

◆ The Medsteds of Heighton in Firle

THE RISE AND FALL OF A 14TH-CENTURY SUSSEX FAMILY (1302–1416)

By Daniel Booker

In the first decade of the 14th century Andrew de Medsted, an obscure member of a Hampshire gentry family, established himself in Sussex, perhaps under the tutelage of the FitzAlan earls of Arundel. Serving as sheriff in 1323–5 and knighted in 1327, Sir Andrew established a respectable estate in the eastern half of the county, including the manor of Charleston in Firle. The holding was consolidated by his more martial descendants, who remained important members of the local gentry community until the family's disappearance in the middle of the 15th century. The origins of the Medsteds, their territorial enterprises and the local and national interests of the family are considered in detail.

The Medsteds of Heighton may not be the most recognisable 14th-century Sussex family, but they are certainly one of the most interesting. Appearing from almost nowhere in 1307, the Medsted family quickly established themselves as major landholders and figures of authority in Sussex. Almost as suddenly as they appeared, however, the Medsteds vanished in the 15th century owing to a lack of male heirs who could continue the family name. The Medsteds' territorial enterprises, attested in a large amount of documentary evidence, were all that survived their descent into relative obscurity after 1416. Their self-styled manor of 'Medsteds' in Firle would in 1545 be bought by Sir John Gage KG from Ralph Bellingham, ward of King Henry VIII and descendant of Joan, great-granddaughter of Sir Philip de Medsted, for the sum of £80.¹ In 1648 the manor of Charleston, another of the Medsteds' creations, was purchased by Sir Thomas Gage from Thomas Elphick of Seaford for £2550.²

Yet the Medsted family was much more than a mere footnote in the history of the Gages: the assembly of their estates, their political and mercantile activities, and the relationships they cultivated with their neighbours deserve narratives of their own, and provide an all-too-rare window into the life and activities of a minor gentry family in Sussex. Three members of the family played key roles in the Medsteds' rise to prominence during the 14th century: Sir Andrew de Medsted, the first of the family to come to Sussex; Sir Andrew's eldest son and heir, Sir William de Medsted; and, finally, Sir William's eldest son Sir Philip de Medsted. The aim of this paper is to bring the fascinating lives of these men back into focus, and to construct a

clearer picture of the family's impact on Sussex before their disappearance from the forefront of county life.

THE ORIGINS OF THE MEDSTEDS AND THEIR ENTRANCE INTO SUSSEX

Due in part to the sudden appearance of the Medsteds in the records, we know very little of their origins. The family almost certainly originated in Hampshire, and quite probably in the area surrounding Alton and the village of Medstead (which is located only four miles away), where Sir Andrew de Medsted possessed several familial connections. One deed of 1317, to which Sir Andrew was a witness, names both Hugh de Medsted and Robert de Medsted as 'of the county of Hampshire', and in 1311 Hugh de Medsted was charged with a violent assault at Alton.³ It is plausible that the Medsted family was in some way connected to the estates of the Bishop of Winchester, as Medstead was a manor of the episcopal see.⁴

Sir Andrew de Medsted emerged in 1307, shortly before the death of Edward I, when he established his first foothold in Sussex. Sir Andrew's initial acquisition in the county was the manor of Bilsham in Yapton, in which he obtained a life estate during the summer of 1307 (by 1316 he was also one of the two lords of the vill of Bilsham).⁵ In 1309 Sir Andrew moved his interests further east, having negotiated a 12-year lease on a portion of land at Heighton in Firle from William, the son of William Daundevill.⁶ Sir Andrew may not have known it at the time, but this was to be the limit of his eastward migration. Although he would gain lands and manors in other parts of Sussex, the estate Sir Andrew established

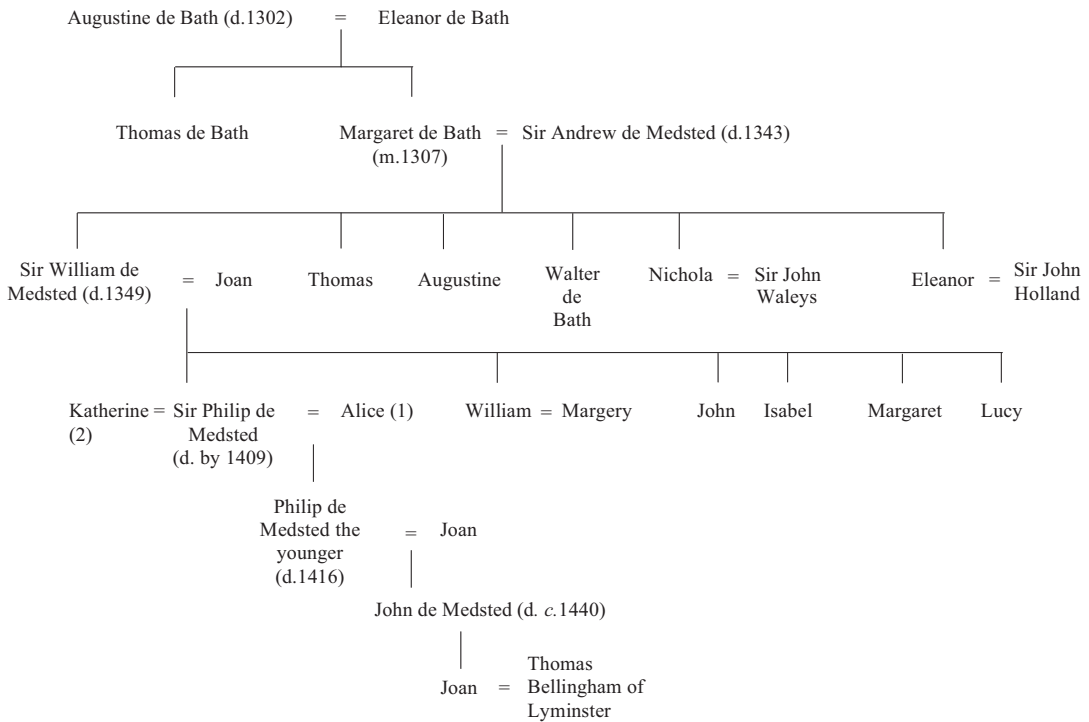


Fig. 1. The Medsteds of Heighton in Firle.

at Heighton would become closely associated with the family and be the most enduring of its enterprises.

Shortly after his entrance into Sussex, Sir Andrew de Medsted also became a substantial landowner in the West Country through his marriage to Margaret de Bath, a royal ward and heiress to a tenant-in-chief.⁷ Margaret's father, Augustine de Bath, had been murdered in 1302. Aside from the charge of murder, the exact circumstances of his death are unclear. In 1302 Eleanor de Bath, Augustine's widow and mother to Margaret, brought an appeal in Devon against Robert the Archdeacon, Urban de Treweyech, Michael de Treweyech and Thomas de Heyly over the murder of her late husband. Yet in April 1302, whilst Edward I was at Devizes, the four men successfully petitioned the king to have the appeal reviewed by a commission of oyer and terminer.⁸ The outcome of the case is far from certain: conventional successes in appeals of murder were not common, and the goal of Eleanor's action may have been financial.⁹ The one result of Augustine's death of which we can be

certain is that his lands were returned to Edward I's hands and Margaret, as a minor and the daughter of a tenant-in-chief, subsequently became a royal ward.¹⁰ Margaret remained in wardship for at least five years (and possibly as much as a decade), until Edward II deigned to award her in marriage to Sir Andrew de Medsted. The marriage instantly brought Sir Andrew a large estate in Devon and Somerset, including the manor and borough of Sheepwash and the hundred of Bath Foreign.

It is not entirely clear why Sir Andrew de Medsted decided to relocate to Sussex, but we can make an educated guess. One possible explanation is that Sir Andrew was in the service of the FitzAlan earls of Arundel, or at least closely connected to the family. Such an association would explain his decision to settle at Bilsham, a manor attached to the Honour of Arundel and in close proximity to the seat of comital authority in Sussex. The influence or patronage of the FitzAlans may also shed some light on how Sir Andrew managed to secure a marriage to Margaret de Bath, a rich heiress and royal ward, shortly after appearing

from almost nowhere in the summer of 1307. The Avenel family, formerly the lords of Sheepwash in Devon (where they were granted a market and fair in 1230), had also held land at Bilsham between 1197 and 1244.¹¹ It is possible that Bilsham was in some way connected to the Devon estates of Margaret de Bath, or represented an outlying portion of her inheritance, and that Sir Andrew's acquisition of the manor (with the support of the FitzAlans) was directly related to the marriage.¹² The Medsteds were certainly close to the FitzAlans in the second half of the 14th century, but their association with the comital family may well have gone back much further than originally thought.

THE CREATION OF THE FAMILY ESTATE (1309–1409)

Rather than dwell in the West Country and live off the substantial rents afforded by his marriage to Margaret de Bath, Sir Andrew de Medsted evidently focused all his attention upon Sussex. Perhaps the most striking aspect of Sir Andrew's personal contribution to the creation of his family's estates in the county is the methodical approach he applied to the endeavour. From 1307 there are many examples of how Sir Andrew would procure a lease or a grant for life of a manor or portion of land, and subsequently buy up the reversionary rights or obtain a release of claim from the previous owners or their heirs, thus perfecting his title to the property. Indeed, his very first foothold at Heighton in Firle provides a perfect example of that process. On 25 July 1309 Sir Andrew procured a 12-year lease of land at Heighton and Compton.¹³ Eight months later, Sir Andrew secured his possession of the same lands by obtaining from William, son of William Daundevill, a release of his claim for £40.¹⁴ The lease was executed at Chichester but the sale at Heighton, indicating Medsted's movement between what were then his only possessions in Sussex. Two years later Sir Andrew repeated the process. The targets on this occasion were the lands and tenements of Emma, widow of Adrian Tailor, in Heighton, which he secured on the 26 July 1312.¹⁵ By August he had snuffed out any potential counterclaim through the purchase of the reversionary rights to the lands from Adrian's son and heir Robert.¹⁶ In 1317 it took Sir Andrew less than a week to obtain a quitclaim from Petronilla la Hoppestre for an acre of arable land that he had originally bought

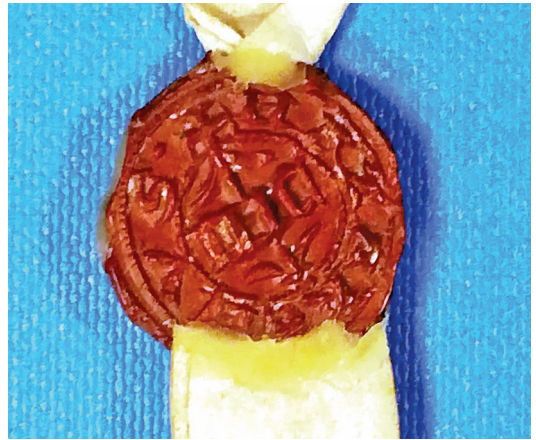


Fig. 2. Seal of Andrew de Medsted from a charter of 1317, showing the sacred monogram IHC and the legend NAZARENVS, signifying Jesus of Nazareth (ESRO SAS/G 47/97).

from her husband Richard la Hoppestre for five marks.¹⁷ We can perhaps speculate that he was advancing money on mortgages in the hope that debtors would be forced to sell up. Sir Andrew de Medsted's *modus operandi* also reveals his overall objective in East Sussex: he was clearly intent on establishing an unassailable possession of his estates and a secure inheritance, rather than a holding in which he and his descendants would be subject to adverse claims. Sir Andrew held his estates in Devon only in the right of his wife, and his possession of Bilsham in West Sussex was only a grant for life, as Hugh de Croft and his wife Perina had preserved the reversionary rights to the manor for themselves and their heirs.¹⁸

Sir Andrew simultaneously began a systematic expansion of his holdings in East Sussex, usually through exchanges or small grants, building upon his original acquisitions in the Heighton and Firle area. Typically this involved the piecemeal acquisition of land from lesser neighbours, more often than not directly adjacent to his own estates. In 1316, for instance, Sir Andrew acquired a grant from Simon de Warbleton of three small pieces of land in Firle (each of half an acre) located next to his existing estate.¹⁹ The single acre that Sir Andrew gained from the Hoppestres in 1317 bordered upon the lands of Mabel de Dene, which he would later acquire in 1323 for £20.²⁰ All the lands of Richard atte Bergh in Chiddingly, which abutted upon Sir Andrew's estate to the north and the west, were

also purchased by him in 1326.²¹ At the same time Sir Andrew was consolidating his estate by frequent deeds of exchange. In 1317 he swapped with Maud de Copedragh a messuage that he had obtained from Emma Tailor in 1312 for another messuage with five acres of land (Fig. 5); 13 years later he repeated the exercise with Albreda, the widow of Simon de Warbleton, granting her a life estate in a house in Heighton with an annual rent of 20 shillings and 6½ quarters of corn, in exchange for all her inherited paternal estate in Firle.²²

In the late 1320s and early 1330s we can begin to see the results of Sir Andrew's patient and methodical campaign to reshape local landholding patterns and forge a respectable estate. The subsidy return for 1327, by which Sir Andrew was assessed at £2 4s. 10d., is the first general overview of his holdings in Sussex. The manor of Bilsham remained the only Medsted possession in West Sussex, but on the other side of the county Sir Andrew had accrued several manors beyond his Heighton estate. One such manor was Charleston, located nearby in the parish of Firle but part of the hundred of Rushmonden and the Honour of Leicester. Sir Andrew had originally procured a four-year lease of Charleston in 1323 from William de Werth at the rate of £8 a year.²³ However, the unusually substantial rent suggests that the deal was actually to buy the manor in full for a total of £32. Sir Andrew was also assessed for land at Brighton (presumably the manor of Bevendean, which he purchased from Roger de la Warr for £133 6s. 8d. in 1312), Willingdon and Westdean-Exceat, of which Sir Andrew had acquired a life estate, probably by mortgage, from William Maufe.²⁴ The latter was the most highly assessed of all his possessions (at 12s. 0¾d.) and quite possibly his main residence at the time.²⁵ Not listed in the subsidy returns is the manor of Manxey in Pevensy, which Sir Andrew had been granted in 1322 by Roger de Mankesie, its former lord.²⁶ There were no significant changes by 1332, when Edward III called upon his subjects for another subsidy, except that the manor of Bilsham (at 16 shillings) had become the most highly-assessed Medsted property.²⁷

In the next decade or so it was essentially business as usual for Sir Andrew. Between 1333 and 1341 he continued to purchase or lease various pieces of land in Heighton and its immediate vicinity. In 1333 he secured the Heighton lands of Walter le Rede for the life of Walter's wife Mazelina,

and a 10-year lease of an acre of meadow in Firle from John Ballard.²⁸ In 1336 Sir Andrew added another piece of meadow to his possessions, this time in Laughton, as well as other lands in Friston, where the vendor also granted him a life estate in his remaining land in return for an annuity of 20 shillings.²⁹ Evidently the only thing that could suppress Sir Andrew de Medsted was his death in 1343: after more than 30 years of canny and near-continuous territorial expansion, Sir Andrew died and was survived by his wife, Margaret, his four sons—William, Thomas, Augustine and Walter—and two daughters, Nichola and Eleanor. Sir Andrew's death signals the end of the principal phase of the construction of the Medsted estates in Sussex: his descendants would augment what he bequeathed to them, but none would display quite the same level of acquisitiveness as their forebear.

Sir Andrew de Medsted's death in 1343 precipitated the dispersal of the Medsted family unit, with roughly half the family remaining in Sussex and the rest relocating to Devon and Somerset. Margaret appears to have left Sussex almost immediately after her husband's death and returned to her ancestral home in the West Country. In August 1343 she was granted the manor of Shockerwick, the bailiwick of the hundred of Bath Foreign and estates in the neighbourhood of Bath in Somerset, and by 1351 she had married Richard Bykelake.³⁰ Margaret also retained the Devon estates of her father Augustine de Bath, and with her new husband held two-thirds of the manors of East Raddon, Colebrooke, Farnhull and Clawton (with the final third held by her mother Eleanor de Bath and her husband John de Chalfham).³¹ Very little is seen of Sir Andrew's younger sons, but Thomas probably remained in the Firle area; his father had already endowed him with a sizeable estate in Willingdon and Jevington that included 176 acres of land and pasture for 200 sheep.³² On the other hand, Walter seems to have adopted his mother's maiden name and followed her back to the West Country: the lands acquired by Margaret in 1343 were also granted to him in tail, with further remainders to his brothers Augustine and Thomas (Fig. 3).³³ Sir Andrew's two daughters also split between Devon and Sussex. Nichola had married Sir John Waleys (I), Sir Andrew's neighbour at Glynde, while Eleanor married Sir John Holland of Weare Giffard in Devon.³⁴

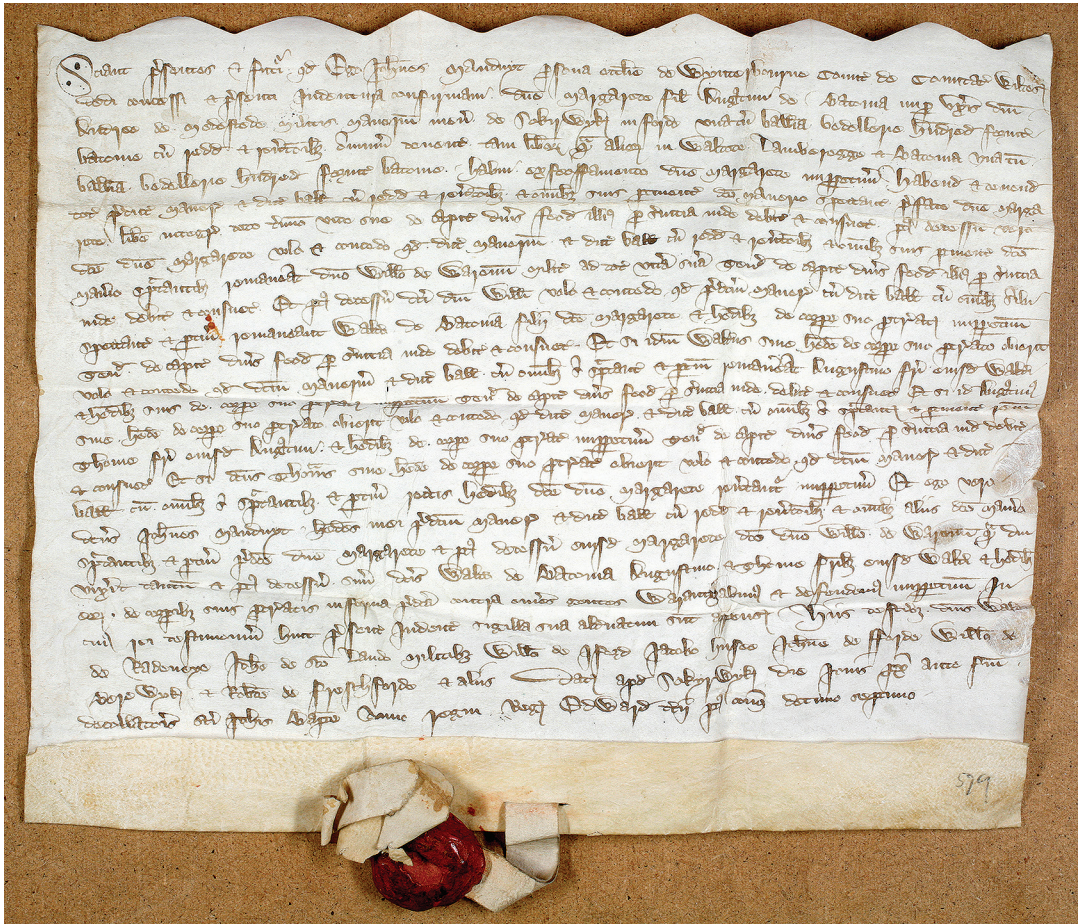


Fig. 3. Settlement of the Somerset estate of Margaret, daughter of Augustine of Bath and widow of Sir Andrew de Medsted on their three sons, 28 August 1343 (Somerset Heritage Centre, Taunton, DD/WHb/409).

The core of the Medsted estates in East Sussex passed to Sir Andrew’s eldest son and heir, Sir William de Medsted, although his mother brought two actions against him in 1343 and 1345 for dower of what was presumably the entirety of his father’s Sussex lands.³⁵ In his short time as head of the family, Sir William certainly took up his father’s mantle in expanding the family estates and continued Sir Andrew’s policy of acquiring lands adjacent to their existing properties or in the surrounding area.³⁶ In June 1345 Sir William bought an acre of land at ‘Apelterwelle’ that lay directly to the south of his own lands.³⁷ In 1346 he gained an annual rent of a penny at Lulham in Laughton, and in 1349 added several portions of land to his estate in Heighton, including a messuage on the

eastern edge of his existing property.³⁸ Sir William’s expansion of the family estates was cut short by his untimely death. A commission sent in 1352 by Queen Philippa, wife of Edward III, to investigate abuses and corruption in her Sussex lands reveals that he died in his bed of an unspecified sickness sometime around 8 September 1349.³⁹ Considering the date of his death, it seems likely that Sir William was a victim of the Black Death that had arrived in England in 1348. Like his father, Sir William was survived by his wife and six children: three sons (Philip, William and John) and three daughters (Isabel, Margaret and Lucy).

In comparison to his father and grandfather, we possess far less evidence for Sir Philip de Medsted’s land dealings in the years between 1349 and his

death c. 1409. Sir William having died whilst his son was a child, Sir Philip's invisibility in the years after his father's death is partially attributable to his status as a minor. Once he came of age, however, Sir Philip inherited the respectable estate in Sussex that had been protected by his uncle, Sir John Waleys, after his father's death. Thereafter we have only a few examples of Sir Philip engaging in any local land dealings. In 1372, for instance, he renewed to Roger Gosselyn the lease of several lands in Firlé that once belonged to his younger brother William.⁴⁰ As we shall see, Sir Philip de Medsted was a very different man from his grandfather and it would be too harsh for us to compare him with Sir Andrew, a man who appears to have possessed an almost preternatural ability to accrue new properties. Sir Philip may simply have been content to survive on the revenues afforded by his existing estates. The survival of the Medsted estates in Sussex beyond Sir Philip de Medsted's death is at least testament to a modicum of good management on his part.

COMMERCIAL ENTERPRISES

The construction of the Medsted estates in Sussex, especially during the phase of rapid expansion under Sir Andrew de Medsted, undoubtedly required a great deal of financial liquidity. What little evidence there is of the sums that Sir Andrew paid for certain lands and manors between 1309 and 1330 suggests that his campaign of purchasing was hardly cheap. The release to Sir Andrew's first acquisition in Heighton cost him £40, and he paid £20 and £32 respectively for the lands of Mabel de Dene and the manor of Charleston. The whole family would have enjoyed a relatively substantial income from their lands in Sussex, and Sir Andrew could certainly draw upon the rents of the Devon estates he held in right of his wife Margaret (although in 1315 he granted the manor and borough of Sheepwash to his brother-in-law Thomas de Bath at an annual rent of 20 shillings) (Fig. 4).⁴¹ If Sir Andrew was close to the FitzAlans, he may also have received significant financial support from the earls of Arundel.

One avenue of financial recourse for the gentry was commerce, and many did become merchants to supplement their landed incomes.⁴² Although the Cinque Ports were hit hard by the loss of Normandy in 1204, and they had no geographical advantage upon which to rely when trade routes were reorganised, Sussex remained an exporter of raw

materials throughout the 13th and 14th centuries. Iron, timber, salt and charcoal were all produced in Sussex; however, the county's primary export was wool, and the Medsted estates were located in areas particularly suited to its production. The trade of wool with the continent had been one of England's greatest sources of profit since at least the 12th century. The material was exported *en masse* to the industrial regions of Flanders and Northern France, which, in turn, provided manufactured goods for the English market.⁴³

It seems that Sir Andrew de Medsted decided to capitalise upon the fortuitous location of his estates and became involved in trading wool with the continent. One particular deed, dated to 27 August 1330, details the conveyance of several pieces of land in Seaford from one John Hikeling, who also held land at Chyngton on the Cuckmere, to Sir Andrew: two tenements (one of which was located on the edge of the town's port), and a single acre of arable land on Seaford Down.⁴⁴ At first glance, the conveyance appears to be reasonably prosaic; however, a comparison with the subsidy returns of 1327 and customs accounts for the export of wool reveals the vendor John Hikeling to have been one of the principal wool merchants operating out of Seaford.⁴⁵ Yet, if we move forward five years to the subsidy return of 1332, Hikeling's name is completely absent. On the other hand, the first entry for Sir Andrew de Medsted in the 1332 return states that he was 'of the Cinque Ports'.⁴⁶ This change signifies two things. Firstly, that Sir Andrew de Medsted had become a portsman in the period between the two subsidies. Sir Andrew's name is also accompanied by the annotation *breve* ('writ'), which is quite probably an indication of the particular rights accorded to such men.⁴⁷ The Sussex limbs of the Cinque Ports, such as Pevensy, Rye and Winchelsea, are absent from the returns as their contributions were negotiated directly with the king.⁴⁸ Indeed, *breve* may signify that Sir Andrew's status as a portsman rendered the 1332 assessments null and void, with his personal contribution to Edward III's tax on moveables coming through the Cinque Ports. Secondly, it suggests that the change was directly related to his purchase in Seaford, which had been a subsidiary limb of the Cinque Ports since 1229. Hikeling's disappearance from the subsidy returns shortly after he made the grant almost certainly indicates that Sir Andrew bought out his business.

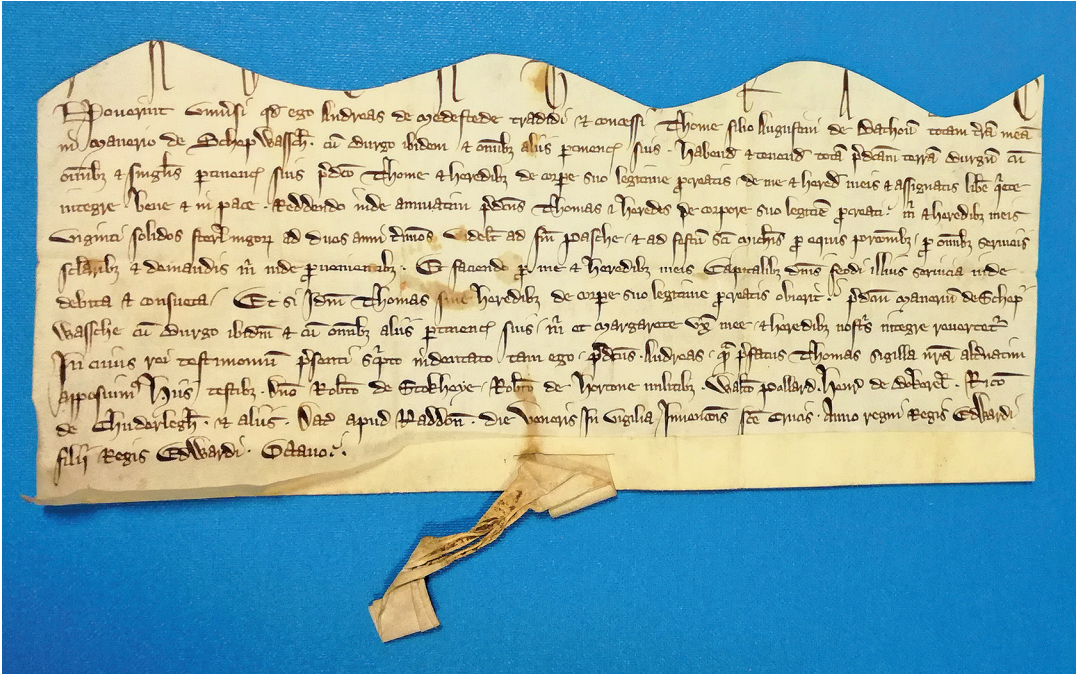


Fig. 4. Charter of Andrew de Medsted granting the manor and borough of Sheepwash in Devon to his brother-in-law Thomas de Bath, 2 May 1315 (ESRO SAS/G 47/91).

Sir Andrew de Medsted had established connections with the town and port of Seaford since at least the early 1320s. One of the witnesses to the 1330 deed, John de la Doune of Seaford, was certainly well known to him. In 1323 Sir Andrew had granted all the lands and tenements he acquired from Mabel de Dene, Simon de Warbleton and Maud de Copedragh to John de la Doune. Although the grant was drawn as a conveyance for £30, the lands were probably to be held in trust during Sir Andrew's term as sheriff for Surrey and Sussex.⁴⁹ John de la Doune may well have been the link between Hikeling and Sir Andrew de Medsted; at the very least he would have been capable of furnishing Sir Andrew with an understanding of the mercantile opportunities afforded by the port in 1330. In terms of wool exportation, Seaford was roughly commensurate to the much larger city and port of Chichester at the turn of the 14th century.⁵⁰ Sir Andrew's estates had direct access to the coast for export, and Seaford's close proximity (and the wool trade's profitability) undoubtedly made investment in the town an enticing prospect. Sir Andrew continued to be involved in the business

until at least 1341, when Edward III paid him £36 1s. 8d. for 9½ sacks and a clove of wool taken in connection with the subsidy.⁵¹

There is no credible evidence that either Sir William de Medsted or Sir Philip de Medsted were portmen or supplemented their income through the trade in wool. It is likely that the nascent conflict between England and France that would become the Hundred Years War caused Seaford to become far less reliable in a commercial sense. In 1339 the French raided the south coast from Kent to Cornwall, and the final year in which we see any activity by Sir Andrew de Medsted in the wool trade coincided with at least one French attack on Seaford.⁵² An inquisition of 1341 into Seaford's payment of the ninth states that many men from the parish had been killed during recent French raids on the port.⁵³ Furthermore, the trade was seriously affected by prohibitions on export, with wool being allowed to leave the kingdom only by licence.⁵⁴ That there is little evidence for Sir William or Sir Philip's involvement in the wool trade is understandable when one considers the uncertain economic situation in the middle of the 14th century.

LOCAL AND NATIONAL INTERESTS

Sir Andrew de Medsted's success in the establishment of an estate in Sussex was mirrored by his own rise within the local gentry community and the kingdom at large. Throughout the decade that followed his arrival in Sussex, Sir Andrew de Medsted was mostly engaged in local affairs, such as standing as the principal witness to land grants and exchanges in the Heighton and Firle area.⁵⁵ In 1324, however, Sir Andrew managed to secure the shrievalty for Surrey and Sussex.⁵⁶ Once more the evidence points to a close connection with the FitzAlan earls of Arundel. Sir Andrew's time as sheriff coincided with the zenith of Despenser power at court, and Edmund FitzAlan, then earl of Arundel, was a key ally of the Despensers and thus in a prime position to have one of his retainers appointed to a key local office. Sir Andrew held the position of

sheriff for two years, until he was relieved of his post soon after the execution of Hugh le Despenser the younger.⁵⁷ Although Edmund FitzAlan paid for his connection to the Despensers with his life, Sir Andrew survived the political crisis of 1327 and did not suffer unduly in the period that followed Edward II's removal by Roger Mortimer and Queen Isabella: in fact, he was knighted in the same year and his dubbing may even have taken place at Edward III's coronation ceremony.⁵⁸ Sir Andrew was then recalled to royal service in January 1331, when he was tasked by Edward III with surveying the lands and possessions of the recently executed Roger Mortimer in Kent, Surrey, Sussex, Hampshire, Middlesex and London.⁵⁹ In light of his service to Edward II (and the possible connections to Edmund FitzAlan and the Despensers), it makes sense that Sir Andrew was amongst the men whom Edward III chose to dismantle the Mortimer estates.

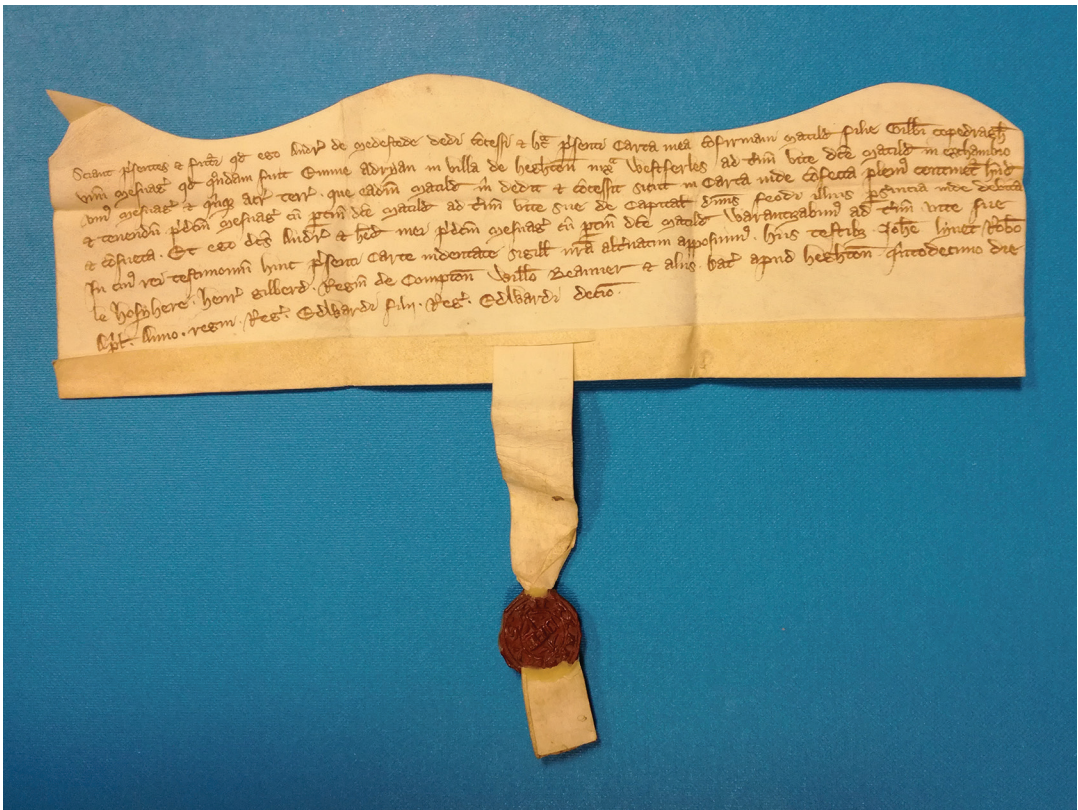


Fig. 5. Charter of Andrew de Medsted to Maud daughter of Gilbert Copedragh, 15 April 1317 (ESRO SAS/G 47/97).

Sir Andrew de Medsted was clearly trusted by the king and considered to be a canny administrator, and regularly performed various duties for Edward III's government until his death in 1343. In 1335 he was commissioned to investigate trespasses in Sussex and punish any local officials who had been negligent in keeping the peace while Edward III was in Scotland in 1333.⁶⁰ A year later Sir Andrew also surveyed wastes in Ashdown Forest on behalf of Queen Philippa.⁶¹ Although in January 1337 he gained a royal exemption which precluded him from being put on assizes or serving as sheriff, mayor, coroner or bailiff against his will, Sir Andrew continued to operate for Edward III at a local level.⁶² In 1338 he was commissioned to inspect the walls and ditches in Sussex for the draining of flooded meadows, and in 1340 he was commanded by the king to make an extent of the Norman abbey of Bec's manors of Preston and Hooe.⁶³ Sir Andrew was also tasked with the collection of the royal subsidy for Sussex in the same year.⁶⁴

While he did not possess the royal connections of his father, Sir William de Medsted was an established soldier (unlike Sir Andrew, who appears to have performed no military service) and an active member of the local gentry. In particular, Sir William had a close association with Sir Michael de Poynings. An especially warlike family, the lords of Poynings served in all the major campaigns of the 14th century: Sir Michael was the son of Sir Thomas de Poynings, who in 1339 fought and died at the siege of Honnecourt near Cambrai.⁶⁵ Sir Michael furthered his family's martial reputation seven years later, when he took a sizeable contingent to France for the Crécy campaign of 1346–7 that included Sir William and several other notable members of the Sussex gentry community.⁶⁶ Sir William de Medsted remained in the orbit of the Lord of Poynings beyond the conclusion of the Crécy campaign, and in 1349 he witnessed a quitclaim of the manor of Perching made by Sir John de Molyns to Sir Michael. Sir William was joined in the witness list by two other notable figures of the local gentry who regularly fought alongside the lords of Poynings: Sir Andrew Peverel of Sompting Peverel, a great landowner in the Cuckmere Valley, and his own brother-in-law Sir John Waleys.⁶⁷

Sir William de Medsted's close relationship with Sir John Waleys was very important when he died in 1349. Bedridden by his unspecified sickness, in the week that preceded his death Sir William had

enfeoffed Sir John (alongside Ralph Pulscote) with his lands on the condition that Sir John would enfeoff his wife, Joan, and heir, Philip, in due course.⁶⁸ As Sir William's neighbour and his heir's uncle, Sir John was the ideal candidate to protect the Medsted estates until Sir Philip came of age. The arrangement was also designed to protect the young Sir Philip from the predation of Sir William's overlord. By enfeoffing Sir John Waleys, Sir William was attempting to circumvent the obligations associated with wardships and inheritances, and thus deprive his overlord, Queen Philippa, of her feudal dues. Sir William de Medsted was far from alone in his attempts to avoid such liabilities. James de Etchingham had also enfeoffed his brother Master John Etchingham and John de Ore to conceal the wardship of his young son William de Etchingham.⁶⁹ Unfortunately for Sir William and the Etchinghams, Queen Philippa harboured suspicions that her vassals were attempting such manoeuvres. In 1352, she appointed a commission to investigate, among other things, the concealment of wardships.⁷⁰ Sir John Waleys was eventually attached to answer the justices on the charge that he had concealed Sir Philip's wardship from the queen, and thus deprived her of revenues. The specific bone of contention was the manor of Southall in Willingdon: although the manor was held from Sir John St Clere, he had died and his heir was a ward of Queen Philippa, who thereby acquired the rights to wardships and marriages which would otherwise have fallen to the St Cleres. Sir John Waleys protested his innocence, and claimed that Sir William's feoffment was made 'simply and without condition'⁷¹ Philippa's justices were far from convinced: they ruled that the feoffment was specifically made to exclude the queen from her rightful dues, and amerced Sir John Waleys 40 marks for his part in Sir William's ploy. That appears to have been the end of the dispute, and there is no clear indication that Queen Philippa continued to claim Sir Philip's wardship or marriage. It is possible that the young Sir Philip had already come of age by the 1352 inquest, and Sir John Waleys had already provided for his marriage. It is significant that the queen's attention was limited to a peripheral manor; for reasons which will soon become clear, she had no right to interfere with the core of the Medsted estate in Firle.

Much like his father, Sir Philip de Medsted was intimately involved in the Sussex gentry

community. One of his closest associates was Sir Edward Dallingridge, a veteran of the Hundred Years War and the builder of Bodiam Castle. The Dallingridge family were certainly well known to the Medsteds. In 1346 Roger Dallingridge and Sir Robert Dallingridge, Sir Edward's father and brother, had both served alongside Sir William de Medsted as part of the Poynings retinue.⁷² Sir Edward and Sir Philip were also both in the orbit of the FitzAlan earls of Arundel; it was perhaps in anticipation of service with John FitzAlan in Normandy and Brittany that in 1379 Sir Philip appointed Sir Roger and Sir Edward as his general attorneys and negotiated a loan of £40.⁷³ Sir Philip was also close to another significant Arundel retainer in East Sussex: Sir Thomas Sackville of Chalvington. Sir Thomas was Sir Edward Dallingridge's son-in-law, and, much like his father-in-law, a very experienced soldier. Having first taken to the field in 1354, Sir Thomas served in all of Edward III's major military expeditions.⁷⁴ The trio often worked in concert: we can, for instance, see the three men appearing together as witnesses to a grant made to Sir John St Clere in 1383.⁷⁵

Sir Philip's close association with Sir Edward Dallingridge and Sir Thomas Sackville drew him into the violent conflict between Dallingridge and John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster and Aquitaine, which erupted in 1384.⁷⁶ In the late 1370s, Sir Edward (alongside Sir Thomas, Sir Philip and many others) had begun a campaign of intimidation and violence directed at Lancastrian officials in Sussex. The trio set fire to John of Gaunt's park at Maresfield, poached deer there and in his chase at Ashdown, and stole £20 worth of Gaunt's property from his estates at Fletching and East Grinstead.⁷⁷ The conflict culminated in March 1384 with the murder of William Mouse, a Lancastrian sub-forester. John of Gaunt took advantage of parliamentary concern over the violence and extortion practised by vassals of the great magnates, as well as Richard FitzAlan's temporary fall from grace, to make an example of Dallingridge and his accomplices. Charges were brought against Sir Edward, and six justices were appointed to hear the case. Of the three who sat, two were closely connected to John of Gaunt, and they were joined by Sir Thomas Hungerford, Lancaster's chief steward.⁷⁸ The heavily Lancastrian commission eventually found Dallingridge in contempt of court, and had him committed to the custody of the sheriff, William Waleys.

It has been argued by Simon Walker that the crux of the conflict between Sir Edward Dallingridge and John of Gaunt was the presence of the latter's court at Hungry Hatch, which was allegedly drawing suitors away from Dallingridge's hundredal court of Rushmonden at Dean.⁷⁹ However, while it is true that Sir Edward unequivocally expressed his indignation at the Lancastrian court during the proceedings of the trial, the violence and the conflict over the court at Hungry Hatch were the symptoms of a much more fundamental rift: the status of the Honour of Leicester within East Sussex and the Rape of Pevensey.⁸⁰

The presence in Sussex of fees belonging to the Honour of Leicester was a result of a feudal realignment that had occurred during the reign of Henry I, almost 300 years before. Originally a Norman military district, the Rape of Pevensey was granted to Robert, count of Mortain and half-brother to William the Conqueror.⁸¹ When Robert's son William rebelled against Henry I in 1101, his lands were confiscated by the king and, after William's capture in 1106 at the Battle of Tinchebrai, the Honour of Mortain was dismantled and reformed into the Honour of Aquila.⁸² Yet the new honour did not automatically include all the lands that had been confiscated in 1101: many of the Mortain estates in Sussex were reassigned to Robert de Beaumont, count of Meulan, as part of the new Earldom of Leicester. The manor of Charleston, which Sir Andrew de Medsted had acquired in 1322, and much of the Medsted estates in Heighton, Firle and Compton, were all transferred from Mortain to the Honour of Leicester.⁸³ Charleston had a particularly close (and somewhat controversial) association with the honour. Originally the property of the de Dives family, whose ancestors held the manor of both Mortain and Leicester, Charleston passed to the Mucegros family in 1212 through the marriage of Richard and Simon Mucegros to the remaining heiresses. In 1264 John de Mucegros joined his overlord Simon de Montfort (who in 1231 had inherited a large part of the Honour of Leicester) in rebellion against Henry III. Despite the involvement of the Mucegros family in the rebellion, the lands were not permanently confiscated following Simon de Montfort's death in 1265 at the Battle of Evesham. Charleston eventually passed to John de Mucegros' sister, Agatha, and her husband Walter de Radynden,

and the quasi-independent status of the manor continued well into the 14th century.⁸⁴

John of Gaunt's attack on Dallingridge and his associates was part of a wider campaign to assert his own relatively new lordship in Sussex and extinguish the feudal independence of Leicester tenants in the county. In 1362, John of Gaunt had inherited the titles of duke of Lancaster and earl of Derby, Lincoln and Leicester, and ten years later he exchanged the Rape of Hastings with its demesne manors of Crowhurst, Burwash and Bivelham for the Rape of Pevensey and the Forest of Ashdown.⁸⁵ In 1381 Sir Edward, Sir Thomas and Sir Philip were all forced (grudgingly no doubt) to do homage to Gaunt for their Sussex lands. The three were all tenants of Leicester fees, and their estates represented islands of historically independent jurisdiction within Pevensey Rape.⁸⁶ The campaign of violence perpetrated by Sir Edward Dallingridge, Sir Thomas Sackville, Sir Philip Medsted and their associates was therefore more than a result of their displeasure over the Lancastrian court at Hungry Hatch: it was an expression of the rancour caused by John of Gaunt's unwelcome intrusion into local life.

Gaunt's successful prosecution of Sir Edward Dallingridge and his associates demonstrated to other Leicester tenants in the Rape of Pevensey that they were not beyond his reach. However, as Simon Walker has pointed out, the circumstances that allowed him to discipline Dallingridge were exceptional.⁸⁷ For instance, the temporary weakness of the Earl of Arundel was absolutely key to conviction. Richard FitzAlan was appointed as a justice for the Dallingridge case, and usually he would have looked after his client's interests. Political exigencies rendered FitzAlan unable to assist Sir Edward, however, as a month before the case began he had been saved from Richard II's ire only by John of Gaunt's intervention.⁸⁸ Once he was restored to favour, it is likely that FitzAlan interceded for Sir Edward Dallingridge in July 1384 whilst Richard II was at Arundel and Gaunt was overseas.⁸⁹ Sir Philip de Medsted also benefited from his patron's return to court: in 1380 Sir Philip had murdered one Richard Upton at Heighton and been harboured by Dallingridge at Sheffield.⁹⁰ The charge had hung over his head for four years until Richard FitzAlan successfully petitioned Richard II to pardon his client in 1384.

Sir Philip de Medsted was by far the most bellicose member of the Medsted family. A soldier

at heart, he followed in his father's footsteps and regularly fought on the Continent. By 1371 he had been knighted, and in 1388 he was certainly involved in Richard FitzAlan's naval expedition against the French.⁹¹ Sir Philip's combative nature also seeped into his regular dealings: on more than one occasion he can be seen vigorously defending himself against a variety of pleas. Indeed, in 1389 Sir Philip's licence to go to France with Sir Edward Dallingridge's company to defend Brest Castle was rescinded because 'he tarried in England on his own affairs'.⁹² Much like his father Sir William de Medsted, Sir Philip faced several actions brought by his own mother, Joan, who actually spent around 20 years trying to recover her dower from her eldest son. In 1357 Joan, then wife of Roger Daber, brought a plea against Sir Philip for the extensive dower that her former husband Sir William had promised to her in 1349.⁹³ Perhaps Joan was not successful in 1357, because in 1374 she brought another action against Sir Philip and his wife Alice for a 'reasonable dower' from his estate in Firle, Alfriston, Lewes, Beddingham, Falmer and Kingston. By 1374, Joan had married her fourth husband, Walter Warnham, and had also been widowed for a fourth time. Sir Philip Medsted may have had the sheriff of Surrey and Sussex in his pocket, as it was ruled there was nothing by which he could be distrained.⁹⁴ Although the lengths that Sir Philip went to deny his mother her dower may not suggest that they were on good terms, in 1362 his stepfather Walter Warnham was described as of Firle and in 1372 he witnessed Sir Philip's release of a part of his grandmother's dower estate in the same parish.⁹⁵

Sir Philip was also forced to defend himself in 1390 against Hugh de Waleys, the son of Sir John Waleys and his second wife Alice. In 1354, Sir Philip's Waleys relatives had levied a fine before the justices of Common Pleas for several of the Devon manors that were previously in the possession of Sir Andrew de Medsted. The agreement was brokered between Sir John Waleys, who was previously married to Sir Andrew's daughter Nichola, and his youngest brother Master Godfrey Waleys. The terms of the agreement specified that Master Godfrey would receive the manors of East Raddon, Colebrooke, Farnhull and Clawton (with the advowson of the church of Cornwood) upon the deaths of Sir Andrew's widow Margaret and her mother Eleanor de Bath, with the reversionary rights to the estates settled upon Sir John and his heirs in tail.⁹⁶ Hugh

Waleys alleged that Sir Philip had illegally re-entered into possession of the manor of Clawton following his grandmother Margaret's death in the early 1380s, contrary to the provision of the 1354 fine.

Sir Philip de Medsted's reply to the charges of Hugh Waleys brings to light his encounter with the notoriously corrupt Sir Robert Tresilian, judge at the Devon assizes and chief justice to Richard II. Sir Philip claimed in 1390 that he had actually arraigned an assize of novel disseisin against one Thomas Bret and his wife Eleanor over the manor of Clawton. Bret (or 'Brit') had been outlawed in London in June 1380, which likely precipitated Sir Philip's attempt to regain the manor.⁹⁷ Sir Philip brought the case before Tresilian and his fellow justices, but Tresilian delayed and then outright refused to go ahead with the action unless Sir Philip would promise that, upon the recovery of the manor, he would enfeoff 'certain persons' with the manor of Clawton to the use of Sir Robert.⁹⁸ There is a record of the transaction, made in July 1384, by which Sir Philip granted the manor of Clawton to a large group of feoffees for £80.⁹⁹ Considering the date of the feoffment, Sir Philip may have been forced to accede to Tresilian's scandalous demands in order to raise money for the defence of his position in Sussex.

Sir Robert Tresilian's underhanded possession of Clawton re-emerged during his downfall in 1387, when he became embroiled in Richard II's attempts to curtail parliamentary influence over royal finances. Tresilian and several major nobles partisan to the king were appealed by the Lords Appellant (one of whom being Richard FitzAlan, Sir Philip's patron). After failing to appear before parliament to answer the charges, Tresilian was found guilty by the Merciless Parliament of 1388 and summarily executed.¹⁰⁰ Prior to his grisly execution, however, Robert Tresilian confessed to his dishonest seizure of Sir Philip's lands, and ordered 'for conscience's sake' that the charters and evidence concerning Clawton be returned to Sir Philip by the hand of his clerk John Bodelli.¹⁰¹ Eventually the lands were granted back to Sir Philip out of the king's hand by Richard II himself. This gave him a convenient rejoinder to the Waleys charges: as he held Clawton by the king's gift, Sir Philip claimed that he was unable to answer his kin's allegations without Richard II's involvement.¹⁰² This appears to have had the desired effect, as the royal justices were forced to defer the case.

THE END OF THE MEDSTEDS

Sir Philip de Medsted had died by January 1409, when we first see his son and heir Philip de Medsted the younger acting in his own right.¹⁰³ However, Sir Philip did not pass away without providing an inheritance for his son and giving us a record of the manors he held upon his death. In a move that bears a striking resemblance to his father's attempts to circumvent feudal dues in 1349, in October 1391 Sir Philip settled his manors of Heighton, Charleston, Southall, Manxey and Bevendean, along with his lands in Firle, on a group of feoffees that included Sir Edward Dallingridge, Sir Thomas Sackville and his brother William de Medsted.¹⁰⁴ Enough of these men must have died by June 1402 to cause Philip to resettle his manors on a new group of feoffees (headed by his longtime associate Sir Thomas Sackville) that included another Leicester tenant involved in the dispute with John of Gaunt, Nicholas Selwyn of Sherrington in Selmeston, to be held in trust for his wife and his son.¹⁰⁵ In 1409 the surviving feoffees granted the manor of Bevendean to Sir Philip's second wife Katherine, and the manors of Heighton, Manxey and Southall were given to his son Philip de Medsted the younger.¹⁰⁶

Little is known of Philip de Medsted the younger, but he certainly followed in his father's martial



Fig. 6. Seal of Philip de Medsted the younger, from a charter of 1409, showing the arms [*gules*] a fess engrailed ermine between 3 pierced mullets [or] (ESRO SAS/G 4/21).

footsteps and quite probably fought at Agincourt in 1415. Philip the younger does not appear in the lists of Sussex knights present at the battle (he did not actually attain the rank of knight), but many of his relations were in the Earl of Arundel's company and it is likely that he served within one of their retinues (Fig. 6).¹⁰⁷ Philip remained in France for almost a year after the battle as part of the garrison at Harfleur, where he died in September 1416. In his will, given at Harfleur, Philip asked for his body to be buried in the church of St Mary of Harfleur before the altar of St Ann, and directed that his 'place' at Heighton and all his lands and rents in England should be left to his wife Joan.¹⁰⁸ Later records tell us that Philip had a son, John, who is not mentioned in the will, probably because he was under age.

Even less is known of John de Medsted, as there is not a great deal of contemporary evidence for his life. The several mentions of him all come from documents created many years after his death in the later struggles to determine the ownership of several of the Medsted estates. Charleston in particular became entangled in a web of feoffments, claims and counterclaims after Philip the younger's death in 1416. By 1440 John Medsted had released all his claim to Charleston to one John Kent.¹⁰⁹ John Medsted clearly married and died without male issue, which led to his daughter, Joan, becoming the sole heir to the remaining Medsted estates.¹¹⁰ Eventually Joan married Thomas Bellingham, the younger son of a Northumbrian gentry family based in Lyminster near Arundel. Although the Bellinghams faced a struggle to secure their own hold on the lands of the Medsteds (such as the manor of Southall, which was the subject of an action by the Selwyns in 1507), Thomas's marriage to Joan brings us full circle: he was the great-grandfather of Ralph Bellingham, who sold the

manor of Medsteds to Sir John Gage in 1545 in exchange for Gage's release of his rights to Ralph's wardship and marriage.¹¹¹

Although their descendants would continue to hold some of the Medsted estates well into the 16th century, the period between the deaths of Philip Medsted the younger and that of his son John Medsted effectively marked the end of the family. Their name disappeared, and the hold of their descendants on the Medsted estates fragmented completely. The Heighton area was not of primary importance to the Bellinghams, who appear to have seen the Medsted lands as simply another source of income or a jointure for their wives, and eventually as a bargaining-counter with Sir John Gage KG. The fall of the Medsted family demonstrates how a quirk of fate could undo more than a century of territorial expansion and careful cultivation of local relationships, and force a once-prominent family into obscurity. The Medsteds became no more than a link in the tenurial chain, proven by their frequent citation in later disputes over the family estates. We should therefore be thankful that the Gage family purchased the manors of Medsteds and Charleston in the 15th and 16th centuries: if they had not, there is no guarantee that the great wealth of documentary evidence would have survived to us in its current form, or at all, and the fascinating lives of the Medsted family would be lost to us forever.

Acknowledgements

My sincere thanks go to Christopher Whittick, who offered much guidance and criticism throughout the creation of this paper, to Susanne Brand for her very useful help at The National Archives, to the anonymous referee for many valuable suggestions, to the Trustees of the Firle Estate for kindly depositing the Gage Family Archive at East Sussex Record Office and to the Somerset Heritage Centre for permission to publish Figure 3.

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NOTES

¹ East Sussex Record Office (hereafter ESRO), SAS/G 4/26.

² ESRO, SAS/G 4/81.

³ ESRO, SAS/G 47/101; *Calendar of Patent Rolls* (hereafter CPR) 1307–15, 367.

⁴ *Feudal Aids: With Other Analogous Documents* (hereafter *Feudal Aids*) 2 (London, 1900), 320.

⁵ L. F. Salzman (ed.), *An Abstract of Feet of Fines for the County of Sussex 2*, Sussex Record Society (hereafter SRS) 7 (1908), no.1227; *Feudal Aids* 5 (London, 1908), 143; W. Farrer, *Honors and Knights' Fees* 3 (Manchester, 1925), 51.

⁶ ESRO, SAS/G 47/86.

⁷ An inquisition from Richard II's reign states that Edward II (the king's great-grandfather) granted Sir Andrew the marriage, which dates the union to 1307x1315, when the earliest contemporary reference to Sir Andrew and Margaret appears: The National Archives (hereafter TNA), C 136/29/3; *Calendar of Inquisitions Post-Mortem* (hereafter *CIPM*), *Richard II* 15 (London, 1970), no.885 (which erroneously states that the marriage was granted by Edward III, though *proavus* is quite clear in what is admittedly a faded and heavily galled document); ESRO, SAS/G 47/91.

- ⁸ *Calendar of Patent Rolls* (hereafter *CPR*) 1301–07, 83.
- ⁹ C. Whittick, 'The Role of the Criminal Appeal in the Fifteenth Century' in *Law and Social Change in British History*, ed. by J. A. Guy and H. G. Beale (London, 1984), 63.
- ¹⁰ A fact established only retrospectively, 81 years after his death: TNA, C 136/29/3; *CIPM Richard II* **15** (London, 1970), no.885.
- ¹¹ *Victoria County History of Sussex* (hereafter *VCH*) **5** (1), ed. by T. P. Hudson (London, 1997), 245–61; S. Letters (ed.), 'Devon' in *Gazetteer of Markets and Fairs in England and Wales to 1516* (Kew, 2005).
- ¹² The Avenel family did not give up on reclaiming their former lands in Sussex. In 1317 and 1320 Nicholas Avenel attempted to dislodge Sir Andrew from Bilsham, complaining that Philip Croft (an ancestor of Hugh de Croft) had disseised his grandfather William Avenel: *Year Books of Edward II, Michaelmas 1320*, Selden Society **104** (1988), 100–2.
- ¹³ ESRO, SAS/G 47/86.
- ¹⁴ ESRO, SAS/G 47/88.
- ¹⁵ ESRO, SAS/G 47/46.
- ¹⁶ ESRO, SAS/G 47/47.
- ¹⁷ ESRO, SAS/G 47/98; SAS/G 47/100.
- ¹⁸ *Feet of Fines* 2, no.1227; their son Hugh Croft later sold the reversion of the manor, during Sir Andrew's lifetime, for 100 marks to Richard FitzAlan, earl of Arundel, in 1337: L. F. Salzman (ed.), *Feet of Fines for the County of Sussex* 3, SRS **23** (1916), no.1855.
- ¹⁹ ESRO, SAS/G 47/94.
- ²⁰ ESRO, SAS/G 47/110.
- ²¹ ESRO, SAS/G 47/125.
- ²² ESRO, SAS/G 47/97; SAS/G 47/135; SAS/G 47/136.
- ²³ ESRO, SAS/G 47/112.
- ²⁴ British Library: Harleian MS 392 f. 24.
- ²⁵ W. Hudson, *The Three Earliest Subsidies for the County of Sussex* 1296, 1327, 1332, SRS **10** (1910), 190; *VCH Sussex* **7** (1940), 225; TNA, CP 40/316 m. 390 [Anglo-American Legal Tradition (henceforth AALT) 0793].
- ²⁶ E. W. Holden, 'Manxey, Pevensey', *Sussex Notes and Queries* (hereafter *SNQ*) **15** (1958–62), 320.
- ²⁷ *Three Earliest Subsidies*, 254.
- ²⁸ ESRO, SAS/G 47/143; SAS/G 47/144.
- ²⁹ ESRO, SAS/G 47/142; SAS/G 47/147–50.
- ³⁰ Somerset Heritage Centre (henceforth SHC), DD/WHb/409; *Calendar of Close Rolls* (henceforth *CCR*) 1389–92, 114; *Feet of Fines for the County of Somerset, 1347–99*, Somerset Record Society (1902), 19.
- ³¹ *CCR* 1389–92, 114.
- ³² *Feet of Fines* 3, no.1969.
- ³³ SHC, DD/WHb/409.
- ³⁴ W. Pole, *Collections Towards a Description of the County of Devon* (London, 1791), 232.
- ³⁵ TNA, CP 40/336 m. 375d [AALT 0756]; CP 40/341 m. 406d [AALT 0824].
- ³⁶ Sir William's date of birth is complicated by the presence of Hugh de Medsted's son William in East Sussex during the first quarter of the thirteenth century. Hugh and his son clearly followed Sir Andrew to East Sussex: in a charter of 1317 witnessed by Sir Andrew, Hugh de Medsted son of Robert, called of *Hampshire*, gained land at Farnham in Firle, and later they appear to have looked after some of Sir Andrew's estates whilst he was sheriff of Surrey and Sussex: ESRO, SAS/G 47/101; SAS/G 47/126.
- ³⁷ ESRO, SAS/G 47/161.
- ³⁸ ESRO, SAS/G 47/162; SAS/G 47/166; SAS/G 47/169; SAS/G 47/170.
- ³⁹ TNA, JUST 1/941A m. 29d [AALT 6380].
- ⁴⁰ ESRO, SAS/G 47/197.
- ⁴¹ ESRO, SAS/G 47/91; the charter was given at [East] Raddon, north of Exeter, another part of his wife's inheritance – TNA C 134/99/1.
- ⁴² P. Nightingale, 'Knights and Merchants: Trade, Politics and the Gentry in Late Medieval England', *Past & Present* **169** (Nov. 2000), 37.
- ⁴³ R. A. Pelham, 'The Foreign Trade of Sussex 1300–1350', *Sussex Archaeological Collections* (hereafter *SAC*) **70** (1929), 94–5.
- ⁴⁴ TNA, C 143/200/13; ESRO, SAS/G 47/138.
- ⁴⁵ R. A. Pelham, 'The Distribution of Wool Merchants in Sussex (c.1330)', *SNQ* **4** (1933), 69.
- ⁴⁶ *Three Earliest Subsidies*, 288.
- ⁴⁷ *Three Earliest Subsidies*, 301, 306, 312.
- ⁴⁸ *Three Earliest Subsidies*, xvi.
- ⁴⁹ ESRO, SAS/G 47/113.
- ⁵⁰ R. A. Pelham, 'The Exportation of Wool from Sussex in the Late Thirteenth Century', *SAC* **74** (1933), 132.
- ⁵¹ *CPR* 1340–43, 240.
- ⁵² W. M. Page (ed.), *VCH Sussex* **2** (London, 1908), 138.
- ⁵³ TNA, E 179/189/17 m 36.
- ⁵⁴ Pelham, 'Foreign Trade', 100.
- ⁵⁵ ESRO, SAS/G 47/93; SAS/G 47/95.
- ⁵⁶ *Calendar of Fine Rolls* **3** (London, 1912), 272; TNA, E 372/171 [AALT 1753]; *List of Sheriffs for England and Wales From the Earliest Times to A.D. 1831, compiled from documents in the Public Record Office* (New York, 1963), 135.
- ⁵⁷ *Calendar of Fine Rolls* **4** (London, 1913), 16, 30.
- ⁵⁸ ESRO, SAS/G 47/126; SAS/G 47/127. Although armorial bearings, *quarterly gules and or, four escallops countercharged*, are recorded for the family in the visitation of Devon in 1564, the surviving impressions of Sir Andrew's seal all bear the sacred monogram. Not until 1409 does an armorial seal appear, on a charter of his great grandson Philip Medsted, by which time a different charge was in use, [*gules*] a *fess engrailed ermine between 3 pierced mullets for*, recorded for the family in several rolls of arms: ESRO, SAS/G 47/96; SAS/G 47/97; SAS/G 47/132; SAS/G 47/135; SAS/G 47/225; SAS/G 4/21. T. Woodcock and S. Flower (eds), *Dictionary of British Arms Medieval Ordinary* **3** (2009) 437.
- ⁵⁹ *Calendar of Fine Rolls* **4**, 217–18.
- ⁶⁰ *CPR* 1334–38, 209.
- ⁶¹ *CPR* 1334–38, 356.
- ⁶² *CPR* 1334–38, 347.
- ⁶³ *CPR* 1338–40, 78, 511.
- ⁶⁴ *CPR* 1338–40, 532.
- ⁶⁵ J. H. Round, 'The Lords Poynings and St John', *SAC* **62** (1921), 1.
- ⁶⁶ G. Wrottesley, *Crécy and Calais* (London, 1898), 85.
- ⁶⁷ ESRO, BAT 1026; Wrottesley, *Crécy and Calais*, 138.
- ⁶⁸ TNA, JUST 1/941A m. 29d [AALT 6380].
- ⁶⁹ N. Saul, *Scenes from Provincial Life: Knightly Families in Sussex 1280–1400* (Oxford, 1986), 24.
- ⁷⁰ *CPR* 1350–54, 287–8.
- ⁷¹ TNA, JUST 1/941A m. 29d [AALT 6380].

- ⁷² Wrottesley, *Crécy and Calais*, 137, 154.
- ⁷³ ESRO, SAS/G 47/204.
- ⁷⁴ N. Harris Nicholas, *The Controversy between Sir Richard Scrope and Sir Robert Grosvenor in the Court of Chivalry*, 2 (London, 1832), 388.
- ⁷⁵ ESRO, SAS/G 47/206.
- ⁷⁶ S. Walker, 'Lancaster v. Dallingridge: A Franchisal Dispute in Fourteenth Century Sussex' (hereafter 'Lancaster v. Dallingridge'), *SAC* **121** (1983), 87.
- ⁷⁷ TNA, JUST 1/944 m. 2; *CPR 1381–85*, 427–8.
- ⁷⁸ 'Lancaster v. Dallingridge', 90.
- ⁷⁹ 'Lancaster v. Dallingridge', 90–1.
- ⁸⁰ 'Lancaster v. Dallingridge', 91; D.A. Carpenter and C. Whittick, 'The Battle of Lewes, 1264', *SAC* **152** (2014), 63 n.13.
- ⁸¹ W. Hudson, 'The Manor of Eastbourne and the Honours of Mortain and Aquila', *SAC* **43** (1900), 170.
- ⁸² Hudson, 'Eastbourne', 173; K. Thompson, 'Lords, castellans, constables and dowagers: the Rape of Pevensey from the 11th to the 13th century', *SAC* **135** (1997), 209–20.
- ⁸³ W. Budgen, 'Pevensey Castle and Endlewick Rents', *SAC* **76** (1935), 122.
- ⁸⁴ *Calendar of Inquisitions Miscellaneous* **1**, no.2030; at the eyre *de terris datis* in 1268 Walter and Agatha paid a fine of £1 6s. 8d. in respect of her brother's plunder of the abbot of Battle's estate at Alciston during the troubles: S. Stewart (ed.), *Royal Justice in Surrey 1258–1269* (SRS **45**, 2013), 37.
- ⁸⁵ 'Lancaster v. Dallingridge', 89.
- ⁸⁶ *Feudal Aids* **5** (London, 1908), 146; *Calendar of Inquisitions Miscellaneous* **1**, no.2030.
- ⁸⁷ 'Lancaster v. Dallingridge', 92.
- ⁸⁸ 'Lancaster v. Dallingridge', 90.
- ⁸⁹ *CCR 1381–85*, 459.
- ⁹⁰ *CPR 1381–85*, 441; TNA, KB 27/502 Rex m. 11 [AALT 0198].
- ⁹¹ ESRO, SAS/G 47/197; N. Saul, 'The Sussex gentry and the oath to uphold the acts of the Merciless Parliament', *SAC* **135** (1997), 224, and A. R. Bell, *War and the Soldier in the Fourteenth Century* (Woodbridge, 2004), 113–14.
- ⁹² *CPR 1388–92*, 118.
- ⁹³ TNA, CP 40/390 m.246 [AALT 7471].
- ⁹⁴ TNA, CP 40/455 m.86 [AALT 0174].
- ⁹⁵ ESRO, AMS 2285; SAS/G 47/195.
- ⁹⁶ TNA, CP 25/1/44/260.
- ⁹⁷ *CIPM Richard II* **15** (London, 1970), no.885.
- ⁹⁸ *CCR Richard II, 1389–92*, 114.
- ⁹⁹ *CCR Richard II, 1381–85*, 561–2.
- ¹⁰⁰ Saul, 'Sussex gentry', 222.
- ¹⁰¹ *CCR Richard II, 1389–92*, 115; for a text of the confession, see TNA, C 49/67/15.
- ¹⁰² *CCR Richard II, 1389–92*, 115.
- ¹⁰³ ESRO, SAS/G 47/225.
- ¹⁰⁴ H. M. Clough (ed.), *The Book of Bartholomew Bolney*, SRS **63** (1964), 50.
- ¹⁰⁵ ESRO, SAS/G 47/217, endorsed 'belongs to Thomas Bellingham'; Nicholas Selwyn had been accused of murdering Gaunt's sub-forester William Mouse in 1384, but gained a royal pardon for the crime in June 1385: *CPR 1381–85*, 480.
- ¹⁰⁶ ESRO, SAS/G 47/226; SAS/G 47/227.
- ¹⁰⁷ W. Durrant Cooper, 'Sussex Men at Agincourt', *SAC* **15** (1863), 129–30.
- ¹⁰⁸ ESRO, SAS/G 4/24.
- ¹⁰⁹ ESRO, SAS/G 4/76.
- ¹¹⁰ ESRO, SAS/G 4/25.
- ¹¹¹ ESRO, SAS/G 4/25; SAS/G 4/26.

