THE ENGLISH TOWNS
AND
THE WARS OF THE ROSES.

by

FREDERIC ARTHUR CULMER, A. B.

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS
in the
GRADUATE SCHOOL
of the
UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI
1918.

Approved by
H. M. Trevelick

March 20. - 1919.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER ONE.

A GLANCE AT NATIONAL ENGLAND IN THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY.

National unity from William the Conqueror--The enlarging town life of England in the fourteenth century---Some reasons for the limitations of inter-municipal trading before the fifteenth century--- The new England of the fifteenth century.

pp. I-4.

CHAPTER TWO.

THE TOWNS OF THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY.

Municipal effects of the breaking up of feudal society---Struggles of ecclesiastical and abbatical towns for municipal rights---The population of the towns---Evidences of the growth of burghal organization and interest--chronicles and municipal buildings---The towns and political power---The decline of the power of the Commons.

pp. 5-15.

CHAPTER THREE.

THE ATTITUDE OF THE TOWNS TOWARDS THE WARS OF THE ROSES.

The wrong impression usually given by writers on the Wars of the Roses.--Sources of the impression of municipal indifference to the struggle ---Seeming evidences of municipal indifference---Careful study of records assential.

pp. 16-23.

(I)

13 Aug 1920 H.H.

CHAPTER FOUR.

THE ATTITUDE OF THE TOWNS TOWARDS THE WARS OF THE ROSES.(Continued)

Factors indicating a probable pro-York-
ist attitude of the towns---the Lollard issue--alignment
of the nobility and the church for the preservation of feu-
dal society--church heads usually "cadets" of noble families
---Ties between nobles, church, and Lancastrian line---
Changes in the distribution of wealth favor trading classes---
Liberties gained by the towns---Inefficient government and
unsuccessful foreign warfare threaten welfare of towns---
The dominance of royal nobility a threat to the towns---
Absence of royal power renders status of towns insecure.

pp. 24-35.

CHAPTER FIVE.

MUNICIPAL ACTIVITIES AND THEIR EXPLANATION.

The Wars of the Roses probably a war of suc-
cession from the beginning---The Rising of Cade the herald
of Yorkist popularity---Examples of the real attitude and
of the activities of the towns--Leicester, Hereford, New-
castle, Norwich, London, etc.---The commercial sequel to the
Wars of the Roses a proof of municipal loyalty to the York-
ist cause---The physical destruction of the towns in the
struggle.

pp. 36-50.

To

A. P. C.,

whose sacrifice and help have made my graduate
work in the University of Missouri possible.

F. A. C.

Fayette, Mo.,

July Twentieth,

Nineteen Hundred Eighteen.

CHAPTER ONE.

A GLANCE AT NATIONAL ENGLAND IN THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY.

The germ of English national unity is found in the centralizing policy of William the Conqueror. Yet this national unity had slow growth, if indeed, it had any at all, until the reign of Edward the First. This enterprising monarch instituted the general representation of the political classes in Parliament, and gave to the country a well organized judicial system. Playing the double part of national king and feudal lord he contrived to "depress legally and without violence the power of the feudal nobility", and build into a compact structure the elements of national feeling which he discovered in his subjects.

The work of Edward the First seemed destined to destruction during the reign of the unfortunate Edward the Second. But a master builder appeared in the person of Edward the Third. The times needed his qualities. Scotland, conquered by Edward the First and lost by Edward the Second, was intriguing with France while France, under Philip the Sixth, was willing and waiting to crush the power of England, both in France and on her own soil.

The foreign policy of Edward the Third indicates the growing national unity of England. For, whatever may be said as to the validity of his claim to the French throne, it can hardly be doubted that his ulterior motive was "the humiliation of France to prevent interference with English trade." (I) Otherwise it is remarkably strange that his foreign policy and

(I) Jane, The Coming of Parliament, 16.

ambitions fit in so well with what appears to be a thoroughly defined English project for international trading. Flanders and Guienne by this time were closely connected with England in the wool trade, as Gascony was by reason of its wine. Now Flanders, Brittany, and Guineane were the chief obstacles to the efforts of Philip the Sixth to consolidate France, and all of them received English aid in turn against him. Flanders had been most important of all. Here were the wealthy manufacturing towns of Ghent, Ypres, and Bruges, large purchasers of English wool. It is significant that Edward the Third, in the treaty of Bretigny, surrendered Flanders in exchange for the withdrawal of French aid from Scotland. Here is a glimpse of England's growing manufacturing interests. Already the possibility of English independence of the cities of Flanders had been learned. English wool could be made into English cloth. Industrial legislation now appears and something more than inter-municipal policy begins.

It is not surprising, therefore, to find indications of an enlarging town life in the fourteenth century. Parliament had separated into two houses; side by side with the county knights in the House of Commons sat the burgesses of the towns. (2) Elsewhere than in England this would have been impossible, for the knights of the county were nobility and despised the townsman. An anticipation may be made here. This amalgamation, born perhaps of common interests in war, presages the later common interests of knight and burgess through inter-marriage and interchange of vocation and rank.

(2) Medley, English Const. Hist. 138, 188-189.

Slowly but surely the commercial and industrial life of England grew more unified. Not that a national policy in its perfection was immediately evident, for the interests destined to make a great national life were hardly more than in embryo. It may be said that prior to the fifteenth century inter-municipal trading was not far removed from foreign trading in its nature.

A fundamental reason for this condition is discoverable. While the foreign policy of Edward the Third fell in with the projected English international trading activities, it appears to be quite certain that the ultimate object of trade was not the power of, but "the plenty of the state". The economic policy embodied in the statutes of his time include high exports and low imports. Aliens were given the shipping which was denied to English carriers.(3). Importation of wine was forbidden and corn was shipped to but two places, Calais and Gascony. The watch word of England was "plenty at home."

But the idea of "the power of the state" had gradually evolved. The reign of Richard the Second is remarkable for its reversal of the economic policy of Edward the Third. Legislation encourages shipping, favors native merchants, grants exportation of corn to all nations except enemies(4), encourages agricultural interests, and seeks in true mercantilist fashion the amassing of treasure.

(3) Edward ordered all ships of forty tons and upwards to be converted into ships of war. Hume, Hist. of Eng. II. 275, citing Rymer, IV.664.

(4) Hen. VI. confirmed and amended. Edward the Fourth prohibited importation of corn when the price was below six shillings and eightpence at port.
Cunningham, Growth of Eng. Ind. and Com..

Thus fostered, English commerce grew apace. The fifteenth century looked upon a new England. Commercial treaties were made with Burgundy and Brittany, with Castile in 1403, and with Portugal about the same time. Early in the century English merchants visited Italy. They elected their own governors in Prussia in 1404; they did the same in Holland, Zealand, and Flanders by 1407, and a little later in Norway, Sweden and Denmark. It is clear that feudal England with its manorial system was passing fast into commercial and industrial England with its larger centers of population, the introduction of a new class into political power, and its new set of political problems. (5)

- (5) The student may find a full discussion of the progress sketched above in Cunningham, Growth of English Industry and Commerce.

CHAPTER TWO.

THE TOWNS OF THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY.

The growth, material progress and political power of the English towns in the fifteenth century may claim some attention. In this study nothing is more noticeable than the gradual breaking up of the feudal elements of society. Little by little feudal ties disappeared; conformably, the bonds of society were of different fibre. A statute of Richard the Second prohibiting livery and maintenance tells the story of the retainer in place of the vassal, the substitution which had told in favor of Edward the Third against the chivalry of France. After England was swept by the pestilence known as the Black Death few vestiges of feudalism remained. With laborers free to hire out their work for the best wages, (a condition which it seems no statute of laborers could obviate) undoubtedly the population of the towns was increased by the entrance of those who sought employment within their walls. The system of enclosures must have aided the influx. Direct evidence of this movement is found in those statutory enactments of Edward the Third which prescribe a heavy penalty for the offence of leaving the ranks of the peasantry to engage in trade.⁽¹⁾ A further check was attempted later by a statute which declared that no parent whose land or other rent was below the annual value of twenty pounds, a sum equalling perhaps two hundred pounds of present money, might apprentice a child to any trade.⁽²⁾

(1) 25.Ed.III.C.2.

(2) 7.Hen.IV.C.I7.

It seems that this legislation must have been actually the result of an undesirable number of laborers in most towns; for when it clashed with the economic interests of a few towns they were exempted from its operation. The cases of London, Bristol, and Norwich may be cited as examples.(3)

Further, the baronage of England for some cause had become remarkably attenuated during the fourteenth century. There had gathered in the parliament of 1300 eleven earls and ninety-eight barons; but to the fateful parliament of 1399 but ten earls and thirty-four barons came. Only two of the great baronial boroughs remained such until the end of the fourteenth century;(4) but undoubtedly the free towns of the country were affected by the change. Lands and constitutional powers were in the hands of fewer men, but they had little cohesion as an estate, the lines between the nobility and the commons became deeper and deeper, the feuds and jealousies of the nobles raged in a smaller circle and therefore the more fiercely.(5) The relations of these changes to the towns is shown below.

Not all the towns of England were favored alike with political or economic growth. Ecclesiastical and abbatical towns struggled against many difficulties unknown to the others. A writer has expressed their condition as follows: "The convent or chapter, entrenched behind its circuit of walls and towers, with its own systems of laws, its own executive, its independent

(3) 8.Hen.VI.c.II.

(4) Kirk, Eng.Bar.Boroughs. Thesis, U.of.Mo., citing Bateson, Borough Records, from Raines, Hist. of Lancashire.

(5) Stubbs, Const. Hist. Eng. III. 17.

trade and revenues, had practically no interest either in the security or prosperity of the town, while its keenest activities, whether from the point of view of business or religion, were enlisted in uncompromising defence of ecclesiastical privilege."(6)

On the other hand, it has been pointed out that there are many instances of bishops and abbots granting charters to their towns with privileges almost as great as those of royal towns. These charters were nearly always confirmed later by a royal charter to the lord. The progress of the ecclesiastical towns may be passed with this brief mention, for the same writer observes that they were not of prime importance nor of large population.(7)

A further inquiry may throw some light on the question of the population, together with the social and political status of the English towns in the fifteenth century. Here a problem arises, for the absence of authoritative material makes any attempt to judge the population of the towns extremely hazardous. Bishop Stubbs bluntly states that "nine tenths of the mediaeval cities were country towns."(8) But for some of them something more may be said. Thirty years after the Black Death the census of London showed 35,000 inhabitants. Now, Stowe makes a statement to the effect that he had seen an inscription on a stone cross in a graveyard of the Carthusian monks, "outside West Smithfield barres," which declared that

(6) Mrs. J.R. Greene, Town Life in the 15th Cen. I. 333-4.

(7) Trenholme, Eng. Eccles. Boroughs, 36.

(8) Const. Hist. Eng. III. 615.

5th

50,000 bodies were buried therein and in the adjoining crypt. But it was not until the London graveyards were full that the dead of the plague ^{were} buried in this Carthusian graveyard.(9) The Norwich Guildhall contains a contemporary record that from the city there perished in the plague 53,374 persons. The city was reduced almost to extinction. In Yarm outh, of a population of 10,000, 7,000 died(10) A fair estimate of the population of ^{some of} the larger towns of England may ~~thus~~ be made.

Now it is on record that the population soon regained its normal level(11), a statement which has an economic law to support it. Coupling this with the flocking of the country laborers to town it is not improbable that, by the decade preceding the Wars of the Roses, the towns had reached an unprecedented level of population.

Certainly even by the opening of the fifteenth century the growth of burghal organization and interest in vital municipal affairs is proved by the vast number of town chronicles begun at this time. Nor are these chronicles adventitious material. An examination of them reveals the fact that oftentimes they were made by official requirement. They were truly, not "exotics on the soil of burghal illiteracy," but a natural growth out of a prosperous municipal life.(12)

The writing of these chronicles coincides with a period of great material progress. Building and repairing

(9) Warburton, Ed. III. 147.

(10) Ibid.

(11) Ibid.

(12) ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~same~~ ^{same} page

went on apace, a fact which apprises the student of prosperity and promise. Blackwell Hall was built in London for a cloth market in 1397. The famous Whittington erected a library in Grey Friars. The new Guildhall was begun and Leaden Hall was built for a granary in 1410. Newgate was rebuilt in 1414. Nor was London alone in this forward movement. Other towns and cities followed; public buildings and chapels were erected in quick succession, and the multiplication of schools shows the quickening of the municipal life of the times(13).

There is no surer sign of what may be called surplus wealth than the erection of buildings which are not productive of material reward. To this indication may be added the facts that, when in 1397, a great loan was made to Richard the Second, out of 193 contributors, 78 were ecclesiastics who gave from one thousand pounds to thirteen pounds six shillings and eight pence, 45 were gentlemen who gave from four thousand pounds to three pounds six shillings and eightpence, while 70 were towns which gave from six thousand six hundred and sixty-six pounds thirteen shillings and fourpence to three shillings and fourpence apiece. And when in the same year a poll tax was levied the sums laid upon the tradesmen were as large as those laid upon the nobility with the exceptions of the dukes of Lancaster

(13) &(12) p.8. For an excellent discussion of these chronicles and this progress see Flenly, Six Town Chronicles, Introduction.

and Bretagne and the Archbishop of Canterbury.(14)

The question of the part played ^{in politics} by the English towns in the fifteenth century is much complicated. Writers on the subject disagree so completely that any definite statement seems impossible. "In the fifteenth century," says one, "they were the arbiters of English politics. Kings no longer sought to bribe nobles, but towns. Courtesies and remissions were showered upon them." (15) To the contrary we may read: "Most of the English boroughs were, during the middle ages, practically insignificant, having great franchises and small liberties." (16) And again: "During the fifteenth century towns took little part in politics." (17) To carry the tale of disagreement further we note: "The people of the towns were making their influence felt in politics;" (18) while on the other hand, Bishop Stubbs reduces almost to zero the part played by the towns in politics during this century. They were, he declares, courted by aspirants to power, and he further asserts that it was only the absence of popular qualities from Henry the Sixth that placed him at a disadvantage with them. (19)

(14) Cunningham, Growth of Eng. Ind. and Com., 385, 386.

(15) Denton, Town Life in the Fifteenth Century, I. 12.

(16) Furnival, Ballads from MSS., I. 99. quoting Gross.

(17) Mowatt, Wars of the Roses, 238.

(18) Vickers, England in the later Middle Ages, 391.

(19) Const. Hist. Eng., III, 611.

The fundamental error of those writers who depreciate the importance of the parliamentary political power of the towns of England during the fifteenth century appears to lie in the failure to place sufficient emphasis upon some aspects of the make-up of borough and town representation, and also of the relations of the burghal representatives to other parts of the House of Commons. When Bishop Stubbs observes that the knights of the shire fought out the middle age battles in the House of Commons, and adds that this may imply the insignificance of the borough members or their hearty concurrence,(20) his latter alternative hints at a quite probable explanation of the fact. It has been pointed out that by the reign of Edward the Third, all classes summoned by the sheriff, that is, the lesser barons, the knights, and the burgesses, were amalgamated.(21). Some factors entering into this amalgamation and its continuance may here be noted.

During the same reign the ranks of the nobility began to be recruited from the great merchants of the country.(22) Nor did some of the members of the noble families disdain to enter the activities of trade. The arms of all the mayors of London from 1423 to 1633, with notes of their origin, are obtainable for study. Of them all, 203 of these officials are accounted for during the period. A study of the information shows that 34 of them were born in London, thirteen in other towns, while 156 were born in the country.

(20) Const. Hist. Eng. III, 608.

(21) Jane, Coming of Parliament, 49.

(22) Cunningham, Growth Eng. Ind. and Com., 314, citing Bourne, English Merchants.

A writer⁽²³⁾ interested in this particular point has argued from these facts and others that fifty per cent of the merchant adventurers, importers and exporters in London came from the country gentlemen "armiger" families. In proof of his conclusion he cites the separation of the working crafts from the distributing and wholesale companies, the honor paid by the king to the members of the latter companies, ⁽²⁴⁾ the jealousy with which apprenticeship in these companies was guarded, the two-fold apprenticeship--master and journeyman, and the fact that the admiration of the middle age masses was not given to the merchant (an evidence that they were shut off from attainment in this class), but to the fighting man. He was the hero because he might be copied. It may well be doubted whether this state of affairs was true for London alone.

Again, the town was quite often in itself a county and its representative a knight. An old record says: "At this day, by the advise of the whole counsel, my lord the mair, Richard York, and John Tong, were chosen citizens and knights of the Parliament, for this honorable citee, and for the shire of the same." ¹³⁷ And it is noted that between the reign of Henry the First and the year 1451 ten towns at least were counties of themselves, namely, London, Bristol, York, Norwich, Lincoln, Newcastle-on-Tyne, Hull, Southampton, Nottingham, and Coventry. ⁽²⁵⁾

(23) Besant, Mediaeval London, citing Stowe's Continuator.

(24) Ibid. One was the mayor of Bordeaux, another the representative of the king in the Low Countries.

(25) ~~"A London reference of the fourteenth century."~~

~~H.M. Thompson, U. of Mo.~~

(25) Merewether and Stephens, History of Boroughs. See index.

There is, therefore, a great probability that the hearty concurrence of burghal and county representative opinion was a prominent factor of the political power of the towns. And in the light of this conclusion the fact of occasional intermittent burghal representation may be minimized as to its bearing on the point(26)

A writer declares that the election of the town representatives was probably the freest part of the parliamentary system of the times.(27)The lords desperately tried to control the elections in the shires(28)a fact which the common interests of the knight and burgher serve partially to explain. But for the most part, writes another author, the burghers went freely and fearlessly to Parliament to represent their interests(29)But this freedom from interference seems doubtful(30) Still, in view of the statements above, it seems rather unnatural to read opinions which voice the utter absence of parliamentary power from the towns.

- (26) One hundred and seventysix representatives of the towns were present in 1399, while five years later only five towns are known to have been represented.

Stubbs, Const. Hist. Eng. III. 23, 48, N. 2, citing Return of Members, 1879.

- (27) Mowatt, Wars of the Roses, 261.

- (28) Paston Letters, 120.

- (29) Ramsay, Lan. and York, 420-I, citing Stubbs and Paston Letters.

- (30) Green, Town Life in the Fifteenth Century, I, 5. For an exception see Paston Letters, 975. This was an attempted ecclesiastical interference. See also No. 151.

- (30) Taylor, Origin and Growth of the Eng. Const., 526-31.

There is, however, another phase of the question. The House of Commons had come to the highest point of its power by the end of the fifteenth century. From that time on its influence and power gradually declined until it collapsed with the whole parliamentary system (31) at the very beginning of its first crucial test. This test was the struggle between the factions of royal nobility, which culminated in the Wars of the Roses.(32)

(31) Taylor, Origin and Growth of the English Constitution 563-76.

(32) In 1450 the House of Commons was helpless because the lords with the largest retinues were with Somerset. Vickers, England in the Later Middle Ages, 437. For the parliament which met after the rout at Ludlow no law of election was observed.

Stubbs, Constitutional History of England, III, 179 yet some facts may easily lend themselves to misinterpretation. It does not follow from Young's imprisonment that the parliament of 1451 was unanimously Lancastrian in its sympathy. As, see Vickers, 437. Young had proposed the Duke of York as heir-apparent to the throne.

"The Commons were agreed and rightfully elected him as heir-apparent of England, nought to proceed in any other matters till that were granted by the lords, wherunto king and lords brake up the parliament."

William of Worcester, 770.
Chronicle of London, 137.

Hence any statement of the parliamentary powers of the towns in the fifteenth century must be limited to that first part of the century during which the parliamentary system exercised any real power at all. And a candid survey of these decades compels the admission of inconsistency and subserviency on the part of the House of Commons during this period. (33)

Before the first half of the fifteenth century had passed the burghers seemed to have realized the true situation. They absent themselves from Parliament and obtain from the king royal license to avoid the political obligations which fell upon them as officeholders. (34) But that they withdrew themselves altogether from the political life of the times, and remained within their their walls, content to accept the results of any and all political vicissitudes, seems to be far from the truth. As the facts later adduced will show, the burghers had merely exchanged their now useless parliamentary privileges for more direct and personal contact with the king and his advisers. And more, the protection of their own interests continually urged them to participate in the restoration of an efficient national government.

(33) See for instances, Stubbs, Constitutional History of England, 33, 34, 58, 83,

(34) Merewether and Stephens, History of Boroughs, III, 843.

CHAPTER THREE.

THE ATTITUDE OF THE TOWNS TOWARDS THE WARS OF THE ROSES.

So far as writers consider the towns of England as of sufficient importance to mention in connection with the Wars of the Roses, they ^{usually} give the impression of utter indifference on the part of the townsmen to the struggle and its outcome. One writer says: "If the gentry constituted themselves the voluntary followers of the baronage, the class of citizens and burgesses took a very different line of conduct. If not actually mischievous they were solidly inert. They submitted impassively to each ruler in turn.*****Of towns it has been remarked that none ever stood a siege during the Wars of the Roses, for no town ever refused to open its gates to any commander with an adequate force who asked for entrance. (1) Writers who have and give this impression seem to regard the English towns as crying out continually against war, and, no matter what the cause of war, insisting upon and demanding peace at all times. (2)

This impression may have been gained from any one or all of several sources. Some of the old writers are full of an enthusiastic desire to free the towns from any imputation of war-like initiative. The Chronicler of London is loud in his praise of the absence of "barbarous ferocity" on the part of the cities, and of the softening influences

(1) Oman, Warwick the Kingmaker, Chap. I.

(2) Green, Town Life in the Fifteenth Century, I, 43.

of humanity and justice to be found within their walls.
And he further declares of London, that it was "many times a friend and fautor during the strife between Henry the Sixth and Edward the Fourth, but never the first motive or author of anything. (3)

Or the impression may have been gained through overlooking the burghal interests involved in the struggle. A fairer statement of the attitude of the towns seems to be that they maintained a quiet life, absorbed in their own affairs except when their repose was disturbed by great civil strife from which the burgesses could not keep aloof. (4) Yet another writer has so far reduced the involved interests of the towns as to remark that the struggle of York and Lancaster was a baron's war without interest to the commonalty, inasmuch as it was regarded as a sport for kings and nobles with a crown for a prize. (5)

(3) Chronicle of London, II, 197, VII, 15.

(4) Gross, Bibliography of Municipal History, 19.

(5) Vickers, England in the Later Middle Ages, 439.

Mr. Vickers seems to have overlooked the fact that as early as 1400, when the interests of the nation were threatened by a baronial revolt, the townspeople of Cirencester had besieged and beheaded Kent, Salisbury, and Lord Lumley; that Huntingdon, who had escaped, suffered a like fate at the hands of the people of Pleshey; that Despenser was killed by the people of Bristol.

Ramsay, Lancaster and York, I, 21, and N.4.

Henry rewarded the town of Cirencester with an annual present of venison.

Stubbs, Const. Hist. of Eng. III, 26, citing Rymer, VII, 150.

In 1403, Cirencester, which had been struggling with the abbot, was granted many privileges by the king.

Trenholme, Ecclesiastical Boroughs, 78.

Another source of this impression may be found in the seeming indifference of the burghers to municipal political obligations, and to the outcome of the civil strife which was rending the country. The first must be acknowledged , although an inquiry into its extent is not possible here. In the twentyseventh year of Henry the Sixth, a statute was found necessary to declare void all letters patent granted to citizens of York, exempting them from the municipal obligation of taking office. The penalty for further purchase of these letters was fixed at forty pounds. Many other letters patent of the same kind has been issued; they were all annulled.(6)

A cursory survey of the acts and attitudes of the towns will convey the strong conviction that they utterly lacked any vital interest in the Wars of the Roses. The survey needs to be accompanied by constant reference to governing principles. A few of these records are here set down. Unaccompanied by any further observations they would easily give sufficient ground for belief in the unqualified indifference of burghal organizations to the fifteenth century strife.

It was the irony of fate that caused Richard the Second to grant the city of Norwich a charter of additional liberties just prior to its espousal of the cause of Henry the Fourth in 1399.(7) Sixty years later Norwich had a captain with one hundred and twenty soldiers fighting with

(6) Merewether and Stephens, History of Boroughs, II, 843.

(7) Thompson, Municipal History, 131.

Henry the Sixth in the north. Yet all the rest of its forces hurried off to Edward the Fourth at his accession.(8) The same city raised one hundred and sixty pounds for the coming of Richard the Third and one hundred and forty for Henry the Seventh.(9)

At first glance Nottingham merits no less criticism. The town stood with Henry the Sixth while the cause of the rebels seemed uncertain; but when Edward the Fourth conquered it sent him gifts and detachments. A troop was sent from the city to join Henry the Sixth at York in 1464. In 1482 a jury of Nottingham presented one for wearing the livery of Richard of Gloucester; but before the battle of Bosworth the town entertained him, gave him a great seal, then afterward sent a deputation to Henry the Seventh for safeguard and proclamation.(10)

In the year 1474 Canterbury bribed one Kyriel to excuse the city from sending men and ships to the war. The city was associated with Henry the Sixth in 1470; after Edward the Fourth conquered, the city lavished wealth on the court and its officers.(11)

The men of Sandwich took no part for or against the Yorkists when Lord Rivers was captured there in 1460, nor when in June of the same year the town was occupied as a result of a Yorkist invasion.(12) Two reasons are ascribed for this, however; one, that the earls of March, Warwick,

(8) Greene, Town Life in the Fifteenth Century, I, 37, citing Blomefield III, 162-3.

(9) Ibid.

(10) Ibid., 350-1, citing Nottingham Records.

(11) Ibid., I, 213, Citing Hist. MSS. Comm., 143. See also p. 216.

(12) Vickers, England in the Later Middle Ages, 454.

and Salisbury entered and took the city,(13) the other, that the earls took the step on the representation of Lord Fauconbridge that both Kent and Sussex were friendly to them.(14)

London itself is not free from ground for an accusation of ^{political} dalliance. The mayor and whole council of the city went to the restoration of Henry the Sixth at St. Pauls in 1471. Yet the authority for this information declares that the Londoners much desired Edward for their king, and that he was in favor with all the common people.(15) The mayor and aldermen, in an audience with Edward, beseech his goodness to the city and its franchises, for their continuation of enjoyment;(16) but the city was profoundly apathetic when Richard the Third came to the throne. Yet it provided him with two thousand pounds wherewith to fight the rebels; and finally sent Henry the Seventh a present of one thousand marks as he came to the city.(17)

Bishop Stubbs is authority for the statement that the mayor and aldermen of London offered to stand by Henry the Sixth when his army which had been drawn up against Cade broke up;(18) and the same writer informs us that in 1471, the Londoners would not rise under Archbishop Neville to resist the entry of Edward into the city.(19)

(13) Bale's Chronicle, in Six Town Chronicles, Flenly Ed. 149.

(14) Vickers, England in the Later Middle Ages, 86.

(15) Polydore Vergel, 110, 133.

(16) Flenly, Six Town Chronicles, Gough London 10, 162.

(17) Vickers, England in the Later Middle Ages, 488.

(18) Const. Hist. of Eng. III, 157.

(19) Ibid. 216.

The city of Bristol has been recorded as York-ist.(20) But in 1470 Bristol gave men, money, and artillery to Queen Margaret when she came with her army to the city.(21)

York was involved in the revolt of the Percies. For this, its liberties were seized for a short time.(22) After the battle of Wakefield the head of the Duke of York was placed on Micklegate bar.(23) The city was the headquarters of the Lancastrian army as it prepared for the struggle of 1461. After the battle of Towton the city received and asked grace of King Edward. "In pace dimisit."(24) But in 1471, York, through its recorder, tried to turn Edward from the city. (It had no mayor at the time by reason of a disagreement over election)(25) Richard the Third sent a letter to York asking

- (26) Hunt's Bristol, 97, 100-2.
- ((27) Mowatt, Wars of the Roses, 225.
- (28) Stubbs, Const. Hist. Eng. III, 599.
- (29) Markham, Richard III, 21.
- (30) Riley, Whetnamstede's Register, 411.
- (31) Bruce, Hist. Arriv. Ed. IV, 5. Halliwell-Phillips, Warworth's Chr. 14.

But a chronicler writes that the recorder had afore been suspecte of him(Edward) and his party. Robert Clifford and Richard Burg came out and encouraged Edward, while Thomas Coniers kept up his discomfort. Hist. Arriv. Edward IV, 4-5.

A recent writer thinks that the whole story of the adverse attitude of York to Edward in 1471 is a gross Tudor Misrepresentation. "It was thought advisable that he should claim only his hereditary dominions. The city feared Warwick and believed the cause of Edward hopeless, and in this way made itself safe in the event of his overthrow.

Markham, Richard III, 46.

Warwick had sent word to every town in Yorkshire to shut its gates to Edward on his return.

Polidore Vergel, 137.

It may be noted that after Edward escaped from his temporary confinement he levied soldiers in York for two days.

Ibid., 125.

for troops and York was represented at the battle of Bosworth field with eighty well-equipped men.⁽³²⁾ Finally, the city register of York contains the entry: "He, (Richard III) was piteously slain and murdered to the great heaviness of this city."⁽³³⁾

From any or all of these sources the opinion of utter municipal indifference may have been gained. One writer at least has not hesitated to declare herself fully on the point while writing of Nottingham. "Throughout the wars, Nottingham did just what every town in England did, reluctantly sent soldiers when ordered out by the reigning king, and, no matter where they fought, hurried off to the victor with their loyalty."⁽³⁴⁾

But such statements need careful qualifications. In the first place it is highly desirable to know what is meant by the word town. Complete unanimity of political opinion in any town is hardly to be expected; and hence it is probable that a too general or hasty pronouncement of the attitude of towns may involve a burghal organization or a majority of the citizens in something of which they were entirely innocent. On one occasion during the wars the Earl of Wiltshire and Lord Bonville "cried at Taunton in Somersetshire sixpence per day to all who would go with them."⁽³⁵⁾ One would hardly be prepared to say offhand that the town was represented in those who went. And further, it is only reasonable to believe that during the civil strife, self-preservation

(32) Markham, Richard III, citing Davies' York.

(33) Ibid., 159.

(34) Green, Town Life In The Fifteenth Century, II, 231.

(35) Paston Letters, 195.

would many times dictate to a town the expediency of holding its real adherence or preferment in abeyance when necessity arose. It does not follow that a town did not prefer Henry the Sixth or Edward the Fourth, as the case might be, simply because it did not commit suicide for the one or the other. Little Hinckley took such a decided part with the Lancas-
trians that its privileges were forfeited to Edward the Fourth. (40)
Most of the English towns, however, learned discretion as the better part of their valor. And, lastly, a broad survey of social and economic conditions seems to warrant the assertion that the English towns may be thought to have had decided preferences, and that, whenever opportunity offered, they gave voice and aid to those preferences.

(40) Thompson, Municipal History, 159. The town was a part of the Duchy of Lancaster.
Stubbs, Const. Hist. Eng. III, 530.

CHAPTER FOUR.

THE ATTITUDE OF THE TOWNS TOWARD THE WARS OF THE ROSES.(Continued)

An inquirer into the attitude of the English towns during the Wars of the Roses was led to observe that the sympathy of the people at large was to some extent enlisted, London and other trading towns being Yorkist, while the country people were Lancastrian.(1) The remainder of this thesis is devoted to the support of the statement regarding London and the trading towns, It will point out the reasons for its conclusions, and set forth the activities of some principal towns during the wars, together with some physical effects of the struggle upon them.

Prominent among the factors influencing the towns at large is the attitude of the Lollards towards the Lancastrian kings. The English church has had three principal parties: the politico-secular churchmen of whom Roger of Salisbury in the twelfth and Wolsey of the sixteenth century are conspicuous examples; the Anglican ecclesiastics who are inimical to secular activities and foreign relations, among whom was such a man as Langton; and the Popish party, who, from the fourteenth century to the Reformation were largely monks enjoying great papal immunities. The Lollards, who arose in the fourteenth century, may be said to have made the fourth party. They have no annals of importance; the chief thing to be said of them is that they persistently opposed the powerful interests around them, and declared always for a purer, freer community life(2).

(1) Enc. Britt., Article, Wars of the Roses?

(2) Rogers, Six Centuries of Work and Wages, 245.

Now were they without social and political power. The benefactions of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries for schools, libraries, almshouses, and like institutions, show the great impression these simple teachers of a pure and practical religion had made. (3). As far back as 1393 the Archbishop of York and the Bishop of London had complained to the king of the mayor, the aldermen and the sheriffs as "male creduli" upholders of the Lollards. (4) London was full of them during the reign of Richard the Second; even the queen was a Wicliffite. (5) Their influence in the Commons is not entirely absent. In 1399 the chosen speaker of the House was a Lollard. (6) Their work is seen in the bill presented to Henry the Fourth praying that the lands of the church be taken into royal hands, as it is in a similar bill presented to his royal successor. (7) So powerful was their antagonism that in 1409, Archbishop Arundel, through arousing their animosity in Oxford, was compelled to resign as Chancellor of the University. When, in 1414, the Lollard uprising took place it was found necessary to close the gates of London in order to prevent many citizens from joining them in St. Giles'

(3) Besant, Mediaeval London, I, 84. ^{Besant} Sir Walter remarks, in the same place, that there were no benefactions for the monks during this period. He is mistaken on this point. Mr. Bede Jarrett has made a selection of sixty wills from a total of over four hundred found in the Somerset House Register, stretching over the period 1413-1504. All of these are made in favor of the order of St. Dominic, by every grade of society, bequeathing their money for masses and their bodies for burial.

(4) Besant, I, 85. (3) Ibid., I, 84, 85.

(5) Stubbs, Const. Hist. Eng. III, 34. He was Sir John Cheyne.

(6) Besant, Med. London, I, 96, citing 2. Hen. IV, 2. Hen. V.

field. So great was the fear of the church that the Lollards would overcome the prejudice of Henry the Fifth, and that their desires would be gratified by the confiscation of church temporal possessions, the ecclesiastics actually favored war with France, in order to divert the royal attention from the subject.(7).

It is a natural supposition, based on the character of their founder, the content of their preaching, and their unsoftened enmity toward great interests, that they were largely of the middle and lower classes. And it is the opinion of authorities that their strongest hold was in the towns, especially in the manufacturing districts.(8)

When Henry the Fourth came to the throne he found his salvation from the "turbulent nobles" in the combined strength of townsmen and nobles. Yet he needed the church as well. He could not have both Lollards and the other churchmen as well. Balancing probabilities he rejected the Lollards, and paid as a part of the price for ecclesiastical allegiance, a statute with the severest penalties directed against the Lollards. One of their number was burnt by a special order before the statute was fully enacted. Their feelings towards this Lancastrian king may easily be imagined.

Henry the Fifth made the same choice as his father had made before him. In his reign the Lollards are represented as Nihilists whose object it is to destroy the king and subvert all government.(9) Their persecution was carried

(7) Stubbs, Const. Hist. Eng., III, 64, 82, 85, citing Fabyan, 578.

(8) Rogers, Work and Wages, 245. Ramsay, Lan. and York, 175, N.I.

(9) Gunningham, Growth of English Industry and Commerce, 353, N.3, citing 2.Hen.V, I, c.7.

forward into the reign of Henry the Sixth and was in no manner mitigated.(10)

The inference seems to be clear. It is very probable that the Lollards were active enemies of the Lancastrians as soon as the issue was clear. That their attitude would influence the towns deeply seems very reasonable to believe.(11)

A further argument for the Pro-Yorkist attitude of the towns is found in the alignment of the nobility and the church for the preservation of so much of feudal life as remained.

Neither class would admit the import of the Black Death and the growing national life of the country. More and more the interests of these two classes conflicted with those of the towns; and more and more did the manorial system and authority cease to exert their influence of former years. The threads of complexity here are not easy to unravel, yet a few suggestions are possible.

A bond of relationship as well as of economic interest held the church and nobility together. In the fifteenth century the church heads were largely the younger sons of noble families. Arundel, the primate of Henry the Fourth, was of noble extraction. Strafford, archbishop of Canterbury 1443-52, was brother to that Strafford killed by Cade, and was descended from the youngest son of Edward the Third. Bouchier, archbishop of Canterbury 1454-88, was brother to the Earl of Essex. Neville, archbishop of York, was a

(10) Ramsay, Lancaster and York, 436-7.

(11) Rogers, Six Centuries of Work and Wages, 368, for a hint of what their attitude must have been. "The charge for burning heretics is a recurrent item of expense on the city revenues of Canterbury and Norwich." Also p.334, "The Lollard's pit at Norwich had stake and faggots always ready."

younger brother of the earl of Warwick.(12) Beaufort of Winchester was an uncle of Henry the Fifth, and a son of John of Gaunt and Catherine Swinford.(13)

But much the same may be said of the church as of the towns, and it may be said more emphatically. During most of the conflict its preferences lay in abeyance. But two of its leaders suffered penalty during the Lancastrian regime. Scrope, archbishop of York, rose with others against Henry the Fourth in 1405. For this he was executed.(14) Pecok of Winchester was deprived of his office in 1457 for heresy.(15) This is a far different program from those of other periods of English history where church men suffered and died with the men whose cause they had espoused.

Antipathy to the Lollards, relationship and common interest with the nobility, and natural conservatism, - all these conspired to bind the church to the cause of the Lancastrians. Yet there is room for belief that the prospect of a Yorkist triumph was welcome to a part of the clergy. Queen Margaret saw this early in the struggle, for she desired "that all bishoprics and other benefices belonging to the king's gift be given to her." (16) The reason for this division of loyalty is found in the reaction of a part of the church upon the accession of the Lancastrian kings. Prior to their accession the church had been strongly national. But the Lancastrians were strict orthodox Catholics.

(12) Howatt, Wars of the Roses, I, 23. He came over to the side of Edward 1471.

(13) Rogers, Work and Wages, 293, 370-75.

(14) English Chronicle, 32.

(15) Rogers, Work and Wages, 372.

(16) Paston Letters, 195.

Upon them the pope had pressed his claims, especially upon the saintly Henry the Sixth. Foreign absentees had enjoyed the fruits of English dioceses in spite of the protests of Parliament. (17) National pride seems, in some cases, to have overcome both loyalty to the monarch and allegiance to other former ties. For when the earls of March, Warwick, and Salisbury came to Sandwich from Calais in 1460, Bouchier met them with a great multitude of people. (18) The bishops of Ely, Exeter, London, Lincoln, and Salisbury took part in the welcome at Southwark. (19) It is evident, therefore, that some division existed among the church dignitaries; but it is reasonable to believe that the sympathy of the majority was with those who espoused the Lancastrian cause.

The apparent diversion from strictly municipal issues finds its explanation in this: the interests of the church were not the interests of the Lollards nor were they the interests of the towns. Hence the Lancastrian bias of the church is one more link in the chain of evidence of the Yorkist partisanship of the towns.

Again, the great economic changes which were sweeping over England during the fifteenth century could not fail to shift "the center of the gravity of power" according to changes in the distribution of the wealth of the country. Royal rights in the matter of the arbitrary coin-

(17) Ramsay, Lancaster and York? But Henry the Fourth had placed Arundel in the Primacy before the papal authority had reached him. Stubbs, Const. Hist. Eng. III, 26.

(18) Eng. Chr. 94. Wheth. Reg. says, "joined them in London". For a discussion of the ingeniousness with which Bouchier hid his preferences see, Rogers, Work and Wages, 372.

(19) Mowatt, Wars of the Roses, 123.

age of money were being questioned. The ban on lending money at interest was slowly but surely disappearing. And as a result financial enterprises were fast passing from the hands of foreigners into those of Englishmen. The majority of these Englishmen were of the trading classes. They speedily became the largest creditors of the crown, doubtless with all the power of pressure creditors could bring upon the royal person. London and other corporate towns, with wealthy merchants, contributed heavily to the wars of Henry the Fifth in France. (20) For the campaign of 1415 they furnished the largest part of the expenses, and in 1431 London was asked for a loan of ten thousand marks. (21) The mayor of London lent Henry the Sixth ten thousand marks for his wars in France. (22) The money poverty of the nobility grew more and more pronounced. (23) The Duke of York was forced to pawn his jewels to Sir John Falstaffe in 1452. (24)

How fast this division between capitalist and landlord grew, and how much the towns made use of their opportunities for obtaining liberties and security from the king, may be seen in a glance at a few instances of the manner in which Henry the Sixth favored the towns with charters and privileges.

"So monotonous, indeed," says a writer, "is the

(20) Vickers, England in the Later Middle Ages, 347.

(21) Ibid.

(22) Stow's Survey, 108.

(23) Paston Letters, 49.

(24) Ibid., 184.

record of the burghers on the royal demesne all moving***** to independence that a brief statement of the liberties secured by any single city will serve to illustrate the general history of all. (25)

In 1437 the king gave the lease of the town and then profits to the men of the town of Bristol for twenty years, and renewed it in 1446 for sixty years. In 1448 Nottingham received a charter of incorporation with great privileges. York received, in 1463, a charter granting the corporation the privilege of overlooking and preserving the principal rivers of Yorkshire. (26) And during the reign of the same monarch the following cities took to themselves charters of incorporation: Hull, Plymouth, Ipswich, Southampton, Coventry, Northampton, Woodstock, Canterbury, Nottingham, and Tenterden. (27)

Now commerce and industry had found themselves threatened by two things emanating principally from the nobility of England,----turbulence and inefficient government at home and unproductive, unsuccessful warfare abroad. (28) The consummation of lawlessness in the reign of Henry the Sixth probably grew out of two things. It was in great measure

(25) Green, Town Life in the Fifteenth Century, I, 238.

(26) Ibid., 239. citing

(27) Nottingham Records, I, 234, Note.

(28) Morey and Stephens, Hist. of Boroughs, II, 950.

(29) For domestic lawlessness see, Cunningham, Growth of English Industry and Commerce, 453, Note, Denton, England in the Fifteenth Century, 306, Ibid., 306, Paston Letters, I, 151, 179, and Plumpton Correspondence, 54.

a reaction from the Hundred Years war. And, in the second place, the royal baronage had become the peers of the king. The wars of Henry the Fifth had kept nobles, mercenary captains, and troops of common soldiers out of the country. There can be little doubt that their return contributed largely to the demoralization of England.⁽²⁹⁾ Not that lawlessness was a new thing. The language of Parliament on one occasion seems to indicate a long period of disorder.⁽³⁰⁾ Yet the disastrous results of the precipitation upon the land of crowds of men fresh from scenes of plunder and carnage may easily be imagined.

If the positive influence of the royal baronage was harmful to the towns, the negative influence arising from the absence of royal power was even more so. The deposition of Richard the Second, the usurpation of Henry the Fourth, and the weakness of Henry the Sixth had removed England a long way from those days when Norman and Plantagenet kings in some measure controlled and directed the whole of the land. The farce of administrative power brought its reward in lawlessness at home and disregard for the government from other lands. The commerce actuated by "the power of the state" during the reign of Richard the Second had been poorly protected and as a result industry had suffered. The military communication of Henry the Fifth with France may have afforded some protection. But how completely Henry the Sixth failed to protect the shipping is shown by the complaints of the time.⁽³¹⁾

⁽²⁹⁾ Mowatt, Wars of the Roses, Chapter XX.

⁽³⁰⁾ Denton, England in the Fifteenth Century, 281.

⁽³¹⁾ Paston Letters, II4.

The shipping did not suffer alone; the coasts were entirely unprotected. Young and old were kidnapped from the shores. (32) Sandwich and Southampton were burned by the French; London and Norwich were defended from marauders with booms and chains. (33) A travesty of internal government and the utter absence of protection for the coasts and shipping, --- these were the dangers threatening the prosperity of the trading classes and the towns and arousing their great alarm.

The threat of unsuccessful warfare remains to be noticed. Whatever had been English loyalty to the cause of England in the past, it is apparent that there was, in the minds of many, a deep desire for peace in the reign of Henry the Sixth. Commerce was being ruined and the country drained of men and money. It has been represented that the Lancastrian council was the party of peace, and that Duke Humphrey, with the Duke of York and others, was its bitterest opponent. (34) But, so far as Humphrey is concerned, it is probable that if Beaufort had stood for war, his opponent would have declared for "peace at any price." It is doubtful, however, whether the Duke of York shared such personal animosity.

The purpose of this thesis does not demand an effort to straighten the complications of the attempts at peace and the final cataclysm of defeat which overtook the nation. A fair general statement would seem to be that it was not the policy of peace embodied in Suffolk's promotion of the marriage of the king to Margaret of Anjou, with the surrender of Maine and Anjou to the French, which

(32) 20. Hen. VI, c. I.

(33) Denton, England in the Fifteenth Century, 87, 89.

(34) Stubbs, Const. Hist. Eng., III, 130.

aroused the popular indignation and revulsion of feeling against peace, so much as it was the policy of Suffolk, plus the ill-luck of Somerset. Both the young queen and the peace were popular in 1445. (35) It was not this peace but the renewal of the war that brought ruin. The English broke the truce in 1449. Maine and Anjou, the surrendered provinces were the key to Normandy; war re-opened and in 1450 Normandy was lost, either by the incompetence or the ill-luck of Somerset. It is worthy of note that the Commons did not demand his arrest before January 26th, 1450, (36) and even then the arrest was made partially on the ground, that he had, by secret dealing, prevented the conclusion of a lasting peace with France. (37)

It does not seem clear, therefore, that popular indignation was aroused over the policy of peace (38) or that the country was impatient of peace. (39) It is more probable that the Commons failed to discriminate between the policy of peace as represented by Suffolk and the disasters of Somerset, (40) and that the suspicious death of Gloucester had something to do with the murder of Suffolk. For Warwick later tried to bring about the peace of Western Europe through the marriage of Edward the Fourth with the sister of the Queen of France (41) a policy he would have avoided in that critical time had it been the cause of so much trouble in the former case.

(35) Stubbs, Const. Hist. Eng. III, 130.

(36) Ibid., 151.

(37) Ibid., 152.

(38) & (39) As ibid., 153, 155.

(40) The English ascribed Somerset's losses to treachery. Ibid. I 46

(41) Ibid., 206, citing Kirk, Chas. the Bold, I, 415, II, 15.

It was national disgrace abroad, brought about by weakness at home and precipitating lawlessness and local tyranny at home, which threatened prosperity and permanent peace.

Nor must it be overlooked that the absence of royal power rendered the status of the towns more and more insecure. As hinted before, the townsmen of the fifteenth century were not without political power. But there are signs that this power was diminishing fast in the latter part of the century by reason of the domination of the lords over the county elections. The shire elections were fast becoming the instruments of the nobility. (42) Now, loans might be a fair substitute for parliamentary power if royal power were a reality; if not, there was no substitute. That these things made for the popularity of the Yorkist cause in the towns there will be little room for doubt; that the towns were by them stirred to something more than the indifference with which they have been charged, may be argued.

(42) Paston Letters, passim. Stubbs, Const. Hist. Eng., III, 53, 424. Denton, England in the Fifteenth Century, I, 5.

CHAPTER FIVE.

MUNICIPAL YORKIST ACTIVITIES AND THEIR EXPLANATION.

Concerning the primary cause of the Wars of the Roses there has been much discussion. Bishop Stubbs thinks the struggle was scarcely more than a grand instance of the working of causes everywhere potent for harm.(1) Others are more inclined to find a distinctive element in the progress of this civil strife.They point out that the war was a protest against the Lancastrian government,which ended in a conflict between two rival houses for the crown;(2) that the Duke of York was forced into claiming the crown after fruitlessly trying to obtain good government by the removal of bad ministers;that the commons was powerful because of the lack of a hereditary title, but in danger because it could not control the powerful executive , and hence the forcing of the Yorkist claim.(3) Still others see in it a war of succession from the start.(4) There is a strong probability in favor of this last position,for the king,although married in 1445,had no issue until 1453. The Beaufort succession was not undreamed of,while many looked to the Duke of York as heir-apparent to the throne.(5) And it is to be noted that the animosity between York and Somerset reached its

(1) Const. Hist. Eng. III, 279.

(2) See Mowatt, Wars of the Roses, Chapter XX.

(3) Markham, Richard III. 7,104.

(4) Rogers, Work and Wages, 308, Jane, Coming of Par.,94.

(5) For the attitude of the House of Commons see
page 15, Note 2.

height during the childless period, when the line of Henry the Sixth seemed about to die out. The question of the right to the throne must have been acute.

But whatever may have been the cause, or whatever issues may have been injected as the conflict progressed, the sequel shows that the Yorkist party stood for that form of government which the commercial and industrial classes ardently desired,--a national efficient government in place of the conservative, weak, lawless regime of the last Lancastrian king. The attitudes and activities of the towns may be examined again, and the light of the results of the Wars of the Roses be shed back over the facts of the conflict.

The rising under Cade in 1450 was a herald of Yorkist popularity. Its organization clearly shows that the movement was far more than the wild ~~ma-~~ **neuvers** of an excited rabble, and the manifesto is evidence of the work of a statesman. It contains the demand that the Duke of York be returned to court, from which he had been excluded. (6) Furthermore, the indictment against the Duke in 1459 mentions his connection with the rebellion. (6) How far were the towns involved in this movement? Disturbances had already been made in some of the towns in the south of the country. (7) At Canterbury, on Oyer et Terminer to try the followers of Cade, eight men were executed for complicity in the affair. (8) It is a matter of record that the mayor and

(6) Stubbs, Const. Hist. Eng., III, 185.

(7) Flenly, Six Town Chronicles, Bale's Chronicle, 131, Note.

(8) Boston Letters, 384.

be expected of a town belonging to the great Duchy of Lancaster. But three years later we find the Yorkist king granting to Leicester twenty marks yearly, and exemption from the intervention of the justices resident in the county. The explanation of this may be deduced from the statement that upon Edward's arrival in England to recover his kingdom, three thousand men, "verily to be trusted," joined him at Leicester, and that in 1470 (sic) he made a grant to Leicester of twenty pounds yearly, together with a fair license, for services rendered by the townsmen under Lord Hastings at Barnet and Tewkesbury. (15) Apparently this was a case of political necessity, followed, when opportunity offered, by an unequivocal expression of political preferment.

In connection with Leicester it is of interest to note that Hereford, also a town of the Duchy of Lancaster, appeared to a contemporary observer to be Yorkist in sympathy when freed from Lancastrian restraint. (16)

The city of Newcastle furnishes another link of evidence in the argument for the Yorkist loyalty of the towns. Writers on the Wars of the Roses are fond of saying that the north was loyal to the Lancastrian cause. The state-

(15) Thompson, Municipal History, 78.

Bruce, History of the Arrival of Edward the Fourth, 8.

(16) Paston Letters, 305.

"The town will go with him (Henry VI) but a peace be made or the king depart thence." At the time of writing the king, with his wife and child, was staying at Hereford.

ment needs careful exceptions. Newcastle gave evidence of its good feeling for the Duke of York when in 1454 he tried, as Protector, to put down disturbances in the north.⁽¹⁷⁾ When Edward the Fourth made his memorable march into the north of England in 1462, Newcastle became the base of his supplies. This of itself would furnish no answer to the question whether its services were voluntary or under duress; but the city spoke in no uncertain terms, when in 1463 it repulsed a Lancastrian attack, though entirely unaided, and captured some French vessels intended for the relief of Bamborough.⁽¹⁸⁾

The apparent indifference of Norwich has already been noted. Its case will bear further investigation. The Duke of Norfolk was an ardent Yorkist.⁽¹⁹⁾ Norwich sent forty men, clothed and paid, to help discomfit the Lancastrians at Tewkesbury. During the absence of Edward the Fourth from England his wife and daughter found shelter in the town. When he returned in 1471, he attempted to land near Norwich, although he had but a handful of followers.⁽²⁰⁾ Taking the Lollard issue into account with these things, the statement that "Norwich adhered firmly to the Lancastrian cause for nearly sixty years, and political necessity forced them

(17) Merewether and Stephens, History of Boroughs, II, 854.
The city aided him with twenty pounds.

(18) Ramsay, Lancaster and York, II, 293, 295.

(19) Stubbs calls him the "pliant agent of the Duke of York."
Const. Hist. Eng. III, 171.

(20) Rogers, Work and Wages, 335.

(21) See pages 26-27, and Note 2.p.27.

to make peace with Edward,"does not seem nearly so plausible as the probability that political necessity kept the town Lancastrian until it had a fair chance to be otherwise.

Information concerning other towns is meager, yet not without importance. The Duke of York seems to have been sure of the support of Shrewsbury in 1452. (22) From Bristol had come the petition of Young in the Commons that York be made the heir-apparent to the throne. (23) Bristol was not wholly Yorkist, (24) yet the petition of Young indicates a preponderance of Yorkist sympathy. Gloucester had many citizens favorably disposed towards Queen Margaret and her army. But the city refused to receive her and her army and the gates were shut. (25) Coventry, Lynn, Beverly, and Warwick gave positive evidence of their Yorkist sympathy. (26) Edward admitted Somerset to favor in 1462. The following year the sight of him with Edward caused the townsmen of Northampton to attempt his life and Edward was forced to hide him. Both Nottingham and Northampton gave enthusiastic support to Edward

(22) Thompson, Municipal History, 134.

(23) In an address to the citizens he says, "I am fully determined to proceed against him (Somerset) with all haste with the help of my kinsmen and friends." Paston L's. Int. 73.

(24) Margaret's army was refreshed by the "king's rebels" in Bristol in 1471. Hist. Arrival Ed. IV, 25.

(25) She was "in fond hope of a friendly reception there in 1471." Ramsay, Lan. & York, 377.

(26) Coventry refreshed Edward's army for three days after Tewkesbury. Hist. Arrival Ed. IV, 32.

Edward found shipping at Lynn for Burgundy on the occasion of his flight from England. Pol. Vergil, 132.

Beverly was a "good town" to Edward. Hist. Arrival Ed. IV, 4.
Warwick received Edward as king in 1471, before his march on London. Hist. Arrival Ed. IV, 9.

in 1471 during his march to London. (27) Dunstable was undoubtedly strongly Yorkist. (28) If Markham's criticism is just, (29) there is little or nothing or ~~nothing~~ to hinder the conclusion that the city of York was decidedly Yorkist. The Cinque ports, Dover, Hastings, Sandwich, Hythe, and Romney, the original five, were generally Yorkist. (30)

Of London itself there is no uncertain opinion that the populace was divided in its sympathies. (31) Yet the corporate city doubtless was Yorkist. The Duke of York was in great favor with the citizens, (32) and later the desire of the Londoners for Edward as king was most pronounced. (33) Henry the Sixth issued an order in 1460 to the Mayor, Aldermen and Sheriffs, "to resist the Duke of York." The order was received in a bad spirit. The animosity with which the order was received is perhaps explained in part by a charter of Edward the Third to the city, which declares the citizens "shall not be compelled to go or send to war beyond the city." But in this same year a band of

(27) Bruce, History of the Arrival of Edward the Fourth, 7, 15.
Six hundred men, with two knights, joined Edward at Nottingham in this year.

(28) In 1471 its forces, led by a butcher of the city, engaged the army of Margaret and lost. The butcher, it is said, hanged himself. Mowatt, Wars of the Roses, 146.

(29) See page 21, note 6.

(30) Green, Town Life in the Fifteenth Century. See Index, "C. Ports."

(31) Pol. Vergil, 106, 143. Old Eng. Chr., 20-21, 67-95.

(32) A plan to assassinate him in 1455 "caused every man to go to harness and much ado there was." Paston Letters, 243.

(33) A writer affirms that "Warwick and March armed 'the Rascall people' and 'such others as ran to them.'" But he is forced to admit that the Londoners much desired Edward for king." Pol. Vergil, 7, 110.

soldiers from London fought under John Harrow, Warden of the Mercers' Company, on the Yorkist side.⁽³⁴⁾ Here is an emphasis of Yorkist loyalty that must not be underestimated.

Of affairs in London during 1460-61 there is some difference of interpretation. It is stated that London would not at first admit the three earls, -Warwick, Salisbury, and March,, and the same writer intimates that the city gave entrance only upon a threat of force from Warwick. He further declares that the city helped the Yorkists against the Lancastrians as the only way to preserve the city.⁽³⁴⁾ The whole affair was probably a politic move.⁽³⁵⁾ London forces helped to besiege Lord Scales in the tower, and after the Yorkist army passed on to Northampton the citizens refused to turn the government of the city over to Scales.⁽³⁶⁾ The city even voted one thousand pounds to help the earls. The opposition was in the minority.⁽³⁷⁾ It would seem that Yorkist influence in the city was as predominant as it was when, in 1453, the Parliament was held at Reading for fear of it.⁽³⁸⁾

No enthusiasm could be roused in the city for Henry the Sixth in 1471 in spite of Warwick's attempt to stir

(34) Markham, Richard III., 11. Mowatt, 138, "a large body."

(35) Vickers, Engs in the Later Midd. Ages, 455, citing the London Journal.

(36) "There was a show of resistance and no-one knows why the gates were open to the earls." Besant, Med. London, 136.

(37) Old Eng. Chr., 95.

(38) Vickers, England in the Later Middle Ages, 455, Paston Letters, Introduction, 140.

(39) Ramsay, Lancaster and York, II, 159, citing Rot. Par., 227.

up the people. Yorkist sympathy was in evidence everywhere in the city. (40)

The statement is often made that the Wars of the Roses was a conflict of the nobles and that the towns had little, if any, interest in the struggle. The facts contradict the statement. For the reasons set forth before and those to be set down later the towns did have and take a great interest in the war. At the battle of Towton More ten standards,-- the White Ship of Bristol, the Harrow of Canterbury, the Black Ram of Coventry, the Leopard of Salisbury, the Wolf of Worcester, the Dragon of Gloucester, the Wild Rat of Northampton, the George of Nottingham, the Griffin of Leicester, the Boar's Head of Windsor,-- all were unfurled on the Yorkist side. (41)

- (40) Warwick had written to the mayor, aldermen, and the Commons "encharging them to defend the city". Henry the Sixth paraded the city in vain. "Edward's true lords, lovers, and servants were in great number." In the same year it was London men who foiled the attempt of the Bastard of Fauconbridge to carry off Edward's wife and child. History of the Arrival of Edward the Fourth, 13, 16, 34. Mowat, 230.

A glimpse of decided popular hostility to the Lancastrian cause is seen in the statement that when, after the second battle of St. Alban's, Margaret ordered provisions from London, the mob in its fury stopped and pillaged the carts. Besant, Medieval London, 1, 37.

- (41) Thompson, Municipal History, 77, 78, 190, citing Ballads in Archeologia.

There remain some few general statements indicating some further activities of the towns in cooperation with the Yorkists. Soon after the accession of Edward the Fourth a call was issued for all loyal citizens to come to London in arms. The soldiers took their wages in advance and started without orders or governors. The result was a fiasco. A contemporary writer complains of the possible misunderstanding likely to arise. (42) Cities sent deputations to Edward affirming their loyalty, (43) while both Edward and Henry the Sixth took occasion to visit many of the towns of England. (44)

(42) "And the towns and country which have sent them

shall think they be discharged." Paston Letters, 384.

(43) "After the battle of St. Albans there was a concourse to him (Edward) of all ages and degrees of men..... others in the behalf of cities promised their good wills and all that they might do, and swore to be his true subjects" Polydore Vergil, 110.

(44) In 1452 Henry the Sixth made a progress thru Poole, Exeter, Bath, Gloucester, Ross, Monmouth, Hereford; and Ludlow. In 1461 Edward the Fourth likewise visited Middleham, York, Preston, Manchester, Chester, Stafford, Lichfield, Coventry, Warwick, Daventry, and Lambeth.

Ramsay, Lancaster and York, II, 151, 274.

After the quarrel between Warwick and Edward ~~each~~ strove to outdo the other in the building up of an army. Warwick, now Lancastrian, turned to the nobility and gentlemen. Edward the Fourth found his army and power among the middle class, particularly the townsmen. (45) All these things tell their own tale of municipal Yorkist loyalty and activity in the Wars of the Roses.

Now, are we justified in believing that the towns of England sided with the Yorkist party because that party stood for an efficient government--a government antagonistic to the tyranny of nobles and favorable to the growth of industry and commerce? A brief review of some details of the commercial sequel to the triumph of the Yorkists may furnish the answer.

The Parliament of 1463 was taken up almost altogether with commercial legislation. A comment on this fact ascribes it to the work of London merchants and craftsmen who had the ear of the new king. (46) If it was anything less than the formulation of a desired and agreed upon program the coincidence is strange. The following year a truce was made with Scotland for fifteen years, and treaties with Denmark, Castile, Brittany, and other countries were established. In

(45) The Earl of Warwick "took to him in fee as many knights, squires and gentlemen as he might to be strong and King Edward did that he might enfeeble the Earl's power."

"As he (Edward) found great comfort in his commoners, he ratified all franchises given to cities and towns, and gave new, more than was granted before, right largely, to the intent of goodwill and love."

Warkworth's Chronicle, 4, 2.

(46) Ramsay, Lancaster and York, 298.

four more years defensive treaties containing clauses of freedom for commercial intercourse between Flanders, Brabant, Burgundy and other countries were established for thirty years, while another was being negotiated with Aragon. Even such a pronounced Lancastrian as Bishop Stubbs admits that during the reign of Edward the Fourth commerce increased; and he remarks upon the neglect of domestic reform which followed the increase of trade and opportunities for gaining wealth.(47) Evidently the age of bourgeoisie commercialism had set in, -a period of protection and prosperity.

The commercial classes paid peculiar attention to Edward. The companies reaped a full reward; for by the fifteenth year of his reign they had gained full control of the election of all corporate officers and members of Parliament.(48)

Edward's attention to the companies of York and Leicester denotes a considerable amount of obligation on his part. Trading interests were largely responsible for the marriage of the king's sister, Margaret, to Charles the Duke of Burgundy.(49) During Edward's temporary confinement in 1469 London called loudly for his release and the chief complaint was that the Duke of Burgundy would break trade relations if he were not set free.(50) Trading interests operated against

(47) "The towns were more earnest in acquiring immunities of trade and commerce which they were to share with London than in reforming their own domestic institutions."
Const. Hist. Eng., 283, 597.

(48) Paston Letters, 362. Stubbs, 594ff.

(49) Gardiner, Houses of Lancaster and York, 185.

(50) Green, Town Life in the Fifteenth Century, I, 39.

Warwick when in 1470 he went to Calais, where Lord Wenlock was his lieutenant. Comines somewhere speaks of the rapidity with which the populace of the town changed their loyalty as different sides for the moment prevailed; but after the Yorkist cause was established the staple authorities kept even Warwick from entering Calais.⁽⁵¹⁾ Warwick's cause suffered large damage in England, when, during his campaign against Edward the "interests and prejudices of the country were touched by rumours of a war with Burgundy."⁽⁵²⁾ Trading interests, again, helped Edward to the recovery of his kingdom. Four Dutch and fourteen Hanse vessels returned with him to England, from which act the Hanse merchants reaped a splendid reward a few months later.⁽⁵³⁾ Here is an important indication of the large commercial life of England; for the Hanse towns were afraid of the inevitable French domination of commercial interests in London, should French aid bring about the triumph of the Lancastrian cause.⁽⁵⁴⁾

That Edward, in the face of former English relations with France, should have made an alliance with Burgundy and attacked that country, seems at first glance, to be strange. But here again, commercial interests seem to be in the ascendancy. Edward's policy seems to have been that of Edward the Third and not that of Henry the Fifth. In view of the fact that, although his army was powerful, he did not strike a blow

⁽⁵¹⁾ Ramsay, Lancaster and York, III, 353.

⁽⁵²⁾ Ibid., citing Fabian, 660.

⁽⁵³⁾ Ibid., 364, 395.

⁽⁵⁴⁾ Cunningham, Growth of Eng. Ind. and Com., 378, quoting Pauli, Pictures of Old England.

against France, when the Duke of Burgundy failed to arrive with his army, but came at once to terms of peace with Louis XI, on the invitation of that king, the conclusion seems fair that his alliance with Burgundy was commercial and not imperialistic. Edward had no desire to involve England in continental war; his interference on the continent was for the purpose of gaining the balance of commercial power. The schemes of Henry the Fifth had been abandoned, and in their place had come the schemes of a trader king. For Edward the Fourth was a large private trader. He increased trade by every means that came to his mind. And upon its foundation he started to build, perhaps not altogether designedly, a greater England than had even been before. That protection, prosperity and wealth was in the minds of the towns as they supported him there seems to be little reason to doubt. (55)

The towns of England, with some few exceptions, did not suffer much physical destruction during the wars (56)

- (55) "Possibly too complimentary to the statesmanship of Edward the Fourth. Selfish personal considerations may have played a part."

Criticism of H.M. Trenholme, University of Missouri.

For the private trading of Edward the Fourth see Ramsay, Lancaster and York, II, 456, and N.6.

See also Howatt, Wars of the Roses, 272.

- (56) St. Albans suffered partial destruction in the first battle of that name. The fight was within the town. O.E.Chron. 72.

After the battle of Northampton the royal army "wasted, burnt and spoiled towne and field." Pol. Vergil, II.3. Yet a defeated, followed army could hardly have been very largely destructive.

After the rout at Ludlow the town was sacked by the conquerors, with some other small towns on the Duke's estate.

Greg. Chr., 207, O.E.Chr., 83, Wheth. Reg. 340.

The royal town of Denbigh in Wales was burnt by Jasper Tudor, attainted earl of Pembroke. Howatt, 198.

JAN 19 1914

The records do not seem to bear out the statement that in the Wars of the Roses towns and country districts had been impartially devastated. 67) Doubtless the greatest amount of damage was done by Margaret's undisciplined forces as they marched from the north. But it seems that the destruction caused great public alarm and injured the Lancastrian cause. (58) There seems to be ample reason for the Yorkist care of the towns; and the Lancastrians doubtless left them alone as far as possible, in the hope of serving their own interests. The decay of towns must be differentiated from destruction and attributed to other causes.

67) Denton, England in the Fifteenth Century, 131.

68) At this time Grantham, Stamford, Peterborough, Huntingdon, Royston, Melbourne, and all the other towns as far south as Dunstable were pillaged, (and destroyed) by them.

Denton, 115. Stowe, Survey of England, 414, O.E.Chr., 107. "Utrobique in omni loco, perquam venerant, et praecipue citra Trentam, depraedantes, despoliantes, devastantesque." Wheth. Reg. 388.

BIBLIOGRAPHY.

- Ashley, W. J., Introduction to Economic History and Theory.
Longman's, Green and Co., 1894.
- Ashley, W. J., The Economic Organization of England.
Longman's, Green and Co., 1914.
- Besant, Sir Walter, Mediaeval London.
- Bock, Pansy Higbee, The New Monarchy. A study of the reign of Edward the Fourth.
Thesis, U. of Mo., 1915.
- Bourne, H. R. F., English Merchants.
Chatts and Windus, London, 1898.
- Bruce, John, (Ed.) History of the Arrival of Edward the Fourth into England and the Recovery of His Kingdom from Henry the Sixth.
J. B. Nichols and Son, London, 1888.
- Cunningham, W., The Growth of English Industry and Commerce.
Cambridge University Press, 1890.
Fifth Edition, 1910.
- Denton, W., England in the Fifteenth Century.
G. Bell and Sons, London, 1888.
- Davies, J. S., (Ed.) English Chronicle, Richard II, Hen. IV--VI.
J. B. Nichols and Son, London, 1846.
- Ellis, Sir H., (Ed.) Polvdore Vergel, Henry VI--Richard III.
J. B. Nichols and Son, London, 1846.
- English Historical Review, Vol. 25.
- Flenley, Six Town Chronicles. Oxford, Clarendon Press 1911.
- Greene, Mrs. J. R., Town Life in the Fifteenth Century.
Macmillan, 1895.
- Gross, C., The Gild Merchant.
Oxford. The Clarendon Press, 1890.
- Gairdner, J., The Houses of Lancaster and York.
Scribner's, 1889.
- Gairdner, J., The Paston Letters.
A. Constable and Co., Westminster, 1896.
- Gairdner, J., (Ed.) Letters and Papers Illustrating the Reigns of Richard III, and Henry VII.
Longman, Green, Longman and Roberts,
London, 1861.

- Harris, D. Miss, The Leet Book of Coventry.
J. M. Dent and Sons, London, 1911.
- Halliwell-Phillips, J. O. (Ed.) Warkworth's Chronicle.
J. B. Nichols and Son, London, 1859.
- Howard, G. E., The King's Peace.
Nebraska University Studies, 1890.
- Jane, L. Cecil, The Interpretation of History.
E. P. Dutton and Co., 1915.
- Jane, L. Cecil, The Coming of Parliament.
E. P. Dutton and Co.
- Kingsford, C. L. (Ed.) Stow's Survey of London.
Oxford. The Clarendon Press, 1908.
- Kirk, G. W., English Baronial Boroughs.
Thesis, U. of Mo., 1910.
- Markham, Sir C. R., Richard III.
Smith, Elder and Co., London, 1906.
- Merewether and Stephens, History of Boroughs.
- Mowatt, R. B., The Wars of the Roses.
C. Lockwood and Son, London, 1914.
- Oman, C. W., History of the Period of the Wars of the Roses
Longman's, Green and Co., 1906.
- Oman, C. W., Warwick the Kingmaker.
Macmillan, London, 1909.
First Edition, 1891.
- Pearson, C. H., History of England--Early and Middle Ages.
Bell and Daldy, London, 1867.
- Pauli, R., Pictures of Old England. Translation by E. C. Otte.
Macmillan, London, 1861.
- Ramsay, Sir J. H., Lancaster and York.
Oxford. The Clarendon Press, 1892.
- Riley, H. T., (Ed.) Whethamstede's Register.
Oxford. Parker and Co., 1873.
- Riley, H. T., (Ed.) Chronicle of Crowland Abbey and Continuator.
J. B. Nichols and Son, London, 1854.
"A Forgery of the Fourteenth Century."
(Library Card, U. of Mo.)

- Rogers, J. E. T., Agriculture and Prices.
Oxford. Clarendon Press, 1866, 1887.
- Rogers, J. E. T., Six Centuries of Work and Wages.
Humbolt Publishing Co., N.Y., 1891.
- Stapleton, T. (Ed.) The Plumpton Correspondence.
J. P. Bowers and Son, London, 1839.
- Stubbs, Bishop William, Constitutional History of England.
Oxford. Clarendon Press, 1880.
- Thompson, J., Municipal History.
London, 1867.
- Traill, H. D. (Ed.) Social England.
Cassell and Co., London, etc., 1894.
Several editions of this work have been
published.
- Trenholme, N. M., English Ecclesiastical Boroughs.
Harvard University.
- Vickers, K. H., England in the Later Middle Ages.
Methuen and Co., London, 1913,
New York, 1914.
- Warburton, Rev. W., Edward III. In Epochs of History Series.
Scribner's, 1888.

ADDENDA.

For Mr. Bede Jarret's work on the wills of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, mentioned on page 25, Note I, see the English Historical Review, Volume 25, pages 309-310.

In connection with the complicity of York in the uprising of Cade the student will find some interesting reading in Shakespeare, Henry the Sixth, Part Two, Act Three, Scene One. He must remember, however, that he is reading a drama.

For "Mowatt" and "Greene" in references read Mowat, and Green.

The publishers of Besant's "Medieval London" are Adam and Charles Black, London, 1906.

010-100719135

378.7M71
XC899

MU Libraries
University of Missouri --Columbia

MU Theses and Dissertations (Pre-1920)

Local identifier Culmer1918

Capture information

Date captured	03092017
Scanner manufacturer	Zeutschel
Scanner model	OS 15000
Scanning system software	Omni scan v. 12.8 SR2 (2675)
Optical resolution	600 dpi
Color settings	grayscale, 8 bit
File types	tiff

Source information

Format	Book
Content type	Text [with images]
Source ID	010-100719135
Notes	Pages typed and single-sided. Title page has signature and perforated property stamp. Call number written on Contents page. Purple ink property stamp on page 50. Some pages have handwritten corrections. Inside front cover has two labels pasted in. Inside back cover has barcode and call number. Pocket slip pasted in at end.

Derivatives - Access copy

Compression	Tiff compressed with LZW before conversion to pdf
Editing software	Adobe Photoshop CS5
Resolution	600 dpi
Color	Grayscale
File types	pdf
Notes	Pages cropped, canvassed, and brightened. Blank pages removed.