Driven to rebellion?

SIR JOHN LEWKNOR, DYNASTIC LOYALTY AND DEBT

by Malcolm Mercer

The events leading up to the death of Sir John Lewknor, fighting for the Lancastrians at the battle of Tewkesbury in 1471, are examined in detail. Two reasons are suggested for Lewknor’s support: firstly, as a result of previous service ties to Henry VI and the royal affinity; secondly, as a consequence of increasingly desperate personal circumstances. Until the triumph in 1461 of the first Yorkist king, Edward IV, Lewknor had been building a successful career as a royal servant. His world then fell apart. Increasingly beset by financial difficulties as the decade wore on, his lands the subject of litigation, and unable to find even a modest role in Sussex affairs, Lewknor became steadily alienated from a regime which offered him no future. The crisis of the Yorkist monarchy at the end of the 1460s presented a way out of his problems. When Lancastrian rule was restored in 1470, Lewknor had an opportunity to rebuild his fortunes and re-establish a career in royal service. In the event, however, the regime crumbled and Lewknor, with little to lose, died fighting for the Lancastrians.

In May 1471 Sir John Lewknor of West Grinstead in Sussex was killed fighting for Queen Margaret and the Lancastrian forces at Tewkesbury. In a hard-fought encounter, Lewknor, who had probably been knighted on the eve of the battle, was just one of a number of Lancastrian supporters left dead on the battlefield. Yet what impelled him to join the Lancastrian forces at this moment of crisis when most other dissidents were making their peace with Edward IV? The Reademption government of Henry VI had disintegrated and Edward IV seemed set to recover the throne. It is generally assumed that only the most committed and partisan Lancastrian supporters fought for Queen Margaret at Tewkesbury. This makes Lewknor’s participation all the more remarkable for very little is known about his family, career or connections. One possible explanation for Lewknor’s conduct could therefore be Lancastrian loyalism. Michael Hicks’ study of Lancastrian loyalism in the north of England between 1461 and 1471 has demonstrated that the close ties of kinship built up decades before amongst Lancastrians generated such a faith in the legitimacy of the Lancastrian title to the throne that some were prepared to continue the struggle against the Yorkists, despite knowing that it could cost them their lives. In his analysis, Hicks used ‘conspicuous Lancastrians’ such as Sir Henry Lewis, Sir Ralph Percy, Sir Nicholas Latimer, Sir Henry Bellingham and Humphrey Neville of Brancepeth to illustrate that phenomenon. For them loyalty to the dynasty was such that any submissions made to Edward IV after 1461 were regarded as temporary compromises with the de facto king, essential for survival in the short term. As soon as events favoured the Lancastrian cause, traditional loyalties quickly reasserted themselves.

Such behaviour is vividly demonstrated by the career of the Westmorland knight, Sir Henry Bellingham. He fought for the Lancastrians at Towton in March 1461. Fleeing after the battle he took part in the Lancastrian raid on Carlisle in June 1461. He was subsequently attainted in November 1461. Captured at the siege of Naworth in the summer of 1462 he was briefly imprisoned in the Tower of London. However, he was pardoned and took part in the earl of Worcester’s naval expedition along the east coast in 1463. His loyalty to the House of York was short-lived and he fled to Bamburgh. He was attainted for a second time in 1465. He was captured again at the surrender of Harlech in August 1468 and imprisoned in the Tower. Pardoned in October, he nonetheless supported the Reademption regime and on Edward’s return in 1471 a commission was issued for his arrest. This time he received no forgiveness. The second attainder was not reversed.
until Tudor’s victory in 1485. Yet Bellingham and the other ‘conspicuous Lancastrians’, are atypical examples. Recent research into the nature of Lancastrian loyalty in the southwest has in fact shown that it did not necessarily manifest itself in such a straightforward and direct manner. Many other Lancastrians chose to remain neutral and wait upon events. Political uncertainty required gentry everywhere to be much more circumspect in their decision-making. They did not commit themselves without first considering a number of important factors, not least the chances of success and their own chances of survival. The purpose of this article is to examine the career of Sir John Lewknor and determine the relative importance of dynastic loyalty to his decision-making in the 1460s. At first glance, Lewknor’s willingness to fight at a time when circumstances were clearly turning against the Lancastrians could suggest a feeling of loyalty. Yet was that the only reason? In order to determine whether Lancastrian loyalty had a significant effect on Lewknor the article will first examine the background of the Lewknor family in late Lancastrian Sussex. It will then explore Lewknor’s career in royal service under the Lancastrians before analyzing the events of the 1460s and the extent to which this period influenced his behaviour during the Readeption of Henry VI.

Probably born about 1420, John Lewknor was one of four sons of Sir Thomas Lewknor of Trotton by Philippa, daughter of Walter Dallingridge. The Lewknors were already a well-established and well-connected Sussex family, part of the administrative elite who filled local government offices. In addition to his principal lands in the shire, Sir Thomas Lewknor possessed property in Hampshire, Middlesex, Huntingdonshire, Northamptonshire and Oxfordshire. Furthermore, he served as sheriff of Surrey and Sussex in 1426 and 1431–2 and represented the county in the parliaments of 1422 and 1425. His marriage cemented the Lewknors’ position as one of the principal Sussex families. Walter Dallingridge was the brother of Sir Edward Dallingridge, a leading servant of the earl of Arundel. John Lewknor could therefore count some of the key families in the Sussex and the south-east amongst his kinsmen, not least the Camoys, de la Warrs, Hoos, Goring, Pelhams, Coverts, Sackvilles and Culpepers.

As Ralph Griffiths has remarked, ‘Property lay at the root of wealth, reputation and influence’. Establishing a landed base and securing noble patronage were essential considerations for John Lewknor. He was the second son of Sir Thomas Lewknor and would not inherit his father’s lands. On his father’s death in 1452 these passed to his elder brother, Roger. There does not appear to be a will surviving for Sir Thomas Lewknor to see whether provision was made for John Lewknor. Nevertheless, Sir Thomas Lewknor did at least arrange a favourable marriage for his son with a wealthy heiress, Joan, daughter of Richard Halsham of Brabourne in Kent. The Halshams, like the Dallingridges, had strong Arundel connections. In fact, Joan was also the niece and heir of her uncle, Sir Hugh Halsham, a servant of the earl of Arundel. Through his wife, Lewknor acquired property not only at Brabourne in Kent, but also at West Grinstead in Sussex along with other lands in Norfolk and Wiltshire. After his marriage there is little surprise that he chose to base himself primarily at West Grinstead in Sussex rather than the more distant Brabourne.

Before his marriage John Lewknor appeared to have been living at Brambletye in East Grinstead in Sussex. Brambletye was also the residence of his brother, Richard, who held this property by right of his wife, Elizabeth St Clare. East Grinstead formed part of the possessions of the duchy of Lancaster. This suggests that the family had moved into the orbit of the House of Lancaster during the course of the early 15th century, possibly as a consequence of the declining influence of the FitzAlan family represented from 1438 by William FitzAlan, the new but unremarkable earl of Arundel. In comparison, royal service offered the possibility of more rewards. John Lewknor turned his back on a double-connection to the FitzAlans, through his mother and his wife, serving as a squire in the royal household from about 1441 until at least 1445, and probably much later. Very little is known about Lewknor’s early career in the royal service. Although he disappears from the Wardrobe books after 1445, he clearly remained part of the Lancastrian affinity, prospering sufficiently to be rewarded with the appointment of forester of ‘Batales Bailly’ in Windsor Forest in 1446. After serving as sheriff of Surrey and Sussex at the time of Cade’s rebellion, Lewknor was rewarded for his good service in combating the rebels. The evidence which does survive of Lewknor’s career, though, suggests that he was developing a close association with other prominent members of the royal affinity in south-eastern England. His increasing circle of household contacts
during this period resulted in his appointment as one of the seven joint-keepers of the temporalities of the archbishopric of Canterbury after the death of John Stafford in 1452. Lewknor’s associates included his household colleagues, Gervase Clifton of Brabourne and Clifton’s step-son, John Scott of SMEETH, both of whom resided near to his Kentish manor of Brabourne. Scott and Lewknor subsequently established closer ties. In 1458, for example, Scott purchased the manor of Leigh in Iden in Sussex which bordered the Lewknor manor of Iden in the same parish.

Other members of John Lewknor’s family had also begun to prosper in royal service. His brother, Richard Lewknor of Brambletye, served as a squire in the royal household during the late 1440s and early 1450s. He subsequently established a career as a lawyer, probably working in the service of the duchy of Lancaster. Another brother, Walter Lewknor of Trotton, became a squire in the household of Queen Margaret during the early 1450s. John Lewknor’s elder brother, Sir Roger Lewknor of Trotton, did not enter royal service. Nonetheless, he was honoured by being knighted on 5 January 1450 at Greenwich during the same ceremony as Henry VI’s half-brothers, Edmund and Jasper Tudor. This created another link between the Lewknors and the House of Lancaster. He also acted as a keeper of the temporalities when Kemp died in 1454. Taken together, the careers of the Lewknor brothers indicated an increasing identification with Lancastrian interests.

When Edward, Earl of March became king in March 1461, the Lewknors, like many other families were presented with a dilemma: to continue supporting Henry VI or to acquiesce and accept the current political situation. In the south-west, leading Beaufort supporters, including the Stourtons, had made their peace with the Yorkists. Unlike their kinsman, Henry Roos, who was attainted for his support of Queen Margaret and the Lancastrians, the Lewknors, including John, adopted the more prudent course of action and accepted the new king. Sir Roger Lewknor, for example, was soon involved in hunting down troublesome servants of Thomas, Lord Roos in Sussex in 1461. He was subsequently appointed to all commissions of the peace for Sussex during the 1460s and served as sheriff in 1467–68. At first, John Lewknor seemed set to follow the same policy as his elder brother. In 1462 he was appointed to two local commissions, firstly, to arrest ‘certain persons who wander about the counties of Surrey and Sussex with masked and painted faces’, and secondly, to make an inquisition into the duke of Norfolk’s lands in Surrey and Sussex.

Lewknor, however, took no further part in the administration of Sussex after 1463. This appears to be a direct result of his outlawry for debt in that year. Lewknor had been increasingly beset by financial difficulties since the end of Henry VI’s reign. In August 1460 Lewknor, Thomas Etchingham and Ralph St Leger had borrowed £220 from two London grocers, Richard Lee and John Crosby. They subsequently failed to pay the sum due and the debt was registered in February 1462 and again in February 1464. In addition, John Nicholl, another grocer of London, had begun legal proceedings in the Court of Common Pleas at the end of Henry VI’s reign to recover £197 2s., from Lewknor. Lewknor was exacted to appear at the Hustings in London but did not present himself and was subsequently outlawed in 1463. This action dragged on until 1466. Lewknor finally surrendered himself to the Fleet and was pardoned on 14 May that year.

Nevertheless, financial worries were only part of Lewknor’s problems. Given that he held his property at Brabourne and West Grinstead by right of his wife, his position was vulnerable to attack from rival claimants. He had already found it necessary to defend his title to West Grinstead by right of his wife, his position was vulnerable to attack from rival claimants. He had already found it necessary to defend his title to West Grinstead by right of his wife, Joan. Lewknor had obviously tried to settle the question of the Halsham inheritance when he had entered into a fine with John Halsham for other Sussex lands in 1455. In this particular instance, though, Halsham argued that they had all been urged by their friends to seek an arbitrated settlement. According to Halsham it was subsequently agreed by the two parties that he would acquire the manor of West Grinstead, a fine would be raised in the Court of Common Pleas to that effect, John and Joan Lewknor would ensure that any other parties would release their rights in the manor, and in return Halsham would pay £80 to the Lewknors for the manor. However, Halsham asserted that Lewknor and his wife had failed to honour the agreement. John and Joan Lewknor naturally disputed Halsham’s version of events. They denied agreeing to an arbitrated agreement in the form alleged by Halsham. It is possible that at the heart of this dispute lay doubts as to the legitimacy of Richard
Halsham, a situation that John Halsham might have been trying to exploit for his own benefit. Unfortunately, Halsham’s bill of complaint and John and Joan Lewknor’s rejoinder are all that survive of this case. It is thus difficult to ascertain the precise details of the agreement. Halsham could simply have been lying to suit his own purposes. Nevertheless, Lewknor was in debt and he certainly required money to tackle a precarious financial situation. It is therefore entirely possible that he did renege on an arbitrated agreement.

It seems likely that Lewknor’s agreement in 1465 with Sir John Scott of Smeeth, controller of the royal household, was an attempt to strengthen his overall position. John and Joan Lewknor had originally enfeoffed the manor of Brabourne to Ralph Botiller, Lord Sudeley, Richard Fiennes, Lord Dacre, Sir Thomas Etchingham, Sir Roger Lewknor, Thomas Hoo, Thomas Lewknor and Bartholomew Bolney, to the use of Lewknor and his wife and the heirs of their kinsman, Thomas Hoo. It was presumably as a result of his financial worries that Lewknor came to an agreement with Scott. He undoubtedly thought that his personal relationship with Scott, combined with Scott’s prominent position in Edward IV’s household, would deter further attacks on his property. In return for a payment from Scott, Lewknor had agreed that Sudeley and his co-feoffees would convey the manor in fee simple to Thomas, archbishop of Canterbury, and others. They would then enfeoff the manor to Scott. On his part, Scott agreed that he would convey lands of a similar value to Brabourne to Thomas, archbishop of Canterbury and his associates to hold on behalf of the Lewknors, with remainder to Joan and her heirs, and a final remainder to Scott. After the death of John and Joan Lewknor, their heirs would find surety to pay 100 marks for eight years to Scott and his heirs, in default of which Scott’s heirs would take 50 marks a year for sixteen years.

This agreement, however, ran into trouble when Sudeley and his co-feoffees took advantage of Lewknor’s difficulties by refusing to honour the new agreement. At the heart of this dispute was Thomas Hoo who appeared to convince his co-feoffees not to make the estate according to the agreement between Lewknor and Scott. When responding to the complaint brought by John and Joan Lewknor, Hoo clearly implied that John Lewknor was forcing his wife to enter into this agreement and wanted to be sure that this was her will and not simply Lewknor’s. It is debatable whether there was any truth in this accusation for it was in Hoo’s interests to make such an assertion: he had been a potential beneficiary of the original enfeoffment. Although Hoo finally agreed to make an estate to the archbishop as agreed, it was no doubt a costly affair for the Lewknors and John Lewknor took the extra precaution of having the final agreement enrolled in Chancery.

Consequently, by the late 1460s Lewknor had every reason to be concerned about his future prosperity. With his finances in disarray, his property the prey of predatory kinsmen and feoffees, and excluded from participating in Sussex affairs, Lewknor was slowly becoming alienated from the Yorkist regime and from the Sussex political community in particular. Lewknor’s sense of isolation, in fact, corresponded with the increasing unpopularity of the Yorkist government in southern England. In one early instance in 1466, rebels had been captured off the Isle of Wight. More organized Lancastrian activity, however, did not surface until 1468. The realm was suddenly filled with reports of intrigue, disaffection and Lancastrian conspiracies. When the spy, John Cornelius, was captured that same summer on the Isle of Sheppey, off the Kent coast, a number of former Lancastrians were implicated. Lewknor’s former household colleague and neighbour at Brabourne, Sir Gervase Clifton, was one. Possibly more significant for Lewknor, though, was the involvement of several individuals from West Sussex and Hampshire close to his own residence at West Grinstead. These men had links to both Queen Margaret and William Waynflete, bishop of Winchester, the former chancellor and confessor of Henry VI. The most notable, Hugh Pakenham, was a former treasurer of Wolvesey who had, at the instance of Queen Margaret, been appointed customer of Southampton in 1459.

So far, Lewknor had avoided involvement in any conspiracies although it is possible that he was aware of developments. Nonetheless, he remained neutral when Warwick and Clarence briefly seized power during the summer of 1469. Similarly, in February 1470 he declined to join the eclectic group of malcontents who fled into exile with the two lords. In fact, having been pardoned his outlawry in 1466, Lewknor was available once again for public office and appointments. The Yorkist government was obviously not questioning his loyalties at this stage for he was appointed to a commission of array on
29 October 1469, after Edward IV regained the reins of power, and another on 8 February 1470, when Edward summoned the local levies to assist him in restoring order in Lincolnshire. Despite the increasing political uncertainties, Lewknor must have decided that the Warwick-Clarence-Edward IV quarrel was not his. Nevertheless, events eventually caught up with Lewknor when the peculiar alliance forged between Warwick, Clarence and Queen Margaret resulted in the restoration of Henry VI in October 1470. With no particular reason to fight for the survival of the Yorkist monarchy, Lewknor threw in his lot with the Lancastrians.

The Readeption government naturally wanted to appoint its supporters to local government offices. Yet it could not afford to offend the sensibilities of moderate Yorkists with a more ambitious redistribution of patronage; nor could it completely overturn the traditional balance of power in the shires. This was particularly apparent in Sussex where the new regime could do little to increase the extent of its support. By the late 1460s, Richard Fiennes, Lord Dacre, was probably the most influential peer in the county. Chamberlain to Queen Elizabeth, he was also her steward of the Eagle honor and her master forester of Ashdown Forest in Sussex. The queen’s brother, Anthony Woodville, Lord Scales, also held the constableship of Pevensey castle. Yet the curious balancing act attempted by the Readeption is particularly visible in Sussex local administration. A Yorkist appointment was made to the shrievalty: Dacre’s son, Sir John Fiennes, a former king’s knight of Edward IV. On the other hand, the commission of the peace included both Yorkists and Lancastrian sympathizers. In addition to Dacre, Yorkist representation included Thomas Bourchier, archbishop of Canterbury and the ineffectual William FitzAlan, earl of Arundel. Lancastrian interests were upheld by Henry VI’s former chaplain and physician, John Arundel, bishop of Chichester, who had been appointed to the see in 1459 through Queen Margaret’s influence, and Richard West, Lord de la Warr, whose father had apparently fought with Somerset at Wakefield. Despite the reduction in size of the commission and the addition of Lewknor to its membership in November 1470, Lancastrian influence in the shire remained muted.

The structural deficiencies of the regime were dramatically exposed when Edward IV invaded in March 1471. The Lancastrians’ leading stalwart, Edmund Beaufort, duke of Somerset, did his best to gather support across southern England for the rapidly crumbling government. However, receiving little encouragement he was forced to proceed to Salisbury in the West Country to continue with his recruitment in more sympathetic areas. Lewknor was undoubtedly in touch with developments taking place nationally. It was possibly while Somerset was proceeding westwards that he and Sir Gervase Clifton both joined the Lancastrian forces. Unfortunately, Margaret of Anjou did not land at Weymouth in Dorset until 14 April, by which time Edward IV had already defeated the earl of Warwick at Barnet. Nevertheless, despite receiving the bad news, she decided to confront Edward IV. The two armies met at Tewkesbury on 4 May. The Lancastrians were routed and suffered considerable losses, including Henry VI’s son, Prince Edward, Somerset’s brother, John, marquess of Dorset, and John Courtenay, earl of Devon. Lewknor had probably been knighted on the eve of the battle and was sufficiently prominent amongst the Lancastrian forces to have his death noted by contemporary chroniclers. Edmund Beaufort, duke of Somerset, who had done his utmost to gather support for the Readeption, was beheaded after the battle along with that other Lancastrian die-hard, Sir Gervase Clifton.

What, then, are the conclusions to be drawn from Sir John Lewknor’s career? In one sense, Lewknor’s motivation is not dissimilar to that of the Warwickshire esquire, Robert Arden of Castle Bromwich in the 1450s. Arden was the son of a wealthy Warwickshire knight whose fortunes had deteriorated steadily since the 1440s. His subsequent support for the abortive rising of Richard, duke of York, in March 1452 has been described by Christine Carpenter as ‘the last desperate throw of a man now almost entirely isolated from his peers and neighbours who was probably also in a condition of gross indebtedness and had little to lose’. Yet the preceding analysis has suggested that Lewknor’s actions could have been shaped by more than mere desperation. Lewknor had service connections with the royal household which stretched back 30 years or more. He had also forged some strong relationships while serving under the Lancastrians, not least with Sir Gervase Clifton of Brabourne. These connections apparently survived the upheavals of 1460–61. Lewknor had little interest in the survival of the Yorkist regime. Prevented by his outlawry from
taking office, Lewknor was unable to find any significant role in Sussex politics. Although his brothers, Roger and Richard became active participants in local affairs, Lewknor himself remained isolated. Personal factors and circumstances exacerbated his sense of alienation. Lewknor was also suffering from severe financial difficulties. This weak position left him open to attacks on his property, a position made worse by the fact that his lands were held by right of his wife. It was fate, however, which acted as the final catalyst so that Lewknor’s problems reached a climax at precisely the moment when the Yorkist monarchy was beginning to experience its own difficulties. The presence of Sir John Lewknor at Tewkesbury is therefore not simply a case of Lancastrian loyalism. Some men were clearly strongly motivated by loyalty to the dynasty, vide Sir Thomas Tresham. Others, no doubt, like Arden, were primarily concerned with personal circumstances. The majority like Lewknor were perhaps influenced by a range of factors and fall somewhere between these two poles. In the final analysis, for any meaningful conclusions to be drawn on the nature of Lancastrian loyalism, more case studies like that of Lewknor need to be undertaken.

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NOTES
5 PRO, C 139/150/35, C 140/66/37, PROB 11/7 fos 5v–6r.
6 List of Sheriffs for England and Wales, PRO Lists and Indexes 9 (1898), 136; Return of the Name of Every Member of the Parliament of England, Scotland and Ireland, 1213–1702 (New York: Kraus Reprint Corporation, 1980) 1, 304, 309. Griffiths describes Sir Thomas Lewknor as a man without particularly strong political commitments although the Dallingridge marriage and his service with the earl of Arundel at Agincourt might suggest an Arundel connection: R. A. Griffiths, Henry VI, 2nd edition (Stroud: Alan Sutton, 1998), 81, 91; PRO, E 101/47/1 (retinue roll m1r).
10 PRO, C 139/150/35.
11 PRO, C 138/13/38; C 139/107/27. Hugh Halsham also fought in Arundel’s retinue at Agincourt: PRO, E 101/47/1 (retinue roll m1r); C. E. D. Davidson-Houston, ‘Sussex monumental brasses’, SAC 78 (1937), 75–6; N. Saul, ‘The Sussex gentry and the oath to uphold the acts of the Merciless Parliament’, SAC 135 (1997), 236.
14 The Dallingriddges had also moved into Lancastrian service during the early 15th century. Sir John Dallingridge, son of Sir Edward, served Henry IV with conspicuous loyalty: Walker, The Lancastrian Affinity, 139.
15 PRO, E 101/409/9 f. 37, 409/11 f. 38v.
16 Calendar of Patent Rolls, 1441–6, 399. Although there is no wardrobe account for 24–5 Henry VI, this grant proves that Lewknor, as a king’s esquire, was still serving in the royal household in 1446.
17 PRO, E 404/68/137.
19 Sussex Topographical Surveys: Iden Parish 1993 (typescript at East Sussex Record Office), 10–11, 177. Scott’s son, William, later married Sybil Lewknor. Her parentage has caused some confusion. She has generally been described as the daughter of Sir John Lewknor of Goring. This seems to be a mistake. There is no evidence that he existed other than for the fact that his name has appeared in a number
of published pedigrees. Furthermore, the biographical details which are provided are the same as those given for John Lewknor of West Grinstead. Given his strong personal connections with John Scott it is more likely that Sybil was John Lewknor of West Grinstead’s daughter: Sussex Topographical Surveys, 11; Comber, Sussex Genealogies, 149; W. D. Cooper, ‘Pedigree of the Lewknor family’, S&C 1 (1850), 92; Wedgwood & Holt, Biographies, 540, 752.

The grant of 1372 to John of Gaunt included the castle and lowey of Pevensy, the free chapel within Pevensy Castle, the demesne manors of Willindon and Maresfield, the church and free chapel of Maresfield, the bailiwick of Endlewick and the free chase of Ashdown; in 1377 a supplementary grant specified the town of East Grinstead (previously considered part of the manor of Maresfield) and the town of Seaford (previously considered part of the castle and lowey of Pevensy): Calendar of Patent Rolls, 1370–74, 183; Calendar of Patent Rolls, 1377–81, 24, 69–70.

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20 March, 1465, Lord Sudeley and others to Thomas wife of John Lewknor); U1115, T 13/5 (Power of Attorney, November 1445, Cardinal Beaufort and others to Joan, wife of John Lewknon); U1115, T 13/5 (Power of Attorney, 20 March, 1465, Lord Sudeley and others to Thomas Wakefield and others to deliver seisin of Brabourne to Thomas, archbishop of Canterbury and others); Calendar of Patent Rolls, 1461–7, 493–4 (a copy of this exemption exists as Centre for Kentish Studies, U1115, T 13/6).


23 In fact, Lewknor’s financial problems continued to deteriorate during the remainder of the decade. As late as February 1471 he was still borrowing money. A further Statute Staple debt was subsequently registered against Lewknor, John Fust of Warnham and John Cowper of Tichhurst in June of that year. By the time the debt was registered, Lewknor was already dead leaving the remaining two debtors liable for his share: PRO, C 241/254/4.

24 G. L. & M. A. Harriss, ‘John Benet’s chronicle’, 228. De la Warr was also reported to have been involved in the defence of the Tower of London in 1460 although this seems to be a confusion with John Dalamare of Berkshire: J. S. Davis (ed.), An English Chronicle of the Reigns of Richard II, Henry IV, Henry V and Henry VI (Camber Soc., 4th ser. 10) 2, 615, 621.

25 List of Sheriffs for England and Wales, 137; Calendar of Patent Rolls, 1467–77, 632–3; Dictionary of National Biography (sub John Arundell); Griffiths, Henry VI, 767; G. L. & M. A. Harriss, ‘John Benet’s chronicle’, 228. De la Warr was also reported to have been involved in the defence of the Tower of London in 1460 although this seems to be a confusion with John Dalamare of Berkshire: J. S. Davis (ed.), An English Chronicle of the Reigns of Richard II, Henry IV, Henry V and Henry VI (Camber Soc., 4th ser. 10) 2, 615, 621.


27 PRO, C 241/246/53, 248/60. Lee was connected by marriage to Sir John Fogge of Ashford, a leading member of Edward IV’s government and treasurer of his household at this time: Mercer, ‘Kent and national politics’, 108.

28 PRO, C 241/246/53, 248/60. Lee was connected by marriage to Sir John Fogge of Ashford, a leading member of Edward IV’s government and treasurer of his household at this time: Mercer, ‘Kent and national politics’, 108.

29 For the manor of Brabourne see entry for Sir John Lewknor, Kentish Studies, 52.