

The Parr Family of Kendal, With Pedigrees Leading to King Edward III of England and King William "The Lion" of Scotland

William Glegg of Gayton¹ (b.1589; d. 15 Dec 1614) and Hannah Bowyer (b.1602; d. 20 Sep 1670) were the 11th great-grandparents of Michael Gregory. A line to the Parr family has been traced through Hannah Bowyer². Hannah's great-grandfather was Sir Thomas Tresham, Lord Prior of St John of Jerusalem³. He died in 1589 and a monument to him can be found at All Saints Church, Rushton, Northamptonshire. He married Anne Parr, the daughter of Sir William Parr, the Lord Parr of Horton. He was a direct ancestor of Michael Gregory. Sir William Parr died on 10 Sep 1546 and was buried at Horton. He was the brother of Sir Thomas Parr (see pedigree attached), who was the father of Queen Catherine Parr, the last wife of King Henry VIII, and it was as a result of the favours of King Henry that Sir William gained his Lordship. Sir William had married Lady Mary Salisbury, the daughter of Sir William Salisbury. Lady Mary died on 10 July 1555 and was buried in Horton. Her mother was Elizabeth Wylde, the daughter of Sir Thomas Wylde.

Sir William's father was also called Sir William Parr, of Kendal. He was firstly married to Joan and secondly to Elizabeth FitzHugh (d.1507). She was the mother of his children, including Michael Gregory's ancestor. The father of this William Parr was Sir Thomas Parr of Kendal. The wife of Sir Thomas and mother of William was Alice, the daughter of Sir Thomas Tunstall of Thurland Castle, co Lancaster. Sir Thomas Parr was born in 1407 and was attainted at Coventry. He died in 1461. Sir Thomas was only one year old when his father, John Parr, died (in 1408). Sir Thomas himself lived, however, to a decent age, and indeed his career spanned the reign of three Lancastrian Kings. During his lifetime he built up the fortunes of his family in Westmorland to a pre-eminent position. His life is outlined in the Transactions of the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archeological Society⁴, and this is extracted below.

Upon his father's death in 1408, Thomas's wardship was granted to his mother, Agnes, Sir Thomas Beauford and Sir Thomas Brounflete. Some time in the following nine years, Agnes Parr married John Merbury. On 9 July 1413, probably about the same time as the marriage, she surrendered the wardship of her son and his lands to Sir Thomas Tunstall of Thurland Castle, Lancs. Parr lived at Thurland Castle during his minority and Tunstall married him to his daughter, Alice. The Tunstalls were ardent Lancastrians throughout the fifteenth century, but this had little lasting influence on Parr, whose Westmorland estates bordered those of the Nevilles, Earls of Westmorland. When he reached his majority and assumed his Kendal inheritance, a mutually supportive relationship arose between the politically aggressive Nevilles and the aggressively ambitious Parr. Parr's value to the Nevilles depended on his own importance as a local magnate and his future advancement on his ability to furnish aid and support to a patron when needed.

Power in Kendal was based on possession of the lands of the original barony of Kendal, which had been twice divided. The Richmond Fee represented one-half of the original barony, the Lumley and Marquis Fees each a quarter. In the fifteenth century, the lands of the Richmond Fee were normally held by absentee landlords, being granted from royal relative to royal relative. The Lumley Fee, too, went through division and transfer, at one point belonging to Parr's enemies, the Bellingham family. The holders of the Lumley lands, however, had merely local significance; only the Parr lands, or as they were later known, the Marquis Fee, were held continuously until 1571 by one family and progressively augmented [sic] through Clifford and Neville patronage, and after 1461, by royal favouritism.

The first Sir William did little to extend his wife's de Roos holdings, preferring to act as an absentee landlord, but Thomas Parr had both the time and the need to consolidate and extend them. Much of the estate was held in dower by three relicts of the Parris until 1436 when his mother Agnes Parr, the last dowager, died. She had signed her dower portion over to her son in 1429 in exchange for a yearly forty-mark allowance. At her death, Parr took the oath of fealty and received full seisin of the dower third of his estate for a fine of two marks. Finally, at the age of twenty-eight, in law as well as in fact, Parr could enjoy his full income, amounting possibly to £80-£100 yearly. The estate totalled at least 5,083 acres of land, 700 of them arable, and 57 messuages and presumably Thomas also held the small Lancashire estate which was the first Sir William Parr's patrimony. This included lands in Parr and Sutton and a toft in Wigan, a parcel held of the Earl of Derby by knight's service, and a yearly rent of 15d. "being thus identified with the quarter of a moiety held by the above-named William in 1370 . . .". Parr, himself, made only one known purchase: a plot called "le Groute by le Howes" from one Baldwin Scheppesshed, which he bought to extend his holdings in Helsington.

To counter the recession of income from land, subsisting throughout the greater part of the fifteenth century, Parr turned from outright land purchase to royal leaseholds as a means of increasing both his income and his local political control. Basically there were three of these leaseholds, all of them portions of the Richmond Fee held by Henry V's brother, John, Duke of Bedford, at his death in 1435. In May 1438, Parr was given the keeping of two-thirds of Bedford's lands (the ultimate third went to his widow, Jacquetta) in the Westmorland townships or hamlets of Crosthwaite, Hutton, Strickland Ketel, Frosethwaite and Helsington, the

¹ See: Gregory, M.P., (2007), "The Glegg(e) Family of Cheshire", Personal Family History Report.

² See: Gregory, M.P., (2007), "The Bowyer Family of Knypersley, Staffordshire", Personal Family History Report.

³ See: Gregory, M.P., (2007), "The Tresham Family of Rushton", Personal Family History Report.

⁴ James, S.E., (1981), "Sir Thomas Parr [1407-1461]", in Transactions of the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian Society, Vol. LXXXI.

keeping of the fishery on the river Kent, and, in Lancashire, all of Bedford's lands in Whittington. The grant was for ten years, at a yearly farm of £25. 12s. 10d. with a maintenance clause. During that time, should anyone else be found willing to offer more, the farm would go to the highest bidder. In February 1439 this grant was reconfirmed, with the addition "that Sir Thomas Parr shall sufficiently build anew, repair and maintain at his own charge one-half part of the Hoton [Hutton] water mill which the King is bound to do and then yield it to the King . . .". It is pertinent that in this area the decline in the revenues enjoyed by landlords, especially in Cumberland, was attributable partly to the decline of income from mills. Parr enjoyed the income from these lands for only five of the ten years of the original lease. In 1443 all Richmond Fee lands formerly held by Bedford, the Duchess' dower, were granted to the king's favourite, John, duke of Somerset and Earl of Kendal. The income from Richmond Fee lands was roughly three times that of Parr's estates, so he cannot have been too pleased at being forced by the king to relinquish them half way through his lease.

In March 1445, another though lesser plum from the lands of Bedford fell into his hands: the keeping of two-thirds of the market tolls, the profits of local fairs, and the profits of "le wyndles et lepes de le weyle, with le bothes, shoppes and scamelles and with the bakery, le bankes and le court house of Kirkby in Kendal". This was a twelve-year farm at 60s. a year, but with a clause that should anyone offer more for the farm during that time Parr would lose the lease. Along with it went a twelve-year grant, at 20s. a year, of the keeping of the herbage ". . . of certain meadows and land called Wryholme alias Holmewery, county Cumberland, with all appurtenances . . .". Six years later, in July 1451, the king raised the rent from £3 to £4 and added a 3s. 4d. per year charge against the income, probably some sort of pension. He also extended the lease for a further twelve years, but it was a gratuitous gesture for twenty months later Henry VI granted the market tolls lease to the Earl of Richmond. Parr, left with a nominal 20s. a year herbage lease, farmed it to his son, William, for sixteen years at the same 20s. rate, presumably with the king's permission, as the original twelve-year lease was due to expire in March 1457. Parr also secured two other local sources of income. These were the tithes of Holme and Mintsfoot which were demised to him at farm in 1431 for 10s. The farm of the Mintsfoot tithe, but not of Holme, was renewed to Parr in 1435, along with ". . . a place of which the name is lost (which) lay fallow in 1431", for which he paid 5s.

One final transaction, which may indicate another royal grant of farm, occurred in May 1428, when Parr and Ralph Blennerhasset of Suffolk (probably a scion of the Cumberland Blennerhassets) committed, by mainprise, to John Broughton, esquire, the keeping of five messuages, five bovates of land and ten acres of meadow in the township of Skelton, a burgage in Carlisle and a quit rent of 13s. 4d. a year from another burgage in Carlisle. This transaction may have been the subletting of a grant at farm as it was later cancelled by Henry VI, who farmed it directly to Broughton at a flat rate of 26s. 8d. a year.

The final grant made to Parr by the Crown was made by Edward IV on 29 July 1461. This was the wardship and marriage of John Hothom, a distant cousin of the Parrs through the de Thweng family. The Hothoms, an ancient Yorkshire family seated at Scorbrough near Beverley, held extensive lands in Yorkshire, Lancashire and Westmorland. Several of their Westmorland properties neighboured those of the Parrs, and Staveley manor was held of one-sixth of one-quarter of the Parrs' manor of Kirkby-in-Kendal, Parr being the effective overlord. It was an exceedingly lucrative wardship, and, as the ward was little more than a baby, it extended Parr's influence into Yorkshire and increased his power in Westmorland and Lancashire. His income must have at least doubled if the size of the Hothom estates is any indication. This substantial royal grant and mark of royal favour from the new Yorkist king was the pattern of the future for the next three generations of Parrs.

Thomas Parr's position in his own community is reflected in the types of office he held there. As a leading member of the local gentry, he sat on most of the north-western commissions of the peace and many commissions of array during a thirty-year career. Knighted some time between 1430 and 1432, he was one of a small closed group of local magnates who monopolized all Crown commissions in Cumberland and Westmorland in the fifteenth century. Under Henry VI, he served as a justice of the peace for Westmorland in July 1432, February 1434, March 1437, July 1454 and July 1456. As late as July 1459, just two months before he joined his fate irrevocably to the Earl of Salisbury's, Parr was again named to a commission of the peace for Westmorland. Under Edward IV, he was justice for Cumberland in May 1461 and for Westmorland in May and September 1461. He was named by Henry VI to the commissions of array for Westmorland of July 1436, July 1437 (also for Cumberland), and November 1448. Edward also appointed him to the commission of September 1461 for Westmorland and the May and November 1461 commissions for Cumberland, the latter called to defend the borders from an expected invasion by Henry VI, supported by Scottish troops.

Parr served also on various special commissions. He was appointed in January 1436 to the Westmorland commission for tax assessment to levy the parliamentary subsidy granted in 1435 for the defence of the realm. In February 1457, he served on a commission to inquire into the lands held by Thomas Lord Dacre at the day of his death, their value, and the identity of Dacre's lawful heir. In December of the same year, due to the imminent danger of a French invasion, a commission to levy fifty-six archers in Westmorland was sent to Parr, Sir Richard Musgrave, John Crackenthorpe of Hugill, William Lancaster, John Hilton, John Wharton and Henry Bellingham. All these were Lancastrian commissions, evidence of the fact that, up until July 1459, Parr was looked upon both as an influential man, whose loyalties were not suspect enough to exclude him from the operation of local government, and one whose cooperation was thought necessary for the government's efficient functioning. Sir Thomas's Yorkist affiliations were soon to become apparent, and he continued his exercise of local power with the full favour of the new Yorkist regime. On 12 November 1460, Parr and his two elder sons served on a commission "to arrest and commit to prison all persons guilty of unlawful gatherings, congregations, associations, combinations and seiges [sic], and if they resist, to call together all lieges of Westmorland and Cumberland and other counties adjacent to fight them". This was an attempt to protect the Yorkist cause in the heavily Lancastrian northern shires. It was reinforced by commissions of peace and array, and, on 6 June 1461,

another commission was named to arrest recalcitrant Lancastrians, namely Gamaliel Pennington, Christopher Broughton and James Uriel, and bring them before the king's council. The senior commissioners were Sir Thomas Parr and Sir Edward Beetham.

Sir Thomas also held local offices which allowed him a wide latitude of action in the county and supplied him with sources of income and political control. In 1430-31 he was granted the office of escheator in Cumberland and Westmorland and in 1435-46 Under-Sheriff for Westmorland, a powerful office because the hereditary sheriff, Lord Clifford, was not a particularly aggressive official. Parr had Clifford's full support in the community and appears to have exercised the extensive powers of the shrievalty with an unhampered hand. Since the sheriff supervised shire court elections to parliament, especially in the northern shires, the shrievalty took on the appearance of an executive office and control of this office, in fact if not in title, was tantamount to control of the shire, particularly when the Crown was weak. This all-pervasive involvement by Parr in the affairs of the community, based as it was on his position as under-sheriff, can be seen in the numbers of land transactions which he witnessed or for which he served as trustee, and in the assorted local feuds in which he was involved or on which his influence was brought to bear. These span his entire career during the reign of Henry VI.

An example of the contempt in which the law was held by the local gentry, and the lengths to which they would go to subvert it in their own interests, is the case of Robert Crackenthorpe of Newbiggin. Crackenthorpe, a justice of the peace for Westmorland, appealed to Chancery in a suit against William and Oliver Thornborough and William Lancaster (all established landowners in Westmorland), who "by instigation of Sir John de Lancaster and Katherine, his wife" had waylaid him "with intent to slay", as he returned from a session of the peace. "The interesting point is that the offenders included men who had sat in parliament for Westmorland and held commissions of the peace. So powerful was their local standing that it would have been useless to sue them in the country". Crackenthorpe's appeal was supported jointly by the Earl of Westmorland and Sir Thomas Parr. The Thornboroughs were "maintained" by the Earl of Salisbury, and it is significant that Thomas Parr sided publicly not with them but with Crackenthorpe and Westmorland, Salisbury's very much estranged nephew. The cause of the attack on Crackenthorpe was that, as a justice of the peace, he had held an investigation into a dispute over lands claimed by the Lancasters. Chancery proved unable to solve the situation and so prevent further violence. Crackenthorpe was murdered by the Lancasters and Thornboroughs in August 1443.

The continuing lack of effective control at the national level exacerbated local warfare in the 1440s and 1450s, and in Cumbria divisions deepened between the Percy and Neville factions. In 1453 the rolls of parliament described the situation in Cumberland as "toon half of the shire was divided from tother". Conditions were no better in Westmorland. In 1446 Thomas Parr, Sir Thomas Strickland and six others were the recipients of a penal bond of 200 marks from eight bondees "to abide the award of certain arbitrators and to keep peace" with Robert Garnett, John Hubbersty and others.

Another typical local feud in which Parr acted as mediator was that of the ubiquitous Thornboroughs and the Threlkelds of Meaburn, who were related by marriage. This dispute, over seven marks from Meaburn manor owed to Threlkeld by William Thornborough, and 13s. 4d. for a black gown for one of Thornborough's servants, involved jury intimidation, coercive violence and extensive litigation. In November 1447, an indenture to keep the peace and settle the dispute was drawn up in the presence of Thomas Parr, Richard Musgrave, John Broughton and Nicholas Leyburne, but such indentures were as much use as miniature dams against tidal waves.

Thomas Parr himself was involved in law-land disputes between 1435 and 1443. In 1440 he lost a legal battle with Thomas, prior of Conishead, when the prior recovered from Parr, by assize of novel disseisin, two messuages, 120 acres of land, six acres of meadow, 100 acres of pasture and 10 acres of wood in Scalthwaitrigg, all of which constituted the Parr interest and right in the Hospital of St. Leonard's Kendal. This had been part of the de Roos inheritance, and Parr was forced to quit-claim it to the prior although he did retain the right to present to St. Leonard's chaplaincy.

The effect of Lord Clifford's support of Parr in his capacity as sheriff, Parr's own influential position locally and his place in parliament are exemplified in the Parr-Bellingham feud, which made itself felt from Westmorland to Westminster. The Bellinghams, of Burneside near Kendal, were a long-established and influential Westmorland family. They also owned land in Helsington near the Parrs and at Strickland Roger. In 1404 the Bellinghams had held 20s. worth of land in Strickland Ketel of the Parrs, which they may still have done thirty years later. It may have been disputes over these lands which provided the spark for the fuse.

In 1441 Henry Bellingham made a complaint in the court of Chancery against Thomas Parr, claiming Parr had come to his house at Burneside "with a great multitude of people with intent to destroy and kill". Parr was dissuaded from this intended violence by "true trefree of gode Gentilmen of the same cuntre". Bellingham however was still receiving threats from Parr, but because of Parr's paramountcy in Kendal, he could not sue him successfully in the county. Robert Bellingham, Henry's father, was indeed a Clifford feoffee but Clifford supported Parr and "the coroners of the same Shire bene his (Parr's) meynyall men". Bellingham, therefore turned to the court of Chancery for aid.

Chancery did not satisfy the Bellinghams who took the matter into their own hands. In February 1445, Thomas Parr was in London as knight of the shire for Cumberland. He took lodgings "on Cornwallis ground beside the Crane in the Wards of the Vyntrye". In the morning of the opening parliament, he and three servants, Robert Duket, Thomas Wryght and Matthew Pierson, left their lodgings for Westminster. On the road to the Thames they were "assaulted with intent to kill" by Henry Bellingham's two younger brothers, Robert and Thomas, together with three other. Parr's servants were badly injured and the attackers were arrested. In March, Parr was granted, by private Act of Parliament, a writ of proclamations addressed to the sheriffs of the city of

London, whose writ was to order the Bellinghams to appear before the King's Bench a month from Easter 1446 or be attainted of felony. The outrage to parliament of an attack on one of its members caused the passage of an act "to protect members of Parliament from assault while in Parliament and in transit . . .". If assaulted, a member of Parliament was to have a writ of proclamation to the appropriate sheriff, "as by an Act in this saide present Parliament for Sir Thomas Parr, Knyght, is in like case ordeined to be hade", to be returned at the King's Bench enabling the complainant to demand there the appearance of those against whom the writ was sworn, or else "such execution as is ordeined also in the saide Acte, for ye saide Sir Thomas".

Before this act two statutes had given members of Parliament recourse at law for any physical attack perpetrated on them or their servants: in 1432 to protect any lord or commoner attending parliament or council from assault, and a Statute of 1403 protecting the servants of a knight of the shire from assault. Thus, when in 1445 the Commons prayed that the remedies and process prescribed in the act for Sir Thomas Parr should be upheld, the king replied that the two prior statutes should provide sufficient redress for the members of the Commons, in effect disallowing Parr's act as a precedent for parliamentary litigation.

The Bellinghams failed to appear at the King's Bench "for gret fere and drede of the seyd Acts", their fear of reciprocal violence being greater than their fear of the courts. In 1449, however, they petitioned for a settlement of the dispute. In 1449 parliament, in which Thomas Bellingham was a member for Arundel and Parr for Westmorland, Parr's writ of proclamation was annulled as "the parties had come to an agreement and Sir Thomas Parr and his servants had received satisfaction". The Bellinghams were pardoned at Parr's request. A remnant of the settlement of this feud may exist in an undated boundary settlement between Sir Robert Bellingham and his son, Henry, and Sir Thomas Parr and his son, William. It fixes the boundaries of their contiguous lands in Strickland Roger, which may have been the original source of trouble.

Parr was not always either a combatant or litigant in local land transactions. Frequently, he acted as a witness or mediator for others. In January 1430, he witnessed a quit-claim, with warranty of advowson, of a moiety of the church in Sedbergh in Lonsdale, Yorkshire, from Thomas Harrington, esquire, the son of Sir William Harrington, to Cuthbert, the abbot of Coverham, and the convent of Coverham. Early in 1435, along with Sir Nicholas Radcliffe, he testified under oath at Carlisle before William Laton, the escheator for Cumberland, regarding the inquisition *post mortem* on Sir Peter Tilliol, whose daughter and coheir had married Sir Christopher Moresby, a close friend and later in-law of Parr's. In 1437 Sir John de Lamplogh (or Lamplugh) granted to his grandson, John, certain lands and tenements in Preston. Parr, who also held land in Preston, witnessed the grant, together with Richard Musgrave and Sir Thomas Strickland. On 11 August 1446, Parr, Strickland, Nicholas Leyburne and Robert Bellingham witnessed a grant of certain Westmorland lands by Thomas Gate and Robert Preston to Edward Beetham. Beetham held from Parr the manor of Beetham and other lands, worth approximately £40 a year.

In June 1452, Parr acted as trustee for Roland Lenthale, taking livery with the other trustees of one-third of the manors of High Roding, Over Shamall and Ginge Margaret in Essex, previously granted to the trustees to uses by Lenthale, who held the manors in right of his wife Margaret, the sister and coheir of Thomas, Earl of Arundel, with reversion to Edmund Lenthale, her son. This shows Parr's sphere of interest extended as far south as Essex and that, as a man of known reputation and influence, he was sought by residents of at least four shires as a witness or trustee. At the local level Parr's position was unassailable as the holder of a large and concentrated estate with a monopoly of shire offices and commissions and one whom the Nevilles regarded with favour. At the national level however his influence was limited to the House of Commons where his initiation was made — in a somewhat unfortunate manner.

As indicated by the sudden increase in disputed elections during the years 1427 to 1429, the statutes governing parliamentary elections were at this time widely abused, due to fraudulent sheriffs, ineligible electors and falsely-returned knights. In 1429 Parliament was originally summoned to meet at Westminster on 13 October. The electors for Cumberland met at a shire court in Carlisle on 30 August and duly elected Sir William Legh and Thomas de la More as that shire's representatives. The date for the opening of Parliament was subsequently brought forward to 22 September and a new summons issued. As there was no regular meeting of the shire court between the receipt of this summons and the opening of the session, the sheriff, Sir Christopher Moresby, took it upon himself to make out a new return for the altered date, naming More and Thomas Parr as knights of the shire "in an apparently normally attested indenture". The reaction was immediate. In 28 September, by royal letters patent, a full investigation was ordered into the sheriff's actions, the date and place of the first valid election and the second unilateral one, the names of the electors and any other facts regarding the dispute. The first investigation was inactive or inadequate and a new one was ordered the following year on 10 July. There is no proof one way or another indicating whether or not Thomas Parr took his seat, but in all probability he did not.

Of twenty Parliaments covering the years 1439-83, in fifteen returns or partial returns available for Westmorland, eleven returns were made either of a Parr or by a Parr as sheriff in charge of the election. Disregarding the disputed election of 1429, Sir Thomas himself sat in six Parliaments — 1435, 1445-46, 1449, 1450-51, 1455-56 and 1459. He represented Westmorland in 1435, 1449, 1450-51, 1455-56 and probably 1459 as well. In 1445-56 he sat for Cumberland. Of the remaining three extant returns, some person connected with the Parrs was either sheriff or returned as knight of the shire in at least two. Combined with Neville patronage, this gave the Parrs a forty-four-year hegemony over Westmorland representation in Parliament. The Cumberland elections show a more limited involvement. From 1439-83, seventeen returns or partial returns are available, seven with a Parr directly involved and two with a close friend or relative. This close involvement in parliamentary elections and attendance was to give the Parrs a place near the centre of political events for over forty years.

It was during the 1440s that Sir Thomas evolved a contrivance which he and his sons systematically exploited during this forty-four-year period. It was designed to circumvent the statute which ruled that a sheriff of a county could not be elected by that

county to serve in parliament. When Lord Clifford was attainted in 1461 and lost his hereditary shrievalty, the Parrs took over the office on an hereditary basis. Sir Thomas, undoubtedly with Neville backing, having obtained the office of sheriff in one county, proceeded to serve as knight of the shire for another. This device was exploited by the three Parrs, Sir Thomas and his sons, Sir William and Sir John, in the parliaments of 1445-46, 1463-65, 1472-75, and 11478. As the interests of the two shires, Westmorland and Cumberland, were closely allied, and as the Parrs themselves had interests in both, they thus managed to integrate the key positions of the two to provide themselves with an unshakeable hold on the northwest.

In the late 1450s, growing violence between the rival houses of York and Lancaster became acute. The Yorkists, facing indictments by the council held at Coventry on 24 June 1459, prepared to take a military stand against their enemies. The Earl of Salisbury, with his northern retainers, marched south to rendezvous with the Duke of York at Ludlow. When the Queen's forces intercepted Salisbury's at Blore Heath in Shropshire on 23 September, the outcome was indecisive. Salisbury rallied his men and, joining forces with York and Warwick, turned to face the royal army at Ludford Bridge near Ludlow. Sir Thomas Parr and several others came to the Earl, not the Duke, to "offer their services". Even at this late date, however, Parr considered himself a Salisbury supporter, not a "Yorkist". The Yorkists were out-numbered and were routed on 12-13 October and Parr almost certainly fled with Salisbury, arriving, by way of Devon, at Calais on 2 November. All were subsequently attainted of high treason and all their lands and goods declared forfeit. By December 1460 the Crown began to grant Parr's estates away, but the triumph of Edward IV reversed the process, and it is hardly likely that, in only a year and a half, Parr's lands suffered too much damage.

Sir Thomas Parr's position before July 1459 is somewhat anomalous. Superficially he was a loyal subject of the Crown, continuing to serve on government-appointed commissions and displaying no overtly rebellious tendencies. McFarlane includes him in a group of "later Yorkists whose attitude in 1450 cannot be presumed . . ." The wedge, which finally separated Parr from his allegiance to Henry VI, was his personal commitment to Richard Neville, Earl of Salisbury. In 1420 Henry V had chosen Salisbury for the office of Warden of the West March, an office not merely lucrative but permitting its holder to raise a substantial private army "among the best natural source of fighting men in the country". The Earl of Salisbury's enormous income and his friendly relations with the King's council were potent inducements for ambitious northerners like Parr to become his supporters and retainers. Nor was it only Salisbury's position as Warden which attracted Parr, it was also the fact that in 1444 he had been made steward of the Richmond Fee. This brought Salisbury into personal proximity with Parr of Kendal and offered a welcome opportunity for each man to make use of the other's support for the mutual benefit of both.

In all likelihood, Parr's assumption of Salisbury's patronage must have occurred between 1435, when he opposed Salisbury's retainers, the Thornboroughs, in the Crackenthorpe case and 1438, when he received the Richmond Fee leasehold, possibly through Salisbury's intervention. Some sort of relationship, however, predates even 1435, for as early as 1430 Parr, together with the Earl of Salisbury, his supporter William Fitz-Hugh and Thomas Tunstall, were co-witnesses of a quit-claim. Two other close supporters of the Nevilles, Christopher Conyers and Christopher Boynton, were also co-witnesses, as was James Strangways [sic], Justice of the Common pleas. Many of these commissions on which Parr served were headed by Salisbury. Yet, despite his Neville sympathies and two decades of mutual support, Parr was cautious. He did not appear among the anti-Somerset partisans at the first battle of St. Albans (22 May 1455), nor, seemingly, did he take any irrevocable anti-Lancastrian action until the day he arrived at Ludlow to offer Salisbury his services. Barely a month later, he was an attainted traitor in exile. He must have wished often during those months that he had remained cautious and delayed a little longer. As things turned out, he had made the right decision after all. In 1460 Parr fought beside Salisbury and York at Wakefield. In the battle and the executions which followed, York, his son the Earl of Rutland, and Salisbury died. On three of the four lists of the slain found in later sources the name of Sir Thomas Parr appears. Supposedly, his head was impaled above the gates of York. Parr, however, outlived his reported death by another year. In the series of battles which followed Wakefield, no mention of him has survived, and he may have been in all or none of them. He had, however, acquitted himself sufficiently well to earn the new king, Edward IV's, personal gratitude and favour. The wardship of John Hotham was the first of a series of grants which were to increase the Parr holdings and income vastly during Edward's reign. For ten more years, the Parrs supported the Nevilles, in the person of the Earl of Warwick. But just as the good lordship of Salisbury had succeeded that of Lancaster, so the patronage of a king was to prove more desirable than that of his overmighty subject.

Sir Thomas Parr's personal life was as full as his public one. He had not followed his paternal forebears in the pursuit of an eligible heiress. He had married Alice Tunstall, the daughter of his guardian, Sir Thomas Tunstall of Thurland Castle, Lancashire. Alice, although from an important family, was no heiress. However, in 1427, her brother, Sir Thomas Tunstall, the younger, married Alianore Fitz-Hugh, widow of Sir Philip Darcy of Knaith, thus bringing Thomas Parr into contact with the Fitz-Hugh family, which by marriage in the next generation, would provide the Parrs with a claim to the lands of the Fitz-Hugh lords of Ravensworth. Parr's eldest son, William, was born in 1434, and his second son, John, in 1438. The Parrs ultimately had nine children, three sons, William, John and Thomas, and six daughters, Anne, Mabel, Margaret, Agnes, Elizabeth and Alianore. They all made advantageous matches and Parr could number among his sons-in-law such northern notables as Humphrey, Lord Dacre of Gilsland, Sir Thomas Strickland and Sir Christopher Moresby. The Tunstall connection, despite its paucity of tangible assets, nevertheless proved valuable some sixty years later when Cuthbert Tunstall, Bishop of Durham, took very seriously his cousinly duty to befriend and advise the widowed Lady Maud Parr.

By Sir Thomas's death, between mid-November and 4 December 1461, the Parrs had risen in less than a century from a position as all but landless retainers in the household of the Duke of Lancaster to a place as prominent landholders among the Westmorland gentry. Sir Thomas had expanded his grandfather's influence by securing a monopoly of the northwestern shrievalties, as well as the shire seats in parliament. By 1461, when Sir Thomas and his family's contribution to the Yorkist cause

was about to launch the Parrs into the court circle, Sir Thomas Parr's position in Westmorland was paramount and unassailable. He had emerged from the mass of local gentry to stand alone as the man or power in Kendal. There were men with nobler titles, who held land and influence in the north, but in Kendal they exercised their influence through Parr. The last Lancastrian king had offered very little to Parr as an inducement for support. With the accession of the house York, the Parrs became royal favourites. The change in administration meant for Thomas Parr a broadening of prospects and opportunities, and although he did not live long enough to take full benefit of these, his sons enjoyed an enviable position as intimates of Edward IV until their deaths. The eldest son, William, was made a Knight of the Garter, an honour commemorated on his fine altar-tomb in the Parr Chapel of Kendal parish church. And his grandson, another Sir Thomas, was not only controller to Henry VIII but father of that monarch's last wife — Katherine.

Sir Thomas's grandfather, William de Parr, a Knight to King Henry IV, died in 1404. This William was born around 1350. It is believed he was the son of Sir John de Parr of Parr in the Parish of Prescot, Lancashire, his mother being Matilda, daughter of Sir Richard Leybourne⁵. The life of William is obscure, but research was carried out and published in the Transactions of the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archeological Society, and this is reproduced below⁶.

The object of this study is to trace the causes of the rise and fall in family fortunes as exemplified by that of the Parrs of Kendal Castle through a period of great political upheaval and transition. Three main factors affected the social and economic status of families at this time. The first, that of patronage, demonstrates how closely the Parr fortunes were affected by those of the patron on whose vessel they were privileged to embark upon the perilous political seas of the 14TH and 15TH centuries. Marriage alliances, too, were of supreme importance, carrying the family to its zenith when Katherine Parr became the consort of Henry VIII, and to its nadir through the failure of William, her brother, to leave legitimate heirs. The third factor was the ability of the head of the house to avail himself of those opportunities for advancement offered in his day and age, and to avoid the dangers inherent in the unstable political situation, learning when necessary on both sides of the stairs to get up, as the earl of Pembroke, husband of Ann Parr, unblushingly confessed to doing.

William de Parr, founder of the Westmorland branch of that name, pursued a military career which, in the 14th century was as good a road as that of the Church or Law for an enterprising man to follow in search of success. Accounts of his origin are confused and obscure. He was born about 1350, assuming that he was about 18 when he killed Robert Haghe in 1369 and one authority states he was the son of Sir John de Parr of Parr in the parish of Prescot, Lancashire, his mother being Matilda, daughter of Sir Richard Leyburne.

An inquisition of 1385 on the possession of Thomas de Lathom states he was seised of "the homage and service of Sir John de Parr, of Robert, son of Henry de Parr and of William, who held their tenements in Parr by knight's service and by rendering 6s. 3d. yearly. Also of the service of Robert, son of Alan Parr, who held of him tenements in socage by rendering yearly 3s. 9d."

William who held an eighth part of the vill [sic] of Parr, seems to have inherited it from Richard, son of another Richard who died about 1350. William was in possession about 1370. A crime opens his recorded career. With a Roger Haukese he was accused of killing Robert Haghe or Hawe some time before 1 March 1369.⁷ But Sir Walter Huet, veteran of the Hundred Years' War, and one of the heroes of Froissart, came to Parr's aid. The renewal of hostilities with France in 1369, and the commissioning of John of Gaunt to take out a strong force to Gascony, gaining for Parr—as well as for others—through Huet's petitions in May 1370, a pardon "for good service to be rendered by William de Par in the company of the said Walter in parts beyond the sea, to William of the King's suit for the death of Roger Hawe, alias Haghe . . . whereof he is indicted or appealed of any consequent outlawry."

From 1 April to 1 June, however, Huet and his men were kept in London "awaiting payment of their wages and the pleasure of the Lord King and his Council." Small wonder that many recruits grew tired and decamped, among them "two chivalers and twenty one men (named) who were to have gone beyond seas in the company of Walter Huet but have not gone, as the said Walter has certified." These had their pardons revoked. By some mischance, as it transpired later, Parr seems to have been included by those in authority among these deserters. Huet's contingent, as part of Gaunt's great fleet, sailed from Plymouth to Gascony, Their arrival in Bordeaux was sadly damped by news of the fall of Limoges. It is unlikely that William was at the siege and sack of the city, for Froissart, who always appears to include Huet's name whenever he took part in an engagement, does not mention him as being at Limoges, but states that Huet and his company had been sent to strengthen and hold the frontiers of Poitou, where he commanded a contingent in the attack on the fortress of Moncontours; here therefore, presumable, Parr first saw action in France.

Six months or so later, when Lancaster returned to England, William accompanied him. By this time he was so far advanced in the duke's favour that he could beg him to petition the king, his father, on his behalf, for it appears that, in spite of the pardon Huet had gained for Parr in May 1370, he was still accounted an outlaw and it was necessary to prove that he had taken part in the Gascon campaign. Accordingly, in 1371, Lancaster himself petitioned Edward III that William might be pardoned, certifying and making known to the king that "he (William) was occupied in the war and service of our lord and father aforesaid in our company and that of the said Sir Walter from the time of our passage towards the said parts of Guienne until our return to

⁵ Harleian MSS, nos. 1187, 1196, 2109.

⁶ Rowling, M.A., (1957), "William de Parr. King's Knight to Henry IV [c.1350-1404], Transactions of the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archeological Society, Vol. LVI.

England." So that, instead of re-entering England as a fugitive from justice, Parr returned under the patronage and protection of the great Lancaster himself, for although no bond of contract between the duke and him was survived, yet some short while later William was established as one of the regular members of the Lancastrain retinue.

The disastrous course of the French war soon drew Gaunt back into the front line and with him, presumably, went William since he, in company with many others, received the sum of £4. 11s. 4d. from the Lancastrian exchequer before March 1372 in part payment of £9. 11s. 4d. due to him as wages and fees of war.

Edward III had determined to save Thouars, which was being sorely pressed. Orders for ships to be collected in the harbours of Portsmouth and Sandwich had been sent out on 6 and 7 February 1372, but the fleet did not sail until the end of August when fierce gales prevented it from making headway. Meanwhile Thouars was lost, and Gaunt and his army returned ignominiously home. Parr now seems to have returned to his Lancastrian manor, for in November 1372 Gaunt sent an order from Hertford to his "parker de Tokstat et Crokstat . . . to deliver to William Par a buck from one of the said parks." By the spring of 1373 William received from the duke letters of protection to go on the king's service on the next voyage in Gaunt's company; he was presumably, therefore, among the bands of fighting men who passed through the towns and villages of the West Country on their way to Plymouth to join Lancaster. By 4 August the great march from Calais towards the south of France had begun, as disastrous a campaign for invader as ever was waged. To Parr it brought what must surely have been a personal tragedy.

At Ouchy, Sir Walter Huet and his men were passing the night. Huet had already gone to his lodging to rest and taken off his armour." Then, suddenly, one hundred and twenty French men-at-arms . . . commanded by Jean de Vienne, surprised at dawn the outposts of the English army and Walter Huet, one of the most illustrious veterans of the army was killed while trying—when only half armed—to repulse a completely unexpected attack . . . the English, deeply affected by the loss of one of their most valiant knights then began the march towards Rheims." Yet before that gruelling march in mid-winter was ended, Parr and his comrades may well have envied Huet his earlier death, for out of 15,000 picked men, all originally mounted, only 8,000, and half of these unmounted, passed finally through the gates of Bordeaux. Parr returned home with his patron. From Hertford where Gaunt retired to shun publicity and the animosity with which he was now widely regarded, he directed his clerk of the Great Wardrobe to make a settlement with his "well loved esquire, William de Par," who had not been paid the five marks of his annuity for the term of St. Michael 1373, nor the other five marks for the following Easter term owed to him by the duchy of Lancaster.

During his retirement the direction of the duke's ambition changed. As husband of the heiress of Castile, Gaunt determined to claim and conquer this country with which Parr was to be connected at intervals until practically the end of his life. Gaunt's first task was to make peace with France and from the evidence it seems that Parr accompanied his patron to Bruges to parley for the truce which was arranged on 27 June, for on 24 July, immediately on his return to England, the duke sent to his chief forester at Needwood orders to deliver to William another fat buck from the chace; an acceptable reward for services rendered, presumably, in Bruges.

From 1375 to June 1378 there is a gap in the evidence regarding Parr, but in the spring of 1378 Lancaster was given command of a naval force to put an end to French aggression, and on 1 June Parr was granted a letter of attorney because he was going to Brittany with the duke. Unfortunately the attack on St. Malo was a fiasco, largely owing to Arundel's incompetence, and once again Parr returned to England under the shadow of his patron's failure. Nevertheless, Parr's personal influence continues to increase through the years as is shown by the fact that at least four felons appealed to him to gain them pardons for their crimes. As one of Gaunt's personal attendants, it seems likely that Parr would accompany him to Scotland in 1380 to treat with the Scots, for warrants were sent out from Leicester on 26 August to the receivers of Lancaster and York to call out the knights and esquires of the duke's retinue to meet him at Newcastle upon Tyne, arrayed for war. But it was around the year 1382 that Parr took his second great step forward along the road of advancement. He was probably now in his early thirties, and his service with Lancaster had brought him not only experience in war but enhanced social prestige: he must also have benefited immeasurably from his contact with the brilliant courts of Bordeaux and the art filled treasure house of the Savoy Palace in London, to which the duke's presence attracted many of the leading figures in the political and cultural life of Europe; here Parr continued his vicarious lessons in diplomacy, talked, presumably, with Chaucer and Froissart, listened to the songs and music of Gaunt's well-paid minstrels and absorbed willy-nilly some at least of the European culture of the 14th century. Nevertheless, Parr was still only a paid mercenary, possessed of an insignificant estate worth but a mere 15d. per annum in rent. His social standing and influence dependent in the main on his retention of his great patron's favour. Then he married, and at once, through his wife the way was opened for his future acquisition of independence and security, of a Norman stronghold in the north—small, it is true, but yet a castle with wide acres—of manors, mills and rents with the added social prestige which went with their possession. His bride was Elizabeth de Ros, daughter of John de Ros (died 1358) and heiress to her grandfather, Sir Thomas de Ros of Kendal Castle, Westmorland. She was 17 years and upwards in 1382.

Elizabeth was a royal Scottish descent, since her ancestor Robert, Lord Roos of Helmsley had married Isabel, illegitimate daughter of William of Lion of Scotland. Robert de Ros of Werk, a younger grandson of Robert and Isabel, married Margaret de Brus, heiress to Kendal Castle. Sir Thomas de Ros was the grandson of this marriage. Parr's marriage was possibly arranged through Peter de Ros, the bride's uncle who had become one of Gaunt's retainers in 1382. In any case, Parr must have been well known to Sir Thomas—a firebrand of a man and a typical Borderer—as Ros had served in the earl of Arundel's retinue under Lancaster, in 1378. A son, named John, was born to William and Elizabeth during or before 1382.

There is no evidence to show whether William took part in Lancaster's campaign against the Scots in 1384 or in King Richard's expedition during the summer of the following year, but by 1386 Parr was being drawn into the orbit of his patron's ambition, centering on Castile, for we find that, on 12 January: "William de Par, going on the King's service to Portugal, appoints Hugh de Ines and Richard de Assheton as his attornies." So, once more, in the spring of 1386, Parr rode along the London-Plymouth highway in attendance upon the duke and his Spanish "Queen." His view of the future must have been satisfactory for, in the event of his patron winning the throne of Castile, the rewards given to his closest followers were likely to be kingly. Then followed the delay in Devon while ships were being collected, the relief of Brest, the surrender of Corunna and St. James de Compostella, capital of Galicia, where Parr presumably witnessed the arrival of the Castilian embassy with a secret offer of marriage for Lancaster's daughter Katherine with the heir of Castile. That he survived the disastrous campaign which followed, when English knights, esquires and archers died off in hundreds from plague and dysentery, speaks well for the strength of his constitution. It was probably to raise another army for the duke that Parr returned to England in the summer of 1387. By the end of 1388 William had gained the confidence of King Richard II himself and was acting as his agent in trying to secure the early return of Gaunt from Aquitaine to redress the balance of power which the Lords Appellant had weighted so heavily against the king. It was through Parr's management of the affairs entrusted to him at this juncture that Lancaster seems to have become convinced of his abilities. Richard had already made one attempt to send envoys to Aquitaine, but this had been frustrated, possibly by Arundel, who held the post of High Admiral. Now using Parr as his agent, the king sent to Richard Earl of Arundel, the King's admiral or his lieutenant, the mayors and bailiffs of Plymouth and Dartmouth, and the keepers of the passages in the ports of Fowey and Barnstaple, strict order as they love the king and his honour, and would escape his wrath, with all speed to provide from the king's money another ship and barge furnished with seamen and gear and deliver them to William Parre for the voyage of certain envoys whom the king purposes to send to John Duke of Lancaster, to declare business which concerns the king and his commonweal [sic], that by their default the business remain not undone which the king would impute to their neglect; as lately, by the advice and assent of the Council, a great ship and barge were arrested and suddenly departed for foreign parts at the will of the owners and possessors for their advantage, without advising the king, as his highness is informed. Dated Windsor, 4 December 1388.

Nearly a year passed before the duke landed at Plymouth. The day following, 20 November, he granted by letters patent "to William de Par, his bachelor, on his surrender of earlier letters patent—granting him 50 marks a year for life from the issues of the duchy of Lancaster—£50 a year therefrom. The bestowal of this grant and the fact that Parr was now a knight bachelor obviously betokens the performance of some outstanding service on his part. Possibly he accompanied the freight ship sent out by the king in 1389 to bring back his uncle Gaunt from Aquitaine. Parr may then have given his patron first hand information regarding the political situation in England, urging upon him the desirability of leaving affairs which, as its governor, had kept the duke in the French province, to deal with the serious state of emergency in England which Parr must have known would continue as long as Gloucester's lust for power remained unchecked, and the divided state of the Council continued to threaten the stability and peace of the realm.

The next seven years which marked for England and Lancaster a period of prosperity, also brought further honours and wealth to Parr. In 1390 Sir Thomas de Ros—Lady Elizabeth Parr's grandfather—ended his long and turbulent life and on 23 January 1391 Sir William and his wife were granted "full seisin of all the lands which Thomas held of the king in chief in fee tail . . . on the day of his death, as the king has taken homage and fealty due from William by reason of his having issue by Elizabeth." Parr did not, however, retire to his northern fortress in Westmorland, for Lancaster went to Amiens to negotiate a truce with Charles of France, taking a magnificent retinue of 1,000 horsemen. Stately processions, royal banquets and tournaments followed fast upon each other, and the grant made by the duke to Sir William and his wife of an estate in Cornwall, "of the land and lordship of Ayrin in the parish of St. Medart, Ruyan, forfeited by the lord of Budos, 26 October 1392", points to a desire on the part of the Duke to contribute towards the heavy expenses incurred by Parr as his knight bachelor during the recent diplomatic mission. But a higher honour was pending. The Duke decided to make sure of the experience in diplomacy which at least two members of his suite had gained during their years of service with him in foreign courts. Sir William Parr with Sir Walter Blount and Henry Bowet, archdeacon of Lincoln were appointed in April 1393 to negotiate a renewal of the truce with King Enrique of Castile, which had been arranged originally by John of Gaunt with king João. Hard on his return to England Sir William was commissioned in 1394 to attend Lancaster to Aquitaine, this time as duke of the province. In the stately and luxurious court established in Bordeaux Parr evidently carried out the duties assigned to him to the duke's satisfaction for on 18 July 1394 he was appointed—from Bordeaux—Justice of the Forests of the duchy of Lancaster for life.

But this colourful interlude in the south ended with Lancaster's return to England in the autumn of 1395. Though Parr was to see them again, Lancaster was unknowingly looking his last on the fruitful vineyards and cornfields of France. After tarrying in Brittany to conclude a treaty with its changeable duke on 25 November, the Lancastrian party proceeded to England where Parr must have been met, soon after his arrival with news of the illness, or possibly the death of his wife, for she died presumably early in the New Year, since Parr was in Kendal in May, the first recorded report of his presence there. Before October 1396 he had remarried. His second wife was not, as might have been expected of superior wealth or social status to Elizabeth. She was Margaret, widow of Sir Laurence de Dutton, a Cheshire knight who had died before 30 January 1392/3. The new marriage was made in such haste that the necessary licence from the king was not obtained. In consequence Lady Margaret had to "make fine in £12. 4s. 4d. for marriage to William de Par, knight, without licence." This was the exact amount of her yearly dower from lands formerly held of the king by the deceased Sir Laurence and valued at £36. 13s. 4d. yearly.

One of Sir William's first recorded tasks in the north was to import corn from Ireland for the needs of his tenants and household at a time when, it seems, the domestic crop had failed. Little is known of the domestic economy of the north west at this time, but a document of 18 Hen. V throws a thin ray of light upon the district, informing us that Cumberland and Lancashire had been

accustomed "long since" to obtain much of their grain and bread from Richmond market in Yorkshire: "Many merchants from the adjacent parts of Cumberland, Westmorland, and Lancashire were wont [sic] to resort there with merchandise, grain, victuals and other goods every Saturday in the year, as well as carriers of grain and bread belonging to the adjacent parts of Cumberland, Westmorland and Lancashire and the neighbourhood of Lonsdale, Craven, Dent and Sedbergh in which no great quantity of corn was then grown, for which reason the inhabitants of those parts made their chief provision of grain in Richmond market.

The people of the adjoining counties of Cumberland [sic], Westmorland and Lancashire have thrown into cultivation large tracts of moors and wastes by means of which carriers of grain, using to resort to Richmond from these parts of Lonsdale and Sedbergh, have *long since* withdrawn from the said market." Was Sir William, inspired by recollections of the cornfields of France, one of those who threw "into cultivation large tracts of moors and wastes" in Westmorland? The fact that he began to play in active part in the county as a commissioner introduces us to two feuds which had a more than local interest. On 1 March 1397 he was appointed to serve on a commission of the peace and of oyer and terminer in Westmorland. As the delinquents named were still at large in November 1398 a stronger commission was appointed—Ralph, earl of Westmorland, Henry Percy, Earl of Northumberland, his son, Henry Percy, Richard Redman of Levens, William de Culwen, Thomas Colvyll, a Yorkshire knight, Thomas Tunstall of Thurland Castle, Thomas Musgrave and the sheriffs of Yorkshire and Westmorland, with John Elyngham the king's sergeant at arms, Richard de Croft, and John Hudleston, with orders— "on information of dissensions between John de Preston, and John, son of Thomas de Middleton, John de Blande, Adam Touke, William and Roger de Blande and Thomas Spicer of unlawful assemblies in those counties and the lying in wait of the last named to kill the said John de Preston and his friends, causing homicides, insurrections, riots—to arrest the persons last named and bring them before the king in council, arresting also others to be found of their following."

Now since 1377, the Blandes and Middletons had been involved from time to time in disturbances of the peace in Yorkshire aimed particularly against Gaunt's officers and property or that of his retainers. They were joined later by the Bekwyths and the trouble came to a head in February 1393 when Sir Robert de Rokley, Gaunt's forester of the Chace of Knaresborough slew several of the Bekwyths, who retaliated by murdering Thomas de Blande, one of their own confederates whom they accused of betraying them to their enemies, John de Preston and his friends, whom the Middletons and Blandes with their confederates were lying in wait to kill in 1397 and 1398 was a justice of the King's Bench and a landowner in Westmorland having inherited the manor of Preston Patrick near Kendal.

During the disturbances in Yorkshire he had served on commissions of a strongly Lancastrian character in Westmorland and Yorkshire at least fifteen times since November 1376. It seems clear, therefore, from this evidence, that the enmity of the Middletons and Blandes was directed against Preston in his judicial capacity, the justice's "friends" being most probably, his fellow commissioners.

The second feud with which Parr had to deal appears from the names of some of the protagonists to have a certain connection with the first. In November 1398 he and John Elyngham were appointed "on information of divers dissensions between Edmund Redman, Richard Duket, John and Thomas de Lancaster and others, on the one side, and the Roger de Wyndesore, William, Thomas and John de Bethom, Roland, John and Richard Threlkeld and Christopher Forster on the other . . . to arrest all persons named and their followers . . ." The primary cause of these divisions seems to have been a family dispute over the will and property of Sir William de Wyndesore of Heversham, Westmorland, husband of the court beauty, Alice Perrers, mistress of Edward III. Wyndesore had died in 1385 and his three sisters, Margery Duket, Christiana Morieux and Isabel de Wyndesore were found by inquisition to be his heirs. Sir William had, however, during his lifetime disposed of some of his property to his nephew John de Wyndesore, leaving the bulk of it by will to him and his brothers. Of the disputants mentioned in Parr's commission of 1398, Richard Duket was Margery's son, Thomas and John de Lancaster, if my deductions from the evidence are correct, were illegitimate sons of Christopher de Lancaster by Isabel de Wyndesore, while Edmund Redman was a relative by marriage of the Dukets. On the opposing side, Roger Wyndesore was John's brother and one of the beneficiaries of his uncle's will which does not mention any of Sir William's three sisters or their descendants. The Bethoms and Christopher Forster were adherents of the Lancastrian party, and John de Preston of the Wyndesores, which provides evidence for a connection in the personnel at least between this feud and the first, especially as Christopher Forster was one of those who supported Sir Robert de Rokley, Gaunt's officer, in his feud against the Bekwyths; the Threlkelds, Bethoms and John de Preston also shared a common enmity against the abbot of Shap. Unfortunately we are given no certain evidence regarding the final outcome of these disturbances. The likelihood is that they were swallowed up—for a time at least—in the great feud of 1399 which ended by Bolingbroke mounting his cousin Richard's throne as Henry IV. Before that happened Gaunt died on 3 February 1399 and Parr, one of the executors of his will, experienced at first hand King Richard's unscrupulous actions regarding the Lancastrian inheritance. Within a month of Gaunt's death the king had changed Henry of Lancaster's temporary sentence of exile into one for life and seized his vast inheritance, ordering the executors to carry out Gaunt's will as speedily [sic] as possible, but to keep the stock formerly owned by the duke in places appointed by the king and his ministers.

On Gaunt's death, Richard took Parr into his service, confirming to him "because retained to stay with the king only" the £50 a year for life which the duke had granted to him for the issues of the duchy. Exactly what part was played by Parr in the tragic events which ended in Richard's deposition is not known. The usurping king showed himself more than generous to most of those who had aided him to gain the throne, but Sir William only received a confirmation of the grant of the lordship of Ayran made to him by Gaunt seven years previously, Taking into consideration the long and faithful service given to the new kings' father, the meagreness of his reward perhaps suggests that Parr had been slow in deciding to support Henry. But Parr's wide military experience made him invaluable in the north where, in spite of the preliminaries of a truce having been arranged with Scotland at the end of November 1399, Henry had to complain of "very great and horrible outrages perpetrated in England by certain Scots"

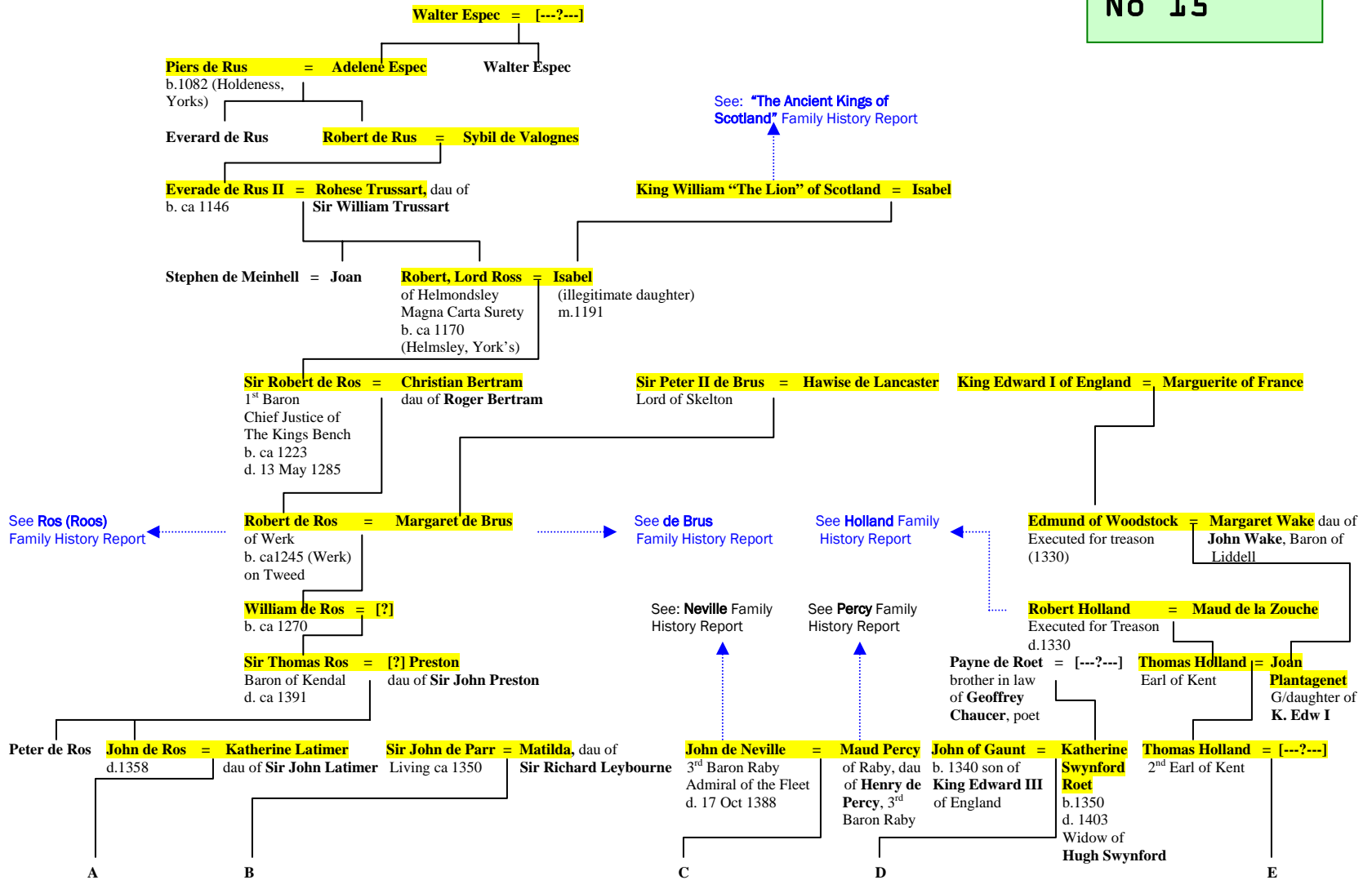
who burned Wark Castle. Parr, under Northumberland and Westmorland, called out the local forces, but the trouble blew over when the Scottish government offered profuse apologies.

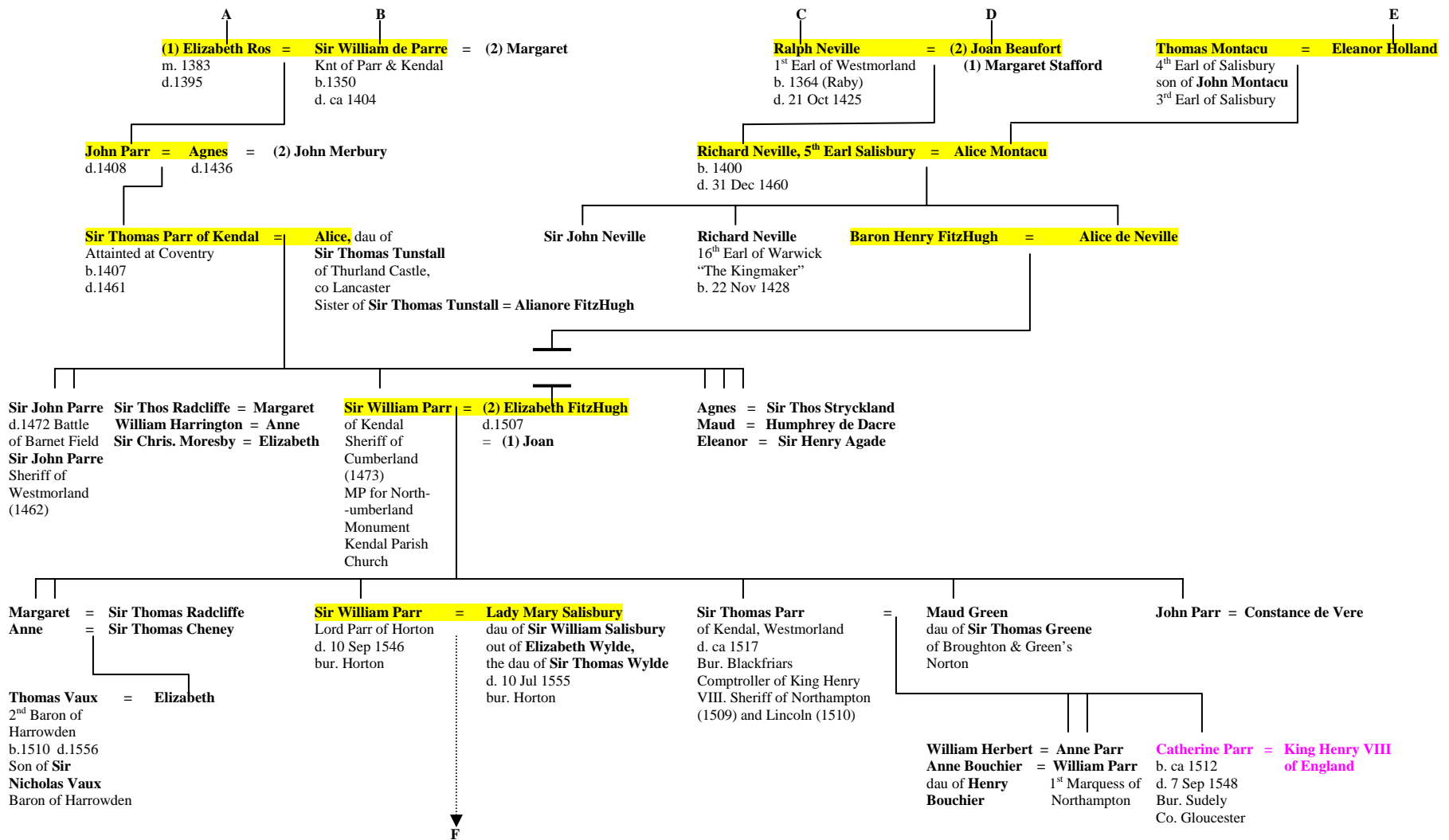
In 1400 Henry recognized Parr's diplomatic ability by sending him with John Trevor, bishop of St. Asaph to announce his accession in Spain where the young Enrique of Castile and his consort, Katherine of Lancaster were now reigning. Parr was rewarded after his return in 1402 "to the king's knight, William Par, a stag and hind in season each year for life, within the forest of Inglewode." Sir William's last recorded services were the collection of the tenth and fifteenth in Westmorland in December 1402, and his appointment with the Earl of Westmorland to a commission of array in September 1403. If one may deduce from this that Parr was serving with Westmorland when the earl prevented the forces of the rebel Northumberland from joining those of his son Hotspur at Chester, then we are left with no doubts of Parr's wholehearted allegiance to Henry IV, once he was established on the throne. Before 9 October of the following year Parr was dead. His son John was now aged 22 and over, and, until a short time before his father's death had not married. Perhaps Sir William had hoped for further sons by his second wife, for John's early death at the age of 26 or 27, and the fact that his name is practically absent from the records, suggests a delicacy of constitutions. A premonition of his own death may have impelled Sir William to arrange a match between his heir and Agnes Devereux, widow of Sir Walter Devereux of Herefordshire, who died in 1403. Sir William had not the consolation of knowing about the birth of his grandson Thomas. He may have died tormented by the fear that the line he had worked so strenuously to establish in prosperity might die out. In fact, Thomas was to prove the most prolific of all the Westmorland Parrs, and many of Sir William's descendants were to inherit his fine qualities of courage in war, versatility and adaptability in peace, as well as those of foresight and industry, which, with a certain ruthlessness often inherent in ambitious natures, enabled his descendants to add to the family wealth, prestige and possessions. These, as left by Sir William and judged comparatively were not great. Much of his income, granted for life, died with him, so that only the fourth part of the manor of Kirkby in Kendale, his in the right of his first wife and worth £40 yearly, with one-eighth part of his vill [sic] of Parr, his own inheritance, for which he paid 15d. yearly to his overlord, were inherited by John. But the importance of Sir William's efforts lay in the fact that he had established his family firmly in the ranks of the independent, landed middle class which was to play such an important part in the development of 15th and 16th century England.

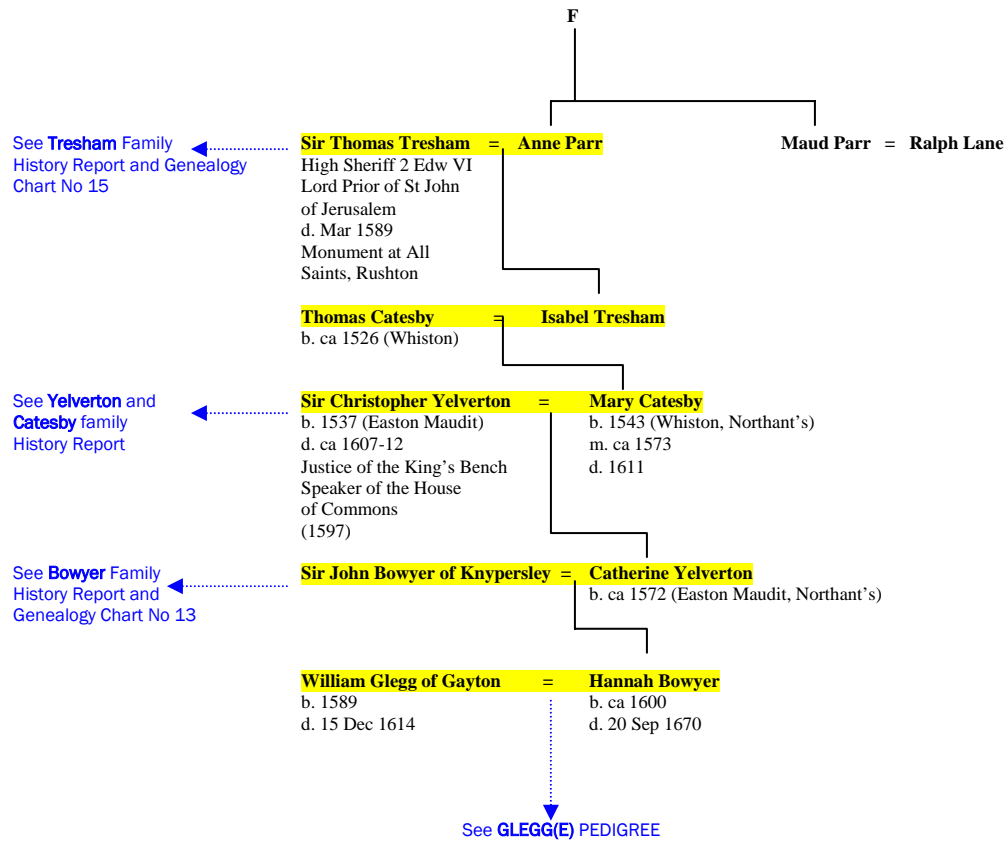
Date of Report: 15 August 2008

THE PARR FAMILY OF KENDAL, WITH PEDIGREES LEADING TO KING EDWARD III OF ENGLAND AND KING WILLIAM "THE LION" OF SCOTLAND

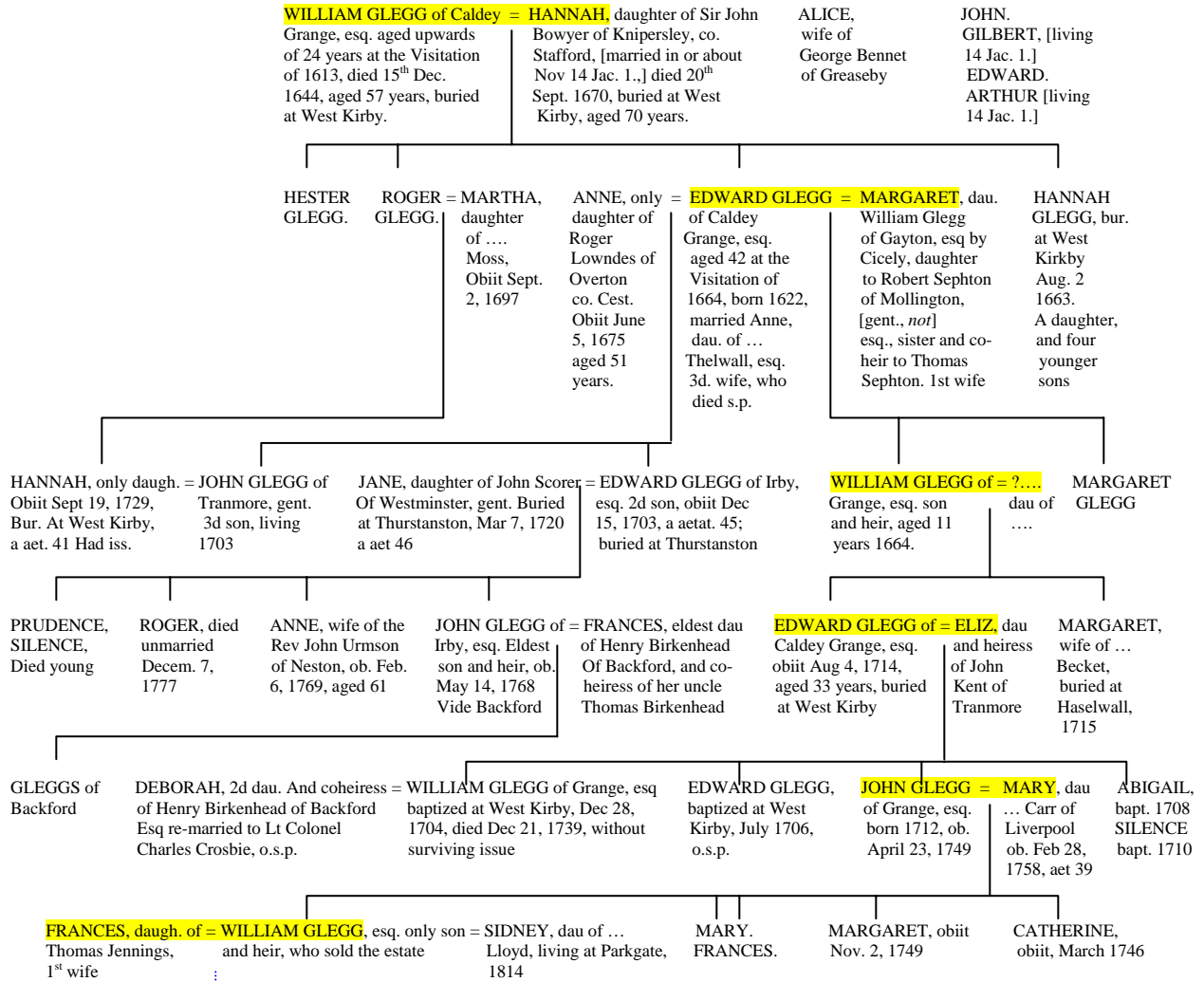
Genealogy
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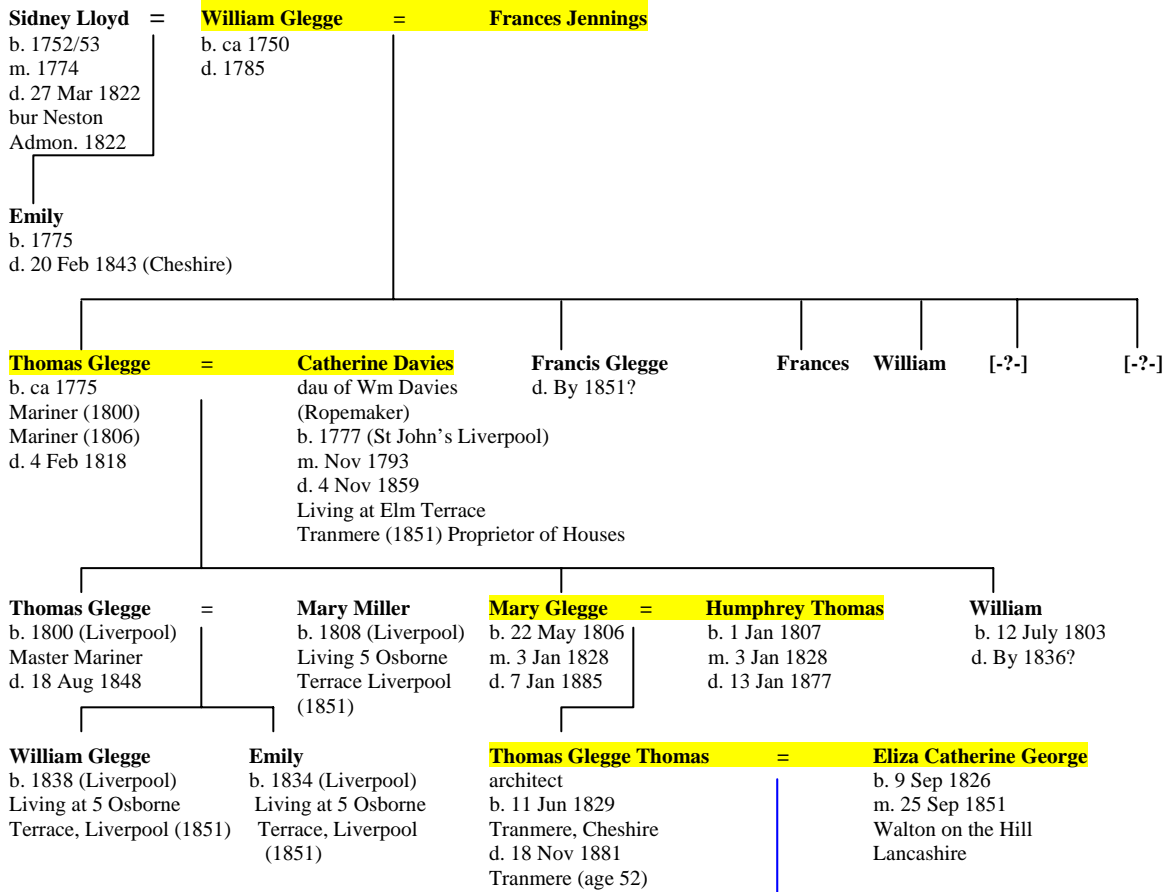


GLEGGE PEDIGREE



See below

Family 1: The Glegge Family (Ancestors of Michael Gregory)



See Below

Line of Descent from Thomas Glegge Thomas to Michael Gregory

