield had in any way fallen out with his king, even temporarily, this order highlights the levels to which hostility between exchequer and chamber could go, even in a period of national crisis.

It is not clear to what extent Edward insisted on Hatfield remaining accountable only to him and how much impetus came from his clerk, who did clearly stand to benefit from it as a result. Tout was of the opinion that much of Hatfield's accounts 'would hardly bear official scrutiny',¹⁰⁵ suggesting perhaps that Hatfield sought and gained undeserved protection from his king due to the affection Edward held him in.

¹⁰² *Chapters*, iv, 289.

¹⁰³ *CPR, 1340-43*, 254. It was not uncommon for sheriffs to assist their superior, the exchequer, in hostilities against the chamber. Another example is the assistance of the Sheriff of Hampshire in 1344 in an attempt to get a ferm paid into the exchequer by the alien prior of Appledurcombe, that had previously been promised to the chamber.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁵ *Chapters*, iv, 257.

This interpretation would suit a reading of the April 1341 order as an apparent change of mind on the king's behalf.¹⁰⁶ However Tout seems merely to have made an inference directly from the unwillingness to account, as there seems to be no information available to attest this. That Hatfield was neither singled out, nor even mentioned in the attacks of Stratford in 1341, counts against Tout's suggestion of suspicious dealings, though his could perhaps also be explained by the privacy of the office. In maintaining unaccountability Hatfield surely gained some leeway in his transactions but anything more sinister is neither evident nor probable. Hatfield was in no way being singled out for specialist treatment during this period, as, for example, in late 1341 Fleet was notified to only to account to king.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁶ *CPR, 1340-43, 254.*

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid., 256.*

Part III – Hatfield’s activities in the Low Countries, 1338-40

Despite the burning of the accounts some idea of Hatfield’s role in chamber workings during the periods spent in England can be gleaned from the chancery rolls, especially regarding monies received. Alien priories provided some income, for example in May 1339 the chamber was to receive, £66 13s from the prior of Appildercombe in the Isle of Wight for the last Easter term.¹⁰⁸ Hatfield was paid £40 by the abbot of Nottele in January 1341.¹⁰⁹ Edward also sought to provide an income for the chamber by rendering unto them the goods of outlaws, for example on 7 October 1342 Hatfield received wool from two outlawed wool merchants.¹¹⁰ John de Molyns’s fall from grace in 1341 provided the chamber with his ‘lands, goods and knights’ fees and liberties’, for a time.¹¹¹ Fines for appropriation could also be received, as on 21 June 1342 Hatfield received £20 from the prior and convent of Wenlock, paid to facilitate their appropriation of the churches of Stoke St. Milburgh and Madele.¹¹² Hatfield appears not to have generally conducted audits but during a period back in England in July 1341 he was put in charge of auditing Molyns’s accounts. Given the situation it was perhaps felt that the task was serious enough to demand the attention of the head of the chamber.¹¹³

Some idea of Hatfield’s role on the continent from 1338 to 1340 can be pieced together from the available resources. Although from a later period Burton’s fragmentary accounts still provide insights to what Hatfield’s role would have been.¹¹⁴ When abroad, like the wardrobe, the chamber was almost entirely focused upon the expenses of war; in fact there seems little to distinguish the two. Though clearly carrying out most of his activities through the chamber, Hatfield’s name appears in the wardrobe account of William de Norwell, for the period 12 July 1338 to 27 May 1340. This shows how clerks were not steadfastly restricted to one department, although it is generally not clear why certain of Hatfield’s activities were conducted through the wardrobe rather than the chamber, as they appear to have been of much the same nature.

¹⁰⁸ *CCR, 1339-41*, 138.

¹⁰⁹ *CPR, 1343-45*, 74.

¹¹⁰ *CPR, 1340-43*, 534.

¹¹¹ *CPR, 1340-43*, 254.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, 473.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, 254

¹¹⁴ *Chapters*, iv, 291-295.

For long periods Hatfield is absent from Norwell's account book, but the winter 1339-1340 saw Hatfield making regular payments, especially in November and January. It is likely that due to a short-term emptiness of the chamber coffers, Hatfield was making payments through the wardrobe that he would have normally made through the chamber. Edward's financial problems necessitating financial juggling within his administration. Later evidence shows that Hatfield was involved in inter-department borrowing. An undated prest of £113 6d in Norwell's accounts suggests that Hatfield had received money from the wardrobe but that this was not enough.¹¹⁵ Later, in the war wages and restoration of robes section of the next wardrobe account book, Hatfield is noted as being owed the vast sum of £1025 15s of the king's money by the wardrobe.¹¹⁶ Alternatively, the increase in the number of his entries in the wardrobe account could simply be a product of raised diplomatic machinations. The more public nature of the negotiations at this time resulting in Hatfield's use through the less secretive department. Yet the public negotiations of winter 1339-1340 were far from unique so it is surprising that there are not other such periods for Hatfield.

At this time Edward was involved in a series of negotiations with allies, both existing and potential, who were also negotiating with each other; the culmination being the alliance of 3 December 1339 made between Van Artevelde and the Duke of Brabant, which saw Artevelde being drawn away from Philip VI into Edward III's camp.¹¹⁷ Sadly few details of the diplomacy are to be gained from extant sources.¹¹⁸ However Hatfield seems to have played some active part in the negotiations, as on 4 November he paid Artevelde's brother, Master John, £9 for coming to Antwerp with his brother's letters. The next day a herald of Germany was presented with 45s for rumours revealed to the king, whilst on 20th Lord Shenk, who came for secret negotiations from Austria, was given £67 10s; it appears that Hatfield may have received these men personally. However other payments paint Hatfield as little more than a 'purse-boy'; for example John, hunter of the Duke of Brabant was paid 4s 6d for coming with his dogs to hunt near Brussels, and on 4th and 12th Hatfield paid the minstrels that entertained the court.¹¹⁹ It seems most probable that chamber shortages have given us a more detailed glimpse of a little of Hatfield's normal role during negotiations in the

¹¹⁵ *Norwell*, 456.

¹¹⁶ *E36/204*, fos. 123.

¹¹⁷ H.S. Lucas, *The Low Countries and the Hundred Years War* (Ann Arbor, 1929), 340-365.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 361.

¹¹⁹ All payments from *Norwell*, 262.

Netherlands. However, how far these entries reveal the full extent of Hatfield's involvement is unclear, and how typical they were is also impossible to assess.

Edward III was greatly impoverished at this time, and Hatfield was one of many attempting to raise finances in the Low Countries.¹²⁰ Some of the tasks given to Hatfield do, however, bear out the idea that whilst he did much that was common to all clerks, Edward did hold his receiver of the chamber in particular esteem. Hence the inventory of jewels for which Norwell was responsible notes Hatfield as receiving a golden eagle by oral order of the king,¹²¹ two golden cruets, and a golden chalice with paten¹²² amongst others, the intention presumably being that he mortgage these jewels to raise funds. In August 1339 Hatfield was in charge of ten armed men who transported a large amount of jewels to Germany to mortgage them for money the king owed. He received £28 8s 2d in total, for all costs on the sixteen day trip. Recorded costs were the wages of the escort, a wallet to carry the jewels, horses with sumpter saddles on which to truss the cargo, linen and cords to tie the parchment in which some jewels were to be wrapped, two coffers to carry them, and the payment of messengers to carry letters.¹²³ The value and make up of the jewels is not specified but the provision listed above indicates that the journey was a major undertaking.

It is possible that the jewels included the Great Crown that Hatfield paid 2,400/ to John de Lentele in February 1339 to redeem.¹²⁴ Hatfield received this as 16,000 florins from the Bardi and Peruzzi, and gained the crown via Paul de Monte Florum who had initially loaned the crown to de Lentele for £4,050. These dealings with the major financial players of the time highlight Hatfield's importance; as do the large sums involved.

The Great Crown was destined to be repledged to the archbishop of Trier.¹²⁵ It is noted that Hatfield was bound to account to the king in Germany that he had received the crown and he is recorded as having done so.¹²⁶ There are a number of problems with Hatfield taking the crown to Edward in Germany. Hatfield's wages reveal that he was not away from court during the account period except from the trip to Germany in

¹²⁰ E.B. Fryde, 'Financial Resources of Edward III in the Netherlands, 1337-40', *Studies in Medieval Trade and Finance*, ed. E.B. Fryde (London, 1983), 1142-1216. Rogers, *War Cruel and Sharp*, 127-73.

¹²¹ *Norwell*, 392, CVII.

¹²² *Ibid.*, 403.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, 232, LXXXV.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, CXII-CXIII, 416.

¹²⁵ *CPR*, 1338-1340, 371. Fryde, 'Financial Resources', 1165.

¹²⁶ *Norwell*, CXIII.

August 1339,¹²⁷ and the first half of 1339 saw Edward residing in enforced idleness in Antwerp. Indeed after September 1338 Edward did not visit Germany again.¹²⁸ Therefore it seems unlikely that Hatfield took the crown in February to Edward in Germany; there is no evidence for either of them visiting Germany at that time. Instead a copying error is likely, with Hatfield accounting to Edward in Antwerp.

Having taken possession of the crown Hatfield must surely have been a strong candidate to be trusted with its transportation to Trier. A task of such magnitude would certainly explain the size and detailed planning of the August 1339 escort. However this would not fit particularly well with the proposed scheme drawn up on 28 February 1339 between Edward III and Archbishop Baldwin, where by the English king promised to hand over the Great Crown and £16,650 *forthwith* as security for subsidies previously promised.¹²⁹ Yet aside from the delay in the crown's passage there are compelling reasons to associate Hatfield's trip to Germany with this ultimately wasteful scheme. Hatfield had previously had dealings with the archbishop and his associate Vyvyno, a Jewish money lender of Strasbourg.¹³⁰

In addition though Norwell simply refers to 'jewels', he records that they were to be mortgaged for money the king owed. Elsewhere, though sadly not clearly dated, Hatfield is noted as having paid a grand total of £4,875 to the Lombard merchant, and member of the Leopard of Asti, Gabrieli de Monte Magno, in return for the delivery of many jewels to the important royal clerk Paul de Monte Florum and himself.¹³¹ Hatfield must have retained many of these jewels, collecting them together until he had a suitable amount to present to Baldwin as security, justifying the sixteen day trip to Germany. The need to gather resources with which to reduce the £16,650 owed to the archbishop would explain the delay between February and August in transporting the Great Crown.

Some impression of the huge amounts of money that Hatfield must have become used to dealing in, and the hectic and presumably apparently endless nature of the clerk's schedule, is gained from the order that Hatfield would have received no sooner

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, 337.

¹²⁸ In the autumn of 1338 Edward III spent under a month in Germany treating with Lewis the Bavarian [Lucas, *Low Countries*, 288. H.S. Offler, 'England and Germany at the beginning of the Hundred Years' War', *Church and Crown in the Fourteenth Century: Studies in European Historical And Political Thought*, ed. A.I. Doyle (Hampshire, 2000), 611-620.].

¹²⁹ Fryde, 'Financial Resources', 1165.

¹³⁰ Hatfield is noted as receiving £848 14s from the wardrobe with which to repay, through Nicholas de Galeys of Antwerp, the archbishop of Trier and Vyvyno, in order to redeem jewels [*Norwell*, 447]. Also in 1339 Hatfield paid Vyvyno £1,695, via Walter de Chaungeour of Bruselles, to reedem more jewels [*Ibid.*, 449].

than he had returned from Trier. On the 22 August 1339 at Oudenaerde Hatfield, along with John de Molyns and the king's chamberlain, Henry de Ferrars, were charged with collectively raising 40,000*l.*¹³² Such a loan demand was anything but unique¹³³ and should be seen as a staple task of Edward's clerks in the Netherlands.

The exact details of Hatfield's dealings are elusive, yet his actions throughout this period show him heavily involved in the machinations of Edward's financial dealings; he received loans, distributed money to get pawned goods back and then possibly used these to get more loans. The responsibility of working with men such as Paul de Monte Florum, and being in charge of a large amount of jewels highlight his considerable importance, whilst at the same time provide little genuine insight into how he may have been different from his peers. However whilst the series of repayments Hatfield made to Thierry, Lord of Valkenburg¹³⁴ in the autumn of 1339 may appear to illustrate the more mundane role of royal clerks, placed in context they reveal Hatfield's essential diplomatic and logistical role during the autumn of 1339.

On the 25 September Hatfield paid 2,000 ecus (£450) via Lord Gerard of Aldenhowe, prior of Abberdas, at Aspre. On 8 October Hatfield met Theodoric in a field near Greyker and paid him 500 ecus (£112 10s) directly. Two days later the same amount was handed over through another middleman, a clerk Godesal.¹³⁵ Payments such as these were essential to allow the alliance of English and Flemish forces to advance into enemy territory. The locations of the meetings were deep into the invaded lands; the impression being that Hatfield had to keep riding between different allied forces, making these hurried payments to maintain unity as many became increasingly disillusioned by Edward III's woeful financial predicament. That the next year Valkenburg wrote Edward, what the king himself described as a 'most acidic'¹³⁶ letter, highlights not only the potential for extreme disharmony between the allies, but also something of the type of man Hatfield was dealing with. With a little imagination it is easy to see that these were far from mundane errands. Hatfield appears to have been rushing here and there, desperately trying to cajole a sceptical foreign knight into remaining in the field, with the knight continuously stalling until he received a further

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, 443.

¹³² *CPR*, 1338-1340, 392.

¹³³ Lucas, *Low Countries*, 306.

¹³⁴ Thierry (Theodoric, Dietrich) Lord of Valkenburg (Falcomont, Falkenburg) and Montjoie (1332-1346) was a petty low county prince, and trusted councillor of the count of Guelders, he received fief-rente and payment for the military and political assistance he provided Edward [Lucas, *Low Countries*, 218. *Norwell*, XCV, CXIII.].

¹³⁵ *Norwell*, 419. For similar transactions also involving Hatfield see *Ibid.*, 25, 76, 424, 440.

concession. The perilous situation is further revealed by Hatfield's sending off officials back to Brussels 'pro denariis ad opus Regis querendis'.¹³⁷

A convincing portrayal of the vast scope of Hatfield's activities can be presented by the inclusion of a few more examples. With the help of Kilsby, Hatfield was partly responsible for maintaining the king's supply of horses in 1339, as they are recorded as paying a prest of 1,407 ecus in advance to John Gernache, a serjant of arms from La Flamgenerie.¹³⁸ It is possible that this payment is linked to the English plundering during September and early October 1339. On 9 October both English and French were arrayed for battle at Flamengerie but neither were prepared to take an offensive role, and battle was not joined.¹³⁹

Also in 1339 Hatfield made a number of payments to ships' captains as their vessels were taken into royal service.¹⁴⁰ Edward's 'administration of impressment was extremely haphazard'¹⁴¹ pre-1340, and the failure to supply enough ships seems to have lead Hatfield to search for ships to be taken into royal service. The problem was so severe that at Brussels on 3 November 1339 the king instructed Hatfield, amongst others, to contract yet another loan, £20,000, to increase the size of the fleet.¹⁴² As in modern conflicts, espionage played an integral part in medieval warfare, so it is unsurprising that the military minded Hatfield seems to have been entrusted the charge of a spy, Alard de Lisle, who was paid 44s in 1340 for secret negotiations in Flanders, to find about the French court.¹⁴³

That in July 1338, just before the embarkation to the Netherlands, Hatfield was already trusted to collect £5,000, a huge amount of cash, reveals that Hatfield did not grow into the task he had been assigned. This was no task for a simple clerk; three carts were demanded, each having to be pulled by five horses, with a guard of ten archers, to transport this money, apparently a product of the wool company loan, from Norwich to Walton-on-the-Naze.¹⁴⁴ From his creation as receiver Edward III placed a great deal of trust in both Hatfield's loyalty and military ability. It is worth noting here that like all

¹³⁶ Sumption, *Trial by Battle*, 360.

¹³⁷ Fryde, 'Financial Resources', 1174.

¹³⁸ Norwell, 437.

¹³⁹ Lucas, *Low Countries*, 333.

¹⁴⁰ Norwell, 434, 436, 437.

¹⁴¹ J.S.Kepler, 'The effects of the battle of Sluys upon the administration of English Naval Impressment, 1340-1343', *Speculum* xlviii (1973), 70.

¹⁴² *CPR*, 1338-40, 395. Kepler, 'Effects of Sluys', 71. Hatfield was again involved in December 1339 [*CPR*, 1338-40, 401.].

¹⁴³ Norwell, 266.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 243.

of Edward's clerks, Hatfield was heavily involved in the wool scheme that was proposed to buy alliances and finance allied offensives into France.¹⁴⁵

Hatfield was in England with his king during the spring of 1340, and on the 22 June, just before the fleet sailed back to the continent from Shotley, he was paid £154 14s 11d, the fifth highest of the clerks, for his service abroad.¹⁴⁶ On Edward's return the financial situation was still grave despite the sea victory at Sluys, on the 24 June 1340. In reflection of the desperation of the situation the administration from 1340 was less organised than the early days of the Netherlandish campaign. Whilst the chamber, along with the treasury, wardrobe and chancery mostly remained across the channel, as did the household, Edward needed his receiver of the chamber even though only his most valued chamber officials accompanied Hatfield for the second time.¹⁴⁷

However William de Kilsby's central role in government from 1338-1340 as keeper of the privy seal affords us some perspective on the importance of Hatfield's position. Kilsby held both the privy and great seals in the Low Countries, and Tout feels we should view him as some sort of 'prime minister', a third minister of state after the chancellor and the treasurer, with an important say in the direction of policy. If Kilsby was the dominant minister, Hatfield's role is more difficult to ascertain, indeed it is hard to say with any degree of certainty exactly who had what voice in the Netherlands. Unlike Kilsby, there is nothing to indicate that Hatfield was given an official position as a member of the select inner council.¹⁴⁸ Kilsby's presence was demanded because writ of privy seal had become the means by which the daily transactions of king's council had come to be carried out. When more general meetings were called the likes of Norwell and Hatfield, surely joined Kilsby and the king's faithful lay advisors, forming the larger king's council 'on whose advice the king was to rely'.¹⁴⁹ And though during this period only Kilsby, of the clerks, had a fully active voice, it is hard to believe that Edward would not have consulted his trusted servant on many matters and valued any opinions offered.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁵ For examples of Hatfield's wool dealings see *CCR, 1339-41*, 364, 388, 525, 544, 546, 555, 571, 575. *Ibid.* 1341-43, 313. For the best general survey see E.B. Fryde, 'Edward III's Wool Monopoly of 1337: A Fourteenth Century Royal Trading Venture', in Fryde, *Studies in Medieval Trade and Finance*.

¹⁴⁶ *CCR, 1339-41*, 525.

¹⁴⁷ *Chapters*, iv, 117.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 99. For slightly different personnel see Rogers, *War Cruel and Sharp*, 155.

¹⁴⁹ Tout, 'Conflicting tendencies', 231. See also *Chapters*, iv, 88-90. *Chapters*, v, 14-15.

¹⁵⁰ *Chapters*, v, 14-15.

Part IV - The crisis of 1340-41

The question of Hatfield's involvement in the crisis of 1340-1 is perhaps integral to an understanding of his career before Durham.¹⁵¹ The crisis represented the release by Edward III of over three years of frustration with his home administration. It erupted in the short-term aftermath of the failure, as the king would rightly have viewed it, at Tournai. After the success at Sluys and with his first French city almost at its knees, the failure of his financial policy fully revealed itself. Yet despite his dissatisfaction Edward still waited a further two months in Ghent vainly hoping that he would receive funds from his ministers at home.¹⁵² So Edward's hasty retreat home at the end of November 1340 is a little puzzling, as the circumstances had apparently not changed significantly.¹⁵³

Luckily here the chronicles help our understanding. Avesbury has the king noting the pressure placed on him by his companions, and has Archbishop Stratford later highlighting the folly of listening to *young* men; Murimuth supports this commenting on the ascendancy of Edward's *young* councillors.¹⁵⁴ Though Edward was himself only twenty-six and it is possible that Hatfield was not more than a decade older,¹⁵⁵ the contention was that the councillors were youthful in years of service not necessarily in actual age. In this lies the fundamental issue of the crisis, and the one that largely explains how before this Hatfield had risen so rapidly; Edward was gradually asserting his wish to rule through ministers he had himself selected rather than those who had, so to speak, come with the job.¹⁵⁶

At seventeen and having being forced to overthrow the regime of Mortimer and his mother, insecurity prevented Edward from starting his reign with a personalisation of his civil service. Though there is some contention as to the degree, by the time Hatfield became receiver of the chamber in 1338, Edward appears to have been well on

¹⁵¹ For the best account, and the basis of my interpretation, of the crisis see N.M. Fryde, 'Edward III's Removal of his Ministers and Judges, 1340-1', *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research*, 48 (1975). See also R.M. Haines, *Archbishop John Stratford: Political Revolutionary and Champion of the Liberties of the English Church ca. 1275/80-1348* (Toronto, 1986), 278-328. B. Wilkinson, 'The Protest of the Earls of Arundel and Surrey in the Crisis of 1341', *EHR CLXXXII* (1931). *Chapters*, iii, 88-135. Sumption, *Trial by Battle*, 363-64. G.L. Harris, *King, Parliament and Public Finance in Medieval England to 1369* (Oxford, 1975).

¹⁵² Rogers, *War Cruel and Sharp*, 215. Fryde, 'Removal of Ministers', 151, 153.

¹⁵³ Fryde, 'Removal of Ministers', 154.

¹⁵⁴ *Avesbury*, 332, 327-29. *Murimuth*, 118.

¹⁵⁵ For a discussion on Hatfield's age see below.

¹⁵⁶ Fryde, 'Removal of Ministers', 155.

his way to uniting his *young* nobility behind him, after years spent fighting together against the Scots.¹⁵⁷ The success at Sluys in 1340 made the channel English by almost negating French piracy,¹⁵⁸ however its greatest importance was surely the further strengthening the king's position, as his efforts were finally being rewarded; three letters written by Edward after the battle illustrate how he took the victory as the 'sign from God he had anticipated'.¹⁵⁹

In such a climate it is easy to believe that the continuous influence in Ghent, particularly of Kilsby but also men like Hatfield, could have convinced Edward that it was time to rid himself of the 'old guard' who had failed him when even God was on his side.¹⁶⁰ As Fryde notes, though important, the constitutional issues focused on by Tout and Wilkinson were not the cause of the crisis; rather they were Stratford's skilful defence when faced by Edward's impeachment.¹⁶¹

Importantly there is little evidence of Tout's wild purge, motivated by 'petulant fury' on the king's behalf.¹⁶² Rather the Tournai failure, though it had greatly infuriated Edward, had merely acted as a catalyst to the desire he had already, quite naturally, illustrated by his promotion of Hatfield amongst others, to mould a warlike administration from men whom he could trust and who saw him as *his*, as opposed to simply *royal* men. Hence the importance of the crisis in analysing Hatfield's path to Durham is not so much through his part in proceedings; indeed as we shall soon see, little of his role can be ascertained. Rather, the main root of the crisis also explains precisely why and how Hatfield could achieve such an intimate role in Edward's plans without having served a long apprenticeship under the experienced statesmen of his father's reign.

By returning to a link proposed earlier between Hatfield and Salisbury this point can be reinforced. For Salisbury was considered Edward's greatest supporter, having accompanied the young prince Edward in his attack on his mother's supposed lover, Roger Mortimer at Nottingham castle in 1330.¹⁶³ If indeed Hatfield had begun his

¹⁵⁷ A. Ayton, 'Edward III and the English Aristocracy at the Beginning of the Hundred Years War', *Armies, Chivalry and Warfare in Medieval Britain and France*, ed. M. Strickland (Stamford, 1998), 176-77. Sumption suggests the nobility lusted for the 'ritual celebration of battle' [*Trial by Battle*, 181.].

¹⁵⁸ Kepler, 'Effects of Sluys', 70.

¹⁵⁹ Rogers, *War Cruel and Sharp*, 198.

¹⁶⁰ Such a belief would help explain why Edward sent charges against Archbishop Stratford to Benedict XII. Such was Edward III's mistrust of his chancellor that he feared he wanted him killed, a fear compounded by the 'allusions', of Stratford - who had played a part in his father's end - 'to the deposition of unjust rulers' [Fryde, 'Removal of Ministers', 153, 155.].

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 161.

¹⁶² *Chapters*, iii, 121. Quote from Fryde, 'Removal of Ministers', 155.

¹⁶³ Fryde, 'Removal of Ministers', 158.

career away from royal service but under Montague he would have had the perfect connection credentials to become, as he subsequently did, one of the king's most trusted servants.

Though he stood to gain nothing personally in terms of promotion as a result of the crisis there can be no doubt that Hatfield would have had great interest in events. Hatfield may not have been as anti-Stratford as Kilsby for example, whose 'extraordinary vindictiveness' stemmed partly from his hatred of the Stratford family due to its previous support of William Zouche in the battle for the archbishopric of York.¹⁶⁴ But he was clearly, by virtue of his efforts abroad, a member of Tout's organised and exclusive court party who 'aspired to dominate the ministry at home, looking upon it as mainly useful for providing the money which the king was to spend, and expecting it to carry out implicitly all orders received from abroad.'¹⁶⁵ Hatfield would have been in no doubts that he was one of the prime culprits to which Stratford's pejorative against those who 'now make themselves governors and counsellors, more than their estate doth warrant',¹⁶⁶ was directed.

No source notes Hatfield amongst those who initially arrived with Edward at the Tower on 30 November 1340, yet there is some disagreement as to this party's make up, so his absence is not a certainty.¹⁶⁷ Nevertheless if the account of Edward tricking his allies by fleeing when supposedly out riding is accepted, it is quite possible that Hatfield may have been absent from his king conducting other business. Even though the king had lost his faith in his home administration over a long period, the actual decision to leave Ghent was made suddenly, maybe even spontaneously, the result being that most of his followers were initially left behind, along with Philippa and their children.¹⁶⁸ By 5 January 1341 Hatfield was certainly in England, as he is noted as having received payment in the chamber from the Abbot of Nottele.¹⁶⁹ Importantly, however, the chronicles do not name Hatfield in the subsequent manoeuvring, clearly not regarding him as a major protagonist on a par with Kilsby, or laymen like William Bohun, earl of Northampton, or bannerets Reginald Cobham and Walter Mauny.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 159. Quote from *Chapters*, iii, 126.

¹⁶⁵ *Chapters*, iii, 90.

¹⁶⁶ Haines, *Stratford*, 289.

¹⁶⁷ Baker suggests a party of eight but names seven: Kilsby, Weston, Giles and John Beauchamp, Nicholas de Cantilupe, Cobham, Northampton [*Chronicon Galfridi le Baker de Swynebroke*, ed. E. Maunde Thompson, (Oxford, 1889), 72.]. Strangely Baker omits Darcy and Mauny, who are both, along with the above mentioned, included in Murimuth's account.

¹⁶⁸ Fryde, 'Removal of Ministers', 154. *Chapters*, iii, 121-122.

It is the very nature of Hatfield's role as receiver of the chamber, which may at once both suggest that Hatfield did play an important part in events, but also explain his absence from the chronicles. One interpretation could be that he was present at parliament in late April 1341 but that his more intimate role as receiver perhaps had failed to provide him with much of a public reputation, leading chroniclers to neglect him. That Murimuth was a royal councillor beforehand and maintained his office afterwards, thus being exceptionally well placed to report the crisis,¹⁷⁰ must count against this. Even when it is considered that his account fails to offer the genuine insights one would hope for from one so well placed; the author simply aspiring to produce a chronicle within the established conventions of the time. Alternatively, it may therefore be argued that Hatfield played little part in the crisis, though such a suggestion goes entirely against the picture of Hatfield so far assembled, and is as a result far from compelling, though there is the weak possibility that Edward allowed him to be distracted by the problems he was having claiming the prebend of Beer and Charminster, which may have necessitated a long trip to the south west almost as far as Portland Bay, and will be discussed below.

Most convincing is the interpretation that his office necessitated a less conspicuous, yet probably none the less integral, background role. The lasting impression is that Hatfield, though sharing the views of friends such as Kilsby, played out his role in the crisis entirely behind the scenes. Edward seems to have left most of the active dealings in the April parliament and earlier at Canterbury, to others, most notably Kilsby, keeping himself and ultimately his receiver of the chamber in the background.¹⁷¹

Through his apparent reconciliation with Stratford in the April parliament, Edward seemed to accept the need to prevent 'occasion for dissension in parliament',¹⁷² but this was no sacrifice of leanings to despotism. Edward III may have had unrealistic expectations of his ability to run the war through his court party in the Low Countries but he was not in this sense trying to be his father's son, he had no wish to emulate the rule of his father and the Despencers. Stratford strove to portray the king as a despot but the archbishop's agenda is all too clear, nevertheless constitutional historians have often accepted his words all too easily. The superficial reconciliation that concluded the crisis did not return Stratford to prominence, though it was not until the end of 1348 that

¹⁶⁹ *CPR, 1340-43*, 74.

¹⁷⁰ Fryde, 'Removal of Ministers', 155.

¹⁷¹ See Haines, *Stratford*, 311-318.

he lay entombed in his cathedral.¹⁷³ By this time many of those men brought in by the crisis, such as Edington and Thoresby, were flourishing in Edward's administration, and Thomas de Hatfield had been bishop of Durham for over three years.

It is quickly worth noting how the victory was soon to turn sour for the court party's leading protagonist, William de Kilsby. The keeper of privy seal retained his office until mid-1342, when it is unclear if he was dismissed or resigned.¹⁷⁴ Yet what is clear is that the vindictiveness of Kilsby's assault had stained him in the eyes of much of the wealthy warrior class; he stood in the way of the unity so essential to the maintenance of war. Hatfield's background role left him untainted, and able to achieve ecclesiastical preferment, whilst the previously ascendant Kilsby, though not entirely humiliated, had to be content with a pilgrimage and a war.¹⁷⁵

¹⁷² *Ibid.*, 329.

¹⁷³ He died still Archbishop on 13 August 1348 [*British Chronology*, 211.]. Fryde, 'Removal of Ministers', 161.

¹⁷⁴ *British Chronology*, 91. *Chapters*, iii, 162.

¹⁷⁵ Haines, *Stratford*, 327. *Chapters*, iii, 162-163.

Part V – The pinnacle of his civil service career: Hatfield as privy seal keeper.

If his activities as receiver of the chamber are frustratingly obscure, then the dearth of information regarding his time as keeper of the privy seal is almost infuriating. It is safe to say that we know almost nothing of Thomas de Hatfield in this role.¹⁷⁶ The dating of his keepership remains clouded. A papal letter of 12 October 1344 lists Hatfield as keeper of the secret seal,¹⁷⁷ however for the purpose of dating the inception of Hatfield's privy seal keepership Tout appears to have taken this as the papal clerks meaning the privy seal, even though he had earlier used this very same letter in his discussion of Hatfield as keeper of the secret seal.¹⁷⁸ Tout's reasoning is clear as sources suggest that John Offord vacated the privy seal post some time after 29 September 1344.

Yet Offord had clearly been unable to conduct his usual office for some time, as he was in reality the most dominant member of the embassy of the bishop of Norwich that left for Avignon at the beginning of August 1344, not ultimately returning until he fled in March the next year.¹⁷⁹ Whilst Offord may have been keeper in name, it is clear that some one would have had to carry out his tasks at Westminster, less clear but highly probable is that this man would have been Hatfield. When the situation necessitated that Offord remain in France into the winter, the move must have been taken to end Hatfield's association with the chamber, presumably to reduce his workload. This decision would probably have been reached sometime in November or early December 1344 when the chamber accounts audit was first ordered.¹⁸⁰ An entry on 10 November states that Hatfield was to be audited from 12 July 1338 until '1 November last'. Given the potential for strife with the exchequer discussed above, Edward would surely have wanted rid of the accounts the moment Hatfield left the position. Whatever the dating of the official hand over, by 11 December news that Hatfield was at least *acting* as replacement for Offord seems to have reached Avignon. On this day Hatfield was referred to as 'king's secretary', the term commonly applied to

¹⁷⁶ *Chapters*, v, 20.

¹⁷⁷ *CPL*, 1342-62, 11.

¹⁷⁸ *Chapters*, iv, 261-261. v, 20.

¹⁷⁹ *Sumption*, *Trial by Battle*, 437, 444.

¹⁸⁰ 10 November 1344 [*CPR*, 1343-45, 420.]. 4 December 1344 [*Ibid.*, 371.].

privy seal keepers.¹⁸¹ Sadly, the chancery rolls offer no help as Hatfield is only mentioned twice as keeper, both in 1345.¹⁸²

The growth in the number of chancery writs that were made on the information or testimony of Hatfield from mid-1343 illustrates Hatfield's importance and increasing closeness to his monarch, and suitability for his new role.¹⁸³ The termination of his office is clearer as on 3 July 1345 John Thoresby replaced Hatfield, bishop-elect of Durham, and on 23 June Walter Wetewang as keeper of wardrobe was ordered to pay Hatfield wages in arrears for his service as keeper of privy seal.¹⁸⁴

So what can be made of the half year that Hatfield held this office? Papal letters show Hatfield with an increasing role to play in international politics. Hatfield's closeness to the king is fully borne out by the requests to exert influence on the king. Hatfield's relationship with Avignon will be more fully addressed later but here it will suffice to note that after Bradestan's visit to the papal curia at the end of 1343 Hatfield was no longer considered a papal enemy. The 11 December 1344 letter saw Clement VI write to Hatfield as one of numerous top officials including earls and bishops, and the king himself, requesting them to receive the visiting papal nuncios favourably.¹⁸⁵ As early as October Hatfield was being commended by Clement for his labours touching the reformation of the peace; Hatfield being heavily involved in communication with Offord in Avignon.¹⁸⁶ In fact it is highly unlikely Hatfield was genuinely working for peace. A military minded man, he almost certainly shared Edward III's desire for a 'decisive battle, where the will of God could be shown', having been so close previously at La Capelle in 1339.¹⁸⁷ Therefore Edward refused to bow to Offord's numerous letters home asking for instructions, the clerk fearing that his king was failing to notice the real potential for peace.¹⁸⁸

It is not clear if Hatfield also received the custody of the great seal as both Offord and Kilsby had;¹⁸⁹ Offord would certainly not have possessed it in France. That Hatfield's tenure of the office was entirely spent in England almost certainly counts against him having the great seal. Only war conditions abroad demanded that the

¹⁸¹ *CPL*, 1342-63, 12.

¹⁸² 6 April 1345 [*CCR*, 1343-46, 511.] and 23 June 1345 [*Ibid.*, 536.].

¹⁸³ See *CFR*, 1337-47, 334. *CCR*, 1343-46, 162. *CPR*, 1343-45, 144, 152, 217.

¹⁸⁴ *Handbook British Chronology*, 91. *CCR*, 1343-46, 536.

¹⁸⁵ *CPL*, 1342-62, 12.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 11.

¹⁸⁷ Rogers, *War Cruel and Sharp*, 216.

¹⁸⁸ Sumption, *Trial by Battle*, 442-43.

¹⁸⁹ *Chapters*, iv, 112.

'keeper of the privy seal became the second chancellor'¹⁹⁰, therefore there is no reason to believe that the chancellor, Robert Sadington would have relinquished his grasp on the great seal. Doubtless his time as keeper of the privy seal was something of a change for Hatfield, as since he joined Edward's service he had been his almost constant companion. After becoming keeper of the privy seal he almost certainly would have followed the pattern of his predecessors in spending most of his time with the council, and therefore out of court, as his staff acted as its secretariat.¹⁹¹ Supporting this, a letter of 23 June 1345 about pay, hints that Hatfield was often out of court, though there are no details of what dates the enquiries ordered found Hatfield as having been absent.¹⁹²

Ultimately Hatfield's appointment was little more than an intermediary measure. However this was in no way because Edward III did not consider his man suitable for the task. As will be strongly suggested below, it appears that the king already had a particular task in mind for his trusted servant. With the ageing Bishop Bury sick, seemingly terminally ill, Hatfield was being groomed as his replacement. This would perfectly explain why Hatfield relinquished the privy seal as soon as he had fully secured Durham; he was merely filling in whilst he literally waited for Bury to die. The privy seal was undoubtedly a stepping stone to the episcopate but not an essential one;¹⁹³ had Bury succumbed sooner Hatfield would surely have advanced to Durham from his position as receiver of the chamber.

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, v, 55.

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 15-20, 59.

¹⁹² *CCR*, 1343-46, 536.

¹⁹³ *Chapters*, iii, 218-19.

Part VI – Hatfield’s pursuit of ecclesiastical patronage, pre-1345

Ecclesiastical patronage became available to a clerk once he had induced a prelate to give him ‘first tonsure’. Beyond this there was generally ‘little need to assume more clerical responsibility than prudence required.’¹⁹⁴ This was perhaps lucky for Hatfield as it has long been assumed that he lacked religious devotion. However this negative interpretation is largely explained by the comments of his metropolitan in 1363. Archbishop Thoresby suggested that as Bishop, Hatfield’s life was ‘dissolute, to the scandal of the church, to the danger of souls’.¹⁹⁵ Yet this is hardly an especially reliable source, as it was clearly a politically motivated diatribe. Sadly, but unsurprisingly, there is no great evidence available for the early part of his career. Although he entered Edward III’s service in the king’s chapel, he did not remain there long. Between July 1338 and May 1339 he paid the king’s almoner 12 gold florins and 54 shillings, for alms for the poor.¹⁹⁶ More insights are found in his later life. Yet it is hard to know if his devotion to St. Catherine the Virgin and St. George was long running, or even genuine.¹⁹⁷ By the end of his life he had long been thinking of how he could avoid the pains of purgatory. But how much religion had concerned him when death did not loom so large is open to debate.¹⁹⁸ Ultimately that his eulogy makes no claim for him being devout suggests that if he was not dissolute, his religion was at best fairly conventional, much like his king’s.¹⁹⁹

Whatever his beliefs Hatfield certainly decided to become a member of the clergy, and therefore put himself in a position to receive ecclesiastical patronage. As he was not the first born male heir, he stood to receive little in a society based on primogeniture. Therefore the church was probably his only path of advancement and upward mobility. Ecclesiastical patronage was also highly valued by those already part of the elite. As the clergy were supposedly celibate, their positions did not become hereditary unlike lay offices. Hence the importance of ecclesiastical patronage cannot be overestimated, as it constantly allowed the king, and his elite, to provide for and reward their current crop of civil servants, without incurring personal losses. This

¹⁹⁴ Tout, ‘English Civil Service’, 198.

¹⁹⁵ *CPP, 1342-1419*, 472.

¹⁹⁶ *Norwell*, 211.

¹⁹⁷ Barker, ‘Death and the Bishop’, 36-7.

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 36-40.

method of reward is often helpful in affording historians insights, allowing them to chart the more obscure earlier stages of an administrator's career.

Hatfield is noted in early 1342 as being the rector of Tarring, in the diocese of Chichester,²⁰⁰ now found in West Sussex. However of the date of this appointment the sources are silent, although we do know that the rectory was still in his hands in late 1343.²⁰¹ Most likely Hatfield had by 1342 already held Tarring for sometime. Rectories were basic ecclesiastical benefices and usually represented the first rung on the ladder of promotion. As rector Hatfield would not have had to be resident at Tarring. Although it is not impossible that he would have chosen to be so, more probable is that through the burden of providing and maintaining a perpetual vicar, who was compelled to residency, he would have personally avoided the burden of the cure of souls. The system was geared by far to benefit the patronised clerks; the profits to be made from the gaining of a rectory, in general, far outweighed those involved in maintaining a vicar.²⁰² Therefore the clerk was paid for, but vitally not distracted from, his main task.

Insights into when and from whom Hatfield may have gained Tarring are offered by consulting the careers of other bishops. Hatfield's predecessor in Durham, Richard de Bury, illustrates the potential for a rectory to be received very early in a career. Bury had taken hold of the rectory of Sawbridgeworth, in the diocese of Canterbury, sometime before 1312, and until 1327 this was probably his only ecclesiastical preferment.²⁰³ The appointment of Thomas Langley, a later bishop of Durham, as rector of the church of Radcliffe, in Lancashire, shows the importance of connections. Langley received the rectory in August 1385, from James Radcliffe, a member of a local family with which Langley would never sever his links.²⁰⁴ Of Hatfield's family connections little is as yet known but the geographical distance from his birthplace may well point to an alternative connection. The comparatively short distance from Salisbury might well be further evidence that Hatfield was a protégé of Montague. Whatever the exact links, the examples above suggest rectories were usually granted by men other than the king, before clerks entered royal service. Hence it is almost certain that another master first groomed Hatfield before he started to serve his

¹⁹⁹ W.M. Ormrod, 'The Personal Religion of Edward III', *Speculum*, 64 (1989).

²⁰⁰ *CPL*, 1305-42, 555.

²⁰¹ *CPL*, 1342-62, 88.

²⁰² R.A.R. Hartridge, *A History of Vicarages in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 1930), 129.

²⁰³ Martin, *Bury*, 32, 36.

²⁰⁴ R.L. Storey, *Thomas Langley and the Bishopric of Durham, 1406-1437* (London, 1961), 3.

monarch, especially when the speed of Hatfield's rise once in the civil service of Edward III is considered.

As noted above Hatfield received the church of Staneford, in Lincoln diocese, almost upon entering royal service.²⁰⁵ Then in July 1338 Hatfield was sent to Richard Bintworth, the newly consecrated bishop of London, to receive a yearly pension 'by reason of the bishop's new creation until he shall provide Thomas with a suitable benefice.'²⁰⁶ Edward was further rewarding his new receiver of the chamber in advance of his services in the Low Countries. Here Hatfield was benefiting from indirect patronage from his king, who by such means was able to provide for his clerks without even reducing his personal supply of ecclesiastical patronage.²⁰⁷ This was not uncommon; Bintworth presumably owed a debt to Edward III for royal assistance in securing his election on the 4 May 1338.²⁰⁸ There is no evidence in the chancery rolls telling whether Hatfield was swiftly provided with a benefice. If not he would have sworn an oath of fidelity to the bishop and been added to the waiting list of pensionary clerks.

Hatfield received another Lincoln church in Market Overton, almost a year after Staneford, whilst he was serving Edward on the continent.²⁰⁹ 1340 saw the grant of the custody of the Hospital of St. John's, Portsmouth, on March 15,²¹⁰ along with the first mention of the problems over the presentation of the prebend of Beer and Charminster, in the church of St. Mary's in Salisbury, in mid May.²¹¹ The grouping of these two grants is illuminating, as from mid-February to the end of June 1340 Hatfield was back in England with his king. With his patronage closer to hand, Edward sought to dispense some of it to those who had been diligently serving him in the Netherlands. Though various entries into the chancery rolls reveal that the home government was being instructed to find benefices for Hatfield amongst others, it is clear from the dates of grants made that there was little substitute for the personal weight of the king and his hungry servant.²¹²

²⁰⁵ *CPR, 1334-38*, 559.

²⁰⁶ *CCR, 1337-39*, 516.

²⁰⁷ W.A. Pantin, *The English Church in the Fourteenth Century* (Cambridge, 1955), 33-34.

²⁰⁸ Bintworth was elected on 4 May, and consecrated on 12 July 1338 [*British Chronology*, 239.].

²⁰⁹ *CPR, 1338-40*, 163.

²¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 440.

²¹¹ *Ibid.*, 509.

²¹² 1338 June 20, July 3, October 19 (also Philip de Weston) [*Ibid.*, 97, 106, 158]. 1341 March 12 (also Philip de Weston and John de Wynewyk) [*CPR, 1340-43*, 150.], October 28 (also John de Wynewyk) [*Ibid.*, 332.] For instance in March 1341 the mandate decreed that John de Etton was to be given the first void benefice 'as soon as the king's clerks, Philip de Weston, John de Wynewyk and Thomas de Hatfield have been preferred.' In addition on 30 June 1338 Hatfield is noted individually as to receive the 'first

From the evidence of patronage available in the chancery rolls, Edward III was quick to reward Hatfield for his major efforts in his service. The Lincoln prebend of Liddington, in the church of St. Mary's, was granted on 8 April 1342, two months after Hatfield stopped being paid for his service in Scotland.²¹³ In May 1343 a few months after the king and his servant returned from Brittany, Thomas collated the prebend of Wolminster in the church of St. Andrews, in Wells.²¹⁴ On 27 June of that year Hatfield was granted his fourth known piece of Lincoln patronage, and the second rich St. Mary's prebend, that of Buckden, which was soon to be the cause of strife.²¹⁵ Finally 17 December 1343 saw Hatfield collated to Fridaythorpe in the church of York. Importantly these last three bits of patronage came in the last eight months of 1343, at a time when chancery entries made on his information apparently suggest his exerting of an increasing influence.²¹⁶ Too stringent a link between event and reward should not be implied, as the balancing of ecclesiastical patronage was a skilled and time-consuming task, with the king always seeking to reward royal servants. However it is obvious that lulls in governmental activity would help thoughts to focus on the distribution of patronage; general orders to find a suitable benefice could only achieve so much.

Hatfield in fact is likely to have held far more patronage than these entries suggest, as far from all royal grants were recorded, and there were other sources of patronage. Upon his election to the see of Durham he also had to relinquish the canonry and prebend of St. German, in Aberwily; the canonry of York; the church of Walsokne, in the diocese of Norwich; and the canonry and prebend of St. Paul's in London.²¹⁷ In addition a note in a papal letter of mid 1344 reveals that Hatfield had at sometime held the fruits of Hadenham, a case which is discussed below,²¹⁸ and there may well have been other similar benefices that he been forced to relinquish previous to his provision to Durham.

These entries found only in papal records show that Hatfield was not simply benefiting from royally *held* patronage but also from papal provision. Petitions in favour of a candidate were sent to the pope, and the more important the petitioner, the

void deanery prebend or other ecclesiastical benefice in the king's gift which he will accept.' [CPR, 1338-40, 106.].

²¹³ E36/204, fol. 99. CPR, 1340-43, 399.

²¹⁴ E36/204, fol. 103v. CPR, 1343-45, 16.

²¹⁵ CPR, 1343-45, 42.

²¹⁶ For Fridaythorpe see DNB, xxv, 154. For Hatfield's influence see e.g. CPR, 1343-45, 144, 152. CCR, 1343-46, 162.

²¹⁷ CPP, 1342-1419, 93.

more likely the success of the provision. The petitioner could of course be a member of the royal court; indeed Edward's influence in achieving some of Hatfield's papal provisions is most likely. Between 1342 and 1366 the king is known to have requested 49 prebends and dignities, and 20 lesser benefices, of which a total of 41 were for his clerks. Alternatively another royal source is possible, with this number being far surpassed by both the Black Prince and Lancaster.²¹⁹

The details of Hatfield's accumulation of ecclesiastical benefices helps complete his background, yet fails to distinguish him from other major medieval royal clerks who all sought their advancement in a similar way. For example Bishops Bateman, Hatfield, Edington, Gynwell and Wyville had all been members, albeit non-resident, of the chapter of Lincoln Cathedral.²²⁰ By way of comparison the vast scale of ecclesiastical preferment that Bury collated from 1330 to 1333 is worth noting.²²¹ For example in 1330 he received the prebends of Wenlocksborn, Penryn, Beauminster, Wells and St. Botolphs, in addition to a period as archdeacon of Salisbury. However to say that Bury was a more valued clerk because he appears to have gained more benefices would be foolhardy. A full comparison with the contemporary Kilsby has the potential to be more informative. Kilsby, a native of Northamptonshire, gained royal patronage from 1328 onwards but it was not until January 1335, when he was made receiver of the chamber, that there was a large increase in the scale of provision.²²² This reveals that Kilsby, unlike Hatfield, had long been in royal service. However the fuller picture is not easy to piece together. Only some of the clerks' benefices are known, and the incomes from these are hard to gauge, and additionally it is not clear what rewards were received elsewhere. So, though useful, Hatfield's accumulation of ecclesiastical patronage does not let us assess to any degree of accuracy, his importance in relation to other prominent clerks of his time.

Most notable in studying Hatfield's gathering of patronage are the problems he encountered in the strife over papal provisions. He was involved in three fairly serious disputes; over the prebends of first Beer and Charminster, then Buckden and also

²¹⁸ *CPL*, 1342-62, 171.

²¹⁹ Pantin, *English Church*, 49. For discussion of the complex processes involved see *Ibid.*, 48-51.

²²⁰ Aberth, *Lisle*, 12.

²²¹ Martin, *Bury*, 56-7. N. Denholm-Young, 'Richard de Bury (1287-1345)', *TRHS*, 4th Series, xx (1937), 146.

²²² *Chapters*, iii, 84

Hadenham, which offer some insight into both his character, and also his growing place and importance in national and international affairs.

Before attempting to link together the often perplexing paths of events in these disputes, they must be placed in context as they were as much a product of the time, as of Hatfield's character. The problem of who had the right to present to a benefice was not a new one, and is beyond the scope of this survey.²²³ Yet what needs to be noted is that from the early 1340s it became the source of major confrontation in England, between the king and papal provisors who had the support of ecclesiastics in certain dioceses.²²⁴ The traditional problem of papal provisions was exacerbated by promotion of the French royal servant, Pierre Roger, to pope in mid-1342, a fact that Clement VI astonishingly later admitted.²²⁵

There are a number of reasons why Clement's moves were antagonistic and resulted in the Ordinance of Provisors in 1343. Clearly papal provisions threatened Edward III's cherished ability to use ecclesiastical patronage to reward his clerks, yet this was again nothing new. It has traditionally been suggested that the genesis of the ordinance of 1343 lay with parliament, the king already being armed with the suitable legal remedies with which to combat the problem.²²⁶ That the commons were concerned about the situation is clear but it should come as no surprise that the English population were especially sensitive at this time. It was a time of war, and there were general expectations of an increase in the intensity of hostilities, and the writings of William of Ockham illustrate - surely correctly - that the English saw Clement as biased against them in his dealings.²²⁷ In such a climate it is not surprising that there were heightened fears that papal provisions were causing the fruits of English benefices to flow out of England, and across the channel, only to sustain the armies of her enemies. Hence John XXII's numerous provisions, predominantly to Italians, during a later, and relatively peaceful, passage of the Hundred Years War resulted in far less outcry than Clement VI's. Clement's main error was to give the richest benefices to Frenchmen, at a time when Anglo-French tensions were fast rising. For example, particularly galling

²²³ See for example Pantin, *English Church*, 30-115 [esp30-80].

²²⁴ R.C. Palmer, *English Law in the Age of the Black Death: A Transformation of Governance and Law, 1348-1381* (Carolina, 1993), 29-30.

²²⁵ *CPL, 1342-62*, 17. For a discussion of Clement VI's partiality see D. Wood, 'Omnino Partialitate Cessante: Clement VI and the Hundred Years War', *The Church and War*, ed. W.J. Sheils, *Studies in Church History* 20 (London, 1983), 179-189.

²²⁶ Palmer, *English Law*, 34.

²²⁷ Wood, 'Clement VI', 179, 185-189.

were the favours shown to Talleyrand de Perigord, and the benefices of up to 1000 marks given to two Cardinals Gerald Domar and Aymar Robert.²²⁸

However Palmer seems justified in arguing that ‘the prosecution of the conflict was not an appeasement of the Commons but a direct expression of royal policy.’²²⁹ Easter 1343 and the ordinance do not mark the commencement of Edward’s conflict against the pope over provisions. In 1342 he had written informing the pope of the right of his courts to adjudicate on matters concerning English benefices.²³⁰ Indeed that since 1340, Hatfield had experienced troubles in his dispute over Beer and Charminster would surely have greatly angered his master, as would Kilsby’s problems over the archbishopric of York; importantly Edward’s chosen method of rewarding two of his most trusted servants was being denied him. So whilst also presumably sharing many of the fears of his subjects, in addition Edward had had one of his most valuable sources of patronage challenged. Hence he was more than merely appeasing parliamentary concerns. As Palmer notes ‘the parliamentary petition [that led to the 1343 Ordinance] was useful for strengthening the king’s hand in dealing with domestic ecclesiastics and with the pope’,²³¹ but it did not mark the start of the problem.

Once the ordinance was proclaimed, Edward appears to have used his important and powerful royal clerks to test both his own ecclesiastics and pope Clement. Indeed Hatfield was granted the Buckden prebend just two months after the list of abuses was drawn up. Edward needed men who because they maintained themselves from his patronage, would fight determinedly for the king’s right to present. Therefore in this sense it was Hatfield’s loyalty to the king that drew him into his disputes with Avignon, as he was compelled to adopt an aggressive stance. Yet from what we can tell, Hatfield was a determined man and would have doubtless been pleased to have, from his monarch, such licence and cover to further his own goals. Hatfield was not directly involved in the most infamous cases of the time, such as that of the deanery of York, which caused parliament to specifically request that someone able to resist Talleyrand be granted it.²³² But he was involved against many of the important papal adherents of the time, for example, William de Saxeby who was importantly Talleyrand’s proctor.²³³

²²⁸ A.D.M. Barrell, ‘The Ordinance of Provisors of 1343’, *Historical Research (the Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research)*, Vol. LXIV (1991), 264, 271.

²²⁹ Palmer, *English Law*, 37.

²³⁰ *Ibid.*, 36.

²³¹ *Ibid.*, 34.

²³² *Rot. Parl.*, ii, 154.

²³³ *CPL, 1342-62*, 63.

Prebends were benefices in a cathedral chapter, granted to support a member of that chapter through the income of a manor belonging to the cathedral. Prebends were highly sought after because they could be held in absentia and in pluralism. The dispute over Beer and Charminster first occurs in the records on 13 May 1340, three years before the ordinance of provisors.²³⁴ The king issued a prohibition to all ecclesiastical persons from proceedings in derogation of his right to present to the prebend, which he had lately recovered in his court against the bishop of Salisbury and collated to Hatfield.²³⁵ The prohibition was Edward's response to the claims made by both the bishop and the Pope. No printed record of the case exists, but it is clear that it is part of the general policy of the English monarchs in the early years of the fourteenth century, whereby a benefice left vacant and then presented by the crown, was regarded as having fallen into permanent royal gift, with the king's courts then being used to reinforce this new policy.²³⁶

The prebend was vacant in 1337 because Robert de Stratford, who had held it, was consecrated as Bishop of Chichester.²³⁷ As a result Robert de Wyville, bishop of Salisbury,²³⁸ had claimed the right to the advowson as bishop, and subsequently provided for his brother Walter, who was already his treasurer of Salisbury. Pope Benedict XII provided for Master Robert de Turre de Adria, an alien, who was presently a canon of Salisbury.²³⁹ This provision was, according to a royal writ of February 1341, made as the result of a deceitful petition from Adria, in which he wrongly claimed to be a royal clerk in the king's service.²⁴⁰ This letter implies that the king would order direct action to be used 'for a convenient remedy against this malice'. Presumably this gave licence for Hatfield, who was in the country, to use his military muscle to intimidate Adria who was 'disturbing' the royal servant by holding the prebend.

²³⁴ *CPR, 1338-40, 509.*

²³⁵ References to when the vacancy occurred are muddled. It is not clear if this is due to confusion at the time, but copying errors in the collation of the modern rolls series seem more probable. The vacancy is noted as occurring in Edward II's reign [*CPR, 1340-43, 107.*] Edward I's reign [*CPR, 1338-40, 509. CPR, 1340-43, 210.*] One vacancy occurred in Edward II's reign after the death of Simon of Ghent in 1315, in his father's reign there were certainly five – possibly six – vacancies [*British Chronology, 251.*].

²³⁶ W.M. Ormrod, *The reign of Edward III, Crown and Political Society in England 1327-1377* (London, 1990), 124.

²³⁷ On 30 November 1337 [*British Chronology, 216.*].

²³⁸ Robert Wyville was Queen Isabelle's former Chaplain [A.K. McHardy, 'Some Reflections on Edward III's Use of Propaganda', *The Age of Edward III*, ed. J.S. Bothwell (Woodbridge, 2001), 172.]

²³⁹ Robert de Turre de Adria was also, from 1342, involved in another disputed canonry and prebend, that of Thorp, in Howden. He never obtained Thorp, dying by late 1344, though he did gain Romsey, in Salisbury [*CPL, 1342-62, 52, 78, 166, 204.*].

²⁴⁰ *CPR, 1340-43, 381.*

Adria was soon to become a papal writer and his later death at the apostolic see²⁴¹ suggests he was very much a papal adherent. Supporting this interpretation are the activities in the locality of Master William de Derby, Reymund Messenger and Master William de Saxeby, which had resulted in the order for their arrest a few months earlier, on January 18 1341.²⁴² Further details about Derby and Messenger are not forthcoming but the later was surely of French origin. Though seemingly English, Saxeby is revealed as an important papal adherent, with a specialist knowledge of judicial procedure. He is noted as later having a number of benefices in provision from the Pope. In 1343 he was proctor to five papal cardinals, including the important Talleyrand de Perigord, Cardinal of St. Peter's Chains, who defeated Philip de Weston in the highly controversial dispute over the deanery of York, and was noted by Murimuth as a great enemy of the king's in the papal court.²⁴³ Whether these men were ultimately arrested is not ascertainable, but they seem to have had no personal quarrel with Hatfield, rather they highlight the operation within England of powerful forces, working against the king and in support of papal rights.

In autumn 1342, the situation was complicated further when the prebend was confirmed by the new pope Clement VI, upon another notable papal servant, Master William de Veyarco.²⁴⁴ The papal letter notes that Veyraco was to gain the prebend because of the delay since the original vacancy, a decision evidently made by the late Benedict XII some time before his death on 25 April 1342. Clearly the thinking was that a stronger man was needed to defeat Hatfield. Such a papal move was becoming increasingly common regarding disputed benefices. When a position was left vacant for too long or the incumbent not ordained within a certain time, the pope claimed the benefice as his to provide.²⁴⁵ This evidently spurred Adria into more decisive action, and caused Clement to drop Veyraco, as before the end of 1342 the archbishop of Canterbury, and the bishops of London and Salisbury, were ordered to cite Hatfield to appear at Avignon if he had violated the sequestration of Beer and Charminster.²⁴⁶ It

²⁴¹ *CPL*, 1342-62, 204.

²⁴² *CPR*, 1340-43, 107.

²⁴³ See Barrell, *Papacy*, 115, 133, 138. *CPL*, 1342-62, 60, 63, 105.

²⁴⁴ *CPL*, 1342-62, 79. In 1342 Master William de Veyraco was to receive a canonry of York, with expectation of a prebend, 'on account of his services to the apostolic see', and in 1345 is noted as 'precentor of Agde, Papal chaplain' [*Ibid.*, 32, 19.].

²⁴⁵ Barrell, *Papacy*, 96.

²⁴⁶ *CPL*, 1342-62, 86.

was also stated that Adria was litigating at Avignon, against Walter Wyville, over this benefice.²⁴⁷

Deciphering this already confusing dispute is not helped by the possibility of a copying error. Virtually the same order is entered on the same date for successive years, 1342 and 1343.²⁴⁸ The details are the same except that the later importantly notes that Adria had achieved three sentences against Wyville, and is also stronger in its suggestion of Hatfield's guilt and that he, should therefore, be compelled to come to Avignon. Ultimately I have interpreted the entries as correctly dated, the explanation being that Clement VI waited a year for his reluctant English ecclesiastics to act against Hatfield, before once again compelling them to do so.²⁴⁹ Clement was not successful as a further year later, in autumn 1344, Hatfield still detained the prebend; the papal line now being that Veyraco had obtained the benefice from Benedict XII and Adria, who had since died, had claimed it due to a papal reservation.²⁵⁰

In this 1344 letter the almost ridiculous situation was further clouded by the death of one George de Salut.²⁵¹ Salut had supposedly claimed that Robert de Stratford had despoiled him of Beer and Charminster, and was alive when the benefice was granted Veyraco, the effect being to make the cases of Veyraco, Wyville, Adria and Hatfield void. This was presumably simply another intrigue - whether based on fact or not - conceived to allow Clement the option of choosing another papal candidate for the prebend, should Veyraco be thwarted. Thankfully after this the case disappears, and by 1348 the prebend can be simply described as 'void by the death of William de Veyraco, Papal Chaplain' with no loose ends.²⁵²

Interestingly Edward III had not directly challenged the right of the Pope to make the provision but rather claimed, it seems quite rightfully, that as Adria had been duplicitous his petition should be invalid. Edward's hope in his notification was not only the - perhaps vain - hope of turning the Pope against Adria, but also to convince his own ecclesiastics that he had acted correctly. This helps illustrate something of the home context that these disputes were conducted in. The problems of dual loyalties for many English ecclesiastics is borne out by the threatening letter Edward III wrote to his

²⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁴⁸ 1342 [*Ibid.*], 1343 [*Ibid.*, 88.].

²⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 88.

²⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 149.

²⁵¹ Salut had also received a prebend of York but had been deprived of it by John de Offord, the king's chancellor. Salut was a papal chaplain and seems to have been involved in a number of disputes concerning his Pope's rights [*Ibid.*, 182, 255-256.].

²⁵² *CPL*, 1342-62, 257.

trusted servant Richard de Bury, then bishop of Durham, in May 1343.²⁵³ Bury also enjoyed good relations with the papacy, having served on a number of embassies to Avignon, and was willing to stand up to his monarch regarding the rights of the church. In 1343 Bury was willing to join forces with the bishop of Salisbury against Edward, because he had just himself been defeated in a similar dispute over the right to present to the church of Greencroft.²⁵⁴ Edward's letter noted that Hatfield had 'canonically obtained possession' of Beer and Charminster, but still papal bulls had been shown to Bury, aiming to subvert this. This was no idle threat; Bury was warned that if he did not back down he would have his temporalities seized.²⁵⁵

It may be tempting to link to the benefice dispute the actions, sometime in 1344, of a gang, including John le Kembre, the bailiff of the town of Dorchester, who entered Hatfield's free warren at Charminster in order to hunt. They carried away game, in addition to assaulting and badly injuring one John Couting, who was Hatfield's servant, and had presumably challenged them.²⁵⁶ However no suggestion is made to indicate that this was anything other than a conventional act of medieval felony and lawlessness, against an advantaged clerk, by those who were less privileged. Importantly Hatfield would surely not have failed to utilise the opportunity to incriminate papal adherents, were there any possibility of a connection to the dispute over Beer and Charminster.

By looking at the Buckden dispute aspects of the Beer and Charminster case become clearer. The diocese of Lincoln was the location for many important disputes. As Palmer notes Bishop Thomas Bek's opposition to Edward III over provisors was 'overt', leading to 'substantial disorder'.²⁵⁷ Edward was therefore again asking Hatfield to operate in an important arena. Soon after the ordinance of provisors, on 27 June 1343 Hatfield - already involved in litigation over Beer and Charminster - was presented with the prebend of Buckden, in the Church of St. Mary's, of Lincoln.²⁵⁸ By 20 July the council had had to appoint an officer to imprison in Newgate anyone challenging the king's right to present to Buckden.²⁵⁹ Edward III had secured this by defeating, in his king's court, the bishop of Lincoln, who had also claimed the right. A privy seal writ of 25 July 1343 informs us that the king had at some point been misled

²⁵³ *CCR, 1343-46*, 118.

²⁵⁴ Martin, *Bury*, 244.

²⁵⁵ *CCR, 1343-46*, 118.

²⁵⁶ *CPR, 1343-45*, 419.

²⁵⁷ Palmer, *English Law*, 41.

²⁵⁸ *CPR, 1343-45*, 42.

²⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 163.

by false suggestion to ratify the provisor Master Hugh de Walmesford, but upon realising his mistake had collated Hatfield to the prebend.²⁶⁰

The threat of incarceration did not subdue Walmesford who attempted to hold the prebend in defiance of the king, and neither was Hatfield a man to submit without a fight. This was to be quite literally the case; as before the end of 1343 Hatfield and his followers reportedly *arrested* the probably ageing monk,²⁶¹ as he set off to Avignon.²⁶² The despoiling of gold, silver, books, muniments and other goods to the value of 100 marks, reveals something of the probable nature of his arrest.²⁶³ However Walmesford was not left in royal hands for long as some papal supporters forcibly rescued him.²⁶⁴ Walmesford's testimony of the event was apparently serious enough for Clement VI to threaten the culprits with excommunication. The investigation of the matter was then entrusted to Lincoln's chancellor, subdean, and to Master Simon de Islep, who was a canon there. After viewing their findings Master Bernard de Novodompno, papal chaplain and auditor, was to hear and terminate the matter.²⁶⁵ Thus there is little doubt that this was a very serious dispute.

However as it is not clear if Hatfield was ever excommunicated, it may be questioned whether Walmesford embellished his version of events somewhat. Nevertheless given Hatfield's warlike nature his participation in, or at least authorisation of, such a callous attack is certainly quite feasible. Later as bishop of Durham Hatfield had to apply to Edward III for a formal acquittance over his supposed involvement in an attack upon Thomas de Salkeld, titular bishop of Chrysopolis and assistant to the Archbishop of York.²⁶⁶ Indeed Hatfield may well have made such a move against Adria in 1341, but this has not left its mark on available records.

Furthermore, there is some suggestion that Hatfield may have been involved in criminal activity in the past. It is not impossible that the Thomas de Hatfield mentioned in May 1321, as having been part of a brutal felony, may have been a very youthful later-to-be-bishop of Durham.²⁶⁷ Building upon this possible suggestion of a criminal past is the oyer and terminer commission of February 1339 sent to exact justice against

²⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 108. Whether Hatfield had been momentarily ousted or only came into the picture afterwards cannot be concluded from the writ.

²⁶¹ Walmesford is noted as having died at the Apostolic see in autumn 1344. He had also held the canonry and prebend of St. Chad's, Shrewsbury [*CPL*, 1342-62, 149.].

²⁶² *Ibid.*, 138.

²⁶³ *Ibid.*

²⁶⁴ Palmer, *English Law*, 42.

²⁶⁵ *CPL*, 1342-62, 138.

²⁶⁶ Barrell, *Papacy*, 190.

²⁶⁷ *CPR*, 1317-21, 606. Hatfield's age is discussed below.

amongst others, a certain chaplain Thomas de Hatfield, who was alleged to have broken into one William Moton's close, at Wimington, and carried away his goods.²⁶⁸ As the name Thomas de Hatfield would not have been uncommon, too much should not be made of these suggestions,²⁶⁹ yet criminal churchmen were not unheard of during Edward III's reign.²⁷⁰ We cannot be exactly sure when the felony noted in the 1339 commission is alleged to have occurred, and by February of that year our Hatfield had been in royal service for over a year, and could perhaps have expected to be named as king's clerk. It could also be argued that having already obtained a number of benefices, this is unlikely to have been our Hatfield, as he would have had less need to resort to illegal activities for his livelihood. Alternatively, a more compelling interpretation is perhaps that Hatfield would have felt protected by his new status, as the examples of Molyns and Bradestan, two men with whom he was associated, help highlight.

Ultimately it is likely that there was a skirmish of some description, as Walmesford's subsequent rescue indicates that he to had some stout and hardy supporters. What reason was there for such an altercation? The papal excommunication letter states that Walmesford was on the way to the apostolic see, and the evidence that he died a year later at Avignon may be seen to corroborate this. Yet it is hard to tell if Walmesford's desire to leave England existed in advance of his *arrest*. It is most unlikely that the English monk was fleeing to France with the fruits of the prebend, in order to supply Philip VI's armies. Though he may simply have been taking them away for his own use and the reclaiming of this income may have been Hatfield's motive. Although it was stated that a hundred pounds was taken, this cannot be taken as an accurate reflection of the value of goods actually purloined. But it does however suggest that the monk may have been travelling with many of his possessions when he was arrested. However this does not necessarily mean that he was on his way to Avignon at this point. Yet regardless of Hatfield's action the situation was becoming increasingly hostile for papal adherents. Indeed most likely is that Walmesford had simply decided in advance to return to the safety of Avignon and litigate from there. Hence, most probably, the arrest was initially just part of Edward's policy of keeping English disputes in England, but it then escalated due to the nature of the parties involved.

²⁶⁸ *CPR, 1343-45, 274.*

²⁶⁹ A glance at any fourteenth century English record illustrates that Thomas was a common name at this time. Also Hatfield appears to have been far from unique as a place name. For example Edward III had a manor at Hatfield in the south.

²⁷⁰ See Aberth, *Lisle*.

Whatever the true nature of the *arrest*, it is clear that the importance of Hatfield's potential excommunication would not have been lost on the Pope. It can therefore be interpreted as something of a calculated move on Clement's part. By threatening Hatfield's very salvation, something to which he was later to devote a great amount of time and money,²⁷¹ the pope was making a most forceful attempt to drive one of Edward's most trusted servants into breaking his monarch's demand that no English ecclesiastic submit to Avignon.²⁷² If he wanted to rid himself of this threat Hatfield was cited to appear before the pope within three months.²⁷³

Nevertheless the supposed excommunication failed to conclude the issue in any way. On 30 August 1344 Edward sent out almost the same order as he had a year previously to arrest those questioning his rights over Buckden,²⁷⁴ and though Walmesford promptly died, as the case of Beer and Charminster shows there was no hope that this would allow Hatfield to emerge victorious. Clement did not disappoint; swiftly providing to Buckden, Master Thomas Fastolf D.C.L., and auditor of the papal palace.²⁷⁵ This is an example of the typical papal practice of surrogation, whereby a claimant replaced another who had died or tired of the struggle.²⁷⁶

Hatfield's final benefice dispute case was over Hadenham. In mid 1344 Hatfield was noted in a papal letter as having held the fruits of Hadenham in the past - the implication being that this was no longer the case - though no dates are recorded.²⁷⁷ Problems occurred after the king had recovered the presentation of the benefice from the bishop of Ely, due to a vacancy.²⁷⁸ Edward III presented John de Martham, who after a time died. This was presumably not during a vacancy, as the then bishop of Ely, Simon Montague,²⁷⁹ took his chance to assert his right to present. That his choice was Thomas de Hatfield is reflective of the time, if it was not at the behest of his monarch it

²⁷¹ See Barker, 'Death and the Bishop'.

²⁷² Palmer, *English Law*, 36.

²⁷³ *CPL*, 1342-62, 138.

²⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 407.

²⁷⁵ *CPL*, 1342-62, 183. The letter notes that there was still a suit between Hatfield and Walmesford.

²⁷⁶ Barrell, *Papacy*, 177.

²⁷⁷ *CPL*, 1342-62, 171.

²⁷⁸ For insights into this case I am particularly indebted to Palmer's brief outlining of the case, due to his use of documents unavailable to me [Palmer, *English Law*, 311.].

²⁷⁹ Simon Montague was brother of William, later Earl of Salisbury, who was possibly Hatfield's master before 1336. Montague's pontificate in Ely ran from June 1337 until his death in June 1345, having been translated from Worcester, having been bishop there since 1334 [*British Chronology*, 222.].

was clearly a pacifying move, made in recognition of past problems and to express support for Edward in a time of tension with the episcopate.²⁸⁰

However a certain Henry de Harwedon was already in possession of Hadenham. Though somewhat predictably in light of the attacks noted above, the forceful royal clerk, Hatfield, soon drove him from the benefice. It is not stated that Harwedon was a provisor but it seems highly probable given the current climate, especially as an inquest of November 1345 later found that Harwedon was attempting to recover Hadenham from the king in the papal courts.²⁸¹ Before 1344 Harwedon had gained restitution against Montague and the prior of Ely was then, as a result, instructed to restore Hadenham to him.²⁸² Ultimately Hatfield's role in this case was limited, and during 1344 his interest in his three disputed benefices seems to have wavered.

Until 1344 Hatfield can only be seen as a true papal enemy. His threatened excommunication in late 1343, was simply the nadir of a series of antagonistic moves against the papacy, yet this very soon began to change. At the start of 1344 the pope wrote to Thomas de Bradestan on a number of issues, amongst these was his acceptance of the recommendation of Thomas Hatfield, which had been made by Bradestan, seemingly on behalf of the king.²⁸³ After this the threat of excommunication seems to disappear, and Hatfield is simply noted as being involved in litigation over Buckden, and Beer and Charminster, even though the pope continued to endeavour to make provision of the prebends elsewhere.²⁸⁴ Having fought so hard for these benefices Hatfield allowed them to fall out of his hands. This was because he expected greater reward, and in order to achieve this it was essential that there at least be the pretence that he was no longer an enemy of Avignon.

Ultimately Hatfield's disputes were exacerbated by his nature but were also very much a product of their context. Hence the dispute over Buckden, which was

²⁸⁰ For a detailed general assessment of the situation, see Palmer, *English Law*, 28-53., and Barrell, 'The Ordinance of Provisors of 1343'.

²⁸¹ *CPR, 1343-45*, 88, 399.

²⁸² This argument relies on the belief that there is a typing mistake in Palmer's appendix: it was not in fact 'Hatfield [who] obtained restitution in papal court against the bishop' [Palmer, *English Law*, 311.] but Harwedon. A number of facts strongly support this belief; firstly, it was the bishop who had given Hatfield the benefice. Secondly, the November 1345 inquest found that Harwedon was litigating against the king in Avignon, and then links this to the instruments being delivered to the prior. Although this does not rule out the fact that Hatfield was as well. Thirdly, Hatfield was soon to become bishop and seems to have relinquished his patronage disputes by the end of 1344. Fourthly and by far most importantly, the taking of such cases outside the realm was one of the very issues upon which Edward III was opposing Clement VI. Therefore Hatfield would surely not have gone against his monarch in this way, and had he done so he would certainly not have been rewarded with the bishopric of Durham. Indeed Harwedon's reward for doing the same was incarceration, firstly in the Tower, and then in the Marshalsea prison.

²⁸³ *CPL, 1342-62*, 4.

²⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 149, 183.

something of a test case for the ordinance of 1343, came to a head more quickly and violently than that over Beer and Charminster, which had its genesis before the antagonisms after Pierre Roger's election.

Part VII – Training for Durham: Hatfield’s military career pre-1345

As noted above it is in a military sense that the choice of Hatfield as bishop of Durham makes the most sense, and therefore it is important to assess his credentials as a soldier when he started to be considered for the position. Thomas de Hatfield has been described as the bishop Odo of his age,²⁸⁵ and clearly thought of himself first and foremost, as a warrior. Though his burial effigy depicts him in his episcopal vestments, this was entirely in keeping with the rest of the English episcopate, and as such should not be seen as a representation of self-image.²⁸⁶ More instructive is Hatfield’s striking *round* seal that depicts himself as a knight arrayed for battle on his warhorse.²⁸⁷ Traditionally bishops, like women, used oval seals, but this appears not to have rested well with Hatfield’s warlike nature.²⁸⁸ After entering Edward III’s service Hatfield spent most of his time both home and abroad with his king.²⁸⁹ Therefore it is possible, by using the chancery rolls and wardrobe accounts, in addition to Edward’s known movements, to build up a picture of Hatfield’s military career from 1337 until 1345. Hatfield is revealed as a more than competent soldier, in all senses of the word, even if it is perhaps hard – from just these documents – to truly separate him from other militarily minded clerks also employed in Edward III’s civil service.

The first evidence of his military career is Hatfield’s employment reconstructing castles in Scotland in late 1337. It is not certain whether he had taken an active part in the campaigning that preceded this. Given the importance of the rebuilding tasks it is likely that Hatfield had some previous experience through the 1330s. If the link to Salisbury can be substantiated it would make this all the more likely, as Montague spent much of this period fighting in Scotland.²⁹⁰ It is possible that Hatfield then remained in Scotland during the winter 1337-8, although his lack of pay suggests he returned south with Edward’s court. February and March saw offensives in Scotland under the

²⁸⁵ Highfield, ‘The English Hierarchy in the Reign of Edward III’, 135.

²⁸⁶ Barker, ‘Death and the Bishop’, 15.

²⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 11.

²⁸⁸ However Hatfield’s seal was not unique at this time amongst the episcopate. It was the ‘first of the round privy seals used by the bishops of Durham’ [W. Greenwell and C.H. Hunter-Blair, *Durham Seals* (Newcastle, 1911), 460.] but Bury had some round seals [I would like to thank Alan Piper for this information.].

²⁸⁹ For example see for the period 22 July 1338 to 4 Oct 1339 Hatfield was only paid for one absence of 16 days [*Norwell*, 337.].

²⁹⁰ Douch, ‘Earl of Salisbury’, 86.

command of Arundel and Salisbury, culminating in the siege of Dunbar, that achieved little and was abandoned by the start of June.²⁹¹ Yet evidence for Hatfield's participation is lacking. The ascription to him of a warlike nature indicates that he would have wished to be involved, should the king's administration have been able to cope without him. But that Hatfield had just entered the king's service would surely have necessitated his presence in the south, and it is indeed possible that he had an important role in planning the Walton ordinances.

A role for Hatfield in the terrible plundering and wasting on Edward's French campaigning through September and October 1339, is supported by the payments made at places deep into enemy territory that have been detailed above. Plundering of enemy lands and actions directed against non-combatants, appear horrific to the modern mind, and totally out of keeping with chivalric ideals of what it was to be a medieval soldier, but this was not the case. They were essential to attempt to draw armies into battle and to lift sieges. Writing on such measures employed by Henry de Grosmont, Duke of Lancaster, Barnie comments that 'such acts were justified by contemporary laws of war and were in no way thought to detract from Henry's chivalry.'²⁹² Hatfield would have surely become well versed in this aspect of warfare, as it was at the forefront of Edward's tactics, for example being used effectively when Hatfield campaigned with Edward III, in France in 1345 and 1355, and in Scotland in 1356.

If the tactic could guarantee misery of local inhabitants for the next few years, it could not always guarantee its main aim in a pitched battle, and this was something of which Hatfield would become all too aware. Hatfield was denied a major battle when Philip declined to join battle at La Capelle on 23 October, even though both sides were already arrayed. Hatfield was most likely being in the centre with King Edward and his household.²⁹³ His disappointment would have been particularly keenly felt as he had achieved an important personal milestone in being raised to banneret in the traditional pre-battle honours.²⁹⁴

Hatfield's administrative abilities were surely put to good use in the organisation of sieges, yet these were ultimately to fail to provide him with the pitched battle he

²⁹¹ Sumption, *Trial by Battle*, 234-237.

²⁹² J. Barnie, *War in Medieval Society: Social Values and the Hundred Years War 1337-1399* (London, 1974), 59.

²⁹³ Sumption, *Trial by Battle*, 288.

²⁹⁴ Hatfield was one of many. First time bannerets included amongst others Philip Weston, Robert Ferrers, Robert Ufford the younger, Maurice Berkley [*Norwell*, 325-355. Rogers, *War Cruel and Sharp*, 171.].

surely longed for to prove himself. At the end of September 1339 he was surely outside Cambrai when the siege failed to bring the French king to battle, and then surely played his part when the English and their allies responded by spreading out to create a fast moving 20 mile wide front, with the aim to maximise destruction. Hatfield was most likely with Edward III, and the Earl of Derby, who followed the course of the Upper Scheldt Valley. Their sole major resistance came from a garrison of Honnecourt Castle; a full scale pitched battle being avoided as Edward sought a more definitive 'trial by battle' involving his adversary, Philip VI.²⁹⁵ A year later in 1340 Hatfield was involved in another siege, this time of Tournai, where the countryside was also savaged in an - again ultimately futile - attempt to draw the French into trying to relieve the siege.²⁹⁶

In summer 1340 Hatfield sailed with Edward's fleet back to the continent, and thus was surely heavily involved in the naval battle of Sluys on 24 June. The fighting was described as 'ferocious and horrible' by Froissart, ships becoming locked together and hand-to-hand combat ensuing, which involved all onboard. This assessment of the battle is borne out by Edward himself receiving a thigh wound, that necessitated two weeks rest aboard the *Cog Thomas*.²⁹⁷ Such a battle would have allowed Hatfield to prove himself but would not have offered the chance for the pomp and ceremony of which his eulogy suggests he was so fond; at Sluys there was surely no pretence that medieval warfare was anything other than a horrific bloodbath.²⁹⁸

As will be clear from the examples already listed, though Hatfield's probable presence can be remarked upon, it is most difficult to move from this to assess just how valuable this presence actually was. Despite the evidence assembled, it is not impossible that Hatfield could have been little more than a desk clerk, who though skilled at the organisation of war, was perhaps merely *competent* in combat situations.

Nevertheless some impression that this was not the case may be provided by the growth of his retinue, though this could arguably have been an attempt to cloak his inadequacies in majesty. In the first two months of 1340, Hatfield received £14 13s 4d, to pay for himself as a banneret, the 13 squires he commanded, and their 44 horses.²⁹⁹ Philip Weston had only 15 horses, but these were for himself, a knight and two squires

²⁹⁵ Sumption, *Trial by Battle*, 278-281.

²⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 348-360.

²⁹⁷ Sumption, *Trial by Battle*, 325-328.

²⁹⁸ For Wessington's note that Hatfield loved pomp see *Script. Tres.*, 137.

²⁹⁹ *Norwell*, 387.

only, indicating perhaps that Weston was less interested in having a body of men to lead. The retinue of William Kilsby - whose willingness to fight is highlighted by his death in 1346, in the disease ridden camp outside Calais, when he had already lost his official place in government - serves to put Hatfield's retinue at this point into perspective. In early 1340 Kilsby had a mighty 102 horses, and employed another banneret, two knights and 28 armed squires.³⁰⁰ Before returning to the continent in the summer of 1340, Hatfield is noted as receiving a further £154 14s 11d for his retinues' service abroad.³⁰¹ For the second period of service abroad in 1340 he received £72, when most of those named received approximately £10, though the magnates were paid considerably more, Reginald de Cobeham, for example, received £400.³⁰²

In 1341 an expedition was planned in detail, the most likely destination being Flanders, and though Hatfield cannot be clearly identified on the extant scheme manuscript, it is likely that this is due to its condition.³⁰³ On 18 July in order to finance his retinue of 16 squires, 3 knights, and himself as banneret, along with 100 mounted archers, Hatfield was promised 27 sacks of wool from Co. Kent.³⁰⁴ The wool grant was made due to cover wages for the forty days of service. Once again the make up of Hatfield's retinue was much the same as Weston's. After the failure to take an army to the continent, Edward directed his attention to Scotland in the winter 1341-2. Hatfield served as a banneret, with 2 knights and 11 squires, for 54 days, from 25 November until 13 January 1342,³⁰⁵ in Edward's 'barren show of force'.³⁰⁶ It is highly possible that he was part of the force of 11 household bannerets who relieved Stirling, as having worked there he would have known the area.³⁰⁷

³⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 386-387.

³⁰¹ *CCR*, 1339-41, 525.

³⁰² *CCR*, 1341-43, 82.

³⁰³ M. Prestwich, 'English armies in the early stages of the Hundred Years War: a scheme in 1341', *Historical Research*, lvi (1983).

³⁰⁴ *CCR*, 1341-43, 570. On 29 July further instructions were given that Hatfield could collect the wool from the port of London. He was 'to take... 27 sacks... at £6 the sack, upon his wages, and those of the said men after he has paid half a mark for the custom due thereon' [*Ibid.*, 564.]. This apparently meant Hatfield was to receive the equivalent of £148.5. On 26 August Hatfield was noted as, to receive 10 sacks of wool, priced at 10 marks each, 'in part satisfaction of £72 of wages of himself and 20 men-at-arms, including a banneret and 3 knights, and of ten armed men and 20 archers' [*CPR*, 1340-43, 267.].

The later provision was for only 20 mounted archers. It is not clear if this is a mistake or if early plans were later considered too ambitious. The make up of Hatfield's retinue is interesting in its *provision* for mounted archers. It is a unique feature of the 1341 scheme that mounted archers were *omitted*, as they were otherwise a mainstay of Edward III's armies. However had the army actually sailed it could have been far different from planned make up; for example Pembroke's retinue was ultimately to include 100 mounted archers and John Deyncourt is noted as bringing 60 Lincolnshire mounted archers to London, only to be informed of the campaign's abandonment.

³⁰⁵ E36/204, fol. 99.

³⁰⁶ Sumption, *Trial by Battle*, 390.

³⁰⁷ For attack see Ayton, 'Edward III and the English Aristocracy', 185.

For 185 days service in Brittany, lasting from 15 August 1342 until 15 February 1343, Hatfield received £235 19s.³⁰⁸ His retinue consisted of himself as banneret, 3 other knights and 16 squires. For clerks serving as bannerets a retinue of approximately 20 appears standard, although Hatfield can perhaps be seen as the most important, at least militarily, as he had more knights in his pay.³⁰⁹ The commencement of Hatfield's paid service coincides with Northampton's embarkation from Portsmouth; apparently placing him in the advanced party that achieved such glory in freeing the channel of the last of the Genoese galleys that had plagued the English from 1338, and in addition relieved Brest.³¹⁰ However suspicions are immediately raised as the King had remained in England, and as keeper of the secret seal Hatfield had never strayed far from his side. Indeed, as Ayton has noted, here Edington's wardrobe account book 'seems a most imperfect guide'.³¹¹

In fact it seems certain that Hatfield remained in England until autumn when he left with Edward and the main part of the army. Given their vital administrative role in raising troops, supplies,³¹² and their transports, Edward could ill afford to let his clerks campaign before all the organisation for the main army was complete, no matter their military aspirations or expertise. A letter included in Jean le Bel's chronicle illustrates how Hatfield was one of the clerks in charge of this organisation.³¹³ Kilsby is known to have sailed with Northampton, but his star was fading. He had been replaced as keeper of privy seal, and was therefore no longer shackled by his administrative role.³¹⁴ Hatfield had previously also revealed himself as a skilled organiser prior to conflict in 1341. Hatfield appears to have had a large part in the collection of wool, not only for his own force but also for others. On 10 November he was ordered to de-arrest 8 sacks of wool of those which he had arrested at the house of William Curtsey, which were said to be part of the 200 sacks of County Essex assigned to William and Walter de

³⁰⁸ E36/204, fol. 103v. £4 11s having been deducted for 81 days during which one of the squires was absent.

³⁰⁹ As in 1341 Hatfield had the same ratios (1 banneret, 3 knights, 16 squires) within his contingent of 20 men-at-arms. Weston was himself banneret, and had 2 knights, 19 squires. Edington was a banneret, and had a knight, 19 squires. John Ufford was a banneret, with 20 squires [E36/204, fol. 103v.]. For comparison Northampton had in addition to himself, an earl, 6 bannerets, 52 knights, and 141 squires. Of the bannerets; Bradeston had beside him, 1 banneret, 3 knights and 15 squires, Cobham, had 1 b., 6 k., 42 s., Mauny, had 1 b., 15 k., 90 s. [for easy reference see Ayton, *Knights and Warhorses*, 263.].

³¹⁰ Sumption, *Trial by Battle*, 399-400.

³¹¹ Ayton, *Knights and Warhorses*, 260.

³¹² *Chapters*, iv, 111.

³¹³ *Chronique de Jean le Bel*, eds. J. Viard and E. Deprez (Paris, 1904), 329-30.

³¹⁴ *Chapters*, iii, 162. Ayton, *Knights and Warhorses*, 260-261. Ayton places all the clerk bannerets in the autumn, not summer 1342 expedition [*Knights and Warhorses*, 263.].

Kilsby. There is no sign that this was a major dispute. It is simply a case of Hatfield reluctantly returning what was no longer needed for the campaign.³¹⁵

Once in Brittany in 1342, Edward's force made swift progress until it reached Roche-Periou, a garrison of Charles of Blois, yet no siege was necessary to secure surrender. Logistical problems at Vannes were followed on 29 November 1342 by an unsuccessful attempt to storm the town, therefore another long siege now had to ensue. Once again Hatfield surely participated in the brutal plundering of the hinterland, but neither side truly cared, at this time, for a pitched battle. The result was the treaty of Malestroit, sealed on 19 Jan 1343, which stated that a truce was to last until 29 September 1346,³¹⁶ and this ultimately marked the end of Hatfield's soldiering before he became bishop.

³¹⁵ *CCR, 1341-43*, 313.

Chapter II – ‘If the king had asked for an ass, he would have received his wish, this time’.

Thomas de Hatfield’s gaining of Durham’s episcopal throne

When Bishop Bury died on 14 April 1345, Edward III had already taken steps to ensure that the vacant see of Durham would be filled quickly with his loyal keeper of the privy seal, Thomas de Hatfield. This was not an unexpected vacancy, which would have caught anyone unaware. Bury was fifty-eight years old, and building on the evidence in the bishop’s eulogy, Denholm-Young has suggested that for much of the last three years of his life he may have been ailing.³¹⁷ When Edward wrote to Clement VI on the 12 April 1345, simply recommending Hatfield,³¹⁸ he must have received news that Bury’s last breath would now certainly be soon drawn. It will be argued that some agreement or knowing, no matter how vague or fragile, had already been reached with Clement VI as to the destination of the see of Durham. It is telling that Edward felt neither the need to specify what he was recommending his servant for, nor waste time waiting for Bury’s death to be confirmed.

In fact Hatfield seems to have been seriously groomed as a future member of the episcopate for at least a year and a half. As noted above, on 2 January 1344 the pope had accepted an earlier general recommendation of Hatfield, which had been presented by Thomas de Bradestan and the king.³¹⁹ And although this was possibly more specifically aimed to free Hatfield from the immediate threat of excommunication, few could have doubted that Edward III would have wanted to make Hatfield a bishop. Indeed though we cannot be certain whether Edward had already earmarked him as the next bishop of Durham, the king must have been struck by Hatfield’s suitability to fill the northern border palatinate, which was, in all probability, conveniently soon to fall vacant.

This first recommendation was made as Bradestan developed a rapport with Clement on his visit to the Roman court in the autumn of 1343, as an ambassador to

³¹⁶ Sumption, *Trial by Battle*, 405-407.

³¹⁷ Denholm-Young, ‘Bury’, 154. Martin, *Bury*, 259. The nature of the illness is unknown.

³¹⁸ *Foedera*, iii, 35.

³¹⁹ *CPL*, 1342-62, 4.

work for an Anglo-French peace.³²⁰ Bradestan was not a major figure by birth, yet he seems to have enjoyed a close personal relationship with Edward, after playing a large part in Mortimer and Isabella's fall.³²¹ But importantly this was no simple favour for an unknown clerk. Bradestan was heavily connected with the chamber and therefore must have worked closely with Hatfield. In 1328 he was noted as *scutifer* in the royal household, and soon after his return to England he was made Chamberlain, holding the office until 1345.³²²

The 2 January 1344 letter informs us that Clement VI had entrusted Bradestan to bring papal letters to Edward. It praises him for 'what he has done to increase the king's devotion to the Roman church', and desires him to send news from England.³²³ Clearly both Clement and Edward were using Bradestan as a bargaining tool, as after the request for news comes Clement's acceptance of Hatfield's recommendation. The suggestion is that the two were linked: by accepting Hatfield the Pope surely hoped to foster better Anglo-Papal relations. Clement was left with little choice but to accept Bradestan and Edward's recommendation. Whatever his reservations about Hatfield, they had to be sacrificed for the great objective of peace in northern Europe. For despite his connections with France, Clement's desire for an end to the Anglo-France conflict seems genuine.³²⁴ Judging by the Pope's subsequent attempts to use Hatfield as a potential way to influence the king, Clement probably decided that in Hatfield he could either have an enemy close to Edward, or a man who felt to a degree indebted to the Pope.

How far this worked is debatable, even though on 12 October 1344 Clement commended Hatfield for his labours touching the reformation of peace, and urged him to continue them.³²⁵ This part of the campaign by Clement VI saw similar letters sent to the Earl of Derby, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and John de Gonouzell, in the first days of October 1344. The pope had realised that John Offord's delegation had limited scope to broker a peace treaty, so he sought to influence Edward through those

³²⁰ See *CPL*, 1342-62, 2. On this trip Bradestan asked for and was granted the right to a portable altar, and to receive plenary remission upon the hour of his death [*Ibid.*, 144, 146. *CPP*, 1342-1419, 22.]. He also petitioned for and was granted benefices for Master Thomas de Bredon and John de Welbourn [*CPP*, 1342-1419, 22, 39.]. By 1345 the Pope noted that a hundred days in purgatory could be negated by visiting one of Bradestan's three chaplains in the Chapel of St. Michael's, in his home township [*CPL*, 1342-62, 169.].

³²¹ Waugh, *England in the reign of Edward III*, 160. J. Vale, *Edward III and Chivalry: Chivalric Society and its Context, 1270-1350* (Woodbridge, 1982), 61.

³²² *Ibid. Chapters*, vi, 46.

³²³ *CPL*, 1342-62, 4.

³²⁴ See Wood, 'Clement'.

³²⁵ *CPL*, 1342-62, 11.

immediately around him. Importantly by this time Hatfield was acting as keeper of the privy seal in Offord's absence and was deeply involved in Anglo-papal diplomacy. December 1344 saw Hatfield amongst many top officials, earls, and bishops who were requested to receive favourably the two papal nuncios, who had come to discuss the Anglo-French situation and also the Ordinance of Provisors.³²⁶ Hatfield was then amongst those informed, by a letter sent on 30 January 1345, that the pope had not sent the nuncios to 'publish processes and fulminate sentences in England', as rumour had suggested. The pope hoped that the receivers of the letters could 'induce the king by peaceful means to revoke novelties attempted against the church.'³²⁷

Between Bradestan's departure for Avignon and Hatfield's eventual provision to Durham in 1345, only Hereford and Norwich of all the English and Welsh bishoprics became vacant. Hereford fell vacant on 11 January 1344. That on 23 February 1344 John Trilleck was able to gain the see by election³²⁸ suggests that it was not especially valuable or politically important.³²⁹ Trilleck's subsequent career is in accordance with his more traditionally religious appointment.³³⁰ Both Hatfield and Edward would have regarded Hereford as neither a fitting use of Hatfield's abilities nor a satisfactory reward.

Norwich may have been viewed as a slightly more appealing possibility, when it became vacant upon the death of Anthony Bek on 13 December 1343. A papal provision on 23 January 1344 gave Norwich to William Bateman, and led Edward to object to the pope.³³¹ However, although Bateman had served the pope for a time,³³² the English king's problem with him appears to have been in no way personal. Indeed Bateman had followed a traditional path to Edward III's episcopate³³³ by undertaking a large amount of royal service. Bateman has been described as 'the most notable of the

³²⁶ *CPL, 1342-62*, 12. Barrell, 'Ordinance of Provisors', 275.

³²⁷ *CPL, 1342-62*, 15. Letters were also sent to Edward III, his queen Isabella, the Archbishop of Canterbury, William de Kildesby, the Earl of Derby and his steward, and the Earl of Lancaster.

³²⁸ *British Chronology*, 230.

³²⁹ This is the last known election that was not subsequently quashed by provision [Highfield, 'English Hierarchy under Edward III', 123].

³³⁰ His register suggests he took a keen, and indeed resident, interest in the pastoral well being of his diocese, whilst also maintaining a hall at Oxford, that later became New College [*Ibid.*, 125].

³³¹ *British Chronology*, 243. Aberth, *Lisle*, 16.

³³² Highfield, 'English Hierarchy', 117, [auditor of causes in the papal court] 121.

³³³ Bateman along with Hatfield, Edington, Gynwell and Wyville had been a member, albeit non-resident, of the chapter of Lincoln Cathedral [Aberth, *Lisle*, 12.].

royal envoys in the negotiations of the first decade of the French war',³³⁴ and there is every reason to believe that Edward would have been happy with Clement's choice, except for the very fact that it was *Clement's* choice.³³⁵ Nevertheless Edward had long set out his stall on papal provisions, and any very minor inclinations that he might have had to accept this particular papal provisor, would surely have buckled in the early 1344 climate of parliamentary pressure regarding Clementine provisions.³³⁶ Yet nothing suggests that Edward ever had any plans to place Hatfield in Norwich.

It is most tempting to suggest that Edward and Hatfield were almost waiting for Bury to die from as early as Bradestan's papal mission, if not before. As noted above the bishop of Durham was increasingly being thought of as a guardian of the north. Martin suggests that in his efforts regarding Scotland, Bury may 'in many respects...even surpass the contributions of...[his] greatest predecessor, Anthony Bek'.³³⁷ Yet though we have no direct evidence of dissatisfaction from the king himself, it seems clear that Bury was finding it increasingly difficult to live up to Edward's expectations. Whilst as late as August 1344 Edward commanded Bury to gather together five hundred Durham hobelers and send them to Newcastle to help repel any Scottish invasion, as is noted above, Bury had by this time fallen back to paying off the Scots.³³⁸ Though Edward's plans for the northern frontier were largely defensive, this does not mean the north would not benefit from a more active bishop of Durham. Bishop Bury had himself been something of a pacifist, bemoaning the destruction that war inflicted upon books, which he so highly valued.³³⁹ However Bury was a skilled administrator and had therefore been more than adequate in organising the defence of the north,³⁴⁰ yet as Hatfield was an all round soldier, he was surely expected by Edward to surpass even Bury's efforts.

The nature of the situation had helped Bury during his first years as bishop of Durham. In 1333, the year before his consecration, the battle of Halidon Hill had been a

³³⁴ Highfield, 'English Hierarchy under Edward III', 129. For a full review of Bateman see A.H. Thompson, 'William Bateman, bishop of Norwich, 1344-55', *Norfolk and Norwich Archaeological Journal*, xxv (1935-37), 102-37.

³³⁵ Later tensions between the two were a *product* of the provision, and Bateman's debt to Clement [Palmer, *English Law*, 48-52.].

³³⁶ Aberth, *Lisle*, 16. Seven days after Bateman's provision at Avignon, on the 30 January 1344 Edward issued a proclamation against provisors to be made throughout England [Barrell, 'Ordinance of Provisors', 271.].

³³⁷ *Ibid.*, 151.

³³⁸ Martin, *Bury*, 150-51. Campbell, 'England, Scotland', 211.

³³⁹ Martin, *Bury*, 265.

most decisive English victory. Indeed it seemed that Edward would have needed few more military initiatives in Scotland, as his puppet Balliol appeared secure.³⁴¹ At the time of Bury's appointment, Edward was still focusing upon Scotland and launched destructive campaigns, in 1334, 1335 and 1336.³⁴² As the presence of the government administration in York indicates; the north was the centre of operations, rather than some peripheral frontier. This does not mean Bury's appointment to Durham did not recognise the importance of defence. In fact Martin portrays the need for Bury to act as a 'guardian of the north', as the primary reason for his promotion, and this may well be the case. However the situation was vastly different from that a little over a decade later. With so many other warriors in the north Edward surely envisaged Bury having to do little more than the, admittedly vital, behind the scenes role.

The switch of focus to France in the late 1330s changed the role that the bishop of Durham would ideally play. As Edward's interest in the north dwindled so did his fortunes: as Rogers notes 1336-1346 was a particularly 'terrible' time for the north.³⁴³ The Balliol position in Scotland crumbled and Scottish raids severely limited the potential to trade, helping cause great economic hardships in combination with burdensome war taxation, and recurrent livestock disease. Some instances of poverty must be treated with scepticism, as applicants sought to use the raids as an excuse to extort financial aid from the government. However the overall impression is of destruction, if not quite on a scale to match that of Robert Bruce's raids, during the turbulent reign of Edward II.³⁴⁴ Hence the situation in the north in 1344-5 was rather different from that just over a decade earlier. Therefore as Bury fell increasingly ill, Edward III must have been pleased that he had an obvious candidate for bishop of Durham, in the apparently more dynamic military man, Thomas de Hatfield.

At the end of the thirteenth century, one of Hatfield's illustrious predecessors as bishop of Durham, Anthony Bek, is reported as upsetting a number of knights who suggested that 'it is not for you, bishop, to teach us about knightly matters, when you should be saying mass'.³⁴⁵ It is highly unlikely many men would have felt this in regard to Hatfield, his military career was distinguished and his retinue sizeable. In fact

³⁴⁰ For example, see his hectic program of duties between March and November 1340, which included the raising of troops and collecting of subsidies [*ibid.*, 269-70.].

³⁴¹ Rogers, *War Cruel and Sharp*, 61.

³⁴² *Ibid.*, 28.

³⁴³ C.J. Rogers, 'The Scottish Invasion of 1346', *Northern History*, xxxiv (1998), 52.

³⁴⁴ See J. Campbell, 'England, Scotland and the Hundred Years War in the Fourteenth Century,' *The Wars of Edward III – Sources and Interpretations*, ed. C.J. Rogers (Woodbridge, 1999), 211. J. Scammell, 'Robert I and the North of England', *EHR*, cclxxxviii (1958), 385-402.

Hatfield's appointment should perhaps be seen as an attempt to invigorate the northern lords, by giving them a real warrior as their bishop, and in doing so show them that he had not forgotten the north as a result of his efforts in France. It was also something of a warning to the Scots who would surely learn from their spies and general rumour, of the difference between the dying Bury - who had been willing to pay them off - and the formidable Hatfield, the impact of which should not be understated.

Negotiations in England in the spring of 1345, between Edward III and the two papal nuncios, saw some improvement in Anglo-Papal relations.³⁴⁶ In a letter to Clement sent on 23 February 1345, Edward 'allayed a number of fears based on a misconception of events of the parliament of 1344,'³⁴⁷ whilst stating that he did not wish to sacrifice his own rights. Soon after the nuncios' return to Avignon,³⁴⁸ on 5 April 1345, the pope promised to make less use of his right to provide than he had since his accession.³⁴⁹ Although both were still at pains to emphasise their rights, Clement and Edward displayed in early 1345 an apparent wish to adopt a less antagonistic attitude to each other.

The letters sent from Avignon during this period show Hatfield heavily involved in the proceedings. For example, as noted above, in the papal letter of December 1344 Hatfield - who is described as 'king's secretary' - is listed among many top officials, earls and bishops, who were requested to receive the nuncios favourably and encourage the king to listen to them.³⁵⁰ Hence, with Bury increasingly unwell it is almost certain that some sounding out of papal attitudes would have occurred regarding a prospective promotion of Hatfield to the palatinate of Durham. To neglect to reach some form of agreement, albeit it probably little more than an unwritten understanding, would have been extremely naïve in the circumstances. Bury's condition strongly indicated that the major see of Durham, would provide one of, if not, the first episcopal tests of the current 'working' relationship. Notably, that Edward simply recommended Hatfield in April 1345 offers weighty support to this interpretation.

³⁴⁵ C.M. Fraser, *A History of Anthony Bek: Bishop of Durham, 1283-1311* (Oxford, 1957), 231.

³⁴⁶ Pantin, *English Church*, 83-85. Aberth, *Lisle*, 16-17. Barrell, 'Ordinance of Provisors', 274-5.

³⁴⁷ Barrell 'Ordinance of Provisors', 275. Barrell notes in this article how Edward III mainly used the 1343 ordinance rather than the later statutes. Most of whose measures the king did not in fact take up.

³⁴⁸ The nuncios were licensed to leave on the 22 February 1345, [Barrell, *Papacy*, 196.] and so surely had reached the pope in advance of the 5 April.

³⁴⁹ Barrell 'Ordinance of Provisors', 275.

³⁵⁰ *CPL*, 1342-62, 12.

Yet if this was the case then why on 23 April 1345 did Edward III grant *conge d'elire* to the Durham chapter after Bury's death?³⁵¹ Would Clement VI not have seen this as an immediate breach of faith? Before these questions are addressed the details of the election will be discussed briefly. After his grant, royal pressure was applied to the chapter to elect Hatfield, the royal couple no doubt being especially determined to avoid the strife that had preceded Bury's appointment in 1333,³⁵² and the problems that ultimately ended in the failure to gain for William Kilsby, the Archbishopric of York.³⁵³

Murimuth's chronicle suggests that the Durham monks had Hatfield forced upon them.³⁵⁴ Although there is no evidence indicating that the Durham monks proposed an alternative candidate, a letter of Queen Philippa's to Prior Fossour indicates just how heavily leant upon the whole locality seems to have been.³⁵⁵ Two days in advance of her husband's granting of *conge d'elire*, the Queen wrote to Fossour, noting how already the king, Richard Talbot,³⁵⁶ and Robert Chickwell³⁵⁷ had sent letters to the priory, which were presumably all in support of Hatfield. The tone of Philippa's letter is polite but makes clear that the monks were expected to accept the nomination of Hatfield: the Queen noting that Fossour and his monks 'should not ignore this in anyway and accomplish it and answer these our prayers'.³⁵⁸ Clearly Edward was only willing to grant allowance to the monks to conduct their election once he was satisfied that they would elect his candidate. As Barrell points out, there is no other cogent explanation for Hatfield's eventual election on 8 May 1345,³⁵⁹ as there was 'no reason

³⁵¹ CPR, 1343-45, 455.

³⁵² In what was surely an embarrassing episode for Edward, Bury had to be imposed by papal provision in 1333 over Robert Graystones, himself a member of Durham Chapter, who had already been consecrated after being elected by his chapter on 15 October of that year [Martin, *Bury*, 117-27. Barrell, *Papacy*, 194]

³⁵³ After Edward granted licence for the election, twelve of seventeen canons of York picked their dean William de la Zouche, on 2 May 1340, the rest Kilsby, the king's choice. This led to appeals to the pope, and a commission by the king against Zouche, however the king's best efforts ultimately failed, and his most loyal servant was left frustrated [*Ibid.*, 198].

³⁵⁴ Murimuth, 171.

³⁵⁵ Durham Chapter Muniments, Misc. Ch. 5375. As far as I am aware the letter is so far unused by historians, and I would like to thank Alan Piper for making it known to me. Hatfield is not mentioned in name, and additionally there is no year dated on the letter close, however as it is dated 21 April it must concern Hatfield's election.

³⁵⁶ Richard Talbot was an important northern figure. During the late 1330s and early 1340s he was commander of the Berwick garrison [Ayton, *Knights and Warhorses*, 168.]. He had become 'Lord of Mar' after Halidon Hill in 1333, and as one of the Disinherited who accompanied Balliol into Scotland. In 1337 he helped besiege Dunbar, and was later a captain at the battle of Crecy in 1346 [see Rogers, *War Cruel and Sharp*, 70n, 78, 79n, 80-1, 217. Rogers, *Wars of Edward III*, 24, 42, 58, 274n.]

³⁵⁷ Robert Chickwell was a royal clerk who stood to gain the prebend of Fridaythorp if Hatfield secured Durham, ultimately both were successful [CPP, 1342-1419, 93.].

³⁵⁸ DCM, Misc. Ch. 5375

³⁵⁹ DNB xxv, 155. *Script. Tres.*, 133 [Although *Chambre* incorrectly notes the year as 1346].

why the bishop-elect would have been well known in any other capacity to the monks'.³⁶⁰

Nevertheless there is little reason to think that the monks would have been too greatly perturbed by the proposal of Hatfield, especially as they could have had little hope of securing their own candidate. Just less than thirty-six years later, Hatfield's eulogy paints his relationship with his monks in glowing terms, without ever attempting to make any claim that the bishop was a religious man. This is an interpretation vindicated by the work of Harbottle on the bishop's second visitation, and the evidence of combined building works.³⁶¹ Hatfield apparently managed to offer the necessary support and prestige desired from a bishop, without interfering overly in their lives. Prior to the election there would have been the usual fears. However the monks were probably never under any illusions as to what kind of man Hatfield would be, and therefore they would surely have hoped, and indeed suspected, that he would be too concerned with other matters to wage war on his priory, as Bek had done.³⁶²

Having been stung in the past, it appears that Edward was unwilling to leave anything to chance. Despite the probable 'understanding' over Durham that Edward had with the nuncios, and subsequent noises made by Clement, the English king apparently lacked a definitive statement from the pope himself that Hatfield would be provided to Durham. Ultimately by securing the election Edward III would not realistically have been hoping to conclude the matter finally. Elections were very rarely left to stand unaltered by the mid-fourteenth century. Given the wealth of Durham, even in the atmosphere of reconciliation, it could not be hoped that Clement VI would not assert his right and quash the election, in order to claim the right to levy the relevant taxes.³⁶³

The election should not be seen as an antagonistic move on Edward's behalf, rather it was his final and most direct recommendation of Hatfield. In getting his man elected Edward was showing Clement that Hatfield was accepted in the see, but more importantly he was forcing the pope into a corner. With Hatfield already elected, Clement would appear the aggressor if he made any alternative provision. However once he had called the election it was vital that Edward secure it. It was imperative that

³⁶⁰ Barrell, *Papacy*, 196.

³⁶¹ For eulogy see *Script. Tres.*, 137-39. For the 1354 visitation see Harbottle, 'Hatfield's Visitation'. For building works see below.

³⁶² For a discussion of the general later medieval relationship see R.B. Dobson, *Durham Priory, 1400-1450* (Cambridge, 1973), 203-06

³⁶³ Barrell, *Papacy*, 191.

he avoid giving Clement the initiative by having to ask the pope to appoint Hatfield, by papal provision, over the product of an election, which he had himself sanctioned, as had indeed occurred in Durham in 1333.

On 9 June 1345 Edward's various recommendations bore final fruit as Hatfield was provided to the see of Durham, by Clement VI. The pope, as Edward had done, asserted his rights, providing Hatfield to Durham stating that the election by the chapter was made 'in ignorance of the papal reservation.'³⁶⁴ Ultimately, it was important that Hatfield was first elected, as this would give him power locally. Within England, and especially the Northeast, the fact that the election was quashed would have been largely irrelevant because the man on the episcopal throne was the one elected in chapter. Whilst on an international level neither the pope nor the king would lose face; within their arenas they had both upheld their rights.

Hatfield's provision is the first time the, until now silent, chronicles offer some indication as to events of his life. Clement is reported to have quipped, after his cardinals expressed reservations over Hatfield's provision, that 'if the king had asked for an ass, he would have received his wish, this time'.³⁶⁵ This quote is used in the title of this work, as it may suggest that Clement did not think Hatfield deserving of Durham, and that the pope may have only consented because of the Anglo-Papal situation in 1345. Clearly the tale of the monks of St. Albans may be merely apocryphal. The chronicle also details Clement's cardinals apparently pointing out that Hatfield was of 'little consequence and a layman'.³⁶⁶ This has long fed a school of thought that Hatfield was entirely unsuitable to join the episcopate, especially as it is apparently corroborated by the attack of the Archbishop of York in 1363.³⁶⁷ Although the cardinals may have actually alleged, as the St. Albans chronicle relays, and perhaps even believed, that Hatfield was of 'little consequence', such an assessment would simply have been wrong. The pope had since 1344 frequently used Hatfield to try and influence the king, which was surely recognition of his importance and position close to the king.

³⁶⁴ *CPL*, 1342-62, 202.

³⁶⁵ *Chronicon Angliae*, 20.

³⁶⁶ *Ibid.* For two basic recent discussions of Clement's comment see Barrell, *Papacy*, 190, and Palmer, *English Law*, 315.

³⁶⁷ For Thoresby's attack see *CPP*, 1342-1419, 472. For two basic recent discussions of Clement's comment see Barrell, *Papacy*, 190, and Palmer, *English Law*, 315 Aim.

However evidence regarding Hatfield's educational suitability is frustratingly inconclusive. His name does not appear on any university documentation and though papal clerks recorded him a master in some of their dealings, this could be explained by the inferences of the papal clerks.³⁶⁸ For bishops who were not graduates were most atypical in this period. As is noted below, Thoresby's vitriolic attack must be viewed in the context of a turbulent relationship between metropolitan and unwilling suffragan. Yet less clear are motives of the St. Albans monks for falsely portraying Hatfield as ignorant. It is possible that the comment reflects some latent bitterness from a century before hand when there had been a hard fought case over the church of Overconscliffe, between the then bishop of Durham and the eventual victor, the abbot of St. Albans.³⁶⁹ Yet even so there had been a number of Durham bishops since, including the infamous Beaumont, whose learning was also doubted, who appear to have escaped such comment. Therefore that Hatfield was picked out, has rightly been taken as an indication that the monks' account was perhaps not entirely baseless.³⁷⁰

Hatfield is not noted as having taken a suitability examination, which he would have been due for as a non-graduate and was demanded of the two other infamous uneducated bishops later in Edward III's reign.³⁷¹ But whether this failure to examine is explained by the reconciliation 1345 or by Hatfield, in fact, being a graduate is impossible to tell. Understandably Highfield has used the evident lack of books in Hatfield's will to further indicate his lack of learning.³⁷² Just before his death in 1381 Hatfield completed the foundation of Durham College, Oxford, perhaps seeking to give others a chance to experience the education he was denied, however the link does not necessarily follow, and indeed Bury must take some of the credit for the foundation.³⁷³

Ultimately a definitive conclusion is hard to reach; yet Hatfield's own failure - along with that of his eulogist - to draw attention to his education, is perhaps telling, especially given the innuendoes made by various people during his lifetime. Nevertheless Hatfield's role in Edward's administration suggests that even if he was no Grandisson, Trilleck, Gravesend or Gilbert - who are all known to have studied in

³⁶⁸ Highfield, 'English Hierarchy under Edward III', 131-2.

³⁶⁹ Lapsley, *Palatinate*, 244.

³⁷⁰ For Beaumont's learning see K. Edwards, 'Bishops and Learning in the Reign of Edward II', *Church Quarterly Review*, cxxxviii (1944), 62-4.

³⁷¹ Pantin, *English Church*, 50. There are two noted cases of problems with examinations in this period. Bishop Stretton only passed on his third attempt, being provided in April 1360, 16 months after his initial election. John Buckingham in 1362 was requested to come to Avignon by Urban V to Avignon for examination, however Edward said he could not spare his keeper of the privy seal, and Buckingham was ultimately passed by three abbots in Ghent [Highfield, 'English Hierarchy under Edward III', 132].

³⁷² Highfield, 'English Hierarchy under Edward III', 132.

Paris³⁷⁴ - he was a man of no small ability, capable of performing a wide variety of duties. For instance Lisle, who had not collated numerous benefices before his provision, later struggled in his running of Ely as he was not experienced in the running of estates.³⁷⁵ In contrast, Hatfield had gained much patronage over a period of time and had also been involved, to a limited extent, in the running of Chamber lands, due to his position as receiver. As he appears not to have received a degree from a university, Hatfield was not a typical member of Edward III's episcopate but this does not appear to mean he was unsuitable.

Despite the patronage disputes and most notably Hatfield's threatened excommunication, it is hard to see that those at Avignon would have held an altogether negative interpretation of the bishop-elect in 1345. Hatfield had had a great deal of contact with Clement regarding English relations with both France and Avignon. And though it is possible that Clement and his advisors were beginning to feel they would get little end-product from Hatfield, because he was too much a royal man and would not feel indebted for any papal assistance in his promotion, he was far from a worthless political contact.

Nor should we think that Hatfield was held in low esteem because of his warlike nature, an opinion that seems to be held by many historians. The distinction, in the later medieval mind, between the religious and warlike should not be overemphasised, as the examples of Henry de Grosmont and the early medieval archbishops of Cologne help reveal.³⁷⁶ The 1138 ban on clerics taking up arms agreed in the Council of Westminster could be ignored by the fourteenth century, as any study of the pay rolls of English armies of this period will swiftly illustrate. And even though most clerics did not fight, the statute of Westminster 1285 included an attempt to oblige the clergy to bear arms in times of need.³⁷⁷ Whilst it is worth pointing out that Hatfield did not wait to be obliged and clearly the extent of his aggressive military participation set him apart from most of his ecclesiastical peers, he should not be thought of as some abhorrent anomaly in the later medieval European episcopate.

³⁷³ Barker, 'Death and the Bishop', 31-2.

³⁷⁴ Highfield, 'English Hierarchy under Edward III', 131.

³⁷⁵ Aberth, *Lisle*, 14.

³⁷⁶ For how Henry de Grosmont, Duke of Lancaster (1310-1361), married deep Christian chivalry with ruthless brutality see J. Barnie, *War in Medieval Society: Social Values and the Hundred Years War, 1337-1399* (London, 1974), 59-65.

³⁷⁷ A.K. McHardy, 'The English Clergy and the Hundred Years War', *The Church and War*, ed. W.J. Sheils, *Studies in Church History*, 20 (London, 1983), 174

Tellingly neither Clement nor Edward could have been under any illusions that in the sees of Carlisle, York and Durham it was impossible for a bishop to avoid military matters. Although Clement VI hoped to promote peace in Christendom, he perhaps also realised that a strong defender of northern England could help stabilise the region and remove one potential front in the current Anglo-French conflict. Indeed, as noted above, this aspect of the role as bishop of Durham appears to have been valued at Avignon, as it was used in 1318 by Edward II as he attempted to sell his choice of Beaumont to the pope. In common with the other Avignon popes, Clement VI displayed no real interest in utilising the Scots to help broker a general peace in Western Europe.³⁷⁸ And as such he was probably happy to see that the Scottish threat might be neutralised, preventing them from creating problematic discord between his two greater concerns: France and England.

Had Hatfield had less to offer, the Durham vacancy could have provided a far greater test of the atmosphere of reconciliation between king and pope. Barrell wonders if the 'sudden improvement in relations...was perhaps instrumental in Hatfield receiving provision to Durham on 9 June.'³⁷⁹ Clearly there is much truth in Barrell's observation. However by early 1345 Thomas de Hatfield had already recovered from his threatened excommunication, to a position of some grudging respect at Avignon. Though much of Hatfield's fortunes were inextricably linked to Anglo-Papal relations, the situation was not the sole reason for Clement's acquiescence to Edward's recommendation. In fact, had Anglo-Papal relations not improved in time, and had Clement decided to use the Durham vacancy to antagonise Edward, the situation may well have provided the only major reason why Hatfield would not have been appointed.

In July 1345, only a few months after Hatfield's provision to Durham, Thomas de Lisle was consecrated Bishop of Ely at the papal palace in Avignon.³⁸⁰ In his provision Clement was overriding the election of prior Alan Walsingham, and the fact that the chapter secured the election seems to suggest a lack of royal interference. This raises a number of issues of importance relating to Hatfield's own appointment. Aberth notes that Lisle possessed 'rather meagre credentials in royal service',³⁸¹ and is of the opinion that the new bishop of Ely owed his appointment to the pope being paid back

³⁷⁸ Barrell, *Papacy*, 210.

³⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 196.

³⁸⁰ Aberth, *Lisle*, 10.

³⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 16.

for allowing, an unsuitable, Hatfield to join the episcopate.³⁸² This draws on the established school of thought, which surely has its genesis in the chronicle evidence and Lisle's subsequent problems with Edward III.

It is true that Edward did not protest as he had done a year and a half earlier when Bateman, a far more loyal royal servant, had been given Norwich by the pope. There can be no doubt that the spirit of reconciliation explains this difference. But it does not mean, therefore, that there was any pre-arranged deal decreeing that the next vacancy would provide Clement with his turn to appoint one of his own men, nor even that Clement was determined to promote Lisle. Here it is important to look at the details of the case.

Though Clement first overrode the election on 7 July 1345, it was not until the 15th that a formal bull of provision was sent to Archbishop Stratford.³⁸³ Was this delay caused by Clement's need to consider whom to provide to the bishopric? The death of Bishop Simon Montague on the 20th June 1345 had been relatively sudden and presumably caught both Edward and Clement unprepared. This would offer explanation as to why Edward permitted the election but did not lean on the chapter. Crucially Montague did not slide slowly into his grave like Bury, so unlike with Hatfield there was no possibility for discussion beforehand; this was to be the first major test of the current reconciliation. The actions of both men are in keeping with this interpretation. Clement probably took Edward's inactivity as a sign of goodwill; the king was not forcing the issue, rather he was acknowledging that the pope would want to quash the election to secure taxes. Nevertheless, Edward had clearly left the ball in Clement's court.

The pope ultimately chose Lisle, whose later problems with Edward might paint him entirely in papal colours. In his letter to Edward III, Clement VI explained his selection of an Englishman for Ely as being 'chiefly because he ought to be agreeable to you, most beloved son, because we have continually found in him a faithful promoter and fervid zealot of your honour and well-being.'³⁸⁴ How far was this political positioning, and how far was Clement genuinely trying to satisfy both sides? Although it is far from certain, the impression is of a pope understanding the delicacy of the situation and looking for a man agreeable to both parties. It is highly likely Clement felt that Edward would not rock the boat, as long as his choice was just about acceptable to

³⁸² *Ibid.*, 17.

³⁸³ *Ibid.*, 10

³⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 10.

the king, and indeed Edward would surely have been willing to give a little because of the situation, and particularly in light of his contentment with Hatfield's appointment. However, this must not be overplayed.

This was no imposition of extremes; Edward did not abhor Lisle in mid-1345, and nor did Clement appoint Hatfield entirely against his will. Lisle would not have been top of Edward's list but Clement's choice would surely have heartened the English king; it could have been a lot worse. Neither man would have been under any illusions that this was to be a great friendship, there was far too much at stake in a number of arenas. Yet by striving not to antagonise each other, both king and pope could be satisfied with the men achieving positions of power within the English church. It was not Edward's turn to accept an 'ass', in Lisle, due to the circumstances, and hence Lisle's appointment sheds light on Hatfield's. The reconciliation between pope and king does not appear to have resulted in 'alternate picks'; instead efforts were made to make choices agreeable to both. Hence Clement's reported quip, 'if the king had asked for an ass, he would have received his wish, this time', would appear to have been offered in jest, if it was uttered at all. It belies the pope's understanding of the subtleties involved in his current reconciliation with Edward, and the place of Hatfield within this.

Chapter III – Repaying Edward III’s faith: Hatfield as bishop of Durham, 1345-57

Part I – Consecration, counsel and the Scots: Hatfield in the second half of 1345

On 1 July 1345 Hatfield was included amongst those to counsel Lionel, the king’s son, regent in the king’s absence,³⁸⁵ as Edward headed for Flanders to rectify the situation there. There was little question of Hatfield accompanying his king to Flanders, and indeed he had been increasingly spending time away from his king due to his role as keeper of the privy seal. Also, more importantly, until late 1345 Hatfield was still busy with the routine of becoming bishop. Though by Edward III’s departure to Flanders Hatfield had already secured the temporalities, he was yet to be consecrated. Hatfield had received the temporalities on 2 June,³⁸⁶ his provision having been confirmed by the archbishop of York, on the previous day.³⁸⁷ However his consecration did not follow immediately. There is some inconsistency amongst the chronicles regarding the dating of his consecration; Murimuth places it on 7 August 1345, whilst prior Wessington’s eulogy notes it as early as 10 July.³⁸⁸

Murimuth’s suggestion, that it was not until early August 1345, that the archbishop of Canterbury consecrated Hatfield at Otteford, appears most apt in light of the available information. The *Dictionary of National Biography* states that the Durham chronicle is accurate but no evidence is provided for this; the assumption probably being that a Durham source would be most accurate for a Durham bishop.³⁸⁹ However, as noted above, the chronicle was not written for over half a century after the year of consecration. Importantly until 5 August 1345 - when he received the wherewithal to coin sterling at Durham - Hatfield was still noted as bishop-*elect* in the chancery

³⁸⁵ Along with the Archbishop of York, Bishops of London and Chichester, Henry of Lancaster, John de Warenne, the chancellor, treasurer, prior of Rochester, Master Simon de Islep, William Trussel and Andrew Ufford [*CPR, 1343-45, 487. Foedera, iii, i, 50.*]

³⁸⁶ *Registrum Palatinum Dunelmense*, ed. T.D. Hardy, Rolls Series, iv, 364. The order for the restoration was made on 24 May [*Foedera, iii, i, 40. CPR, 1343-45, 473.*].

³⁸⁷ DNB xxv, 155.

³⁸⁸ Murimuth, 172. *Script. Tres.*, 137.

³⁸⁹ DNB, xxv, 155.

rolls,³⁹⁰ whilst from 10 August 1345 he is referred to as bishop.³⁹¹ Due to the lucrative nature of the mint, the 5 August 1345 order would seem to fit, as recognition that Hatfield's consecration was most imminent.³⁹²

The delay between the receiving of the temporalities and the eventual consecration could be largely explained by problems over who was to conduct the ceremony, although such a delay was hardly atypical.³⁹³ In July Hatfield petitioned the pope asking for, amongst many other things, licence to defer his consecration for a period of three months beyond the due time, allowing him to hold the benefices he had at the time of his promotion.³⁹⁴ The new bishop gained most of what he sought; yet this particular licence does not appear to have been granted.³⁹⁵ Hatfield appears to have been seeing just how far the pope was willing to go, perhaps adding support to the interpretation that he was not so badly thought of at Avignon by this time. This request was probably motivated by greed, but was also a safeguard to give him space to manoeuvre in his dealings with the archbishop of York.

Hatfield would not have been too concerned by the failure of this petition, because soon after he had sent it, he would have received faculty to be consecrated by any bishop, to whom he would in addition swear his oath of fealty.³⁹⁶ This grant was made in spite of there being strong evidence that Hatfield had already sworn such an oath to the archbishop of York. Archbishop Zouche's register notes that in 1345 Hatfield swore to be his faithful and obedient servant.³⁹⁷ And when, on 7 June 1345, the escheator of Middlesex was ordered to deliver the temporalities in his bailiwick to the new bishop of Durham, it was noted that Hatfield's 'election has been confirmed by William, Archbishop of York, and who has done *fealty*'.³⁹⁸ As metropolitan, Zouche would have expected to consecrate his suffragan, yet there had long been strife over this issue. For example, Bury had received the same licence as Hatfield, and was also

³⁹⁰ On 27 June [*CPR*, 1343-45, 487.], 1 July [*CCR*, 1343-46, 541.], 5 August [*Ibid.*, 542.].

³⁹¹ See for example *CPR*, 1343-45, 545, 561., *CCR*, 1343-46, 607., *CFR*, 1337-47, 447.

³⁹² For the Durham mint see Lapsley, *Palatinate*, 282.

³⁹³ Consecrations, had to be conducted within a year but did not necessarily follow quickly after provision; it was not uncommon for a period of half a year to elapse between the two [for examples see *British Chronology*, 203-280].

³⁹⁴ *CPP*, 1342-1419, 100.

³⁹⁵ For example Hatfield requested and was granted licence to chose his confessor, to let the religious eat flesh at his table, to dispense people of illegitimate birth and create notaries [*CPP*, 1342-1419, 100. *CPL*, 1342-62, 209-15.].

³⁹⁶ 'Faculty to be consecrated by any catholic prelate of his choice in communion with the apostolic see, who shall receive his oath of fealty, according to the enclosed form, to be remitted to the pope; without prejudice to the right of the archbishop of York', [*CPL*, 1342-62, 214.].

³⁹⁷ Barrell, *Papacy*, 189.

³⁹⁸ *CPR*, 1343-45, 477 [*italics added*].

consecrated by John Stratford, archbishop of Canterbury.³⁹⁹ Ultimately far more research needs to be done on Hatfield's problems with York, and a clear understanding of the events that lead to Hatfield's consecration in the south is potentially vital, as it stands to provide the genesis of the individual relationship, against the background of the traditional problems.

In addition to the process of official ceremony, Hatfield clearly had to become bishop in reality, taking over the working of the palatinate. However it is not yet clear how much time he spent in the north, and how far he was able to take a leading role on the regency council, and in the raising of much needed loans for the war.⁴⁰⁰ Later in the year, after Edward's return, fears that the Scots were about to invade grew. The council, assembled in mid-October 1345, decided on 24 October 1345 that Hatfield should proclaim to the men of Northumberland, that they could bring their cattle down to the forest of Galtres, in Yorkshire, for their protection, at no cost.⁴⁰¹ No longer needed to counsel the regent Hatfield was by now surely in the north, fulfilling for the first time his role as a 'guardian of the north', though there is little other existing evidence to confirm this.⁴⁰² Ultimately it was upon the western march that the Scottish raided; the incursion into the area round Carlisle began on 25 October 1345, and lasted less than a week.⁴⁰³ Though Edward III himself went north, he was back in London for the 17 December 1345.⁴⁰⁴ Hatfield, however, remained in the north, as on 25 December 1345, he was enthroned and inducted in Durham, in a composite process known as instalment.⁴⁰⁵ On balance it seems that for Hatfield this was not a rare appearance in Durham, but part of an actual stamping of himself upon his palatinate, as its bishop, especially doing the 'guardian' job, which Edward had promoted him to do.

³⁹⁹ Barrell, *Papacy*, 201. For licence see *CPL*, 1342-62, 214.

⁴⁰⁰ Hatfield was instructed, along with rest of the regency council [except the bishop of London, and Lancaster and Warenne], to engage himself in securing loans for Edward [*CPR*, 1343-45, 487].

⁴⁰¹ *CCR*, 1341-43, 561.

⁴⁰² Hatfield is absent from the *Rot. Scot.*, though it is possible that he simply inherited the orders of Bury, his predecessor.

⁴⁰³ *Murimuth*, 189. *Anonimale*, 19. *Sumption, Trial by Battle*, 499-500.

⁴⁰⁴ *Murimuth*, 190.

⁴⁰⁵ *Script. Tres.*, 137. Bek had also been installed at Christmas, and it is likely that this was done to save money by combining two major feasts on one day; as Prior Wessington later used this argument to try and persuade bishop Neville in 1441 [R.B. Dobson, *Durham Priory, 1400-1450* (Cambridge, 1973), 228]. Bury was installed on 5 June 1333 by Prior Cowton in the presence of King Edward, Queens Philippa and Isabella, the king of Scotland, the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, five other bishops and seven earls [*Script. Tres.*, 128].

Part II – 1346: Was Hatfield at the battle of Crecy?

Though in 1345 the Scots had only raided for a week, the north was still in a perilous position. At the start of February 1346 there was a great council at Westminster, though it is unlikely that Hatfield was in attendance as on 8th of the month he seems to have been busy making his first visitation of the priory of Durham.⁴⁰⁶ However by the 11th Hatfield was involved in the process of raising forces in the north.⁴⁰⁷ A month later, on 8 March the defence of the north was placed in the hands of Hatfield, the Archbishop of York, Henry Percy, Ralph Neville, and Thomas Rokeby, who was sheriff of Yorkshire. The situation was apparently grave, as on 27 March Maurice de Berkley came north to York to talk through plans and presumably quench the fears of worried northern lords who felt the South coast was being given priority.⁴⁰⁸

Almost four months later on 17 July 1346 a particularly 'gloomy and acrimonious meeting between representatives of the government and the leading barons of the north' took place at Newcastle.⁴⁰⁹ Hatfield is recorded as attending personally, rather than sending a proctor. Due to the severity of the situation the northern lords decided to write to those ruling in place of Edward, informing them that the agreements made at Newcastle and York could not be honoured, as they had received no funds. The message was simple; if those at Westminster failed to support the north financially, the barons could not guarantee effective resistance against the Scots.

⁴⁰⁶ Durham Chapter Muniments, 2.7. Pontificalia. 1h. Secondary sources are somewhat at odds with this regarding this dating, though on balance the evidence suggests that proceedings would have run from this date, if not before. This dating is discussed in greater detail below.

⁴⁰⁷ *Rot. Scot.*, 668.

⁴⁰⁸ M. Prestwich, 'The English at the Battle of Neville's Cross', *The Battle of Neville's Cross, 1346*, eds. D. Rollason and M. Prestwich, *Studies in North-Eastern History*, ii (Stamford, 1998), 3. Sumption, *Trial by Battle*, 492.

⁴⁰⁹ *Calendar of Documents relating to Scotland*, ed. J. Bain, iii (Edinburgh, 1887), 266-67. ['It was agreed... on Monday 17th July, at Newcastle-on-Tyne, between the bishop of Durham, the Earl of Angus, the seigneur of Percy, Monsire Rauf de Neville, the Sire de Segrave, and others, that the bearer be sent to London to represent to the Archbishop of Canterbury, the chancellor, treasurer, Monsire Geoffrey le Scrope, and others of Council, how the convents made with them at Newcastle and York were broken, as they had got no money, and Sir John Dellerker had interfered with what was assigned for defence of the March, to be paid them by the hands of Sir Robert de Spynay, appointed receiver by the council, who had also warranted payment to three of their number out of the 'Byvennale' of the bishoprics of York and Durham. If which was not paid, they would be discharged of their covenants. He was also to inform the council that the Seigneurs of Moubray and Segrave, Monsire Thomas de Rokeby, Monsire William de Felton, and Monsire John de Stivelyn, and the garrison of Berwick, had told the above Seigneurs 'courtement' that, unless they got payment of their money quickly in hand, they neither could nor would stay any longer. The Seigneur Segrave also said that his indenture bore that if he was not paid in three weeks after he reached Newcastle, he was discharged, and said 'brivement' that he would not stay longer.] For quote see Sumption, *Trial by Battle*, 504.

The dating of this meeting is vital as it indicates that contrary to the convention amongst chroniclers, and thus historians, Hatfield was not part of the king's fleet that left Portsmouth on 11 July 1346.⁴¹⁰ Bain has dated this document in 1346, though the manuscript of the indenture is apparently not dated with a year. There is however a strong case to support this meeting as occurring in 1346. It is noted as having occurred on a Monday, and the 17 July in 1346 was a Monday. Such an indenture would also fit the problems being experienced by the north in this year. Clearly the noting of meetings in Newcastle and York is not especially helpful in pinning the document to 1346, as these were common locations for meeting to discuss northern defence. It is unlikely that the document was from 1345 as it refers to a bishop, not a bishop-elect of Durham. The effect of the victory at Neville's cross makes it less likely to be from after 1346, as the situation in the north became less perilous. The absence of the bishop of Carlisle may reflect either a north eastern bias or his relative lack of importance. Alternatively it may further support 1346 as the Scots had at this time moved into Cumberland, which would have occupied him at this point.⁴¹¹

If, as appears likely, this meeting did occur in 1346, was Hatfield present? Evidence suggests that Hatfield was in the south in early summer 1346, though the nature of the evidence is a little problematic. We lack detailed pay records for the 1346 campaign, and therefore exact periods of service are sometimes hard to calculate.⁴¹² Walter Wetewang's lost wardrobe accounts are the basis of Wrottesley's *Crecy and Calais* but this record details all those men who served at any time from La Hogue to Calais, a period of approximately a year and a half.⁴¹³ Equally it must be noted that securing a writ of protection reflected only the intention to serve, it being sought and received in advance of the actual undertaking.⁴¹⁴ Though there is evidence that Hatfield intended to depart with Edward, it does not necessarily mean that he actually did.

It appears undeniable that Hatfield was at least in the south until almost the point of departure, if indeed he did not sail. From May 1346 men were receiving letters of protection to serve in Hatfield's retinue, and these letters continued to be granted until 6

⁴¹⁰ Murimuth, 199. *Le Baker*, 79. Sumption [*Trial by Battle*, 502.] assumes Hatfield was in with Edward, maintaining the rear as the army moved towards Rouen. The *Anonimalle* [19-20.] chronicle includes no details of who disembarked with Edward at La Hogue

⁴¹¹ Sumption, *Trial by Battle*, 504.

⁴¹² Rogers, *War Cruel and Sharp*, 423.

⁴¹³ *Ibid.* G. Wrottesley, *Crecy and Calais – from the original records in the public record office* (London, 1898).

⁴¹⁴ A. Ayton, 'The English Army and the Normandy Campaign of 1346', *England and Normandy in the Middle Ages*, eds. D. Bates and A. Curry (London, 1987), 258. For discussion of the problems and then value of the evidence available for the 1346 Campaign see *Ibid.*, 253-268.

July, for the period until Christmas.⁴¹⁵ Clearly if any decision was taken not to head to France at this point, it was a very last minute one. Evidence from other sources supports this. On mandates sent from Porchester on 2 July, regarding northern defence, Hatfield is a notable absentee.⁴¹⁶

Even if the only actual evidence we have that Hatfield sailed to La Hogue is found in the chronicles, there are many other indications that he did. Indeed Rogers does not mention Hatfield as one of magnates, which he doubts actually served from La Hogue, though it is unlikely that he was aware of the issue of the 17 July indenture.⁴¹⁷ Also important, is that when the northern lords were asked on 30 July to send proctors to parliament, the possibility of the bishop's absence from the north was recognised, as the summons was sent to Hatfield or his Vicar General.⁴¹⁸ Though this may well reflect the uncertainty at Westminster, given the problems in the north, as to whether Hatfield did in fact leave with the king; and as a result this cannot be in any sense conclusive.

If, indeed, Hatfield did remain in England for a time, due to the perilous situation in Scotland a number of points would appear to count against his swiftly meeting up with his king in France. Firstly, the situation in Scotland remained tense until the end of July when a truce was sealed after Percy and Neville had chased the Scots back into the lowlands. Insightfully the witness list for the truce does not include the bishop of Durham.⁴¹⁹ Having decided to remain in England, why would he leave before the situation was sorted fully, at least in the short-term by a truce? One answer to this, which will be more fully discussed below, is that Edward perhaps felt that he had far more to gain in France than he had to lose in Scotland. Perhaps had the indenture produced swift results, Hatfield may have been content that though he would not be there personally, he had 'done his bit' in helping to organise the defence satisfactorily enough to depart – a decision that Neville's Cross would vindicate.

Yet more problematic is how Hatfield could have met the army in time for Crecy. The path taken by Edward III strongly counts against the notion of Hatfield joining him after La Hogue. Whilst his fleet sailed along the coast, the army – especially after they left Caen on 31 July – left coastal areas and were increasingly

⁴¹⁵ Wrottesley, *Crecy and Calais*, 84-7, 97, 99, 101.

⁴¹⁶ Mandates sent from Porchester to AB York, B Carlisle, Lucy, Percy, Neville, Umfraville, Segrave, Cantilupe, FitzHugh, Mowbray, Maule and *not* Hatfield [*Rot. Scot.*, 672-73.].

⁴¹⁷ Rogers, *War Cruel and Sharp*, 423.

⁴¹⁸ *CCR*, 1346-49, 146.

⁴¹⁹ Sumption, *Trial by Battle*, 504. *Rot. Scot.*, i, 672-3.

moving inland.⁴²⁰ Sailing down the *Seine* to meet Edward after 7 August would have been suicidal, as it would have meant passing Rouen, if indeed craft could be found for such an inland journey. Somewhat more compelling would be that Hatfield sailed down the *Orne* to Caen. However the English army left Caen only two weeks after the indenture at Newcastle.⁴²¹ It seems unlikely that this would have given enough time for Hatfield to have both completed all he needed to do in the north, and travelled the distances required, especially when possible delays for weather are considered, however it is not an impossibility.⁴²² Ultimately, an arrival at Caen before 31 July 1346 must represent the most likely explanation allowing Hatfield to be at both Newcastle and Crecy.

If it he did not meet Edward here it is almost impossible to see that he was at both events. Hatfield would have had little idea as to the exact location of Edward's army at any point as it moved through Normandy. Though the fires of the burning countryside may have offered some hint to his king's path, any move to meet up with Edward would have involved a ride of approximately 30 miles, through relatively hostile and unknown territory,⁴²³ searching for the right army - i.e. not a French one.⁴²⁴ If such a feat had been managed it would be surprising that it has gone unreported by the chroniclers of the *chevauchee*.

After his letter sent from Caen, Edward III had hoped to meet up with reinforcements on 20 August at Le Crotoy, on the mouth of the Somme.⁴²⁵ Le Crotoy was proposed due to its suitability to disembark a large number of troops. However the reinforcements did not arrive until after Crecy, therefore when Hugh Despenser took Le Crotoy on 24 August no fleet was found, as it was still assembling in England. Importantly the king's newsletter from Caen mentions letters to be sent to the bishop [sic] of York, and other northern lords, but once again not the bishop of Durham.

⁴²⁰ Rogers, *War Cruel and Sharp*, 239.

⁴²¹ *Ibid.*, 252.

⁴²² Whether in this situation Hatfield would have sailed from Newcastle, Hartlepool, or returned south first to sail, is uncertain. Officially the first available day for Hatfield to sail would have been the 19th, because as part of his strenuous efforts to safeguard the destination of the fleet, the king had decreed that no ship leave England for eight days after his fleet [Rogers, *War Cruel and Sharp*, 223.]. Hatfield might well have considered himself in a position to ignore this however.

⁴²³ Despite serving in Northern France before becoming bishop, Hatfield had not campaigned in this part of Normandy before.

⁴²⁴ For a map of Crecy *chevauchee* path see *Ibid.*, 238. For the attitude of the Norman people to the French at this time [*Ibid.*, 237-8.] In addition to forces at Caen, the French King had moved to Rouen by the time Edward left Caen [*Ibid.*, 252.].

⁴²⁵ K.A. Fowler, 'News from the Front: Letters and Despatches of the Fourteenth Century', *Guerre et Societe en France, en Angleterre et en Bourgogne. XIVE-XVe Siecle*, ed. P. Contamine et al. (Lille, 1991), 83-4.

Further evidence from the Wetewang accounts indicates that Hatfield was there for the entire campaign until Calais. A number of writs suggest that men served with the bishop of Durham from La Hogue,⁴²⁶ and in 1352 Hatfield apparently certified that Fulk de Birmingham had served under him from the date of passage to Normandy, and at Crecy and Calais.⁴²⁷ Whilst here Hatfield does not state - although many of others referring to his retinue do - that he sailed to La Hogue, raising the possibility it was Caen, this is strong evidence that the bishop was at Crecy. In light of other evidence it is extremely unlikely that Hatfield was trying to create a myth that he was present, having in fact just missed it.⁴²⁸

This creates a problematic contradiction. There is little apparent reason to discount the 17 July document and that Hatfield would have wanted to be present at its sealing; other than the fact that his involvement in Newcastle at that time appears to stand in the way of almost all other available evidence. And it is now that the chronicles of the battle must be turned to. Importantly the *Acta Bellicosa*, which is considered most valuable of the lists detailing Edward's army, places Hatfield in charge of the rearguard.⁴²⁹ Jean le Bel places Hatfield with Suffolk and Northampton in the second battle, commanding 1,200 men-at-arms and 3,000 archers, and *Recits* places the bishop and Edward III behind the Prince of Wales, who lead the vanguard.⁴³⁰ Rogers has shown how the English arrayed in three battles, one behind another, flanked on either side by archers. This fits the chronicles' depiction of the young Prince doing the greater part of the fighting that day. Thus Hatfield - having 'deserted' his northern post - and his king would have spent much of the battle sitting on their shields, awaiting the outcome.

The thinking behind this formation is brought about by a tale that forms part of Froissart's account. He claimed that when the king decided it was unwise to leave his son, the soon to be named 'Black Prince' - whom he wished to earn his spurs - too exposed, he selected Hatfield to take twenty knights to go and assist the sixteen year old.⁴³¹ Whilst some French sources perhaps support this idea in general by claiming

⁴²⁶ Wrottesley, *Crecy and Calais*, 132, 139, 141, 143, 148, 160, 163, 164, 166, 172, 179.

⁴²⁷ *Ibid.*, 172.

⁴²⁸ Very far fetched but perhaps possible, is that due to peoples' assumption that he was there, Hatfield decided not to disappoint people and stand in the way of a good story, maybe trying to convince himself. These tales in turn feeding the various chronicle entries. Ultimately however Fossour's letter, see below, makes this unlikely.

⁴²⁹ R. Barber, *Life and Campaigns of the Black Prince* (Woodbridge, 1979), 29.

⁴³⁰ Rogers, *War Cruel and Sharp*, 266.

⁴³¹ A.H. Burne, *The Crecy War* (London, 1955), 181.

that the prince was captured for a time,⁴³² it is far from clear that Hatfield was his saviour. In fact even in Froissart's account - the only one to mention Hatfield in this capacity - it is not certain whether Hatfield and his knights rescued the prince, or whether the van had repelled the attack and was awaiting the next, by the time Hatfield reached the king's son. Hatfield is not noted elsewhere in relation to this feat, whilst Thomas Daniel was later credited and financially rewarded, by virtue of his replanting of the Prince's banner at some point during the battle.⁴³³ However, whether it is based in fact or not, Froissart's tale is important as it suggests that Hatfield's deployment away from the frontline need not be seen as a negative reflection of his abilities on behalf of his king. Rather, the bishop may have been kept back so that he could be used at a telling time, anywhere along the English line.

It is worth devoting a couple of paragraphs here to commenting on, just how hard it is to truly gauge the skills of a warrior from the evidence available. Clearly Hatfield was a more than capable military organiser but can we infer that he had proved himself in previous skirmishes and at Sluys? On the evidence of the Calais roll, a massive aggregate total of 294 men served under Hatfield at some point from La Hogue to Calais, perhaps indicating that he was a warrior of some renown.⁴³⁴ However with later reinforcements and shifts between retinues, it is difficult to make a great case for this in anyway reflecting his force at Crecy. If Hatfield was indeed part of the rearguard, a sizeable force would be one reason to explain why he was kept back, in theory allowing him to help swing the battle at a suitable juncture, and hence the figures might not be entirely unreliable.⁴³⁵ However they are broken down, the figures certainly provide some indication of just how powerful Hatfield had become.

Nevertheless whilst we admittedly lack knowledge of his career before 1336, Crecy was to be Hatfield's first decisive battle on the continent. As a result did Edward keep back his loyal servant and companion, because he feared he was really just a simple clerk, who though extremely adept at the organisational side of war, was unlikely to have the stomach for the melee? Is Hatfield's seal more symbolic of his ego

⁴³² No English source tells of the Prince's capture, not even the *Life of the Black Prince* by the Chandos Herald. It is therefore impossible to tell if the French were merely trying to suggest they held an advantage at one point, or if in fact there is some truth in their allegations [Rogers, *War Cruel and Sharp*, 268-69 n. 171.].

⁴³³ *Register of Edward, the Black Prince*, ed. M.C.B. Dawes, i (London, 1930-33), 45, 48.

⁴³⁴ It is noted Hatfield himself served as an Earl, and had in his retinue 3 Bannerets, 48 Knights, 162 Esquires, 214 men-at-arms and 81 mounted archers [Wrottesley, *Crecy and Calais*, 198.].

⁴³⁵ Arundel had 304 in total, Suffolk 159, Huntingdon 224, and Hugh le Despenser 234 [*Ibid.*].

and his wish to be more than a 'pen pusher', than his battlefield prowess? What evidence we do have, such as the journeys made with precious jewels and money in 1338 and 1339, counts against this but is far from conclusive.

Nevertheless the most important question still remains: how reliable are these chronicle entries in showing that Hatfield was simply at the battle in the first place? Jean Le Bel's account was written in 1356, a decade after the battle, in the knowledge of Bishop Hatfield's subsequent participation in the French campaign of 1355, and his chronicle was almost the sole point of reference for Froissart's writings later in the century. Le Bel's account of Neville's Cross reveals just how far wrong he was capable of getting things, whereas his account of the Picardy chevauchee in 1355 is a highly regarded source.⁴³⁶ Rogers has described Le Bel's account of Crecy as 'well balanced and of high quality.'⁴³⁷ Nevertheless Hatfield would not be the only man Le Bel incorrectly places at Crecy; the young Earl of Kent did not arrive until Calais.⁴³⁸ Interestingly, a list of Edward's forces at Crecy found in the as yet unedited St. Omer Chronicle makes no mention of Hatfield.⁴³⁹ This source appears to be related to the *Acta Bellicosa*. In keeping with the *Acta*, it notes the rearguard as being under Suffolk, Arundel, Huntingdon and Hugh le Despenser. However it does not mention Hatfield, instead adding Robert Morley and 'Le seigneur de Tringas le seigneur de Baruf'.

However, this St. Omer list appears to stand by itself in support of the 17 July document, and suggesting Hatfield was not at Crecy. Whilst the evidence of Le Bel and Froissart can reasonably be doubted, the weight of chronicle evidence still appears to indicate Hatfield was at the battle. It is not easy to disregard the combined evidence from the accounts of Murimuth and Le Baker and, *Acta Bellicosa* and *Recits*. Surely these usually reliable sources are not all mistaken due to the bishop's known military credentials and a later presence at Calais. Nevertheless the St. Omer Chronicle is vitally important in suggesting the 17 July document should not be dismissed out of hand, and that more research into the manuscript might well be fruitful. With this information in mind, we must be careful in entirely assuming that Hatfield did 'desert' the north in July 1346.

⁴³⁶ Rogers describes the former as 'almost valueless', but the later as 'excellent' [Rogers, *Wars of Edward III*, xv.].

⁴³⁷ Although it is 'somewhat less sophisticated than the first section of the work', [*Ibid.*, 131.].

⁴³⁸ *Ibid.*, 133.

⁴³⁹ I would like to thank Michael Prestwich for informing me of these details, found in a chronicle that was previously unavailable to me.

Interestingly Geoffrey Le Baker has the bishop of Durham conducting the funeral of King John of Bohemia on 27 August 1346, the day after the battle.⁴⁴⁰ King John was highly regarded. This was not only because he had fought bravely in the midst of battle despite his age and blindness, but also, it is noted, because of his courteousness to the English, probably a reference to his efforts on behalf of the captured Salisbury and Suffolk in 1340.⁴⁴¹ Had Hatfield carried out this service it would have been a great honour, as the event was surely something of a solemn celebration of chivalry. Also if Hatfield was indeed a protégé of Salisbury he may well have had a certain personal affection for the dead king. Nevertheless some caution is necessary. Only one source mentions this ceremony, and the bishop would seem the obvious candidate for Geoffrey le Baker to use to enliven his story. Without knowledge of Hatfield's career it could be inferred from this that Edward brought the bishop with him as something of a military chaplain. Yet from what we know of Hatfield, his religion was most likely simple,⁴⁴² and his knowledge of liturgy probably functional at best. Would it have stood up to such an occasion unrehearsed? He seems to have baptised Thomas of Woodstock but he would have had time to prepare for this.⁴⁴³

One final suggestion can be made regarding the now unlikely possibility that Hatfield was at Newcastle and not Crecy. The first English ships were spotted in the channel just off Calais on the 4 September 1346, according to two French chronicles.⁴⁴⁴ That Bishop Hatfield would have been amongst the first over to France would fit in with the idea that he was keen for battle, and felt frustration at the delays in the sailing of the reinforcement fleet. This date coincides with the list of pardons given by the king on the information of Hatfield,⁴⁴⁵ and this may indicate that this was the day that these men commenced service in France under Hatfield, possibly adding some weight to the idea that the bishop only arrived on this day. Sadly the dating of enrolled pardons can be confusing, as it is not always clear to what the date refers.⁴⁴⁶ If the 4th refers to the date the pardon documents were sealed, it would necessitate Hatfield and the king acting immediately on the bishop's arrival, which is most unlikely. Alternatively it could reflect the length of service of these men, coinciding very neatly with a possible date for

⁴⁴⁰ *Le Baker*, 79.

⁴⁴¹ Rogers, *Wars of Edward III*, 271 n. 187.

⁴⁴² See indications in Barker, 'Death and the bishop'.

⁴⁴³ *Avesbury*, 422.

⁴⁴⁴ Sumption, *Trial by Battle*, 537.

⁴⁴⁵ *CPR, 1345-48*, 488. Hatfield is also placed outside Calais on 8 September [*Foedera*, iii, i, 90.].

⁴⁴⁶ Ayton, 'Normandy Campaign of 1346', 259.

Hatfield's arrival. More compelling is that having fought at Crecy these men were pardoned for actual service, rather than in advance of it.

A letter of John Fossour, prior of Durham, to his bishop informing him of the threat of Scottish invasion, appears at first to further complicate an already confused picture, however it ultimately fits the interpretation that Hatfield left England on 11 July.⁴⁴⁷ Raine places the letter in July 1346, and this has surely helped many confirm at a glance Hatfield's presence from La Hogue. However, Raine's thinking is confused but understandably so; the letter is puzzling, with many of its details not appearing to add up. Nevertheless, it is possible to work through the letter and gain an understanding of it. Fossour's purpose in writing was to thank Hatfield for his news of English success in France and also inform him of the increasing threat of the Scots. Sadly the letter does not make it clear whether Hatfield was just relaying information or had himself participated in events in France, nor even to which success was being referred. The adulation which the news of success received from the prior, makes it likely that the success was Crecy, as Raine notes, yet this is at odds with his own dating of the document in July 1346. Hindsight pales the significance of successes before Caen in comparison to Crecy, but in late July they would have seemed the cause for such rejoicing. Nevertheless the timing does not ring true.

Importantly Fossour makes note of the collection of the fruits of autumn, suggesting he was writing around harvest time. Additionally, that the prior makes note of rumours that Philip VI wished to provoke Scottish incursions, would suggest a dating not before late August, as the first letters sent by the French king to the Scots are dated in the middle of that month.⁴⁴⁸ This would fit the battle being Crecy, Fossour writing sometime in mid-September, by which time Hatfield was definitely outside Calais. The tone of the letter would fit this, apparently reflecting the fears of northerners immediately prior to the raid that ended with the battle of Neville's Cross.

Fossour's dating of the incursion of the Scots into Westmoreland also has the potential to cause confusion. He notes that the Scots entered English lands on the feast of St. Peter *in Chains*, which is the 1st August, but there is no other evidence that the Scots raided then. Importantly a copying error would explain this; Fossour or - much more likely - Raine noting 'Sancti Petri ad Vincula', where it should have simply read 'Sancti Petri'. The feast of St. Peter is on the 29 June, which fits with the known incursion of the Scots into the Western March. Hence it seems that Fossour was

⁴⁴⁷ *Historical Papers and Letters from the Northern Registers*, ed. J. Raine (London, 1873), 385-86.

actually referring to two separate raids, the one which had occurred in early July 1346, and the one which was about to be unleashed on the north in September. Importantly, that Fossour felt the need to inform the bishop of the early July raiding, very strongly suggests that Hatfield had not been in the north at this time and had not since returned.

Ultimately, because of the 17 July indenture it cannot be certain that Hatfield was at Crecy, yet all other evidence seems to strongly indicate that Hatfield did take part in the battle that would be the pinnacle of his career. Whilst the various chronicle accounts do provide vivid detail of the fighting, they are hard to reconcile, and thus a certain course of events is impossible to establish, and any great insights into Hatfield's career are hard to decipher. Yet if Hatfield did indeed fight at Crecy, no matter if he remained predominantly in the rearguard, the events would have left a distinct impression upon him, for many reasons. The battle was certainly one of great brutality and carnage, continuing late into the night, with fatalities on the French side being notably high. Some impression of the mayhem on the battlefield is given by Geoffrey le Baker's assertion that many French were crushed in the midst of their own army, never having reached the English positions.⁴⁴⁹ More importantly after the frustration of being denied a decisive battle before his rise to Durham, Hatfield's satisfaction upon his installation - just under a year previously - would have been made all the sweeter by his presence with his king at such a hard fought triumph, and perhaps further so by his leading of John of Bohemia's funeral.

Nevertheless even if it is accepted that Hatfield was at Crecy, we are left with a frustrating uncertainty over exactly when he left England, which hinders any attempt to assess his activities in relation to his role as a defender of the north. The ultimate question is whether Hatfield left for France with the north in great peril? Because if this was the case it would appear to contradict the interpretation that Edward long planned to create Hatfield as bishop of Durham, specifically in order to counterbalance the threat of the Scots.

In 1345 Hatfield was made regent when Edward III went to Flanders, and does not appear to have been included in the plans for either of the abandoned campaigns to Brittany or Gascony.⁴⁵⁰ This may have been caused by fears over Scotland, and

⁴⁴⁸ Rogers, *War Cruel and Sharp*, 277.

⁴⁴⁹ *Le Baker*, 84.

⁴⁵⁰ For the planned campaigns of 1345 see Sumption, *Trial by Battle*, 472.

Hatfield does appear to have played his part in the north. Whatever the case, the need to secure himself in his new office surely meant that campaigning in 1345 was not an option for Hatfield. Therefore 1346 is the first real test of the portrayal of Hatfield as a defender of the north. In the early months of 1346 he seems to have carried out his task to good affect but by May, letters of protection suggest that, he had come south or at least soon planned to do so.

In 1346 Edward had the choice of Gascony or northern France as the destination for his campaign. Though military preparation had dominated most of 1346, Sumption has suggested that the absolute final decision to sail to Normandy was not taken until approximately 20 June, when Edward apparently changed his mind from Gascony to Normandy.⁴⁵¹ This raises some doubts whether Hatfield had long planned to campaign due to the possibility of Gascony's distance. However it is possible that Edward had always leaned towards Normandy, and Hatfield knew or suspected this. Indeed, whilst Normandy had not yet assumed its fifteenth century importance to the English, it had strategic draws. It would in theory be comparatively easy to move troops and to maintain them either from across the channel, or to live off some of the most fertile soil in France. Also, and perhaps more importantly, looking back with hindsight after the events of 1346, Normandy presented an opportunity to wound the Valois, in one of its heartlands.⁴⁵²

Originally Edward had wished to lead a campaign in early spring 1346 but problems in raising both an army, and boats to transport them, pushed the date back to mid May.⁴⁵³ On 27 March Hatfield appears to have been at York discussing plans to defend the north once Edward headed abroad, but after this we are left in the dark until the meeting at Newcastle in mid July. It is possible that this March meeting saw Hatfield requested to join Edward abroad, the other northerners being assured that they would have the support to defend the north without him. Indeed the Scottish situation appears not to have caused great concern through the spring until after Edward had ultimately departed. Indeed the Scots had only raided for a week in 1345 before they ran out of supplies and had to return home, the English maybe expected nothing more in 1346.⁴⁵⁴

⁴⁵¹ Sumption, *Trial by Battle*, 497-99.

⁴⁵² A.E. Curry, 'Lancastrian Normandy: The Jewel in the Crown?', *England and Normandy in the Middle Ages*, ed. D. Bates and A. Curry (London, 1987), 239.

⁴⁵³ Sumption, *Trial by Battle*, 489-492.

⁴⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 499.

Though Edward's army had been encamped on the south coast since early June, poor weather prevented departure for just under a month and a half.⁴⁵⁵ Importantly Edward III boarded his ship and left Portsmouth on 28 June, and it is likely that Hatfield did the same. So though they did not leave the English coast for a further two weeks, the ships were loaded and ready to sail to France.⁴⁵⁶ In this scenario therefore, whilst news of Scottish raiding into Westmoreland in early July may have reached the king before his passage to la Hogue, Hatfield would not have been in a position to leave his ship and disrupt the plans. This would have been especially been the case after waiting so long, and being in the knowledge that last year's raid only lasted six days. If rumour of Scottish preparations had reached Hatfield before boarding on 28 June this may have prompted him not to sail with the king, returning instead to be at Newcastle on 17 July. The evidence of letters of protection for his retinue, dated until 6 July when he would have already have boarded ship, count against this.⁴⁵⁷ As noted above, had he returned to the north, it is unlikely that he would have left before the truce at the end of the month, which in turn would stand strongly against him fighting at Crecy.

The Scottish truce was to run until the end of September 1346. However there are indications that events, and the absence of so many Englishmen away in France, seem to have swiftly raised fears again, though the indications offered are once again frustrating. Between 19 August and 7 September 1346 Henry de Melbourne and William de Burton, two northern clerks, arrived in London informing the government of fears of Scottish restlessness.⁴⁵⁸ It is possible that the arrival of the clerks provoked the order on 22 August 1346 for Henry Percy to send spies into Scotland. Though such espionage was part and parcel of medieval warfare, and the move need not have been a response to specific stimuli; it was surely a sensible move as only a month of the truce remained.⁴⁵⁹ We know that Philip VI had written to David II before Crecy hoping to force the English to return home, and that by this time the government back in England knew of the imminent danger to the north.⁴⁶⁰ It is with this knowledge that Hatfield would have sailed if he were among the first reinforcements to arrive, having just missed the battle of Crecy.

⁴⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 492-501.

⁴⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 500.

⁴⁵⁷ Wrottesley, *Crecy and Calais*, 101.

⁴⁵⁸ Prestwich, 'English at Neville's Cross', 3.

⁴⁵⁹ *Ibid. Rot. Scot.*, i, 674. As an example of espionage, Hatfield himself is noted as having had had contact with a spy during his stay in the Netherlands [*Norwell*, 266.].

⁴⁶⁰ Rogers, *War Cruel and Sharp*, 277.

Here it is worth discussing what motives the Scottish had for launching attacks in 1346, as it will help us to understand what Hatfield and Edward would have expected the Scots to do. As Grant ponders, noting the lament of an early fifteenth century Scottish prior, was there any need for the Scots to invade with such force in 1346?⁴⁶¹ For most of 1346 such a move would not have been expected by the English. Grant notes that for most of 1346 the Scots had in a sense won the Anglo-Scottish conflict, at least temporarily. The English king had devoted his energies to war in France, as the removal of the flower of English chivalry to Calais suggests. Far from being hellbent on pacifying Scotland - as he had been in the 1330's - security was now Edward's primary objective in the north. Philip's initial letters to David in late-summer 1346 were probably rejected by the Scots, who having raided in July had come to a truce, after being chased back across the border by Neville and Percy.

However events in France threatened to change the situation, Crecy and Edward's declaration of his intent to take Calais cannot be underestimated. Traditional interpretations, such as Perroy's, have been turned on their heads by recent research.⁴⁶² Crecy, was not victory grabbed from the jaws of defeat but the product of a calculated attempt to bring the reluctant French king to battle on English terms.⁴⁶³ And Calais was not merely a way for Edward to flee France; he already had a suitable port in Le Crotoy, and ultimately spent a year securing Calais, whilst actually *bringing more* troops to the siege.⁴⁶⁴ The Scots would have seen how Edward had won a famous victory, and also that he intended to gain another one. Given the continued cajoling of the French it probably would have appeared to the Scots that the balance of power in northern Europe was tipping decisively towards England, and that this threatened to shatter the apparent Scottish security. So whilst some confusion surely existed in David's mind, he probably felt he had to do something when an opportunity such as this presented itself. Hence when he responded to Philip VI's request for assistance, David II was not just honouring the auld alliance, rather in his eyes he was fighting to maintain it. By attacking, the Scots presumably hoped to prevent Edward picking off his enemies one at a time.

⁴⁶¹ A. Grant, 'Disaster at Neville's Cross: The Scottish Point of View', *The battle of Neville's Cross, 1346*, 15.

⁴⁶² For traditional interpretation see for example E. Perroy, *The Hundred Year's War*, translated by W.B. Wells, (New York, 1965.), 119-20. For recent research for example see Rogers, *War Cruel Sharp*, 217-237.

⁴⁶³ *Ibid.*, 238-272.

⁴⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 273-77.

It is helpful to wonder what would have been the ideal result of the invasion of 1346 for the Scots. David planned to invade deep into England, hoping to goad Edward to loosen his grip around Calais. Yet he surely had no realistic wish to claim swathes of northern England, as the Scots had had enough trouble keeping hold of their own lowlands. By the time major English reinforcements reached the north, David would have planned to have already disappeared across the border. Replete with plunder and content with the damage done to northern England, he would have hoped that Edward would only wish to regain his security and would resist the temptation to launch too destructive an attack into the Scottish lowlands. Ultimately the move proved disastrous, yet it is hard to overly criticise the thinking of David II.⁴⁶⁵ Hence, in July 1346, even if he had heard news of Scottish moves into Westmoreland before embarking, Hatfield would probably not have been desperately worried. To his mind there would have been little point in rushing back to the north. The attack would surely be over by the time he arrived and the Scots would have neither been able to, nor want to, launch another attack until the next summer.

Less immediately excusable is Hatfield's apparent failure to return to England on being informed in early September that Scotland was soon to become a theatre of war once again. Neville's Cross and Crecy were separated by a month and a half, and fighting in both was feasible as John Neville, son of Ralph, illustrates.⁴⁶⁶ Yet, it is first necessary to ensure ourselves that Hatfield was not at the battle of Neville's Cross, for a number of chronicles again assign him a role.

Jean le Bel's account has little basis in reality, and is easy to discount. The Hainaulter has the battle occurring outside Newcastle, not Durham, and lists Hatfield, along with the archbishop of Canterbury, the bishop Lincoln, and even the Queen, as illustrious protagonists.⁴⁶⁷ As Froissart relies so heavily on Le Bel for this campaign, his assertion that the bishop of Durham was present is also worthless. The Meaux Abbey chronicle offers a damning picture of the bishop, suggesting he 'was staying in the south in a manor he owned',⁴⁶⁸ apparently disinterested in the plight of the north. Whilst it cannot be discounted out of hand, it does not ring true. Unless he was injured,

⁴⁶⁵ Grant, 'Disaster at Neville's Cross', 18-19..

⁴⁶⁶ Prestwich, 'English at Neville's Cross', 8.

⁴⁶⁷ The evidence suggests none of these were present [*Ibid.*, 8-9.].

⁴⁶⁸ *Chronica monasterii de Melsa a funditione usque ad annum 1396*, ed. E.A. Bond, Rolls Series 43, iii (London, 1868), 60-2. Hatfield did have a number of southern manors, [M.W. Thompson, *Medieval Bishop's Houses in England and Wales* (Aldershot, 1998), 116.] including the one at Aldeford where he died in 1381.

it is most unlikely that a warlike man such as Hatfield would have been *staying* at a manor he owned, not trying to get to a potential battle. The chronicler was possibly taking the absence of the bishop as an opportunity to comment on the non-residential nature of much of the episcopate.

Telling is the non-appearance of Hatfield in the comprehensive list compiled by the northern clerk, Thomas Sampson, whose account is seen as exceptionally valuable as it was written in the direct aftermath of the battle.⁴⁶⁹ Most conclusively, had Hatfield been at the battle, Prior Fossour would not have felt the need to write to him reporting it.⁴⁷⁰ In conclusion, here is nothing to suggest that Hatfield was anywhere but outside Calais when the battle occurred, so the question that needs to be addressed is why he did not hurry back with concerned northerners such as John Neville? The answer appears to be found in a keen understanding of the situation on Edward's part.

Edward III must have well known that to withdraw from Calais, either fully or partially, was to give Philip VI exactly what he wanted. Edward was loathed to bow to his enemy and equally he was not a man for half measures. He had quite literally set his stall out to win Calais and/or force the French to give him a second, and what he believed would be a decisive, pitched battle. Therefore it is likely that Edward told his bishop of Durham to remain and trust in the measures he had himself helped maintain, which had long been in operation. Much of the 'flower of the good chivalry of England' was outside Calais, but the north was far from unprotected. Hatfield would have felt he was in the wrong place but he would have also realised that despite the vigour with which Edward III had fought to secure his provision to Durham, one man's absence would not leave an unbridgeable breach in the marches' defences. Of all those assigned to defend the frontier on 8 March, he was the only absentee. In addition Hatfield would have realised it was highly possible he would arrive in the north too late, and as such he was not to be distracted from his task in France.

In attempting to decipher Hatfield's defence of Durham and the north in general, it is vital to think of what would have befallen the region if the invasion had not been met and defeated at Neville's Cross. The evidence indicates that David II was in no position to plan a savage and wanton, annihilation and destruction of the north; though it is important to understand how those in the north would have feared this. Indeed the Durham monks are reported to have negotiated with the Scots before the battle. Perhaps

⁴⁶⁹ Rogers, *Wars of Edward III*, 138.

they felt deserted by their new warrior bishop, and there were thoughts of paying off the invaders with a fee of £1,000.⁴⁷¹ Along the same lines, *Historia Roffensis* states that the bishop of Durham had been sent letters by the Scots giving him an option to safeguard Durham, and his lands and manors, for 1,000 marks of silver. This chronicle is important as it additionally notes that an alternative option was offered, which was that the palatinate supply the Scots with enough bread with which to sustain their passage to York.⁴⁷² Further, the Lanercost chronicle, written in the north-west march, explains how the Scottish king 'strictly ordered that four northern towns should not be burnt, to wit, Hexham, Corbridge, Darlington and Durham, because he intended to obtain his victual from them'.⁴⁷³

Though David apparently had aims to raid deep into England, these chronicle accounts are also a sign of how limited the Scots were in what they could hope to achieve. Edward was well aware of this, and at these critical times in 1346 and later, he seems to have displayed a clear understanding of the situation and how he could best achieve his aims. This allows us to reconcile Hatfield's use in 1346, and his role as a 'guardian of the north'. Importantly the *auld alliance* meant that Edward's conflicts with Scotland and France were not independent but rather different fronts of the same war. The English king had devoted much of the early years of his reign to fighting the Scots, but by 1336 had failed to get the Scots to sign a peace agreement. Though the *Anonimalle* and Lanercost chronicles are surely correct to point to Scottish pride as a reason for the failure in 1336, Knighton's highlighting of French influence is significant.⁴⁷⁴ The Scots could be broken militarily but in the French they had an ally in whose interests it was to stop them withering completely.⁴⁷⁵ Though it is unlikely that French assistance to the Scots ever amounted to much in real terms, the potential was always there and could help convince the Scots to fight on.

The nature of Scotland's dependence was well known but Edward III seems to have had a clear understanding of his problems to the north. He knew that through swift raiding the Scots could inflict a substantial degree of damage, and this is why he wanted a man such as Hatfield to defend the north. However, whilst Scottish raiding created a

⁴⁷⁰ Raine, *Letters from Northern Registers*, 387-89.

⁴⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 23. Knighton, ii, 41. Such payments were common under Edward II [J. Scammell, 'Robert I and the North of England', *EHR*, cclxxxviii (1958), 389-90.] and Bishop Bury had fallen into this by the end of his pontificate.

⁴⁷² Rogers, 'Scottish Invasion of 1346', 57.

⁴⁷³ *Lanercost*, 346.

⁴⁷⁴ Rogers, *War Cruel and Sharp*, 111.

⁴⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 128.

lawless frontier, was bad for morale and drew finances and manpower away from France, this was by the mid-1330s the realistic extent of its threat. Before this time Scotland was a vital arena for Edward to secure himself after the political and military humiliations of 1328.⁴⁷⁶ Hatfield's role as bishop of Durham was to allow his king to focus on France by securing his northern frontier. There would have been no suggestion that his 'job description' would have included solving the Scottish problem; king and servant knew the key to regaining suzerainty over Scotland lay principally in defeating France.

It is also important to understand what Edward hoped to achieve when embarking on a campaign, in order to understand Edward and Hatfield's decisions regarding the bishop's movements in 1346. As Rogers forcibly highlights, in his conflicts, Edward III was constantly seeking God's judgement. Edward believed strongly in decisive battles, therefore on his campaigns he was actively seeking a trial by battle, if albeit always trying to use his tactical ability to provide his English army with a strong defensive position.⁴⁷⁷ This belief in trial by battle was why Hatfield left England in July 1346; and was also, rather than the fear he would not have arrived in time, the decisive reason why he did not leave Calais in September. Believing that god was on his side Edward III was willing to gamble. Edward knew that France was where his dreams could be realised or left in tatters, and hence he wanted to unleash his full weight against the French. Edward rightly gambled that losses against the Scots would not drastically change the *status quo* that was developing in Anglo-Scottish relations. Admittedly, there was clearly only so much that Hatfield and his retinue could do to influence events in France, and with hindsight their actions seem neither to have been decisive at Crecy nor Calais. Yet twice in 1346 Edward appears to have realised that whereas in Scotland he had little to lose, in France he had much to gain; as such, when assessed from this standpoint, it is hard to fault Edward's use of his 'defender of the north'.

It was the duty of Edward III and Hatfield to consider the bigger picture but how were events viewed in the north? Does the 'mythical' role of the monks in the battle offer any insights into how they perceived Hatfield's absence? Local tradition, recorded in the sixteenth century, tells of the vision of St Cuthbert to prior Fossour, the night

⁴⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 28.

⁴⁷⁷ Rogers, *War Cruel and Sharp*, 6-9.

before the battle.⁴⁷⁸ The patron saint told Fossour to use as a banner, the cloth, which he had used when performing mass, and then proceeded to point out where the battle would take place. The banner then protected the monks from the Scots and gave God's assistance to the English. This tale is a reflection on the continuing role of St Cuthbert in looking after his monks and town.⁴⁷⁹ As this tale is based on a local tradition, which was later recorded, it is possible to suggest that it may have had its genesis in a popular belief that Hatfield had deserted his people. Saints continued to play a role in life and could be offended if not treated well, as is illustrated by the example of subprior Master Rypon's lament, concerning religious standards in Durham during the early part of the fifteenth century.⁴⁸⁰ Had Hatfield's failure to do his duty as bishop, forced Cuthbert - his most famous predecessor - to act in his place? Direct criticism is evident in neither the *Rites*, nor in either of Fossour's letters, neither of which mention the dream or St Cuthbert. Therefore the dream appears to be neither *real*, nor a tale concocted in the priory to make a point against their bishop.

We can only guess how the bishop's absence was viewed by the common man or woman in the north-east. It would be surprising, however, if in the region's alehouses and markets, jibes were not made bemoaning Hatfield's gallivanting in France, and how he had let the archbishop of York come and diminish his honour. Those better informed would probably have reflected on how the warlike bishop was serving his king in any way he could, if also seeking to increase his own prestige and repute. In the end, Hatfield should not be overly chastised for trying to help Edward in France and unwittingly missing the battle, which would shape the destiny of the frontier for a decade.⁴⁸¹

Nevertheless Fossour's second letter would have been a great relief to the bishop.⁴⁸² Less pleasing would have been its mentioning of the role played by William Zouche, archbishop of York, though as yet the traditional tensions between Durham and

⁴⁷⁸ *A brief description or brief declaration of all the ancient monuments, rites and customes... within the Church of Durham before the suppression*, ed. J. Raine, Surtees Society, xv, (1842), 20-22.

⁴⁷⁹ Burne ['Battle of Neville's Cross', *Durham University Journal*, new series (1948-9), 105.] has suggested that this story could be real, but as Prestwich ['English at Neville's Cross', 14.] notes this is most unlikely.

The tale is based on ideas that the dead could intercede in life [See P.J. Greary, *Living with the Dead in the Middle Ages* (Ithaca, 1994), chap. 5 and 6. Barker, 'Death and the Bishop', 7.].

⁴⁸⁰ He noted that 'it is commonly said that St Cuthbert sleeps... because we do not lend our devotions as we ought' [Dobson, *Durham Priory*, 31.].

⁴⁸¹ After the battle David II and many Scottish noblemen were left in English hands, leaving Edward III entirely with the initiative, making Scotland almost no threat to England [Campbell, 'England, Scotland', 214.].

York had not been exacerbated enough to fully explode. Zouche, whom Hatfield had slurred by going to the archbishop of Canterbury for his consecration, had led the army that had defended the seat of Hatfield's episcopal power, winning in the process 'a decisive moment in the long conflict between England and Scotland in the later Middle Ages.'⁴⁸³

⁴⁸² Raine, *Letters from Northern Registers*, 387-89.

Part III – 1347: The Siege of Calais and Balliol's campaigning in Scotland

How long Hatfield ultimately waited outside Calais for a second decisive battle is unclear. Yet the nature of the success at Neville's Cross would have surely given Edward all the more reason to let his bishop of Durham work long outside Calais. Indeed in siege warfare Hatfield was quite probably in his element. As his military career before Crecy shows, Hatfield was skilled in the organisation of war, and he had surely had a great part in the planning of the sieges at Cambrai and Tournai. In this sense Hatfield can be seen as something of a veteran, who along with Trussel and Kilsby, helped the newer government administrators, such as Thoresby, Bramber and Burton, in preparing 'a defended camp and slowly tightening his [Edward's] noose around the town until nothing could get in or out'.⁴⁸⁴ In fact in this sense it could well be that Calais, and not just Crecy, formed the zenith of Hatfield's military career.

The evidence of later writs of exoneration for members of Hatfield's retinue indicates only that the bishop left France sometime before the siege's completion.⁴⁸⁵ A number of his retinue are listed elsewhere in the Calais Roll, as having also served as captains in their own right.⁴⁸⁶ As stated above the dates of service have not survived, so this simply suggests that Hatfield arrived late or left early. It is possible that men such as William Marimon, Philip de le Despenser and Thomas Colville, were in command of their own retinues from La Hogue and then joined Hatfield when he arrived later.⁴⁸⁷ However, given the judgement that Hatfield sailed to La Hogue, the suggestion is that the bishop left Calais early. Whilst we have no real clue as to when this return may have been, it is possible to draw up a reasonable hypothesis.

As bishop of Durham Hatfield was requested to conduct a number of important activities at home in England. Diocesan business such as this would have carried with it little compulsion to leave the walls of Calais. For example on the 15 November 1346 the council at Windsor directed to Thomas, bishop of Durham, notice of the presentation of Robert de Hampslape, to the Church of Elleton in the diocese of

⁴⁸³ Prestwich, 'English at Neville's Cross', 1.

⁴⁸⁴ *Chapters*, iii, 169-70. For quote see Rogers, *War Cruel and Sharp*, 276-77.

⁴⁸⁵ Wrottesley, *Crecy and Calais*, 132, 139, 141, 143, 148, 160, 163, 164, 166, 172, 179.

⁴⁸⁶ Ayton, 'Normandy Campaign of 1346', 265. Rogers, *War Cruel and Sharp*, 423-426.

⁴⁸⁷ For example see Wrottesley, *Crecy and Calais*, 141, 201 [William Marmion], 87, 201 [Philip de le Despenser], 101, 200 [Thomas Colville].

Durham.⁴⁸⁸ Yet in reality this was simply being sent to the bishop's administration, as it is most unlikely that Hatfield ever dealt personally with such matters, even when in the north.

The dating of Hatfield's first visitation is somewhat problematic. It is possible that, although it is noted as having started in February 1346, it was left uncompleted when Hatfield left for the continent, or, perhaps, it had not even been properly started.⁴⁸⁹ Indeed if the visitation continued into, or in reality started in, 1347, it is possible that this duty may have added weight to the bishop's need to return. Still it is unlikely to have provided the strongest pull, especially had he already undertaken the initial visit of the priory - in spring 1346 -, as he later showed that he had the ability to complete tasks far from their place of origin. For example, in March 1355 - some seven months after its commencement - Hatfield sent the injunctions of his second visitation north, having moved south to baptise Thomas of Woodstock.⁴⁹⁰

Arguably far more of a pull away from Calais would have been the non-religious aspects of Hatfield's role as bishop. On 10 December 1346 Hatfield was amongst the northern lords summoned to a council to address matters of northern defence.⁴⁹¹ Then at the end of January 1347, the clergy of the province of York convened at St. Peter's, York, to grant funds for the king's wars.⁴⁹² Neither Edward III nor Hatfield sat outside Calais would have viewed the convocation as a trifling concern, as will be discussed below. Hatfield was a soldier in all senses of the word, and clearly understood the need to provide as much money as possible to feed the hungry war machine. However in early 1347 Hatfield would still have been reluctant to leave Calais before the conclusive battle, especially having seemingly played such a part in Edward's efforts to engineer it.⁴⁹³

⁴⁸⁸ CPR, 1345-48, 214.

⁴⁸⁹ 2.7. Pont. 1h. places the visitation as occurring from at least 8 February 1346. However Harbottle ['Hatfield's Visitation', 84 n 17.] places the visitation in 1347, as does Dobson [*Durham Priory*, 231.], although sadly neither provide exact dates. Dobson cites 2.7. Pont. 1., as one of his sources, but also additionally cites Harbottle, so it is possible that the confusion stems from a Harbottle mistake. Harbottle cites 1.8. Pont. 9. as her source for all three Hatfield visitation dates [1347, 1354, 1371]. However Harbottle ['Hatfield's Visitation', 84.] notes that Hatfield stated, 'in 1346 before he visited the priory for the first time' that he would receive no procuration fee for the visitation, thus confirming the clause in *le Conveniet*. So perhaps the visitation did start in 1346, but why then do Harbottle and Dobson date the second visitation on the completion of the injunctions [1355].

One thing is clear; more work is needed to decipher the course of events of Hatfield's visitation. That it is confusing, is perhaps reflected by Harbottle's passing over it to work instead on the second visitation.

⁴⁹⁰ Harbottle, 'Hatfield's Visitation', 85, 87.

⁴⁹¹ *Foedera*, iii, i, 97.

⁴⁹² CCR, 1346-49, 154, 508.

⁴⁹³ Rogers, *War Cruel and Sharp*, 275-85.

Yet if he had not left by May 1347 it is hard to see that Hatfield would have left before Calais was handed over to the English. This is because from this time Edward believed that his battle was imminent, as he had gained information that Philip was mustering an army.⁴⁹⁴ This importantly coincides with the timing of Edward Balliol's first incursion with the support of the northern lords. Sadly, relatively little is known of Balliol's moves into Scotland in 1347. What is known is that Hatfield was not part of the planned force drawn up in March 1347.⁴⁹⁵ However Balliol did not cross into Scotland until May, so it is highly likely that Hatfield was sent back to add his weight to what was one of few aggressive moves by Edward III in Scotland after the 1330s. By this time apart from the hope for an ultimate battle, Hatfield's work outside Calais was surely largely done.

Seeing that he held the initiative, given the Scottish calamity at Neville's Cross, Edward III was willing to give Balliol another chance, and hence he fully supported him in another attempt to impose himself on Scotland.⁴⁹⁶ In the circumstances, after almost a year away, it is understandable that Hatfield would have been sent to serve his king in his own northern arena. In the end even with a second incursion in October, Balliol was not able to win a decisive battle, which would have allowed him to force himself upon the beleaguered Scots,⁴⁹⁷ but Edward's thinking is understandable. It is important, despite the useful idea of how the king sought to use Hatfield in the most telling area, to remember that Edward was not compelled to use his bishop in accordance with any set doctrine, no such system would have even existed in his mind. Whilst a pattern and way of thinking can be deciphered, Edward was axiomatically making human judgements. Therefore there is no great contradiction in his bringing Hatfield to France for a decisive battle in 1346, keeping him there into 1347 but then sending him away before another potential battle in late 1347.

In Balliol's first move, his army operated in Scotland through May and June 1347, penetrating up to Glasgow and securing much of the border lands. Still, the campaign was something of a failure, and seems to have further convinced Edward that the way to defeat Scotland was in securing the north, whilst fighting in France. The Scots were unwilling to give battle and Balliol was loathed to brave the dangers of a

⁴⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 278.

⁴⁹⁵ *Rot. Scot.*, i, 691-92.

⁴⁹⁶ Campbell, 'England, Scotland', 214.

⁴⁹⁷ See *Ibid.* and A.A.M. Duncan, 'Honi soit qui mal y pense: David II and Edward III, 1346-52', *Scottish Historical Review*, 67 (1988), 114.

march to the *Tay*.⁴⁹⁸ In supporting Balliol's moves in 1347, Edward's aim appears not to have been to make a concerted aggressive move, but instead to assess whether Neville's Cross had weakened the Scots so far that they would tamely submit. It was not long before the English king returned to a defensive stance in the north, prompting him to opt for diplomacy instead, as he decided to make use of David II, whom he had held in captivity since Neville's Cross.

⁴⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 114.



Part IV – Organising the defence of the north, and the potentially divisive effect of tensions between the sees of Durham and York

As noted above, given Hatfield's proposed *enjoyment* of participating on the field of battle, suggested by his seal and campaigning history, it would be easy to wrongly gauge his role in the north. Edward would have seen the advantages of promoting Hatfield when he was relatively youthful for a bishop - perhaps not much older than forty -, as it is hard not to link Bury's lapse into defence by payment, with his failing health. Tellingly, within a year of re-commencing these payments Bury was buried in the cathedral. Nevertheless, the defence of the north was not simply a question of skilled warriors riding about the north, dismissing the Scots back to whence they had come. And after the winter 1341-2 campaign of Edward's, the 1347 Balliol campaigns were the only English aggression until the winter 1355-56. Had the battle of Neville's Cross not all but ended serious Scottish raiding over their border, we would have been afforded a better picture of exactly the role Edward had in mind for his servant upon his appointment. However a picture can be compiled from various available pieces of information.

The key to defending the north was organisation, something in which Hatfield had proved himself most capable. The Scots were able to move quickly with their lightly armoured hobelars, taking off supplies and burning what they could not carry. Only if, as in 1346, the raid was cut off, would a pitched battle ensue. As Edward II's reign shows such raiding thrived off division; if individual northerners were allowed to pay off the Scots, it allowed them easy passage and additional supplies to plunder further.⁴⁹⁹ Durham was of particular importance as it was wealthy.⁵⁰⁰ Indeed, Hatfield would have had little difficulty in protecting only his bishopric, as is illustrated by the letters which it is claimed were written to him before the Neville's Cross raid: payment could ensure immunity. This was, however, specifically what his king did not want him to do, and Edward surely chose perfectly, as such a move would appear totally against the bishop's nature.

⁴⁹⁹ See J. Scammell, 'Robert I and the North of England', *EHR* lxxxiii (1958). C. McNamee, *The Wars of the Bruces: Scotland, England and Ireland, 1306-1328* (East Linton, 1997).

⁵⁰⁰ Scammell, 'Robert I and the North', 391-92.

Hatfield was to join with the likes of Percy and Neville to protect the whole of the North-east. Here Edward II's wall analogy, although obvious, is useful; if the Scots could not deal with the English individually they faced a far harder task. Where the analogy is less apt is in how the united front was to keep out the Scots. This was no Berlin wall, or Great Wall of China, rather it can tentatively be proposed that it was more of a Hadrian's wall. The northern lords could not literally hope to keep the Scots out of England should they want to make an incursion, though their presence could act as Hadrian's wall had in a symbolic sense, as a statement of control. The Scottish incursions in 1346 and 1355, when they perceived that the wall had left, lend credence to this interpretation. Yet if the Scots did enter English territory, the northern lords provided a network of information, and pools of men - similar to the Roman forts some way behind the wall - that could then be mobilised, to drive the invaders away.

Edward III had no aspirations for Hatfield to be an individual saviour of the north but hoped he could become a part of a system that had long existed, if not always worked. For example, as Campbell rightly points out 'that an army to defeat the Scots was collected in time and at the right place in 1346 was the result, not of fortunate improvisation, but of the orderly working of a system of defence much of which was at least as old as the reign of Edward I'.⁵⁰¹ A thorough and detailed assessment of the intricate workings of northern taxation, recruitment, and other expenditure is beyond the scope of this study, but the indenture of 17 July 1346 can be used to bring out a number of important points.⁵⁰²

The northern lords are noted as having made 'convents' at Newcastle and York by which they had expected to receive money from the council. These indentures would have been made with the government commissions that arrived from the south to discuss the needs of the north. It was these indentures that were essential in providing the north with the manpower and men to repel the Scots.⁵⁰³ Both of these, in general, came from the north, as it was left to deal with its own defence. The 17 July indenture also shows how northern magnates such as Thomas de Rokeby and William de Felton, came with their retinues to a general muster to be ready for any attack. They did not wait individually in their locality, although it was noted that they would leave if payment were not forthcoming; this example illustrates the emphasis on collective

⁵⁰¹ Campbell, 'England, Scotland', 212.

⁵⁰² *Calendar of Documents relating to Scotland*, ed. J. Bain, iii (Edinburgh, 1887), 266-67. For the full transcript from the calendar of the document see above.

⁵⁰³ Campbell, 'England, Scotland', 212.

defence.⁵⁰⁴ With men mustering together, at one or perhaps a number of points, it was vital for the northern lords to have good information of the enemy's movements. As noted above spies were used but also important were watchtowers and Castles, for example Norham, which belonged to the bishop of Durham. Indeed, just after the period of this survey, in 18 November 1359, Hatfield was amongst many other northern lords, ordered to look after their castles and fortifications.⁵⁰⁵

That the lords of the north came together to form this indenture is indicative of the unity that was essential for effective defence. The mid-July meeting of 1346 seems something of an emergency measure but northern assemblies, and not just government ordered ones, appear to have been regular occurrences.⁵⁰⁶ One fundamental reason for this was that the defence of the north was in all of their self-interests, and this is perhaps a compelling reason for appointing a northerner, like Hatfield, to Durham. Nevertheless, with his vast northern estate, any bishop had a vested interest in maintaining the freedom of northern lands from devastation.⁵⁰⁷

The potential for friction between the northern lords over defence is illustrated most poignantly by the murder of Richard Marmaduke, by Robert Neville on Framwellgate Bridge, in Durham, during Edward II's reign. The immediate cause was seemingly the problem of the collection of the county's truce payments. It is one of Edward III's greater achievements that he was able to prevent such animosity, by offering balanced rewards to his notable magnates, such as Ralph Neville and Henry Percy. By the end of his pontificate Hatfield was part of this unified north; for example, in 1377, he noted that John Neville had 'de long temps adeste de nostre consaile et nous servant'.⁵⁰⁸

Hence the friction between the sees of York and Durham must be assessed, due to its potential to upset the much needed unity. The relationship between the two sees was traditionally strained because of Durham's wealth and power, and the fact that it was one of only two true suffragans that York enjoyed.⁵⁰⁹ That Hatfield was not a man to pacify such disputes is revealed in his conflicts over a number of church benefices.

⁵⁰⁴ *Calendar of Documents relating to Scotland*, Bain, 266-67.

⁵⁰⁵ *Rot. Scot.*, i, 844. See Dobson ['Durham and the borders', 137.] for Norham's importance.

⁵⁰⁶ Campbell, 'England, Scotland', 212.

⁵⁰⁷ For indication of how jealously Hatfield tried to safeguard his income from his lands see R.H. Britnell, 'Feudal Reaction after the Black Death in the Palatinate of Durham', *Past and Present*, 198 (1990), 248-47.

⁵⁰⁸ Quote from Lapsley, *Palatinate*, 145 n. 6.

After initially swearing obedience to Zouche, Hatfield seems to have then slurred him by refusing to be consecrated by the archbishop. There is no evidence to indicate that relations ever improved, and by 22 September 1348 they had soured further as Clement VI responded to the bishop of Durham's request to be released from his oath.⁵¹⁰ So serious was the problem that Hatfield, his vicar general, official, chancellor, treasurer and crucifer were all exempt from excommunication, suspension or subjection to interdict. Hatfield probably expected that this would not be an end to the problems and at the same time he asked for letters conservatory.⁵¹¹ Clement granted Hatfield these letters, which allowed Hatfield to make a swift appeal to a named ecclesiastical panel in the event of further strife, negating the financially burdensome and time-consuming need to involve the pope again directly. This was Hatfield's insurance should Zouche move against him over his exemption.⁵¹²

As Barrell quite rightly surmises, the exemption must have been 'a frequent source of friction between Hatfield and his metropolitan', indeed it surely did much to produce the unabated vitriol of Thoresby's 1363 diatribe.⁵¹³ Though it appears that Hatfield's relations with Zouche were not as problematic as those with Thoresby, Hatfield was implicated of involvement in a disgraceful incident that occurred in York Minster, in early 1349. After vespers had been sung on 6 February a group of his supporters moved through the Minster to the gates of the choir. Here, it is reported, that under the crucifix they broke wind, shouted insults, and worse; all in order to illustrate their contempt for the clergy of York.⁵¹⁴

Given this apparent animosity could the parties be expected to work together? First of all, it must now be assessed just how far the archbishop was expected to be involved in the defence of the north? William Zouche, archbishop from 1340 until 1352,⁵¹⁵ was not unaccustomed to war having previously campaigned, and it was he who in 1346 stepped into the breach to be present at Neville's Cross. Yet he was not at Newcastle on 17 July 1346 and is a far from permanent fixture in documentation

⁵⁰⁹ D.B. Weske, *Convocation of the Clergy* (London, 1937), 180. Canterbury had 18, York just Durham and Carlisle.

⁵¹⁰ *CPP, 1342-1419*, 137-38. *CPL, 1342-62*, 283. Barrell, *Papacy*, 190.

⁵¹¹ *CPP, 1342-1419*, 138.

⁵¹² Barrell, *Papacy*, 170-172.

⁵¹³ Quote from *Ibid.*, 190. For Thoresby's attack see *CPP, 1342-1419*, 472. Thoresby may well have known Hatfield well from their time in Edward's civil service, so there is possible true personal antagonism. In 1358 it is likely Hatfield's men attacked the archbishop's assistant [*Foedera*, iii, i, 389. Barrell, *Papacy*, 190.].

⁵¹⁴ R.B. Dobson, 'The Later Middle Ages, 1215-1500', *A History of York Minster*, eds. G.E. Aylmer and R. Cant (Oxford, 1977), 44. *Letters from Northern Registers*, (1873), 397-99.

⁵¹⁵ *British Chronology*, 264.

concerning northern defence.⁵¹⁶ As metropolitan of the province of York, the archbishop had to concern himself with the co-ordination of a large area. In addition his see was slightly removed from the frontier. Hence the archbishop's role was important but less 'hands on' than the bishop of Carlisle's, and he seems not to have been expected to work 'in the field' with the likes of Hatfield, Neville, and Percy.

The archbishop was essential, however, in the granting and raising of taxes. York was the capital of the north, and the taxes collected from the lands north of the Trent were generally collated there, under the keeping of special officers.⁵¹⁷ In addition to this, the theory by which only those who had consented in person, or by proxy, could be held to contribute to a grant, was gaining increasing importance. Therefore convocations were a vital part of northern defence, in that they backed up the grants made in parliament, and hence extensive efforts were made to ensure full representation at them, and, as metropolitan, it was to the archbishop that this important task fell.⁵¹⁸ The importance of consent at convocations is highlighted in early April 1347, when northern ecclesiastical figures including Hatfield, were written to requesting that they follow the lead of those clergy present in parliament who had assented to a wool loan.⁵¹⁹

It was regarding convocations that the dispute most threatened northern defence. It seems that Hatfield was absent from the 1347 convocation because he was outside Calais, but when, in May 1351, he was next called, he responded by sending his chancellor, William Legat, as a proctor. In convocation Legat read out Hatfield's protest that he enjoyed the privilege of papal exemption from the jurisdiction of York, but noted that 'less the king's business suffer damage by our absence, this proctor does appear.'⁵²⁰ This explanation was accepted with the archbishop's commissary, who then went as far as to inform Legat that 'we are pleased to hold your lord excused, by reason of his stated privileges; nor do we intend anything to derogate from such privileges.'⁵²¹ There is little hint here of the kind of dislocation that might have been feared given some of the low points of the dispute noted above. The absence was only symbolic and in Legat, Hatfield appears to have had a man of no small ability, whom he trusted implicitly. Hence the north would have suffered little from the bishop's absence.

⁵¹⁶ For 17 July 1346 see *Calendar of Documents relating to Scotland*, Bain, 266-67. For general absence see *Rot. Scot.*, and Chancery rolls.

⁵¹⁷ Campbell, 'England, Scotland', 212.

⁵¹⁸ Weske, *Convocation of the Clergy*, 116.

⁵¹⁹ *CCR, 1346-49*, 262

⁵²⁰ *The Records of the Northern Convocation*, Surtees Society, cxiii (Edinburgh, 1907), xlvi.

⁵²¹ *Ibid.*

There may be some possible suggestion of minor problems in the raising of cash for the defence of the north. Some time before 6 August 1347 the bailiffs of York arrested James Lumbard, Hatfield's moneyer, along with his money, 'for certain causes'. It was ordered that he be taken to London to go before the council.⁵²² However, as there is no further information available, it is neither clear whether Lumbard ever appeared, nor what the council's verdict was if he did. We can not even be certain that this bore any relation to the friction between the two sees, and the defence of the north. In conclusion, there is, as yet, little to indicate that the York-Durham problems resulted in any serious paralysis in collecting of finances for northern defence.

Behind all the show of the protests and insults Hatfield must surely have had some dealings with his metropolitan, even if these were through intermediaries. Edward III would not have allowed a total breakdown to occur. The king was himself at odds with Zouche, who had obtained the see of York against Kilsby by papal provision and was subsequently one of provisions great supporters in England.⁵²³ But when it came to actual matters of defence the king knew where the archbishop's loyalties lay, and Zouche was not traitorous in his actions. Even Hatfield's and Thoresby's relationship does not seem to have been one of genuine hatred. At least it was not so strong that they were unable to share the same room with one another, as is revealed when, in 1354, they both witnessed Lancaster's receipt of secret orders for the Anglo-French negotiations.⁵²⁴ More likely both men felt duty bound to fight for their rights, and did so with all the force available to them. Yet, as with the jurisdictional tensions between the king and Hatfield, detailed below, though hard fought, they were not allowed, nor surely wished, to compromise higher objectives.

⁵²² *CCR, 1346-49*, 304, 387.

⁵²³ Palmer, *English Law*, 39-40.

⁵²⁴ Rogers, *Wars of Edward III*, 146.

Part V – 1348-55: Hatfield’s role in discussions for David II’s release

Just over a year after Hatfield’s essentially defensive appointment, the Scottish disaster at Neville’s Cross gave the English the initiative. That the Scottish king and a number of his most important nobles were in captivity across the border, exacerbated the existing political disorder in Scotland.⁵²⁵ However the situation was not changed to the extent that it required a rethink of Edward’s grand strategy, or Hatfield’s place within it. The English still lacked the wherewithal to wage aggressive war in both Scotland and on the continent. So after 1347, when he had funded Edward Balliol’s bungled invasion of Scotland, once again Edward III firmly committed his finances to France.⁵²⁶ The effect of Neville’s Cross on Hatfield was to limit - for the time being - any potential chances to soldier on a frontier battlefield, instead leaving him to confront the Scots over the negotiating table.

For the next decade Hatfield, along with Neville and Percy, had a dominant role in running the negotiations for the release of David II, and initially for a permanent Anglo-Scottish peace. Though it is difficult to define his exact role in the various negotiations with princes in the Low Countries, it is clear that during his rise through Edward’s administration Hatfield would have gained a great deal of instruction in the intricacies of diplomacy. As with other notable warriors of the age, such as the Duke of Lancaster, Hatfield was no uncouth slayer; he was skilled at engaging the enemy with words, as well as weapons.⁵²⁷ Neville’s Cross had been a great success for the English but had not created a fecund atmosphere for negotiation. That it was left to David himself to instigate proceedings, is in itself an indication of the problems Hatfield was to encounter over the next decade.⁵²⁸ Hatfield’s task was to try to get the Scots to acquiesce to major English demands, in return for a king which they neither desperately needed nor really wanted back.

It is unclear if Hatfield was involved in the first discussions over David; the first Scottish embassy to London, arrived in the first half of April 1348, but we are lacking

⁵²⁵ Campbell, ‘England, Scotland’, 214.

⁵²⁶ Campbell, ‘England, Scotland’, 214. Duncan, ‘David II and Edward III’, 114.

⁵²⁷ For example the Duke of Lancaster was given secret instructions regarding the ratification of the Treaty of Guines in 1354 [Rogers, *Wars of Edward III*, 146.].

⁵²⁸ Duncan, ‘David II and Edward III’, 115.

details of the English who negotiated with them.⁵²⁹ Parliament met twice in early 1348, the later one running until mid April, but it is unclear if Hatfield was present. Given his possible absence from the north from May-June 1346 until May 1347, it is likely that he had much to deal with in his diocese. We are similarly lacking details for those Englishmen who received the Scottish mission, which was planned in July 1348 to number seven but only arrived in October 1348 with three members.⁵³⁰ In light of his position and his later involvement in negotiations it is highly possible that Hatfield would have been away from the north at this time. Indeed there is no evidence of any renewed English defensive measures, which were later caused by re-awakened fears of Scottish raiding and ran concurrently with negotiations; it seems the Scots were as yet still shell-shocked after Neville's Cross.

On the other hand, the 1348 embassies were never going to be more than formative manoeuvres in a relatively long process. So perhaps Hatfield's presence would not have been necessary; sadly the available evidence does not suggest anything of Hatfield's movements in 1348. Indeed, though they were 'guardians against the Scots', the northern lords might only have gained responsibility for the negotiations, when Scottish unwillingness to travel too far into English territory, led to meeting being moved northwards. Ultimately, here, as in much of Hatfield's life, it is impossible to move beyond conjecture.

1349 saw little development despite the issuing of safe conducts for an embassy.⁵³¹ During this period Hatfield is quite hidden from our view; for example, he is largely absent from the records relating to Scotland.⁵³² This is perhaps explained by the arrival of the Black Death and his 'vigorous' feudal reaction within his own bishopric. For example, in mid-June 1349 Hatfield was busy appointing a commission to enforce the statute of Labourers in his bishopric lands, indicating that he was in the north dealing with the running of his bishopric.⁵³³ Hatfield certainly spent some time in Yorkshire that autumn, as he is later noted as having granted a charter at Brotherton on

⁵²⁹ *Rot. Scot.*, i, 714-15.

⁵³⁰ The agenda included 'a final peace between the two kingdoms', but only got a truce extension [*Rot. Scot.*, i, 722-23. Duncan, 'David II and Edward III', 116.].

⁵³¹ Duncan, 'David II and Edward III', 116-17. See e.g. *Rot. Scot.*, i, 727.

⁵³² See *Bain Documents Relating to Scotland.*, and *Rot. Scot.*. The exception is when on 24 February Hatfield was ordered to de-arrest a Scottish ship, which was taken against the terms of a truce. The Scots demanded that this was a precondition for their envoys to come to treat for peace [*Bain Documents Relating to Scotland*, 282. See also *CCR, 1349-54*, 57, 15.] This not the first request, but the first to note it as a bargaining tool in negotiations [see previously April 1348 [*Bain, Documents Relating to Scotland*, 279.]]. For discussion see below.

⁵³³ R.H. Britnell, 'Feudal Reaction after the Black Death in the Palatinate of Durham', *Past and Present* 128 (1990), 29.

the 9 August.⁵³⁴ Though plague ravaged much of the country, Hatfield did not simply hide away, in his palatinate manors, hoping to escape the pestilence; indeed the north-east was hit as badly as much of the rest of the land.⁵³⁵ On 28 May 1350 Hatfield was at Auckland,⁵³⁶ having not long returned from a venture south, as on the 13th of that month Hatfield had attended a full chapter at St. Albans, at which king Edward had made a grant.⁵³⁷

Late 1350 saw the negotiations over David II reopen nearer the Scottish border, with the northern lords now undoubtedly in control. On 12 August 1350 safe conducts were issued for two Scottish parties, of four, to come to York, to treat with Hatfield, Stafford, Percy, and Neville, who were ordered to make up the English delegation on 14 October.⁵³⁸ However there were delays; Ralph Lord Stafford's expenses reveal that he only made the journey north, to join the three northern lords, on 13 November 1350. Indeed we lack details of the nature of negotiations but some Scots seem to have arrived, as William Douglas of Liddesdale's release was secured.⁵³⁹ Nevertheless, even the planned make up of their embassies is revealing of the lack of Scottish enthusiasm, as neither look like they were officially appointed by the Scottish council. Both 'have a suspicious resemblance to independent initiatives by the king's friends in the absence of any effort by the Steward', as both failed to contain either an earl or a bishop amongst their number.⁵⁴⁰

The arrival of David in the north at the end of November 1350 may point to some early diplomatic progress by the English contingent. However by 17 December the Scottish king had returned to London and this failure can have surprised few people.⁵⁴¹ Therefore it was decided that a 'complaisant Scot' was to be sent home to treat directly with the Steward and others; William Douglas of Liddesdale appears to have been in Scotland by the end of the year.⁵⁴² Such a decision would not have been left entirely to the discretion of the northern lords, but was surely made on their counsel. And at this point it is possible that they would have had to inform Edward, that they could achieve little or nothing by merely continuing as they had in previous years.

⁵³⁴ *CPR, 1348-50*, 490.

⁵³⁵ R. Lomas, 'The Black Death in County Durham', *Journal of Medieval History* 15 (1989), 127-39.

⁵³⁶ Britnell, 'Feudal Reaction', 32.

⁵³⁷ *CCR, 1349-54*, 222.

⁵³⁸ *Rot. Scot.*, i, 736-37.

⁵³⁹ Duncan, 'David II and Edward III', 121.

⁵⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁵⁴¹ *Ibid.*

In early 1351 plans were made to hold negotiations even closer to Scotland. On 7 March safe-conducts were issued for the Earl March, four bishops, Livingstone and Erskine to proceed to Hexham. Hatfield was not included amongst the English party this time; somewhat surprisingly given the proximity to his episcopal seat.⁵⁴³ However the apparent threat to Calais probably explains this, as at this time the bishop of Durham seems to have been burdened by requirements to provide exceptionally large amounts of victuals to be sent from Hartlepool.⁵⁴⁴ This highlights the degree to which Hatfield was still truly a royal servant: as theoretically the liberty was exempt from providing contributions, though it was noted that the sheriff of Northumberland would pay the bishop for costs.⁵⁴⁵ That Hatfield was actually involved in this logistical operation, rather than simply passing it on to his administration, can be inferred from both the aptitude he had earlier displayed for such tasks as receiver of the chamber and his absence from Hexham. In fact it is unlikely that Hatfield was greatly missed. The sources reveal that the only discussions to have taken place were with Edward Balliol, while the English awaited the Scottish delegation.⁵⁴⁶

In summer 1351 it was hoped that a breakthrough could at last be achieved. Safe conducts were issued on 28 June 1351 for a sizeable Scottish embassy to come to Newcastle.⁵⁴⁷ English thirst for a result is revealed by the speed with which major preparations were made, after an English delegation was named on the same day. This delegation was far more powerful than that sent to Hexham; Hatfield returned, joining Arundel, Percy, both Ralph and Hugh Neville, and the clerk John Winwick.⁵⁴⁸ By 7 July David II had been conveyed to York, and on the 16th Hugh Neville and the earl of Arundel were about to head north. The instruction, which Edward sent north, that his negotiators could grant safe conducts in order to allow new Scots to move swiftly to Newcastle, is further indication of both his desire for results, and importantly his trust in his delegation. It was hoped that this would facilitate more speedy progress, by negating the delays of conventional procedure through central government.⁵⁴⁹

⁵⁴² Quote from *Ibid.*, *Rot. Scot.*, i, 737-8

⁵⁴³ Only Percy, Neville and William de Bohun, Earl of Northampton were listed as to attend Hexham [*Rot. Scot.*, i, 739.].

⁵⁴⁴ *CFR*, 1347-56, 275, 291. *CCR*, 1349-54, 290-91.

⁵⁴⁵ Lapsley, *Palatinate*, 306. *CCR*, 1349-54, 291.

⁵⁴⁶ Duncan, 'David II and Edward III', 123.

⁵⁴⁷ It included four of each of bishops, earls, knights, in addition to William, Lord of Douglas [*Ibid.*, 125.].

⁵⁴⁸ *Rot. Scot.*, i, 741.

⁵⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

Although there were various hitches, by early November 1351 English efforts appeared to have been rewarded. The main negotiations were probably over by 23 August, as Hugh Neville and Arundel arrived back in London on 28 August. Duncan cunningly asserts that they had returned home with the 'undated agreement', which he devotes much of his article to.⁵⁵⁰ On 4 September, after a week's discussion, Edward III finally announced that 'articles in a certain indenture' had been drawn up. Seemingly, though pleased with his negotiators' efforts, Edward took time to make sure that the document was entirely to his satisfaction.

Through October, Hatfield and the other remaining members of the delegation continued negotiations with those Scots remaining in Newcastle, presumably smoothing out lesser contentions after Edward had checked their handiwork. This finally culminated in the order for the temporary release of the Scottish king being issued on 3 November 1351.⁵⁵¹ These northern lords then received David on 14 November 1351 at Newcastle,⁵⁵² sending him home with the 'undated agreement'. The English were becoming increasingly frustrated by the variety of different Scottish factions, who had little incentive to ransom their king. Therefore it was decided to take the drastic step of allowing the king himself to return home, hoping that David's personal presence in his own country would provide the lubrication, which the release of William Douglas of Liddesdale in 1350 had not yet achieved.⁵⁵³ The work of the northern lords did not end upon David's passage to Scotland. On 1 February 1352 Hatfield, Percy and Neville were instructed to negotiate further, to gain some insight into the effect David was having on his subjects.⁵⁵⁴

In late March 1352 secret instructions of the English council gave these northern lords allowance, to leave David II at liberty in Scotland, and to receive him at Berwick or Newcastle at Whitsun, if they judged benefit would be reaped.⁵⁵⁵ Edward III had little choice but to give David more time. Clearly, it was realised by all that the prerequisite for a breakthrough would be David's gaining of a base of powerful Scottish allies, who wanted him to return home. Without such a base - no matter how they expended their certifiable skills - Hatfield, Neville and Percy faced an almost impossible task. They could not hope to force the Scots to ransom a king they did not

⁵⁵⁰ Duncan, 'David II and Edward III', 131.

⁵⁵¹ *Rot. Scot.*, i, 743-45.

⁵⁵² Hatfield, along with Percy and Neville, was to receive David II [*Ibid.*, 744-45.].

⁵⁵³ Duncan, 'David II and Edward III', 125-26.

⁵⁵⁴ *Rot. Scot.*, i, 747.

⁵⁵⁵ 26 March 1352 [*Ibid.*, 749. *Foedera*, iii, i, 78.].

want. Frustratingly for the northern lords, as David was in London a week and a half before Whitsun, the deadlock had showed no signs of breaking but this must have been half expected.⁵⁵⁶ However the order is perhaps most important in terms of this survey, in once again revealing just how much the king trusted the judgement of his negotiators. It further reinforces the interpretation that the northern lords largely ran the negotiation process, as opposed to being puppets with little scope for manoeuvre.

One possibility opened up by David II's initial passage to Scotland in 1352, and then the potential two-month extension, was that the Scottish king could enter his own country in force. Edward III requested that his own Scottish followers be ready to support William Douglas and David II, should civil war erupt from David's desire to have his provisional agreement with Edward ratified.⁵⁵⁷ In such an atmosphere Edward was surely hoping to *provoke* his followers rather than merely *warn* them of its possibility.

However Edward stopped short of active English involvement. Interestingly, the chronicle of Henry Knighton suggests that Englishmen were actively involved in Scotland in 1353. Knighton recounts that upon hearing of the rejection of the treaty, Edward III instructed a number of Englishmen - the northern lords, the 'Disinherited' and William de Bohun - to gather with his brother-in-law and wage war against his enemies in Scotland. This is surely a case of Knighton confusing his chronology, and mixing together the events of 1352 and 1353.⁵⁵⁸ However the generally valued Knighton is not only wrong in his chronology but also in his understanding of the extent of the English king's involvement. No other record of such a move on Edward's part is extant, and it seems unlikely that such an invitation to the northern lords would ever have been sent. Due to their frustration with the apparent futility of their negotiations, the northern lords would have jumped at the chance to be able to *force* a settlement upon the Scots. Yet Edward knew that for David to be accepted by his kinsmen, and begin to win over some of the supporters of the Steward, it was vital that he appear to stand by himself as the true king of Scotland, rather than an English puppet.⁵⁵⁹

On 20 July 1352 Hatfield was summoned to a conference on the 'great and urgent affairs at Westminster on the morrow of the assumption next'.⁵⁶⁰ Hatfield was ordered to send receipt of when he received this summons and to also detail who the

⁵⁵⁶ David was back in the tower on 16 May [Duncan, 'David II and Edward III', 132.].

⁵⁵⁷ *Rot. Scot.*, i, 748.

⁵⁵⁸ Duncan, 'David II and Edward III', 133.

⁵⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 133-34. *Knighton*, ii, 76. 133-34.

⁵⁶⁰ *CCR*, 1349-54, 498.

messenger was. Given these safeguards it would seem fair to assume that Hatfield would have travelled to London by mid-August 1352, especially as it is probable that the council rethought Edward's strategy for Anglo-Scottish negotiations. Until the failure of 1352 the English had been hoping to conclude David's release as part of a greater Anglo-Scottish peace settlement. However, after five years of false dawns the king was willing to rescind his desire for a more comprehensive settlement. From now on Edward simply hoped to cut his losses by securing both long lasting truce, and importantly ransom cash to finance the war in France.⁵⁶¹

The change of policy did not produce immediate results. Hatfield returned north - being at Durham on 27 January 1353⁵⁶² - perhaps not with David II but doubtless the bishop's return was related to the Scottish king's passage north to Newcastle. David's arrival, in late January, appears to have been a hopeful move to entice the Scots to the table but it was ultimately unsuccessful, with no embassy appearing in the records until late 1353.⁵⁶³ On 15 July Hatfield was ordered to attend parliament on 21 September,⁵⁶⁴ but later in 1353 he was to be back in the north. On 15 October 1353 Edward ordered an even greater delegation to treat with the Scots. This time it was to be made up of Hatfield, Northampton, Percy, Neville, and for the first time regarding David II, the bishop of Carlisle, Thomas de Lucy, William Greystock, and Henry le Scrope.⁵⁶⁵ But once again little seems to have been achieved. This was perhaps not unexpected, as Edward appears to have been increasingly wary that after such a period of quiet, in terms of cross border raiding, discussion might quickly turn to war. The lack of Scottish interest in the negotiations exacerbated English concerns, that years of negotiations had been merely a way to bide time and cloak the recovery after Neville's Cross. Hence on the 30 October Edward prudently demanded that the north be ready for any Scottish incursion.⁵⁶⁶

No attack materialised and in March 1354 it was deemed safe enough for Hatfield to leave the north for a time. On the 18th the admiral of the north fleet was ordered to deliver to Hatfield three ships, to allow him to bring his victuals to London

⁵⁶¹ Duncan, 'David II and Edward III', 134.

⁵⁶² Hatfield noted as being at Durham on '27 January, in the eighth year of his pontificate', where he made a grant of the office of master forester of the royal liberty of Durham, for life, to his yeoman and chamberlain, John de Belgrave, [*CPR, 1354-58, 533.*].

⁵⁶³ *Rot. Scot.*, i, 759-60.

⁵⁶⁴ *CCR, 1349-54, 610.*

⁵⁶⁵ *Rot. Scot.*, i, 761.

⁵⁶⁶ *Rot. Scot.*, i, 762.

for the parliament.⁵⁶⁷ This should not simply be taken as a general sign of Edward III's keenness to have his reluctant episcopate represented at his parliaments.⁵⁶⁸ This was a time of war and the shipping was highly sought after. That *three* ships were ordered is clearly a measure of Edward's particular affection for his bishop, but also of his need for Hatfield to be conveyed speedily but nevertheless still with the necessary majesty afforded by his household.⁵⁶⁹

Yet soon Hatfield was again part of negotiations in the north concerning David II's ransom,⁵⁷⁰ and once again there were early indications that the English lords had made progress. Indeed, on 13 July 1354, the negotiations produced an indenture detailing that David was to be released for £60,000, which was to be paid in nine annual instalments, and guaranteed by hostages. In addition it decreed that a further meeting be held on 25 August 1354. Hatfield seems to have taken the gap of a month and a half before the next meeting, as a chance to notify Prior Fossour that he wished to make his second visitation of Durham, and he conducted the initial visit in Durham from 23-26 July.⁵⁷¹ Hatfield almost certainly planned to attend the proposed later meeting with the Scots, as on 28 August 1354 he was at Kepier, on the edge of Durham, and then on 1 September he was at Auckland castle.⁵⁷² However there is no evidence showing that the meeting ever occurred.⁵⁷³ Still, in early October 1354 David was once again sent north to Newcastle, along with documentation for ratification.⁵⁷⁴ The English once again made extensive preparations but still David was not released.⁵⁷⁵

Hatfield appears to have sought personal audience with Edward upon this failure, as he moved south for a time. He was at Westminster on the last day of October 1354, before Lancaster left for France.⁵⁷⁶ It is likely that after discussing the matter with his king Hatfield returned north, where on 12 November another indenture was drawn up. Both sides agreed to return on 14 January 1355 to ratify the indenture, having secured official approval, but if the meeting ever took place, the advances ended

⁵⁶⁷ *CCR, 1354-60*, 10. *Foedera*, iii, i, 275.

⁵⁶⁸ See Ormrod's interpretation [W.M. Ormrod, *The Reign of Edward III: Crown and Political Society in England, 1327-1377* (London, 1990), 131.].

⁵⁶⁹ Nautical transport was the quickest and cheapest method of travel at this time.

⁵⁷⁰ The delegation was the same as October 1353 except for the addition of Gilbert de Umfraville, Earl of Angus [*Rot. Scot.*, i, 766.]. *Foedera*, iii, i, 285-91, 293.

⁵⁷¹ Harbottle, 'Hatfield's Visitation of 1354', 85.

⁵⁷² *Ibid.*, 87. Hatfield had spent the intervening time hearing the answers of a number of monks he had required to clear themselves of accusations, following his actual visitation.

⁵⁷³ Campbell, 'England, Scotland', 216.

⁵⁷⁴ Edward III had accepted this and sent it to his nuncios [who were the same as in June 1354] to discuss with, and gain its acceptance by, those of Scotland [*Rot. Scot.*, i, 768.].

⁵⁷⁵ *Rot. Scot.*, i, 768-71.

⁵⁷⁶ Rogers, *Wars of Edward III*, 146.

up being yet another false dawn.⁵⁷⁷ The problem was as ever that the Scots were waiting to gauge the Anglo-French situation. Both the English and Scottish knew that there was a treaty under discussion at Guines. In July 1354 it must have appeared to the Scots that they would soon be alone. The French king, John II, was on the verge of severing the auld alliance in treating independently with Edward III, yet ratification was not due until the end of 1354.⁵⁷⁸ It was pragmatic for the Scots to feign a willingness to sign but in reality hold back and wait. Ultimately their approach was rewarded when the treaty of Guines was not ratified, and hence by the end of February 1355 David was once again returned south.⁵⁷⁹ In response to the setback it was decreed that the defence of the North be solidified once again.⁵⁸⁰

However, the concern was not compelling enough to prevent Hatfield from moving south again, as he joined the royal court at Woodstock and was greatly honoured by the royal couple. On 22 February 1355 Hatfield baptised Thomas of Woodstock, the couple's sixth son, also conducting Philippa's churching.⁵⁸¹ After the first day's religious duties Hatfield surely enjoyed the ensuing feasting and jousting,⁵⁸² though he could not have taken part in the latter. Clearly as the sixth born son, the young Thomas was not destined for particular greatness but the baptism appears more than a matter of official necessity. Rather it was the result of a long personal association between Hatfield and the royal couple.

Philippa had been heavily involved in securing Hatfield's election, and had asked Hatfield to help secure benefices at her behest.⁵⁸³ The couple's second son, and third born child, William, died at Hatfield's birthplace in 1336. It has even been suggested that Hatfield was tutor of the Prince of Wales, and though it is not clear where this assertion originates,⁵⁸⁴ given Hatfield's role in the chamber such a bond should not be at all surprising. Indeed it is plausible that the naming of Thomas was partially influenced by Hatfield, who seems to have been godfather to the young prince. Certainly, that the baptism was no mere detached formality for the bishop of Durham is

⁵⁷⁷ Campbell, 'England, Scotland', 216. Duncan, 'David II and Edward III', 134.

⁵⁷⁸ Campbell, 'England, Scotland', 217.

⁵⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 217.

⁵⁸⁰ *Rot. Scot.*, i, 775.

⁵⁸¹ *Avesbury*, 422. For Edward III's issue see *British Chronology*, 36. Churching was a service of thanksgiving for a mother's survival of childbirth that also signalled her return to normal life [Vale, *Edward III and Chivalry*, 63.].

⁵⁸² *Avesbury*, 422.

⁵⁸³ For Queen Philippa's requests see *CPP, 1342-1419*, 85, 109, 121. *CPL, 1342-62*, 200, 232, 245.

⁵⁸⁴ *DNB* xxv, 154.

shown by Hatfield's will of 1381, in which he asked Thomas - since August 1377, Earl of Buckingham - to assist John de Popham, in receiving a thousand marks of silver owed to the bishop.⁵⁸⁵ The pair were then entrusted to use this money to further ease Hatfield's path through purgatory; clearly a task for someone held in affection, even though the bishop had already done much to secure his salvation.⁵⁸⁶

As the summer of 1355 approached unease grew upon the northern frontier. News of a French presence north of the border provoked a well organised response; for example, on 8 June 1355 the north was issued orders to ready itself, with further instruction being sent at the end of the month.⁵⁸⁷ The north had long been left to organise itself against the Scots but French assistance threatened to increase the Scottish potential to lay waste to English territory. In March 1355 John II of France had sent Sire de Garencieres to Scotland, with a force of fifty men-at-arms and apparently 40,000 *deniers d'or* or *l'escu*, a substantial amount of capital.⁵⁸⁸

Hatfield seems to have been given a predominant role in preparations. On 18 July 1355, at Northfleet, Edward and his council detailed that, because the archbishop was himself absent, Hatfield was to receive those troops that could be raised in the York diocese, in addition to his own forces.⁵⁸⁹ This was a sensible course of action but cannot have soothed relations between archbishop and suffragan. Exactly how the muster of men from York was concluded is unclear, as it was later noted upon the order that it was 'vacated and nothing was done there upon.' Nevertheless, by August 1355 a sizeable force was ready at Newcastle.⁵⁹⁰ This appears to have frightened many of the Scots, and by the end of September *some* of them had agreed to a truce, in the negotiation of which Avesbury recounts Hatfield played the greatest hand.⁵⁹¹ The failure of some Scottish nerves appears to have produced a belief amongst many of the English, that the French support could not have been as real as their initial intelligence had portrayed it. To Edward III this was all important. Upon the agreement of the Anglo-Scottish truce of Michaelmas 1355, Edward allowed a number of his most important

⁵⁸⁵ *Testa. Ebor.*, 121. For Thomas of Woodstock's titles see *British Chronology*, 36.

⁵⁸⁶ See Barker, 'Death and the bishop'.

⁵⁸⁷ On 8 June to Hatfield, Umfraville, Percy, Mowbray, and Neville [*Rot. Scot.*, i, 777.] 28 June to Hatfield, Umfraville, Percy, Neville, Carlisle, Lucy, Dacre [*Ibid.*, 778.]. Further order on 18 July [to the above with the addition of Mowbray, Buzoun, Deyncourt, and Grey] noted that men who were 'corporibus impotentes' were not simply excused but should contribute to the expenses of those who were able bodied [*Ibid.*, 779-80.].

⁵⁸⁸ Campbell, 'England, Scotland', 217.

⁵⁸⁹ *CCR, 1354-60*, 145.

⁵⁹⁰ Campbell, 'England, Scotland', 217.

northern lords leave to join him in campaigning abroad. With the benefit of hindsight Campbell has interpreted this as imprudent.⁵⁹² Yet in assessing Hatfield's role as royal servant and especially 'guardian of the north', it is important to try and understand the thinking behind the move that left the north without Hatfield, Neville, Percy and the Keeper of Berwick.

As the evidence below illustrates, the French presence in Scotland in 1355 did not prompt the English king to halt his continental campaigning. It did, however, threaten a step up from traditional Scottish raiding; even that of autumn 1346, which was launched partly at the behest of the French. Having failed to gain a good peace at the negotiating table at Avignon, Edward would have been rightly troubled by the Valois' apparent desire, and ability, to attack England from Scotland. Since Sluys the English had grown accustomed to the security of its borders from French attack. Decisively, the Michaelmas treaty would at once have firstly suggested to Edward that Scotland was now safe. But secondly, it told Edward, more bluntly than ever, that the solution to his problems with both Scotland and France lay in making 'war in France more vigorously than ever before'.⁵⁹³

So Campbell's comment can perhaps be modified a little. Unbeknown to the English, only *some* of the Scottish nobility had agreed to the truce, whilst others had received the promised French money at Bruges on 15 September. Perhaps Edward should have catered for the possibility that the French threat had not yet been neutralised, as the unusual move against Berwick in early November ultimately illustrated to him.⁵⁹⁴ Moreover, the truce could well have lasted, and the Picardy *chevauchee* of 1355 produced an English victory in a further decisive battle, assisted by the fighting abilities of the northern lords. In such a scenario we would be hard pressed to see Edward's move as anything other than inspired, if also not a little daring but surely such qualities were valuable in a war leader,⁵⁹⁵ especially one who believed he had God on his side. As noted above, when assessing Hatfield's probable presence at first Crecy, and then his continuing attendance of the siege of Calais in 1346-7, when Edward fought on the continent he felt he was competing for a higher stake than in

⁵⁹¹ *Avesbury*, 427.

⁵⁹² Campbell, 'England, Scotland', 217.

⁵⁹³ This is how Froissart has Edward remarking after the failure of the French to make peace at Avignon in 1355 [Rogers, *War Cruel and Sharp*, 292.]

⁵⁹⁴ Campbell, 'England, Scotland,' 217.

⁵⁹⁵ A comparison between Edward III and Philip VI in the Crecy campaign of 1346 illuminates this point, see Rogers, *War Cruel and Sharp*, 217-272.

Scotland. For Edward III it was prudent to take risks, when the situation appeared to allow it, in order to play his biggest games with his best hand.

Part VI – Hatfield in France 1355, the ‘Burnt Candlemas’ of 1356, and the culmination of a decade’s hard work with the release of David II in 1357

In early April 1355 the great council at Westminster had decided on the make up of the Gascon campaign and the king’s expedition to Cherbourg.⁵⁹⁶ Though the King’s fleet was assembled at Greenwich by the 10 July 1355, bad weather prevented it from doing more than moving along the English coast. Thus it happened that Hatfield was freed for participation in continental campaigning in 1355 by the truce, which was concluded with the Scots around Michaelmas. The weather delays and the treachery of the king of Navarre, meant that Edward’s expedition did not leave until late October 1355, and also that the destination was switched to Calais.⁵⁹⁷ It was not until the 26 October that Edward’s force docked at Calais.

Though no reliable evidence is currently available for the exact size of the force contributed by the late-joining northern lords, something of its significance is indicated by Avesbury’s figures. He notes that Hatfield’s sizeable retinue numbered a hundred men-at-arms and eighty mounted archers, which was the same as that noted for Neville, with Percy having 50 men-at-arms and 80 mounted archers.⁵⁹⁸ Clearly chroniclers were often left to make educated guesses regarding numbers, but that the retinues of these late comers are specifically noted may suggest the figures had some basis in reality. If this is so, they may reflect the hurried nature of the northern lords’ preparations for campaigning. Although Hatfield’s force in 1346 had a similar number of mounted archers, it had far more men-at-arms, however as noted above these 1346 figures must be approached with care.⁵⁹⁹

After Calais’s fall in 1347, there had been no full-scale campaigns, as the English sought to gain a ‘proper peace’ without further loss of life. But once Edward III was in France he actively sought a battle to defeat the new French king, John II, for the first time, and the Valois family for a third major time. The English once again planned to burn the French countryside to force its king to face them in a trial by battle. After a period of diplomatic and geographical manoeuvring by both monarchs, Edward and John finally held discussions outside Calais, both apparently hungry for a battle. Yet

⁵⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 294-295.

⁵⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 297.

⁵⁹⁸ *Avesbury*, 427.

neither wished to fight upon the others terms.⁶⁰⁰ Though the duration of the campaign was just two weeks there were signs of winter's approach and supplies had dwindled. This coupled with the failure of the initial invasion to 'sting' Jean II into battle, seemed to condemn the English army to a harsh winter of comparative inertia, whilst diplomatic fencing tried to secure a battle.⁶⁰¹ Though denied a second Crecy, Hatfield certainly increased his repute as the warrior bishop of his age; playing a large part in a *chevauchee*, which according to Avesbury was 'much praised' upon the army's return.⁶⁰² Importantly, the chronicler's assessment bears out the interpretation, that Edward had succeeded in making Jean II 'appear as reluctant to face the test of battle as his father had been'.⁶⁰³ In this sense, though the campaign did not give Edward III what he wanted, it was hardly a failure.

Whether Edward had already decided to return home before he heard of the capture of Berwick is open to dispute. Rogers believes that Edward hastened back from France because of the news, despite the fact that in 1346 the English army remained outside Calais despite Scottish raiding.⁶⁰⁴ Admittedly 1355 presented a different situation, as Berwick was the 'largest and most prosperous town in the realm' [of Scotland].⁶⁰⁵ Its capture also represented something of a change in approach on the part of the Scots, and if maintained would have provided the Scots with a base to launch telling raids against the north.

Yet in the short term it did not threaten in anyway to decisively alter the Anglo-Scottish situation. The Scots were still divided and those at Berwick only held the town and not the Castle. Had Edward III, in France, believed he had any chance of having his trial by battle, on his terms, it is extremely doubtfully that he would have lead his army back across the channel in late 1355. Importantly, Campbell does not place the news of Berwick's capture as the major reason for Edward's return, noting that 'Edward III learned of this either just before or just after he left Calais for England on about 19 November.'⁶⁰⁶ The situation in France and not in the north, provided the stronger push for Edward to return home.

⁵⁹⁹ For Hatfield's retinue see Wrottesley, *Crecy and Calais*, 198. For its reliability see above.

⁶⁰⁰ Rogers, *War Cruel and Sharp*, 297-303.

⁶⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 300.

⁶⁰² *Avesbury*, 431.

⁶⁰³ Rogers, *War Cruel and Sharp*, 304.

⁶⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 303, 335.

⁶⁰⁵ Rogers, *War Cruel and Sharp*, 60.

⁶⁰⁶ Campbell, 'England, Scotland,' 217.

Although he did not return simply because of it, once he had returned Edward III nevertheless grabbed his chance to punish the Scots for breaking his truce. Edward hoped in doing so to at once reclaim Berwick, and more importantly grease the seemingly deadlocked Anglo-Scottish negotiations. The first objective was swiftly and painlessly realised. Great energies were devoted to the recruitment and organisation of a force, to assemble at Newcastle for the first day of the new year.⁶⁰⁷ Almost straight after the return 120 miners began to mine under the walls of Berwick.⁶⁰⁸ By 23 December the King was at Durham,⁶⁰⁹ and the royal army had arrived outside Berwick by 13 January 1356, which was about the time the mining work reached completion.⁶¹⁰ The Scottish force inside Berwick realised that they had no hope of resisting, so they surrendered allowing the English army to proceed into the Scottish lowlands.

Hatfield was present at Roxburgh on 20 January 1356 when Edward took the step of securing Balliol's cession of his claims to the Scottish throne, and probably had a role in the negotiations that preceded it.⁶¹¹ Yet after just over a decade trying to maintain a defensive position in the north of England, Hatfield would have been under no illusions that this did in fact represent a decisive shifting of focus to his frontier. Edward was still in no position to commit himself to an aggressive war in Scotland. Rather in threatening to assert and impose direct lordship, Edward sought to make David II more appealing to the, seemingly obstinate, people and nobility of Scotland. In doing so Edward hoped first to provoke them into ransoming David. Secondly, he hoped to convince the Scots of the value of the peace arrangements that he had already drawn up with David.⁶¹²

As noted above, moves in 1352 to provoke civil war as a means of helping David II reclaim Scotland had failed. This partly because it was all too clear that the Scottish King was being sent home with the backing of his English captor. Therefore in 1356 Edward's tactic was to reject Balliol, and hence suggest that he was no longer interested in puppet rulers. By virtue of his apparent desire to claim the throne for himself and not merely his heirs, Edward III now hoped to dupe the Scots into believing

⁶⁰⁷ For example on 24 November 1355 the sheriff of Yorkshire was ordered to collect both mounted men and footsoldiers to march swiftly against the Scots [*Rot. Scot.*, i, 783.]

⁶⁰⁸ *Avesbury*, 450. Rogers, *War Cruel and Sharp*, 335.

⁶⁰⁹ *Rot. Scot.*, i, 785.

⁶¹⁰ Rogers, *War Cruel and Sharp*, 335.

⁶¹¹ *Rot. Scot.*, i, 788-89.

⁶¹² Rogers, *War Cruel and Sharp*, 338.

that now David II no was longer his puppet, but his rival, and by necessity his enemy.⁶¹³ After Roxburgh the 'Burnt Candlemas' campaign was the calculated display of 'brute force', by which the English sought to back up Edward's assertion of his right.⁶¹⁴ Hence the 'Burnt Candlemas' was something of a gamble on Edward III's behalf. By quickly reopening the Scottish front, he hoped to deliver a knock out blow and gain a passive Scotland under a relatively Anglophile king. Edward could, in no sense, afford a return to full scale war on his northern frontier.

The mere threat of violence nearly produced immediate results. Even before Roxburgh, a Scottish commission met an English contingent to treat over the release of David II on 17 January 1356.⁶¹⁵ Then soon after leaving Roxburgh, Edward was approached by Lord William Douglas, and Hatfield - amongst others - was then instructed to undertake discussions with the Scots.⁶¹⁶ These failed and the English reaction was predictable. The English army split into three sections and, with a front of up to twenty leagues breadth, proceeded northwards, savagely burning all in their path, until Haddington.⁶¹⁷ Weather problems hindered the supply fleet, necessitating a week spent laying waste to Lothian, over Candlemas, and hence the campaign gained the infamous title by which it is oft referred.⁶¹⁸ Because of the failure of the Scots to meet his army and due to the logistical problems, Edward started to think of returning south. In the destruction dispensed by his army he had already achieved much of what he set out to do. However he still hoped for a pitched battle. Hence he soon took a small force, perhaps including the bishop of Durham, on an ultimately unsuccessful quest, to answer a call of the Duke of Lancaster. Lancaster, having proceeded further north than Edward's position at Melrose, had heard rumours that there were some Scots who were prepared to give battle.⁶¹⁹

Ultimately on 18 April 1356 William Douglas and Northampton concluded a truce, which terminated significant Anglo-Scottish warfare for the time being.⁶²⁰ After over half a year of activity Hatfield, along with Percy and Neville, was once again left in charge of the northern frontier, as the king once again returned south to focus on

⁶¹³ For discussion of the technicalities of what David II had at various times previously been willing to give up to Edward see *Ibid.*, 336-37.

⁶¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 338.

⁶¹⁵ *Foedera*, iii, i, 114.

⁶¹⁶ Hatfield, Carlisle, Northampton, Umfraville, Percy, Neville, Scrope [*Rot. Scot.*, i, 791.]. Rogers, *War Cruel and Sharp*, 338-39.

⁶¹⁷ *Avesbury*, 455. Rogers, *War Cruel and Sharp*, 339.

⁶¹⁸ Rogers, *War Cruel and Sharp*, 339.

⁶¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 340.

⁶²⁰ *Foedera*, iii, i, 122.

France.⁶²¹ On the face of it, the situation was not drastically different in appearance from a year previously. Nevertheless, Hatfield had played an important role in a flow of events, which helped produce notable results both in Scotland and France before 1357 was at its end.

Having been left in the north, the northern lords reopened negotiations upon Edward's return south in 1356. Immediate results were not achieved, yet by the summer of 1357 there was again expectation of a breakthrough. On 16 August 1357 Hatfield was present at negotiations held at Berwick.⁶²² The Black Prince's victory at Poitiers in September 1356 had left the French in disarray, and with their own king in captivity they were in no position to help the Scots. Now the Scots knew that they were alone, and the memories of Edward's brutal 'Burnt Candlemas' campaign under the banner of the king of Scotland, were surely fresh in their minds. Therefore they finally agreed to ransom David II, with terms for his release being reached by the start of October 1357.⁶²³ Hatfield was present on 5 October 1357 when the indenture concerning David II's ransom was notarially attested at Berwick, and the king was finally returned to his people.⁶²⁴

The events of 1356-7 should be seen as the closing of a chapter in Hatfield's life. Much of his time as bishop was devoted to discussion over David II, and his release was surely something of a relief. It is rightly noted that the terms of the Berwick indenture of 1357 did little to rectify Anglo-Scottish problems.⁶²⁵ Yet it would have been felt by the English that having, at last, coerced the Scots into buying back their king, there would axiomatically be some shift in diplomatic relations. Hatfield must have hoped for a less stagnant diplomatic situation, because it was round the table and not upon the battlefield that he stood to continue his role as a 'guardian of the north'.

Indeed, the 'Burnt Candlemas' of 1356 marks Hatfield's retirement from major campaigning, though in 1370-1, an ageing Hatfield did harbour desires to answer the call of the pope, and lead a crusade to assist in the 'defence of the Roman church in

⁶²¹ *Avesbury*, 456.

⁶²² York, Carlisle, Hatfield, Percy, Neville, Scrop, Musgrave [*Rot. Scot.*, i, 809. *Foedera*, iii, i, 365-8.].

⁶²³ *Rot. Scot.*, i, 811-14. *Foedera*, iii, i, 372-8.

⁶²⁴ Also present in the English delegation were York, Carlisle, Percy, Neville, Scrop and Musgrave, who were described as messengers and deputies of Edward III [*The Acts of David II, King of Scots, 1329-1371, Regesta Regum Scottorum*, ed. B. Webster, vi (Edinburgh, 1982), 173-74. *Rot. Scot.*, i, 814.].

⁶²⁵ The auld alliance was not mentioned, there was no specific recognition of David II as King of Scotland, and territorial issues were not addressed. Neither was the vital problem of the inheritance of the crown after David dealt with [See Campbell, 'England, Scotland', 218.].

Italy'.⁶²⁶ When Henry of Lancaster left for Normandy in mid June 1356, Hatfield was still very much involved in the north.⁶²⁷ After the brutal show of force in 1356 there could be no suggestion that Hatfield leave his post, as it was apparent that he could now help conclude the task to which he had devoted much of the previous decade. It has been argued that Edward used Hatfield when he wanted to throw his full weight against his Valois enemy. Nevertheless there was surely little question that a man so involved in the north would head so far away as the South of France, and hence Hatfield was not present on the Poitiers campaign.

After Scotland in 1356, King Edward did not enter the field again until he led his last campaign to Reims in 1359-60, at the age of 48.⁶²⁸ Hatfield did not join his king; was this because he was not needed or was there greater need for him in the north? Alternatively, was absence a product of a physical deterioration, meaning that he would have had little to offer in the field? It is reasonable to perhaps suggest a combination of the above. On 16 November 1359 Edward III ordered that he did not wish Hatfield to leave the north and jeopardise the safe custody of the march, as David II was threatening to join in a Franco-Danish assault on England.⁶²⁹ The implication is that, after his use in 1346-7 and 1355, the bishop of Durham was eyeing a return to northern France. But by this time, as Rogers notes, though 'the war was not yet over... it was already won.'⁶³⁰ In this situation Edward had no need to gamble and take Hatfield with him, when there were potentially serious problems in the north. Nevertheless, had Hatfield been in his prime it is not impossible that he would have found his way on to the campaign at some point, especially after the feared invasion did not materialise. That he did not perhaps indicates that time was catching up with him. This hypothesised retirement from campaigning is important because Hatfield clearly saw himself as a warrior, and would therefore have regarded his inability to campaign as the sad closing of an important chapter of his life.

As it is suggested that Hatfield's body was ailing, it is useful to think of his age. Though we have no indication of Hatfield's age, a number of suggestions can be made based on events in his life. He entered royal service in 1337, achieved his bishopric at

⁶²⁶ Edward III however commanded his royal servant to remain at his post [*CPL*, 1362-1404, 98. *Foedera*, iii, ii, 936].

⁶²⁷ Rogers, *War Cruel and Sharp*, 341.

⁶²⁸ For the Reims Campaign of 1359-60, see *Ibid.*, 385-422.

⁶²⁹ *CCR*, 1354-60, 664.

⁶³⁰ Rogers, *War Cruel and Sharp*, 384.

1345, and in 1363 he applied for a licence to be buried in Durham Cathedral.⁶³¹ When he died in 1381⁶³² he had been bishop of Durham for just under thirty-six years, and in royal service for almost forty-four years. The impression is that Hatfield died an old man, who had had to long consider 'that nothing is more certain than death nor less certain than its hour'.⁶³³ Indeed it is relatively certain that he was seriously infirm for a period before his death.⁶³⁴ However, just how old Hatfield was at his death is far from clear. It is possible, though far from certain, that the Thomas de Hatfield mentioned in May 1321, as part of a brutal felony, was indeed a youthful later-to-be-bishop of Durham.⁶³⁵

By attempting to fit the above information into a possible path of a person's life, it may seem reasonable to - very approximately - hypothesise Hatfield was born around 1305. If this birth of date were used, it would make him a youth of 16 for the felony and a man of just over thirty when he entered Edward's service. He would have been in his mid-forties when consecrated bishop and fifty when he last campaigned. When he gained licence for his tomb he would have been just under sixty, being not far off eighty when he died. Admittedly this is little more than guesswork, albeit based on hunches developed over a couple of years study. Nevertheless, it seems to me that none of the dates for these events would seem out of place, in a proposed time span of his life.

It seems to me that a birth date for Hatfield around 1305, would also fit his relationship with Edward III, who was born in 1312.⁶³⁶ Hatfield would perhaps have been just old enough to have commanded Edward's respect for his greater experience. But less than ten years the king's senior, he would have been in a position to adopt a stance perhaps more like a much older brother, than a potentially distant father figure. If some corroboration could be found for this dating of Hatfield's birth, it could be suggested that, though he was clearly most talented, Hatfield's age was another telling factor in his success.

⁶³¹ *Script. Tres.*, cxxii.

⁶³² *Testa. Ebor.*, 121.

⁶³³ *Ibid.*, 121.

⁶³⁴ His will notes that he was infirm of body, and a letter dated simply 15th December but which cannot have been from after 1380, seems to indicate a man who was having to live with the slow but unmistakable deterioration to his last breath [*Script. Tres.*, cxlv. Barker, 'Death and the bishop', 2.]

⁶³⁵ *CPR, 1317-21*, 606.

⁶³⁶ *British Chronology*, 35.

Part VII – Hatfield’s justice: a source of tension with Edward III?

Though this dissertation has focused predominantly on Hatfield’s position in relation to Edward’s waging of war, there were clearly many other tasks that the king expected Hatfield to carry out. And as such it is important to look at these briefly, as space will allow, before conclusions are reached. One major area in which Edward would have had expectation was law and order. Before 1346 the northern frontier had become a dangerous place. Bands of brigands roamed the country, bearing no particular allegiance to either crown.⁶³⁷ This lawlessness ran hand in hand with the cross border raiding, one often being hard to differentiate from the other. The task was far from easy; if punitive measures were too harsh they ran the risk of driving men to join the Scots - as an initiative in the north west had come close to doing.⁶³⁸ Further exacerbating the problem was the jurisdictional nature of the liberty of Durham. It was common practice for those who had committed crime elsewhere to try and escape the king’s justice, and to do this they simply entered the bishop’s land, where the king’s writ did not run. In 1341 Bury had taken measures to counter this in a deal with the king.⁶³⁹ However making the deal was one thing, but the determination needed for both to enforce it was another, regardless of good intentions.

Hatfield seems to have struggled to combat the activities of outlaws in his liberty. There were problems as early as February 1346, when Edward was forced to request Hatfield find a band of men at large in his palatinate.⁶⁴⁰ Having been called before an Oyer and Terminer commission at Newcastle, the men had fled into the liberty, delaying their punishment. Less easily excusable was Hatfield’s failure, in the same month, to provide Flemish burgesses with justice regarding a ship arrested by some of his own ministers. The king threatened to provide justice himself, notwithstanding the bishop’s liberty, if Hatfield continued to delay.⁶⁴¹

It seems that Edward did not see the results he wished for, and again in 1350 he complained of the bishop’s administration of justice. Hatfield responded by appointing

⁶³⁷ Campbell, ‘England, Scotland’, 211.

⁶³⁸ *Ibid.*

⁶³⁹ Lapsley, *Palatinate*, 226.

⁶⁴⁰ *CFR*, 1337-47, 454.

⁶⁴¹ *CCR*, 1346-48, 12, 38.

a special commission to put 'certain articles' received from the king into execution.⁶⁴² In 1353 the people of the palatinate went to the king to obtain from him confirmation of a charter of Bishop Bek's, which dealt with the control of the bishop.⁶⁴³ By 1358 the problems still existed and Hatfield, apparently without his king's prompting, launched a similar commission to investigate reports of oppression and extortion, on the part of his ministers.⁶⁴⁴ Sadly it is almost impossible to assess whether Hatfield was making genuine attempts to deal with the problems, and whether the same can be said for his justices.

Clearly there is much scope for a detailed analysis of Hatfield's household and their activities, and it may well be that he harboured criminals. In fact, Aberth draws parallel between the situations in Ely and Durham, as both had a degree of autonomy in their administration and justice.⁶⁴⁵ Supporting any suggestion of activities outside the law are Hatfield's contacts with noted wrongdoers such as Bradestan and Molyns. Both of these men were long tolerated by their king; at times enjoying great favour before Edward felt obliged to act.⁶⁴⁶ Aberth's work on Lisle has aided our understanding of how criminals could be maintained.⁶⁴⁷ Yet it should, and indeed must, not lead us into labelling as a criminal anyone who had trouble with justice, or allowed his followers a little leeway. For a man such as Hatfield it was a major task to control his large household, especially in such an area of the country.⁶⁴⁸

Hatfield was himself on the receiving end of crime on more than one occasion. These may in time be seen as revenge attacks against a bishop, implicating him in the midst of frontier crime. Yet from the available information they appear little more than examples of lawlessness against a wealthy lord. In the summer of 1348 Hatfield complained of a series of instances when a group of poachers entered different warrens

⁶⁴² Lapsley, *Palatinate*, 178.

⁶⁴³ *CPR*, 1350-54, 466. Lapsley, *Palatinate*, 131, 134.

⁶⁴⁴ Lapsley, *Palatinate*, 178.

⁶⁴⁵ Aberth, *Lisle*, 147.

⁶⁴⁶ For example, Bradestan. In 1331 the king received petitions that he and his wife, Isabella, had prevented justice being enacted against their valet who was accused of multiple murders. The petitioners complained that Bradestan had so much influence with the king that he could act with impunity in the county, and always sided with malefactors [Waugh, *England in the reign of Edward III*, 160.]. However he was pardoned in 1339, in 'part recompense of his labours and charges in service of the king from his early years in constant attendance at his side' [*CPR*, 1338-40, 381, 389, 399.]. As Vale points out the inference is that Bradestan had a large part to play in Mortimer and Isabella's fall [J. Vale, *Edward III and Chivalry: Chivalric Society and its Context, 1270-1350* (Woodbridge, 1982), 61.]. For Molyns see N. Fryde, 'Removal of Ministers', 158.

⁶⁴⁷ Aberth, *Lisle*, esp. 147-158.

⁶⁴⁸ Hatfield had a large household, see his plans for their entertainment after his death in his will [*Testa Ebor.*, 121-22.]. See also the work of Lapsley [*Palatinate*, esp. 78-120.].

of his and carried away game.⁶⁴⁹ More threatening was the attack in early 1352 made on Hatfield whilst he was trying to carry out the king's orders. As stated above, Hatfield was one of a number of northern lords who was to receive David II at Berwick, and then take him to Newcastle, to treat further with ambassadors of both sides.⁶⁵⁰ The motivation of this attack seems not to have been directly connected with David's return, but was rather a simple - if large scale - felony. It was certainly not a proper Anglo-Scottish battle, though it is unclear exactly what the result of the attack at Morpeth was, and how and when Hatfield was able to secure his release. Hatfield was far from the only recipient of such banditry in the area. For example, in the same year Prior Fossour had horses and timber stolen, and crops trampled down, along with the obligatory attack on his servants.⁶⁵¹

Edward III may have tried to indicate that he expected more success from Hatfield in his combating of crime. But fighting crime was not high upon Edward's list of objectives. Therefore he was surely resigned to a lawless frontier. Although the king's writ did not run in the liberty, palatinate borders did not prevent the infiltration of the general atmosphere of the time. The vast number of pardons received on each of Edward's campaigns serves to illustrate the nature of the problem. Firstly, Edward had geared his whole country to war. And secondly too harsh an assault on law and order would have had a major negative impact on his recruiting capability. It may also be argued that bands of pardoned criminals were the perfect weapon with which to savage northern France, to draw the Valois into accepting a trial by battle. Hence Hatfield's request that his king pardon Robert FitzIngram, due to his good service in Scotland, was probably not a move on the part of the bishop to establish his own band of supported criminals.⁶⁵² Rather it was part of a theory, used and supported by Edward, of forgetting the indiscretions of those who were considered to be of use.⁶⁵³ Aberth may perhaps be a little too harsh on the king. Yet it is hard to argue with his general assessment: 'the inconsistent and intensely personal way in which Edward interpreted his role as lawgiver provided a poor example...to society at large.'⁶⁵⁴ Ultimately, it is

⁶⁴⁹ *CPR*, 1345-48, 163.

⁶⁵⁰ *CPR*, 1350-54, 339. The calendar notes how a band of brigands was said to have sought 'to hinder the expedition of the king's business contrary to their allegiance, despising his honour and the great father, his messenger, clandestinely gathered together armed and attacked the bishop on his way to Berwick to do the things contained in the letters patent at Morpeth, co Northumberland, arrested him and detained him under arrest and assaulted his men and servants, whereby he lost their service for a great time.'

⁶⁵¹ *CPR*, 1350-54, 388.

⁶⁵² *CPR*, 1343-45, 561.

⁶⁵³ See for example Bradestan and Molyns.

⁶⁵⁴ Aberth, *Lisle*, 198.

hard to see Hatfield as a particular wrongdoer within the panorama of the enforcement of law and order in England during this period, though further research could modify this picture.

Part VIII – A brief assessment of the ‘disputes’ over rights between master and servant

In 1348 Hatfield was granted 400 marks by the community of the liberty of Durham, to pay for the energy and finances he had expended preserving the franchise and his rights against the king.⁶⁵⁵ This corroborates the assessment found in his eulogy, suggesting that perhaps Wessington was using his memory for this part rather than simply ascribing Hatfield qualities from ancient bishops in the *Gesta*.⁶⁵⁶ The monks and people of Durham were understandably keen to laud Hatfield for his efforts. Yet it is initially perplexing to find Hatfield so quick in challenging Edward III in his own, king’s courts. In October 1345 Hatfield fought but lost a case over the church of Houghton.⁶⁵⁷ Similarly, the king’s right was upheld in further cases noted in the chancery rolls, in 1350 and 1352.⁶⁵⁸

Were such actions not a great insult to the monarch who had just secured Hatfield’s provision to Durham, and who - out of his affection for the bishop-elect - had pardoned the liberty’s tenants of the tallage due of them?⁶⁵⁹ It appears not. Instead, these cases are instances of the bishop asking for a judgement to be made because he was keen to make the most of any available patronage. He was not embarking on long or expensive litigation but rather wondering if, by right of law, he had a better claim. He cannot have been much surprised when all decisions went against him but, importantly, he probably felt it was *his duty to enquire*.

It was not only over ecclesiastical matters that Hatfield challenged his king. In 1346 he followed Bury’s lead in petitioning for the right to ‘distrain his subjects to assume knighthood’ and to claim all the financial benefits.⁶⁶⁰ The bishop argued that these had traditionally fallen to his predecessors. Sadly the result is lost to us but the king did agree to examine the matter. Later, in 1352, Edward had ‘deliberately if tacitly withdrawn from the bishop the privilege’ of forfeitures of war, simply leaving the saving clause for Durham of his assertion of it for the rest of the country.⁶⁶¹ Hatfield apparently accepted this. More seriously, in late 1354, Hatfield disputed his right to

⁶⁵⁵ Lapsley, *Palatinate*, 119.

⁶⁵⁶ *Script. Tres.*, 137.

⁶⁵⁷ *CPR, 1343-45*, 11, 563.

⁶⁵⁸ In 1350 the church of Halghton [*CCR, 1349-52*, 186.] and in 1352 Gretham Hospital [*CCR, 1349-52*, 407-08.].

⁶⁵⁹ *CCR, 1343-46*, 541.

⁶⁶⁰ Lapsley, *Palatinate*, 288.

collect a subsidy on cloth in his liberty that the king had been granted in council. Hatfield openly resisted Edward, causing the king to 'wonder that he presumed to do such things'.⁶⁶² Nevertheless the problem seems to have been solved and makes no further mark on available records.

The impression given by these examples is of two men who were each keen to uphold their rights; seeing it as their duty to do so. Both would assuredly have realised this of each other, and therefore neither would have genuinely taken offence from each other's actions. Even Edward's reaction in 1352 - if anything can be read into the wording of the calendar - appears more of genuine surprise than anger. The days of Bek were long gone.⁶⁶³ Rather than aggression, there was manoeuvring for position within a stable, and still positive, relationship.⁶⁶⁴

⁶⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 40.

⁶⁶² *CCR, 1354-60*, [Quote] 48, 159.

⁶⁶³ For Bek's struggles see Lapsley, *Palatinate*, 92-3.

⁶⁶⁴ Lapsley [*Ibid.*, 76.] notes how the fourteenth century was 'a period of perplexed toleration' by the crown, with no major encroachments.

Part IX – A brief assessment of Hatfield’s activities as bishop post-1357 and what they reveal about his role pre-1357

Post-1357 Anglo-Scottish diplomacy had in theory moved on from ransoms and release dates. Although David II stalled over payments, Hatfield could now hope to devote his efforts to securing a perpetual peace.⁶⁶⁵ Hatfield was still often ordered to remain in the north, even though the return of the relatively anglophile David II did much to limit the potential threat of cross border raiding.⁶⁶⁶ Indeed it was only really after first, David II’s death in 1371, and then that of Edward III in 1377, that the north was again truly threatened. This was particularly so because Edward’s death left his ten-year-old grandson, Richard II, on the throne.⁶⁶⁷ It was at this point, during the spate of castle fortification and building that these events appear to have prompted, that Hatfield decided to rebuild - in stone - the keep of Durham Castle.⁶⁶⁸ He probably used the highly regarded John Lewyn, who was in 1368-9 described as the bishop’s mason, and was in his pay.⁶⁶⁹ Hatfield was by now an extremely rich man.⁶⁷⁰ This allowed him to employ Lewyn and others on an array of building projects, designed both to benefit and protect those in his locality, and as a result help speed his path to heaven.⁶⁷¹ It is important to note this building activity, for which he is perhaps now most remembered. This is because it helps illuminate the period 1345-57, by the contrasts with the later years of his long pontificate.

⁶⁶⁵ See August 1360 [*Foedera*, iii, i, 506.] June 1362 [*Ibid.*, iii, ii, 659.]. For example in the first half of 1359 he helped address problems over Berwick and in Norham with regard to the truce [*CCR, 1354-60*, 598. *Rot. Scot.*, i, 839.].

⁶⁶⁶ For example 16 November 1359 [*CCR, 1354-60*, 664. For the particular reason see Campbell, ‘England, Scotland’, 219]. For discussion of David II’s reputation as craven betrayer of the national cause, see Duncan, ‘David II and Edward III’, esp. 113, 137-38.

⁶⁶⁷ David II d. 22 Feb 1371, Edward III d. 21 June 1377, Richard II b. 6 January 1367 [*British Chronology*, 56, 35-6].

⁶⁶⁸ J. Harvey, *English Medieval Architects: A biographical Dictionary down to 1550* (Gloucester, 1984), 182.

⁶⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 181.

⁶⁷⁰ For his later wealth it suffices to note a few examples: he was owed 1000 marks by Alice Perrers at time of his death [*Testa. Eborca.*, 121.], and around 1370 he loaned double this to Edward III [*Foedera*, iii, ii, 893, 901.]. Finally, and perhaps most notably, a robbery of £2500 from Hatfield’s treasury, in 1369, apparently either failed to unduly concern the bishop, or possibly even went unnoticed, as it is absent from records until 1385 [Lapsley, *Palatinate*, 293.].

⁶⁷¹ For details of his later building munificence see Harvey, *Medieval Architects*, 181-2. [cathedral, castle,], *Script. Tres.* [castle, cathedral, his manor and chapel at Oldford near London], 137-8. *DNB* xxv, 156. [the above, Carmelite house at Northallerton], Barker, ‘Death and the Bishop’ [esp. the importance of his constructions for his salvation], also E. Cambridge, ‘The Masons and Building Works of Durham Priory, 1339-1539’ (Durham University Ph.D. Thesis, 1992), 57-67, 265-68 [Cathedral esp. episcopal throne/tomb and nearby windows].

Hatfield would probably have always considered himself a royal servant on the national stage. Whilst far more research is needed to draw more than tentative conclusions from the initial evidence, it seems that from 1356-1362 his part was essentially played as a diplomat. June 1362 appears to have been his last foray to the Anglo-Scottish negotiating table.⁶⁷² After this Hatfield arguably became a trusted, if ageing, and probably distant, advisor. This must have been a saddening decline for a loyal servant, who had - until his retirement from campaigning - had been most energetic in his service of his king. During his time in Edward's civil service he had been an almost constant companion of the king. Even after his elevation to Durham he seems to have been at court or Westminster fairly regularly. Also, in addition to the almost continuous yearly Anglo-Scottish negotiations and preparations for the defence of the north, Hatfield had managed to travel to France twice more to serve his king, in 1346-7 and 1355. As his retirement from active service indicates, by the 1360s Hatfield's efforts appear to have begun to catch up with him.

Even as Hatfield's active use to the king dwindled, there is no indication that his affection for his king followed suit, nor indeed vice-versa. In fact it is debatable whether this would have meant longer periods apart, as we lack detailed itineraries for either. It is likely that Hatfield spent much time at the manor he built at Oldford, as in his will of 1381 he referred to it as his 'place of habitation'.⁶⁷³ Oldford was near to London, the seat of government, and therefore this would at least have facilitated the maintaining of an association, if not a more official advisory role. Indeed in financing Durham College at Oxford, just before his death, Hatfield made heavy demands for an 'elaborate series of masses and obits to be said for the souls of Edward III, Queen Philippa', in addition to himself and relatives.⁶⁷⁴ He also made similar demands in his other chantries.⁶⁷⁵ Though chantry prayers for the monarch were far from unique, in Hatfield's case they would appear to be a mark of continuing and strong personal affection, rather than merely a concession to fashion. In light of this, it is possible to view his rebuilding of the keep at Durham in the 1370s as more than merely a product of his increased wealth and the prospect of a weak boy king.

Could it not also be indicative of how Hatfield had had to change how he sought to fulfil the role given to him by his king, that of 'guardian of the north'. Perhaps, had he had the time and money to embark upon the rebuilding of the keep in the late 1340s

⁶⁷² *Foedera*, iii, ii, 659.

⁶⁷³ *Testa. Ebor.*, 121.

⁶⁷⁴ Dobson, *Durham Priory*, 347.

or 1350s he would have done so. Indeed, the keep project may well be seen as little more than the next way to spend his apparent fortune, having by this point already commissioned the construction of his unique tomb.⁶⁷⁶ Nevertheless, it is difficult not to see it as some reflection - albeit largely symbolic, given Durham's already largely impregnable natural location - of a realisation on Hatfield's behalf, that if he was no longer able to defend the north in body, he could perhaps do so in stone.

⁶⁷⁵ For these chantries see Barker, 'Death and the Bishop', 30-2.

⁶⁷⁶ Cambridge ['Masons of Durham Priory', 60] suggests that the construction of the funerary monument may well have started before the granting of the formal licence in 1363.

Chapter IV – Conclusion

By the end of 1357 Edward III had gained a dominant position in northern Europe. He held the French king captive, and by securing the release of David II had gained an Anglophile monarch north of the border and the promise of regular ransom payments. Had Edward mused upon the reasons for his success he would have first thanked God and his divine right and then perhaps the heroic Black Prince. However, depending on how long he contemplated the issue, it is not inconceivable that he may have remembered a moment around two decades previously when he noticed something in a clerk outside his service. Alternatively, he might have recalled the realisation, a number of years after this, that he had found the perfect replacement for the ageing Bury. Edward would surely have had no regrets in these recollections; Thomas de Hatfield had been one of the many cogs that had driven the English war machine. Hatfield played a vital role in choking Calais, he was present on both campaigns of the winter 1355-1356, and devoted much of a decade to difficult negotiation with the Scots over David II. In addition the bishop was most probably present at Sluys, Crecy and on Balliol's Scottish incursions.

Nevertheless had Hatfield played the part he had been chosen for? It has been argued here that the rationale behind his creation as bishop of Durham was that he be a 'guardian of the north'. Yet in 1346 Hatfield missed the decisive battle of Neville's Cross and in 1355 he left for France just before the attack on Berwick. Was Durham then little more than a way to financially reward a loyal servant? Or did Edward just abandon plans that the north be Hatfield's focus, when he had a chance to use him elsewhere? Instead, was the appointment little more than a symbolic gesture to pacify the disgruntled northerners by giving them a warrior as bishop of Durham?

It has been argued that Hatfield was devoted to the north but also that Edward III understood that France and Scotland were two fronts of the same war and, moreover, that Edward knew France was the arena in which he had most to gain. Between 1347-1355 neither man was active in France, crucially this was because Edward saw no possibility of a decisive 'trial by battle'.⁶⁷⁷ Edward was 'a sincere Christian, if not a

⁶⁷⁷ Rogers, *War Cruel and Sharp*, 286.

very sophisticated one'⁶⁷⁸, whose motto was *Dieu et mon droit* but this did not lead him to reject practical concerns. The English king knew that if he was to face the heavenly jury, he needed to do as much as he could to ensure victory before entrusting his fate to God.

Despite their hard work, Edward and Hatfield would have rightly believed that there was no potential for the 'guardians of the north' to take the initiative and further the cause of the north in their own arena, as the Scots could not be brought to battle. Hence Hatfield was not deserting the northern cause in 1346 or 1355. Rather he was hoping that he could play a part in France, which would be more beneficial for the north, than the one he would have played on the border. That the Scots attacked both times Hatfield 'deserted' the north helps support the importance of Edward's campaigns. The Scots realised that Edward was making a push in France that directly threatened their ability to stand up to the English, and hence were compelled to act. In all other years Hatfield worked hard for northern defence, and in light of our understanding of Edward's tactics, there is every reason to think that Hatfield took his role as 'guardian of the north' very seriously, and was part of a successful northern unit.

However, Dobson has suggested that Hatfield and his immediate successors were relatively minor figures in northern defence.⁶⁷⁹ There can be little doubt that Hatfield's successors were not active 'guardians of the north'. Fordham was granted license to appoint deputies to assume his responsibilities as 'warden of the march', and later disgraced himself by declining to lead his men to Battle at Otterburn, even though he was in the vicinity.⁶⁸⁰ Upon his appointment Skirlaw was a diplomat of some repute and he seems to have been selected as bishop for this purpose.⁶⁸¹ Clearly Hatfield also spent much of his episcopal career as a negotiator but this was not the role for which he was chosen. Although he had some diplomatic experience upon his provision, this was not what had propelled him through Edward's civil service. The combination of Hatfield's work as a negotiator and his French campaigns perhaps prompted Dobson to reduce the bishop's active regional role, viewing him as a national and international figure.

⁶⁷⁸ See Ormrod, 'The Personal Religion of Edward III', 849-877. Quote from Rogers, *War Cruel and Sharp*, 301-02.

⁶⁷⁹ Dobson, 'Durham and the borders', 135.

⁶⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 128-29, 134.

⁶⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 133-34. As a result he was able to do much to ease the situation in the north in the period after the Scottish victory at Otterburn in 1388.

By looking closely at the events, it seems that Edward picked Hatfield as bishop of Durham precisely to play a major part in northern defence, due to the situation in 1344-45, and that Hatfield did this successfully. Fordham and Skirlaw were not chosen by Edward III and hence belong to a different mindset, in a different situation. Upon shifting his focus to France, at the start of the 1340s, Edward needed a wall against the Scots and when Bury died he had long since chosen Hatfield to reinforce it. Despite the easing of the situation after 1346 Hatfield was still able to work actively for northern defence. He did so around the negotiating table, in Scotland in 1347 and 1356, in aiding the war in France and by apparently spending much of his time in the north being ready to meet any problems that may have arisen.

War was the overarching concern of both Edward and Hatfield throughout this period of study, and it was the issue to which Hatfield devoted most of his efforts. In addition to his own role as a warrior-bishop 'guardian of the north', as a member of the episcopate Hatfield was one of many 'all-purpose workhorses of the realm'.⁶⁸² During war bishops were to secure taxes at convocations and parliaments, and then use these on supplies, equipment, and troops, whilst also meeting far reaching demands for prayers *pro rege*.⁶⁸³

Therefore, although he was far from negligent, Hatfield's great involvement in every aspect of Edward's wars has meant that as a royal servant he achieved little else of note. Any attempts the bishop made to combat crime were largely unsuccessful but this was at least as much a product of the time, as the result of any personal failings. However, this interpretation could change if evidence could be found for Hatfield's sponsoring or tolerating criminals. Elsewhere, Hatfield sought to uphold the rights of the liberty, often against his king, but there is no evidence that this was seen as a breach of faith. Edward had not put a royal servant in Durham so he could ride roughshod over the traditional rights of the palatinate. Within his liberty Hatfield was a tough landlord.⁶⁸⁴ Nevertheless, he does not appear to have attempted any large scale administrative reform, as his survey was only started in his later years and not completed until after his death.⁶⁸⁵

⁶⁸² McHardy, 'Reflections on Propaganda', 174.

⁶⁸³ *Ibid.* For prayers see W.R. Jones, 'The English Church and Royal Propaganda During the Hundred Years War', *Journal of British Studies*, 19 (1979-80), 18-30. Hatfield was requested for example on 15 June 1345 [CCR, 1343-46, 588] 3 August 1346 [*Ibid.*, 1346-48, 145.]

⁶⁸⁴ See Britnell, 'Feudal Reaction'.

⁶⁸⁵ See *Bishop Hatfield's Survey*, ed. W. Greenwell.

It seems clear that Edward III would have seen his efforts to secure Hatfield as bishop as being entirely justified. Hatfield had risen swiftly through Edward's civil service and had not disappointed as bishop. However, as bishop, Hatfield was not only a servant of Westminster. Although this study has focused on Hatfield as a royal servant, it is worth considering how he would have been viewed at Avignon by the end of 1357. Though Hatfield's relationship with Avignon appears to have improved greatly from 1344, he remained very much Edward's man through the 1340s and 50s. During this period Edward had managed to 'overawe the pope...through a combination of military terror abroad and political control and propaganda at home.'⁶⁸⁶ Politically the pope might have felt that he did not get much in return from Hatfield, after the 'agreement' of 1345. Yet this does nothing to support the idea that the pope had Hatfield forced on him or that the aspersions of the St. Albans chronicle are correct. In 1345, the pope would have *hoped* for Hatfield's assistance in furthering his peace plans, but he would have been realistic. As any glimpse at the calendar entries illustrates, Hatfield was but one of many voices around the king that he hoped to influence.

Hatfield was too involved in Edward's wars to make any real pretence of serving his papal master. For example, Hatfield was only asked seven times between 1345-70 to execute the provision of a benefice, whereas Bury had been asked six times 1342-45.⁶⁸⁷ But Hatfield was never going to be a 'religious' bishop, and indeed he was rather liberal in his use of dispensations.⁶⁸⁸ There is no evidence, however, of any great breakdown in the running of the diocese in this period.⁶⁸⁹ This need not be surprising, as Hatfield would have employed more ecclesiastically minded men for this purpose. Nevertheless, when called to act in this capacity as bishop, Hatfield appears to have conducted himself satisfactorily, even if he did not display any religious zeal, as the example of his second visitation in 1354 shows.⁶⁹⁰ Ultimately Hatfield enjoyed a relatively good relationship with his monks, and it seems that in the worldly Prior Fossour, the bishop had perhaps found a kindred spirit who maintained a large

⁶⁸⁶ Aberth, *Lisle*, 182.

⁶⁸⁷ Barrell, *Papacy*, 207. Hatfield's tardiness over the provision of the highly sought after church of Bishop Wearmouth angered the pope [*Ibid.*, 208.].

⁶⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 231-48. Interestingly, in 1366 Hatfield dispensed Thomas Eyr who had drawn blood when he punched a Carmelite friar in the face [*Ibid.*, 48.].

⁶⁸⁹ A full study, such as that initially embarked upon by Hamilton-Thompson, of Hatfield's register, would be fruitful. The register appears to be almost entirely devoted to the ecclesiastical workings of the diocese.

⁶⁹⁰ Harbottle, 'Hatfield's Visitation'. Barker, 'Death and the Bishop', 12.

household and even employed a professional fool.⁶⁹¹ Hatfield's later offer to crusade for the pope in Italy in 1370, seems little more than a way of achieving salvation. Nevertheless, the contrast between the problems that Lisle caused Edward III, and the merely *moderate* service that Hatfield offered the pope, is striking.

Here it is worth returning to a point made when discussing the sources used. It is often difficult to gain any indication of the personalities behind medieval figures, even when many events of their lives are known. What kind of man was Hatfield? If his motivation could be gauged it would be easier to decipher and make sense of his actions. A strong case can be made for Hatfield being a loyal and determined man, who stuck with a task once he started. Alternatively, he could have been a glory seeker, whose personality Edward had simply been drawn to. It is the former interpretation that is far more compelling, although it would surely be possible for other historians to address the events of his life with this assessment of him.

Moving on from this, as this is the first major survey to take Hatfield as its subject here is great scope for revision and reinterpretation. More detailed research into Hatfield's career from 1357 to 1381 is likely to reveal a great deal about his life before this. Similarly, further work in a number of areas could lead to a dramatic re-evaluation of the man Thomas de Hatfield. Hence new insights into the confusion surrounding Hatfield's presence at Crecy; the possibility of his criminal links; the exact roles behind the orders to defend the north; any 'agreements' between Clement and Edward in 1345; and any scraps of information that could help to produce a more developed itinerary, would be most welcomed.

Far from being an 'ass' who owed his appointment to circumstance, Thomas de Hatfield appears to have been a most able man. His ascent through the civil service was startling and his achievements after his provision to Durham, suggest that he was a devoted and determined royal servant. Nevertheless, hours of study have in many ways left me little closer to truly knowing what kind of man he was. In this sense, the warrior-bishop, housed in his lavish funerary monument in Durham Cathedral, remains as wonderfully intriguing as the day I embarked upon piecing together, and trying to make sense of, the events of his life.

⁶⁹¹ Dobson, *Durham Priory*, 92-105.

Abbreviations

<i>CCR</i>	Calendar of Close Rolls
<i>CFR</i>	Calendar of Fine Rolls
<i>CPL</i>	Calendar of Papal Letters
<i>CPP</i>	Calendar of Papal Petitions
<i>CPR</i>	Calendar of Patent Rolls
<i>DNB</i>	Dictionary of National Biography
<i>Foedera</i>	<i>Foedera, conventiones, litterae etc</i>
<i>Script. Tres.</i>	<i>Historiae Dunelmensis Scriptores Tres: Gaufridus de Coldingham, Robertus de Graystones et Willelmus de Chambre</i>

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