

Richard Quatremains: a 15th - century Squire and Knight of the Shire for Oxfordshire¹

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SUMMARY

As a younger son, Richard Quatremains perhaps unexpectedly inherited his father's Oxfordshire estate when he was about 20 years of age. Until well into middle life he was a customs official in London. Eventually he became increasingly involved in local affairs, as befitted a middling squire of the period, serving as a justice of the peace and as a parliamentary knight of the shire. The real interest and significance of his career, however, is to be found in his close association, during his early years, with such prominent supporters of the Lancastrian government as Thomas Chaucer and Thomas Stonor, whereas in later life he became firmly attached to the House of York.

The value of the prosopographical approach to the study of later medieval English society and, in particular, that of the gentry is now well established, largely owing to the work of Professor J.S. Roskell on the Lancashire knights of the shire between 1377 and 1460 and on the knights, citizens and burgesses in the parliament of 1422.² More recently, attention has been given to regional studies of the gentry in the 14th and 15th centuries.³ Taken together, the 'knights', 'esquires' and 'gentlemen' (a term first used in 1415)⁴ formed the bed-rock of local society, the core of the community who performed the many tasks of running affairs: sheriffs, justices of the peace, escheators, tax commissioners, commissioners of array, of gaol-delivery and the like. By the 15th century the social division between 'knight' and 'esquire' was a thin one. For instance, the fact that Thomas Chaucer (who sat for Oxfordshire fourteen times between 1401 and 1431) and William Allington (who represented Cambridgeshire in 1472 and 1478) were 'esquires', not 'knights', was no obstacle to their nomination as Speakers, the former on five occasions, the latter on two.⁵ Indeed, by the end of the 14th century the county gentry were certainly developing a feeling of 'political self-consciousness',⁶ while

¹ I should like to thank Dr C.T. Allmand and Dr G.J. White for kindly reading through this article and for their useful criticisms and suggestions.

² J.S. Roskell, *Knights of the Shire for the County Palatine of Lancaster (1377-1460)* (Chetham Society, n.s. xcvi, 1937), and *Commons in the Parliament of 1422: English Society and Parliamentary Representation under the Lancastrians* (1954). The value of this type of detailed work was urged upon scholars by the late K.B. McFarlane in an unpublished paper given to the Stubbs Society in 1938 and now made available in *Nobility of Later Medieval England: The Ford Lectures for 1953 and Related Studies* (1973), 296.

³ N. Saul, *Knights and Esquires: Gloucestershire Gentry in the Fourteenth Century* (1981), and M. Christine Carpenter, 'Political Society in Warwickshire c. 1401-72', unpublished Cambridge Ph.D. thesis (1976).

⁴ G.E. Sitwell, 'The English Gentleman', *Ancestor*, i (1902), 58-103. Writing of the early Tudor period it has been suggested that a 'gentleman' was a lesser landowner worth usually £10 a year, whereas a knight was expected to be worth double (J. Cornwall, 'The Early Tudor Gentry', *Econ. Hist. Rev.*, 2nd ser. xvii (1965), 470).

⁵ For Chaucer and Allington, see J.S. Roskell, *Commons and their Speakers in English Parliaments, 1376-1523* (1965). Allington was knighted after the close of the parliament of 1478.

⁶ Saul, *Knights and Esquires*, 259.

their experience in the multifarious duties of local government well fitted them to represent their communities in the Commons.⁷ Repeated election or frequent re-election to parliament, especially in the case of the knights of the shire, the more dominant element, must have played some part in developing a corporate sense among the members of the Commons. Moreover, the meeting of men from different shires who enjoyed similar experience and outlook must have had important social consequences in an age which was becoming both more mobile and more literate. During the early 15th century many of the gentry made good through military, administrative or legal service at home or in France, sometimes as servants of the Crown or sometimes as servants of the nobility.⁸ Again, in this period of 'bastard feudalism', the nobility used their influence to secure election to parliament of their servants, retainers, and associates.⁹ But 'service', 'attachment' or 'association' did not mean 'subservience'. If the gentry as a whole had progressed on the way to political self-consciousness, it follows that they had established some degree of independence of behaviour and action in spite of their links with the nobility: for they represented the 'community of the shire' who, through their work and association, provided continuity and a certain stability. Not untypical of this type of country gentleman was Richard Quatremains esquire, who represented Oxfordshire in the parliaments of 1432, 1433, and 1472-5.

Writing in the reign of Henry VIII, just conceivably within living memory of the death of Richard Quatremains, John Leland wrote: 'the house of the Quatremains in Oxfordshire hath bene famose and of right fair possessions. Their chief house was at Weston by Ricote . . . About King Henry the vi dayes dyvers brethren dyed . . . one after another, and by a great onlykelihod al the landes descendid to one Richard the yonggest . . . that was a marchant of London, and after customer there . . .'.¹⁰ In this brief entry Leland did less justice than he might, for Quatremains enjoyed a long and active life, during which he established himself as a substantial member of the inner circle of the Oxfordshire gentry. Interest in him does not end there for, certainly in his later years, he enjoyed close connections with Richard, Duke of York, his duchess Cecily, and their son Edward IV.

Born about 1395, Richard Quatremains was the third and youngest son of Thomas Quatremains III (died 1398/9) of Ascot and North Weston (Oxon.) by Joan, daughter of John Russell of Bradenstoke (Wilts.). He succeeded to the estate after the deaths of his elder brothers John (in 1403) and Guy (in 1414).¹¹ Within a few years he had begun to be involved in business and public service for, on 21 July 1417, as Richard Quatremains 'esquire', he was named as a mainpernor or surety for a man granted a lease by the

⁷ Roskell, *Commons*, 85-6.

⁸ A good example was Geoffrey Lowther esquire, knight of the shire for Kent in 1422, 1426 and 1432 (on the last occasion he was a fellow parliamentary knight of Richard Quatremains), a lawyer, at first closely associated with the Neville family in the person of Thomas, Lord Furnival, and later with Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, in whose retinue he served in 1415, and for whom he was deputy warden of the Cinque Ports and constable of Dover (Roskell, *Commons*, 201-02).

⁹ On this point, see the classic article by K.B. McFarlane, 'Parliament and "Bastard Feudalism"', *T.R. Hist.S.*, 4th ser.xxvi (1944), 53-73. More recently the researches of Dr. M.A. Hicks have revealed that in the parliament of 1472-5 the servants of George, Duke of Clarence, were strongly in evidence, but far less so in 1478 when the duke was out of favour (M.A. Hicks, *False, Fleeting Perjur'd Clarence: George, Duke of Clarence, 1449-78* (1980), 217-18).

¹⁰ *Itinerary of John Leland*, ed. L. Toulmin Smith, 5 vols. (1964), i, 114-15.

¹¹ W.F. Carter, *Quatremains of Oxfordshire* (1936), 15ff; *V.C.H. Oxon.* v, 10, 171. On 6 Aug. 1414 the escheator of Oxfordshire was ordered to deliver seisin to Richard, brother and heir of Guy Quatremains (*Calendar of the Fine Rolls* (hereafter *C.F.R.*), 1413-22, 76). The surname is found variously as 'Catermayns', 'Catyrmayne', 'Katermayne', 'Katyrmayn', 'Quatermayns', 'Quatremains', 'Quatremaynz'.

Exchequer.¹² By the beginning of 1419 Quatremains had connections with London, when he was described as 'of London' in a charter, dated 1 January, granting part of the Warwickshire manor of Marston by Wolston to Thomas Wodelawe and his wife, Margaret.¹³ In the same year Thomas and Margaret Wodelawe quitclaimed their rights to a moiety of the advowson of Ickford (Bucks.) to Quatremains, subject to a life-interest to Margaret.¹⁴ Towards the end of the year, on 26 November, Quatremains himself was successful in obtaining an Exchequer lease of the manor of Oldland (Glos.) following the death of John Devereux, a tenant-in-chief.¹⁵ More significant, as a pointer to his identification with the Oxfordshire gentry, was the recognisance in £40 which Richard Quatremains, 'citizen and fishmonger of London', made on 2 July 1419 with John Golafre, a prominent and well-connected Oxfordshire and Berkshire squire, shire-knight (he sat fourteen times for one or other of those shires between 1397 and 1429) and close associate of Thomas Chaucer.¹⁶

Probably Quatremains's first public post of responsibility was his inclusion, on 26 April 1421, in a commission of enquiry into the theft of wines and gear of a Breton ship which had sunk at the mouth of the Thames.¹⁷ He was quite likely in London for much of the year, for on 14 July and again on 12 November, when described as 'of Oxfordshire', he was named as a guarantor first for John Cottesmore, an Exchequer lessee of Oxfordshire lands and, secondly, on behalf of John Coldon and Thomas Russell, who had been appointed aulnagers of cloth in Northamptonshire and Rutland.¹⁸ Moreover, about the same time he was involved in litigation concerning a property in Bread Street, St Mildred's parish, London, and on 28 November a commission was set up to examine his claim that an error had been made in this case.¹⁹

On 6 February 1422 Quatremains was appointed controller of the subsidy of 3s. on the tun of wine and 1s. in the pound on other imported goods in the port of London. He was to hold office during pleasure and to carry out the duties personally. When his appointment was renewed on 8 February 1423, the patent specifically added that he had to write the rolls with his own hand – indirect proof that he was literate.²⁰ Further renewals of his customership were made on 16 August and 10 November 1433 and 10 May 1437.²¹ It has been suggested that Quatremains may have owed his early advancement to a family connection with John Cottesmore of Haseley, near Thame, a

¹² *Ibid.*, 207.

¹³ *Calendar of Close Rolls* (hereafter *C.C.R.*), 1413–19, 516; Sir William Dugdale, *Antiquities of Warwickshire* (1656), 28; *Warwickshire Feet of Fines*, iii (Dugdale Soc. xviii, 1943), no. 2510.

¹⁴ *V.C.H. Bucks.* iv, 61.

¹⁵ *C.F.R.*, 1413–22, 308.

¹⁶ For Chaucer and Golafre, see Roskell, *Commons*, 165–67, 185–86. Golafre, who died in 1442, married Nicole widow of John Englefield, son of Sir John Englefield, of Englefield, Berks. At a date before 12 Dec. 1447 Quatremains married Sybil, dau. of Sir John Englefield and sister of John 'the younger' (*Visitations of Berks*, 1532, 1566, 1623, 1665–6, ed. W.H. Rylands, ii (Harleian Soc. lvii, 1908), 122; *Calendar of Patent Rolls* (hereafter *C.P.R.*), 1446–52, 180–81). It is likely that Quatremains had married Sybil some years earlier, since he was certainly 50 by 1447, in which case the connection between Quatremains and Golafre would have been strengthened.

¹⁷ *C.P.R.* 1416–22, 384. On 7 May Quatremains and another commissioner duly held an enquiry at Queenborough (*Cal. of Inquisitions Miscellaneous*, viii, 1339–1421 (1968), No. 618).

¹⁸ *C.F.R.*, 1413–22, 393, 394.

¹⁹ *C.P.R.*, 1416–22, 327.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 1416–22, 410; 1422–29, 58. An illustration of his signature to a deed dated 5 Feb. 1459 (B.L. Add. Charter, 20320) is given in Carter, *Quatremains*, 34. Quatremains's signature has also survived in a letter dated Monday 6 Aug. 14[?]70 which he wrote to William Hamyldon concerning a dispute the latter was having with one of his tenants, William Buldry. Quatremains was apparently engaged to act on Hamyldon's behalf or as an arbitrator (P.R.O., Ancient Correspondence, SC1/51/76).

²¹ *C.F.R.*, 1430–37, 163, 179, 329.

judge, whose wife was sister-in-law of Maud Quatremains, Richard's sister.²² No doubt Cottesmore was a useful contact, but more likely the vital influence was that of Thomas Chaucer, who occupied the important office in the royal household of Chief Butler at the time of Quatremains's appointment as controller.²³ Significantly the names of Quatremains, Cottesmore and Chaucer were all given as witnesses on 12 November 1433 to a quitclaim by Robert Skeyrne to the Abbot and Convent of Oseney.²⁴

Despite his official duties in London, Quatremains was now becoming more involved in Oxfordshire affairs and must increasingly have been seen as a man of some substance among the local squirearchy. Not surprisingly, his nomination as a tax assessor for Oxfordshire on 12 April 1431 was followed by his election, on 1 May 1432, as one of the knights of the shire to the parliament which met at Westminster on 12 May.²⁵ The life of this assembly (it lasted until 17 July) was dominated by the charges brought by Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, against his uncle and rival Cardinal Henry Beaufort, Bishop of Winchester. Beaufort successfully defended himself against claims that he had obeyed papal instructions instead of a royal command to go to France, but he had to lend a further sum of £6000 to the government and to accept a postponement of the repayment of loans already outstanding (Beaufort was one of the chief creditors of the Lancastrian government at this time).²⁶ Although the evidence is purely circumstantial for the close relationship of Thomas Chaucer and Richard Quatremains, it is interesting to note that whereas Chaucer, who was Beaufort's cousin, no less, did not sit in this parliament, his younger associate Quatremains did. Moreover, the Speaker, John Russell, knight of the shire for Herefordshire and a lawyer, enjoyed some links with Beaufort as a co-feoffee for Edward, late Duke of York.²⁷

Some four months after the close of the parliament Quatremains was made a justice of the peace for Oxfordshire on 10 November 1432. He was to remain on the bench for almost exactly four years, until 21 November 1436.²⁸ During this period he was again returned, on 25 June 1433, as one of the Oxfordshire knights of the shire, now to the parliament summoned at Westminster for the following 8 July.²⁹ This parliament assembled against a background of growing lawlessness at home – Quatremains was actually assaulted during the lifetime of the parliament – increasing financial difficulties and a deteriorating political and military situation in France.³⁰ For several reasons the duke of Burgundy, England's main ally against France, was increasingly lukewarm; the French, having recovered their nerve since 1429, were now adopting a harder attitude towards a negotiated settlement; and the duke of Bedford's military reputation was being questioned. In the first parliamentary session (which ended on 13 August) Bedford silenced his critics and governmental changes were carried out, which weakened the influence of the duke of Gloucester. The most important appointment was

²² Carter, *Quatremains*, 29; *Visitations of the County of Oxford, 1566, 1574 and 1634*, ed. W.H. Turner (Harleian Soc., v, 1871), 186.

²³ Chaucer was Chief Butler, except for a few months in 1407 and from March 1418 to May 1421, from 5 Nov. 1402 until his death on 18 Nov. 1434 (Roskell, *Commons*, 165, 167).

²⁴ *C.C.R.*, 1429–35, 252; *Cartulary of Oseney Abbey*, ed. H.E. Salter, ii (Oxf. Hist. Soc., xc, 1929), 400.

²⁵ *C.P.R.*, 1429–36, 138; *Official Return of Members of Parliament* pt. i, 1213–1874 (Parliamentary Papers, 1878), 322; J.C. Wedgwood and Anne D. Holt, *History of Parliament: Biographies of the Members of the Commons House 1439–1509* (1938), 703–04.

²⁶ *Rotuli Parliamentorum* (hereafter *R.P.*), 1272–1503, ed. J. Strachey and others, 6 vols. (1767–83), iv, 390–92; Roskell, *Speakers*, 205; Ralph A. Griffiths, *Reign of King Henry VI* (1981), 41–2.

²⁷ Roskell, *Speakers*, 204.

²⁸ *C.P.R.*, 1429–36, 623; *ibid.*, 1436–41, 588.

²⁹ *Official Return*, 325.

³⁰ *R.P.* iv, 453.

that of Ralph, Lord Cromwell, as Treasurer; and it was Cromwell who produced the famous (and depressing) statement of the Crown's finances in the second session of the parliament. In spite of pressure for substantial financial support, the Commons only voted one tenth and one fifteenth, less £4000, about £33,000 in total, to be paid in four instalments spread over two years.³¹ In the second session Lords and Commons showed their concern about law and order by re-taking an oath of 1429 to keep the peace (members of the lower house did so individually before Bedford on 13 November) and deciding to extend the oath-taking to include prominent people in the kingdom at large. For the latter purpose the knights of the shire were to submit the names of suitable people to Chancery.³² Consequent upon the decisions of the parliament, Quatremains and his 'senior' colleague, Stephen Hatfield, were appointed on 27 December 1433 and again on 1 February 1434 to distribute the tax allowance of £147 2s.9½d. in Oxfordshire; and on 1 May he and Hatfield as 'late knights of the shire' were named commissioners to take the oaths of Oxfordshire men to be sworn to the peace.³³ On 3 November Quatremains became escheator for Oxfordshire for the Exchequer year 1434-5.³⁴ Meanwhile, on 17 July 1433, he, Sir Richard Hastings and others were sureties in £100 that Sir William Lovell should not molest a certain William Penteney; and in July 1434 he obtained an Exchequer lease of the Hampshire manor of Pury, during the minority of the heir, for which he had to pay 10 marks.³⁵ In Hilary term 1435 he was plaintiff in a fine concerning the manor and advowson of Wigborough, Essex, and on 30 June Quatremains was included in a commission of enquiry into the escapes from prisons in Oxfordshire and Berkshire.³⁶

Although he had been appointed to bodies dealing with local matters, it seems quite likely that Quatremains had to spend much time in London at this period in business connected with his post as a customs' official. The Receipt Rolls of the Exchequer record several payments in the names of Richard Quatremains and his colleague, Thomas Walsingham, in the 1430s and 1440s. For example, under 29 October 1433, sums of £200, £120 and £49 16s.8d. were paid in;³⁷ on 18 February 1434 £66 13s.4d.;³⁸ on 22 February sums of £266 13s.4d., £133 6s.8d. (both of which were assigned to John Tyrell, treasurer of the royal household), and two amounts each of £100;³⁹ and in May and June 1438 they handed over seven sums of money totalling £638 11s. of which £208 11s. was to be assigned to Edmund, Earl of Dorset, to pay for 33 barrels of saltpetre for war purposes.⁴⁰ Quatremains was, in fact, quite closely involved in the 'war effort' at this period. For instance, in 1436 he was given £100 for the masters and mariners keeping the sea against the enemy,⁴¹ and in the previous year, in his capacity as one of the collectors in the port of London, Richard Quatremains along with John Throckmor-

³¹ Ibid., iv, 425-26; Roskell, *Speakers*, 206-10; Griffiths, *Henry VI*, 121.

³² R.P., iv, 455-57; Griffiths, *Henry VI*, 145-6.

³³ C.F.R., 1430-37, 187, 193; C.P.R., 1429-36, 392.

³⁴ C.F.R., 1430-37, 222.

³⁵ C.C.R., 1429-35, 228; C.F.R., 1430-37, 207. Quatremains is recorded as having paid 66s.8d. into the Exchequer for the custody of Pury manor on 6 May 1437 (P.R.O., Exchequer Receipt Rolls, E101/751, m.5).

³⁶ *Feet of Fines for Essex*, iv, 1423-1547, ed. P.H. Reaney and M. Fitch (Essex Arch. Soc. 1964), 21; C.P.R., 1429-36, 474.

³⁷ P.R.O. E401/734, mm. 3,4.

³⁸ P.R.O. E401/736, m. 15. A marginal note stated that this sum was assigned to them on 24 Feb., a fact confirmed by an entry on the Issue Roll under the same date (P.R.O. E403/712, m. 10).

³⁹ P.R.O. E401/736, m.16.

⁴⁰ P.R.O. E 401/756, mm. 2, 10, 11, 12, 13.

⁴¹ C.F. Richmond, 'The Keeping of the Seas during the Hundred Years' War: 1442-1440', *History*, xlix (1964), 292.

ton, Richard Bokeland and William Venour, was ordered by Ralph, Lord Cromwell, as Treasurer, to fit out a ship and a balinger – the *Petur* and the *Julian of Newcastle* – to guard the seas between 25 July and Michaelmas 1435. The patrol arrested the *Cristofre* of Bristol for trading illegally with Iceland and 'Finmark' [Norway], and on 1 March 1436 Quatremains successfully petitioned the Court of Exchequer for a writ to allow him to purchase the ship and for the others to have the value of the victuals they had provided. The vessel was sold for £20.⁴² His association with Throckmorton is particularly interesting, for not only was the latter one of the chamberlains of the Exchequer (an appointment he owed to Richard Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick) and under-treasurer of England at that time, but he had been knight of the shire for Worcestershire in 1432 and 1433, and must have known Quatremains well.⁴³

In Oxfordshire he was made a commissioner of array on 18 January 1436, a tax assessor on 29 January, and on 24 February he was appointed to a panel to persuade the notables of the shire to lend money to the king, the loan to be repaid out of the tenth and fifteenth due by Whitsuntide 1437.⁴⁴ Quatremains himself had been among those requested by writ of Privy Council, on 14 February 1436, to make a specific loan for the war: in his case £40, a not inconsiderable sum.⁴⁵ Early in March he was ordered with other officials to requisition all ships of sixteen tuns or more coming to London, together with their crews, to transport troops to France.⁴⁶

His appointment as sheriff of Oxfordshire and Berkshire on 8 November 1436 reinforced his standing as one of the leading squires of the county.⁴⁷ As sheriff he held the elections for Berkshire (on 19 December 1436) and for Oxfordshire (on 3 January 1437) to the parliament which met at Westminster on 21 January 1437.⁴⁸ On 29 April 1437, 50 marks (£33 6s.8d.) were paid into the Lower Exchequer on his behalf by John Kent.⁴⁹ Various other sums were recorded as having been received from Quatremains as sheriff during the following months, including £40 on 29 October 1437 and £5 6s.8d. on 10 February 1438.⁵⁰ Within a fortnight on relinquishing office as sheriff (7 November 1437) he was restored to the Oxfordshire bench of justices, on which he was to serve continuously, with reappointments from 23 November 1437 until 14 November 1470.⁵¹ Two days after his reappointment as a justice of the peace, the sheriff of Oxfordshire

⁴² *The Overseas Trade of Bristol in the Later Middle Ages*, ed. E.M. Carus-Wilson (Bristol Rec. Soc. vii, 1937), No. 76.

⁴³ Throckmorton had previously been elected for Worcestershire in 1414, 1420 and 1422, and was to be returned again in 1439 (J.T. Driver, 'Worcestershire Knights of the Shire' 1377–1421', *Trans. Worcs. Arch. Soc.*, 3rd ser. v (1976), 17–18). Bokeland was appointed treasurer and victualler of Calais in 1421 and sat for Northamptonshire in 1431, in company with Thomas Chambre esquire (Roskell, *Commons*, 163).

⁴⁴ *C.P.R.*, 1429–36, 521, 529; *C.F.R.*, 1430–37, 261, 269. Serving on some of these commissions was Quatremains's fellow Oxfordshire squire and lawyer Drew Barentyne, who was to be shire-knight in 1445–6; Barentyne's second wife was a natural daughter of William de la Pole, Duke of Suffolk, whose seat was at Ewelme, near Thame, and his third wife was the daughter of John Throckmorton (Wedgwood, *Biographies*, 40, 851).

⁴⁵ *Procs. and Ords. of the Privy Council*, ed. Sir H. Nicolas (1835), iv, 328.

⁴⁶ *C.P.R.*, 1429–36, 534.

⁴⁷ *C.F.R.*, 1430–37, 303; *P.R.O.*, *Lists and Indexes*, ix (1893): *List of Sheriffs for England and Wales*, 108.

⁴⁸ *P.R.O.* C219/15/1/92, 94. I should like to thank Dr A.T. Thacker, who kindly checked this reference for me.

⁴⁹ *P.R.O.* E401/751, m. 4; *P.R.O.*, Lord Treasurer's Remembrancer Rolls ('Adventus Roll'), E368/209, m. 6d.

⁵⁰ *P.R.O.* E401/754, m. 4; 754, m. 20. Quatremains's full account is preserved in the Pipe Roll, Mich. 15 Henry VI – Mich. 16 Henry VI (*P.R.O.* E372/282, mm. 37–8).

⁵¹ *C.P.R.*, 1436–41, 588; *ibid.*, 1441–46, 476; *ibid.*, 1446–52, 593; *ibid.*, 1452–61, 675; *ibid.*, 1461–67, 570; *ibid.*, 1467–77, 625.

was told to elect a new verderer of Shotover, Oxfordshire, since Quatremains was too occupied in London to carry out the work.⁵² That this was so tends to be borne out by the continued payments made into the Lower Exchequer under his name and that of Thomas Walsingham, as collectors of customs in the port of London. For example, £186 6s.11d. was paid in on 30 November 1437, and £21 4s.11d. and £200 on 11 and 18 February 1438 respectively.⁵³ Furthermore, on 24 May 1438, the treasurer and chamberlains of the Exchequer were ordered to pay £300 to Richard Quatremains for the passage of Bernard Angevin, a councillor, to Bordeaux; and shortly afterwards payment by tally was warranted for £53 6s.8d. to John Solers esquire for the expenses of German 'ambassadors' and workers coming to London, the tally to be presented for payment to Quatremains and Walsingham.⁵⁴ A surviving 'view of account' for 1438-9 reveals that these two officials collected £2046 18s.10½d. between Michaelmas 1438 and Easter 1439, and that they seized a quantity of illegally imported madder.⁵⁵

In addition to fulfilling his official duties, Quatremains's name crops up in more personal dealings as, for example, executor, feoffee or witness to deeds. Such references are evidence of his standing and social contacts, rather than proof of his presence when a particular document was drawn up. On 4 December 1436 and 20 March 1437 his name was given as one of the feoffees for the manor of Dunton (Bucks.); on 18 February 1438 he and William Mering esquire (to be one of the parliamentary knights for Nottinghamshire in 1478) were sureties for an Exchequer lessee; and about this time he was an executor of Richard Bokeland.⁵⁶ Very interesting, as indicative of his range of contacts, was that on 4 February 1439 Richard Quatremains 'of Oxfordshire, esquire', and William Tresham (who had sat for Northamptonshire in 1432 and 1433) were named as mainpernors or guarantors for Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, when the duke was allowed the wardship and marriage of the daughters and heirs of Thomas Seyntcler.⁵⁷ Ten days later he was one of the sureties in £500 for the appearance of Thomas Haseley before the king and council to answer certain unspecified charges.⁵⁸ In September 1439 William Northales, fishmonger of London, made a gift of all his goods (possibly in return for a loan) to Quatremains and another man; and in the following month Quatremains witnessed a grant of a tenement in Queenhithe Ward.⁵⁹ In March 1440 he was referred to as 'esquire, late escheator in Oxfordshire', when he obtained a pardon; and from a pardon granted to John Russell, of Gloucestershire, in October, it appeared that Quatremains was one of the executors of Thomas Polton, formerly Bishop of Worcester.⁶⁰ About the same time Quatremains was one of several feoffees for Sir Thomas Wykeham of the manor of Adderbury, called 'St Amand's manor', which was ultimately conveyed to Drew Barentyne, John Danvers, and John Kent, 'clerk'.⁶¹

⁵² C.C.R., 1435-41, 143.

⁵³ P.R.O. E401/754, mm. 11, 18, 19.

⁵⁴ P.R.O., Exchequer Warrants for Issue, E404/54/176; 55/143.

⁵⁵ P.R.O., King's Remembrancer, Customs Accounts, E122/75/25; 76/36.

⁵⁶ C.P.R., 1436-41, 31, 51; C.F.R., 1437-45, 28; Wedgwood, *Biographies*, 704.

⁵⁷ C.F.R., 1437-45, 68. For Tresham, who had close links with the royal household under Henry VI and possibly with Beaufort, and who was four times Speaker between 1439 and 1450, see Roskell, *Speakers*, esp. 218-23, 229-30, 238-39.

⁵⁸ C.C.R., 1435-41, 252. Quatremains's connection with Haseley provides another, if rather indirect, link with Thomas Chaucer, for in 1423 Chaucer and Haseley, an Oxfordshire man and clerk of the Crown in Chancery, obtained the wardship of certain lands of John Arundell esquire, deceased (Roskell, *Commons*, 149).

⁵⁹ *Cal. Plea and Memo. Rolls . . . of London . . . 1437-57*, ed. P.E. Jones (Camb., 1954), 25, 162.

⁶⁰ C.P.R., 1436-41, 386, 321.

⁶¹ Carter, *Quatremains*, 39; C.P.R., 1441-46, 344. Wykeham was great-nephew and heir of Bishop William Wykeham; he sat for Oxfordshire four times between 1402 and 1425 (Roskell, *Commons*, 239-41).

In July 1441 he was included in a commission with the sheriff of Cornwall and others to investigate the seizure of a Breton vessel by Cornish pirates; on 26 March 1442 he was a member of a panel to try a case concerning the sale of *le Marye*; and on 28 August following he was a commissioner to raise a loan in Oxfordshire for the defence of Aquitaine.⁶² Later in the year, on 24 November, he was a co-feoffee with Ralph, Lord Cromwell, and Drew Barentyne for the manor of Drayton (Hants.), which was eventually conveyed by Quatremains and other feoffees to Thomas Pound and his wife in January 1447.⁶³ He and Barentyne were again associated together in May 1444, when they were named as supervisors of the rights of pontage granted to 'the good men of Chis-elhampton' (Oxon.).⁶⁴ On 30 October 1445 Stephen Foster, merchant, acknowledged before the mayor and recorder of London a deed of gift to Sir William Estfield, a wealthy London mercer, John St. Lo esquire, and Quatremains of pepper, silks, sugar candy and other goods on their way to England in two Venetian galleys.⁶⁵ In June 1446 he was again included in a government loan-raising commission for Oxfordshire, and in the following December he has once more associated with Drew Barentyne as joint lessee with William Beaufitz of lands in Hampshire, Wiltshire and Dorset, during the minority of the heir of Sir Stephen Popham.⁶⁶

Meanwhile Quatremains had continued to carry out his duties as collector in London until 11 September 1445, when his successor William Lynde was appointed.⁶⁷ Payments totalling £276 8s.11d. were recorded at the Lower Exchequer as having been paid in by Quatremains and Walsingham between 11 May and 16 July 1445.⁶⁸ Even after Quatremains had officially ceased to be a customer of London, monies were still noted as having been received from him and Walsingham or another collector, Thomas Pounds. Several payments were made between 5 May and 21 July 1446, the last being for £66 13s.4d.; and on 22 April, 1 May and 11 May 1447 sums of £167 4s.8d., 20s. and £20 respectively were received.⁶⁹

By now Richard Quatremains must have been a man of some substance and standing in both London and Oxfordshire. It was, therefore, in keeping with his position that he and his wife, Sybil, were licensed to found the guild and chantry of St Christopher in Thame church on 12 December 1447. The trustees of the foundation included not only Drew Barentyne, who must have been a close friend and possibly a family connection, but a clutch of Lancastrian establishment notabilities – John Stafford, Archbishop of Canterbury, William Alnwick, Bishop of Lincoln, Humphrey Stafford, Duke of Buckingham, and Willam de la Pole, then Marquis of Suffolk, and a neighbour of Quatremains at Ewelme in Oxfordshire.⁷⁰ Other important contacts were probably Ralph, Lord Sudeley, for whom Quatremains was a feoffee in April 1448, and Sir John Fortescue and Sir Edmund Hungerford (two staunch Lancastrians), with whom he was a co-feoffee in Hintlesham manor (Suffolk) between September 1448 and August

⁶² *C.P.R.*, 1436-41, 575-76; *ibid.*, 1442-46, 57, 92.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 1441-46, 144; *ibid.*, 1446-52, 31. Pound was a customs official in London, 1443-6, and parliamentary knight for Hants. in 1450-1; his son, John, sat for Portsmouth in 1472-5 (Wedgwood, *Biographies*, 695-96).

⁶⁴ *C.P.R.*, 1442-46, 267.

⁶⁵ *Cal. Plea and Memo. Rolls* . . . 1437-57, 83.

⁶⁶ *C.P.R.*, 1441-46, 431; *C.F.R.*, 1445-52, 60.

⁶⁷ *C.P.R.*, 1441-46, 372. The two men almost certainly knew each other, since Quatremains had been a guarantor for Lynde when the latter took out an Exchequer lease in Oct. 1435 (*C.F.R.*, 1430-37, 348).

⁶⁸ P.R.O. E401/790, mm. 15, 16, 17, 18, 28.

⁶⁹ P.R.O. E401/794, m. 31; 799, mm. 1, 4, 10.

⁷⁰ *C.P.R.*, 1446-52, 180-81. See also Carter, *Quatremains*, 43-4; *V.C.H. Oxon.* vii, 203.

1449.⁷¹ That he stood well with the government of the day was underlined by his appointment in the following December as controller of the petty custom in London with the reward of £20 yearly and permission to carry out his duties by deputy (a grant made to Quatremains for good service to Henry VI and his father as collector and controller of tunnage and poundage for some twenty-four years);⁷² and that he was actively involved in his duties is suggested by a warrant issued on 8 February 1449 to reimburse him for £7 16s.8d. which he had previously paid to Alexander Diedo and other Catalan merchants for goods taken from them.⁷³ Although Quatremains still retained interests in London, he must by now be seen increasingly as a county squire of some means and authority in his locality. To his position as an Oxfordshire justice, he added his membership of the Berkshire bench from 24 June 1449 to 22 March 1452.⁷⁴ These years saw the collapse of English rule in France (though the final expulsion of the English from Gascony did not take place until 1453), the fall of Suffolk and the outbreak of Cade's rebellion in 1450. For several years lawlessness at home had accompanied failure of English arms abroad. Notorious were the activities of Sir Thomas Tuddenham in East Anglia, and the clashes between the Bonvilles and the Courtenays in the south-west.⁷⁵ In an effort to cope with such localized trouble, investigating commissions of local gentry and lawyers would frequently be set up. Such was the case on 23 May 1450, when Richard Quatremains was appointed with Sir William Lovell, Drew Barentyne and others to investigate an attack by Humphrey Stafford of Grafton (Worcs.) and his men on Sir Richard Harcourt (Oxon.).⁷⁶ A few months later, on 9 August, Quatremains was nominated a tax commissioner in Oxfordshire, and on 21 October he witnessed the shire elections, his name being given second in the list to that of Drew Barentyne.⁷⁷ Together Barentyne and Quatremains were made surveyors of pontage on 19 February 1451, with particular responsibility for deciding what tolls should be levied at Hareford Bridge near Wheatley; and they were again fellow-commissioners on 23 September 1452, this time to enquire into the escape of prisoners in the county.⁷⁸ Earlier, in July 1452, he was one of a group of feoffees for a tenement and lands in the parish of St Mary Colechurch, London; in July 1453 he was named as a feoffee for lands in Warwickshire; and in November he was mentioned as an executor of a certain Agnes Watton of Suffolk.⁷⁹ Sometime between 1453 and 1455 Quatremains was a defendant in a case of trespass brought against him by two Venetian merchants, Francis Bembo and Nicholas Morasyn.⁸⁰

Exactly when Quatremains became attached to the service of Richard, Duke of York, is not possible to say, but his association with the duke's chamberlain, Sir William Oldhall, as agent of the duke in land transactions on 20 December 1451, strongly suggests that his links with York were already established.⁸¹ Another, but more oblique,

⁷¹ C.C.R., 1447-54, 73; *Cal. Feet of Fines, Suffolk*, ed. W. Rye (Ipswich, 1900), 303.

⁷² C.P.R., 1446-52, 221; C.C.R., 1447-54, 83. As collector and controller he had received annual wages of 20 and 50 marks respectively.

⁷³ P.R.O. E404/65/103.

⁷⁴ C.P.R., 1446-52, 586.

⁷⁵ For discussion of the question in general and of these cases in particular, see Griffiths, *Henry VI*, esp. 569-97.

⁷⁶ C.P.R., 1446-52, 386.

⁷⁷ C.F.R., 1445-52, 173; P.R.O. C219/16/1, pt. 2/74.

⁷⁸ C.P.R., 1446-52, 413; *ibid.*, 1452-61, 56.

⁷⁹ *Cat. of Ancient Deeds* (hereafter cited as C.A.D.), ii, A/2065; i, B/736; C.P.R., 1452-61, 129.

⁸⁰ P.R.O., *Lists and Indexes*, no. xii: *List of Early Chancery Proceedings*, i (1901), 24/219.

⁸¹ C.C.R., 1447-54, 326-27. For Oldhall, see Roskell, *Speakers*, 242-47, and 360-61 and 'Sir William Oldhall, Speaker in the Parliament of 1450-1', *Nottingham Medieval Studies*, v (1961), 87-112.

connection with the Yorkist circle was his inclusion, on 15 March 1454, among feoffees with the lawyer Thomas Young on behalf of John Timperley esquire of Hintlesham (Suffolk).⁸² It was Young who, as member for Bristol in the parliament of 1450-1, had proposed that York be acknowledged as heir-presumptive to Henry VI; whereas Timperley was a retainer of the John Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk, who was related by marriage to Richard of York.⁸³ More significant was Quatremains's nomination as sheriff of Oxfordshire and Berkshire on 4 November 1454 (his second time in that office): an appointment he owed directly to York, who had been made protector of England on 27 March as a result of the king's incapacity.⁸⁴ In fact, York took the opportunity to strengthen his hand by putting in several other members of his 'affinity' as sheriffs at the same time, which adds point to Quatremains's nomination.⁸⁵ On 17 April and 24 October 1455 he is recorded as having paid two sums, each of £13 6s.8d., into the Exchequer from the issues of his county.⁸⁶

Quatremains's close contact with his fellow-gentry, many of whom were parliamentary knights, is underlined both by his private and by his public dealings at this time. For example, in 1456, he was a co-feoffee with Thomas Stonor for the Berkshire manor of Woolhampton (Stonor had previously sat for Oxfordshire in 1447 and 1450-1 and had been his immediate predecessor as sheriff of Oxfordshire and Berkshire); and in June 1457 he and his nephew Richard Fowler (who was to sit for Buckinghamshire in 1467-8) were feoffees for lands in Oxfordshire.⁸⁷ Sometime between 1455 and 1459 he was involved in a conveyance of Lymbery's manor (Cambs.) to William Allington esquire in return for a guarantee of title in Argentine's manor, Chalgrove, and other lands in Berrick Salome (Oxon.) and West Wittenham (Berks.).⁸⁸ This is a particularly interesting reference because Allington sat for Cambridgeshire in the parliament of 1433, when Quatremains represented Oxfordshire, whereas his son, also William, was to be speaker in the parliament of 1472-5, to which Quatremains was also elected. Furthermore, his association with the Allington family no doubt strengthened his Yorkist connections, since William 'the younger' had links with William Grey, Bishop of Ely, and William's elder brother, John, was a one-time retainer of Richard, Duke of York.⁸⁹ Quite likely he was in London early in 1459 when, on 18 February, a London draper, Thomas Eyre, made a gift of all his goods and chattels (possibly in return for a loan) to Quatremains and others.⁹⁰ In 1460 Richard Quatremains's name was twice associated with the lawyer Thomas Littelton: first on 18 May, when Thomas Fowler (another nephew) made a gift of all his goods to Quatremains, Littelton, his own

⁸² *C.P.R.*, 1452-61, 150.

⁸³ For Young's proposal, see Griffiths, *Henry VI*, 692, citing *R.P.*, v, 337; for Timperley and the Mowbray connection see G.H. Ryan and Lilian J. Redstone, *Timperley of Hintlesham* (1931), 2, 5, 12. York was brother-in-law of John Mowbray, 1st Duke of Norfolk, and uncle of John 2nd Duke of Norfolk.

⁸⁴ *C.F.R.*, 1452-61, 101; *P.R.O.*, *List of Sheriffs*, 108.

⁸⁵ Other Yorkists made sheriffs included Sir Henry Radford (Lincs.), John Wingfield (Norf. and Suff.), Sir Thomas Green (Northants.), Sir John Barre (Herefords.), and Sir John Savile (Yorks.) (Griffiths, *Henry VI*, 728). As sheriff, Quatremains would almost certainly have been responsible for holding the elections to the parliament of July 1455, summoned shortly after the battle of St. Albans, but proof of his having done so is lacking because the returns for Oxon. and Berks. have been lost.

⁸⁶ *P.R.O.* E401/844, m. 2; 847, m. 5. Quatremains's account for Oxon. and Berks. is preserved in the Pipe Roll for 1454-5 (*P.R.O.* E372/300, m. 48).

⁸⁷ *C.C.R.*, 1454-61, 119; *C.A.D.*, iii, A/5711. Stonor was a former protégé of the Duke of Suffolk, whose seat was at Ewelme, Oxon. (Griffiths, *Henry VI*, 720).

⁸⁸ Carter, *Quatremains*, 50n.

⁸⁹ Roskell, *Speakers*, 199n.3, 284.

⁹⁰ *Cal. Plea and Memo. Rolls . . . 1458-82*, 152.

brother, Richard, and a London merchant, William Hampton; and secondly, on 13 September, when they were named as attorneys by two Italian merchants, Francis Michel and Bartholomew Scheatis.⁹¹ More important, however, was his association as a co-feoffee of William Hastings in the grant by John, Lord Lovell, of the manor of Ashby-de-la-Zouche to Edward, Earl of March, on 2 November 1460.⁹²

In spite of what seem to have been his firm Yorkist connections, Quatremaings was still being appointed in the late 1450s to commissions by the Lancastrian government. For example, he was included in the Oxfordshire commission of array on 26 September 1457 and in the panel to apportion the quota of 419 archers to be raised within the shire on 17 December.⁹³ Between September 1458 and August 1459 he was steward and lieutenant of the manor of East Greenwich, during which time he had spent £63 in building a new tower there and in repairing one begun by Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, some years before.⁹⁴ On 21 December 1459, the day after the close of the Lancastrian-dominated Coventry parliament, Quatremaings was again appointed a commissioner of array in Oxfordshire.⁹⁵

The employment of gentry such as Quatremaings on official bodies was possibly often more related to their standing in their locality than to a 'party connection'. Perhaps the important exception was appointment to the bench. It was all the more significant, therefore, that Quatremaings was reappointed a justice of the peace and a member of the quorum on 17 July 1461, some fourteen weeks after the decisive success of the Yorkists at Towton.⁹⁶ Having been a receiver for Richard, late Duke of York, he continued in the service of his widow, Duchess Cecily, who appointed him on 22 November as one of a group of officials to enquire into the state of her properties at Bridgwater, Somerset, and to ascertain who her tenants were and to inform her as soon as possible, so that her council could advise her on future policy.⁹⁷ On 13 August 1462 Sir John Lovell made a recognisance in £1000, to be levied in Oxfordshire, to Richard Quatremaings esquire and his nephew, Richard Fowler.⁹⁸ Three months later, on 10 November, Quatremaings headed a list of witnesses to a lease of the Oxfordshire manor of Stratton Audley and lands in other counties by Henry Bourchier, Earl of Essex, to his brother, Thomas Bourchier, Archbishop of Canterbury and others.⁹⁹ – further good evidence of Quatremaings's attachment to Yorkist circles. From a document dated 30 March 1463 we learn that some years earlier he had been one of the creditors of Robert, Lord Hungerford and Moleyns, who had been captured in France.¹⁰⁰ On 23 April he was

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 155.

⁹² Historical Manuscripts Commission: *Report: MSS of R.R. Hastings*, i (1928), 2.

⁹³ *C.P.R.*, 1452-61, 402, 407.

⁹⁴ P.R.O. E404/73/2/54. This warrant for repayment of £63 is dated 11 Feb., but the regnal year is torn off. The next document in the series is dated 7 Feb. 6 Edward IV [1467].

⁹⁵ *C.P.R.*, 1452-61, 557.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 1461-7, 570. Quatremaings's nomination to the quorum is to be found on the dorse of the Patent Roll, P.R.O. C66/492, m. 23d.

⁹⁷ *Bridgwater Borough Archives*, iv, 1445-68, ed. T.B. Dilks (Somerset Rec. Soc., lx, 1948), No. 825. Another member of the panel was Stephen Preston, who subsequently sat for Lyme in 1467-8 and 1472-5. For the identification of Quatremaings as receiver for York, see J.T. Rosenthal, 'Estates and Finances of Richard, Duke of York (1411-60)', *Studies in Medieval and Renaissance History*, ii (Nebraska, 1965), 181, citing P.R.O. SC6/850/29. Bridgwater was one of the headquarters of the York receiverships (Rosenthal, *op. cit.*, 169-70).

⁹⁸ *C.C.R.*, 1461-68, 139.

⁹⁹ Westminster Abbey Muniments, No. 15195.

¹⁰⁰ *C.P.R.*, 1461-67, 284. Hungerford, a Lancastrian, had been taken at Castillon in 1453 and ransomed for £7,966 (*D.N.B.*, x, 256-57).

commissioner with Sir Robert Harcourt and others to enquire into breaches of statutes which regulated the wool trade; and in July he headed two commissions in Oxfordshire, one to assess taxes and the other to find out what lands had been held in the county by the attainted Lancastrian, William, Viscount Beaumont.¹⁰¹ In 1464 Quatremains was appointed a commissioner of oyer and terminer in Oxfordshire and Berkshire, in April and again in December.¹⁰² Sometime during the year he was a feoffee for his nephew, Richard Fowler, then Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, to whom Sir Robert Corbet and his wife conveyed the Berkshire manor of Tubney.¹⁰³

The main interest of the next two years concerns his appearance as a fellow-trustee with other prominent local gentry, lawyers and administrators like himself. For instance, his name was included among the feoffees for executing the provisions of a marriage settlement relating to Oxfordshire estates on 20 November 1465; on 19 March 1466 he was a co-feoffee with Sir Richard Chokke, now a justice of the Common Pleas, in a quitclaim of land in Middlesex to Richard Bulstrode, who later sat for Buckinghamshire in the parliament of 1472-5, when Quatremains was returned for Oxfordshire; and on 22 November 1466 when he was listed with Thomas Stonor, Guy Fairfax and John Catesby, which latter two were both serjeants-at-law, as a feoffee for Walkern manor (Herts.).¹⁰⁴ Of more direct concern to Quatremains himself were the transactions made on 13 July and 5 August 1467 by which he obtained the manor of Wickmere (Norfolk) for life, and by which he and Richard Fowler exchanged the manor of Hambleton (Rutland) for the manors of Wilbraham (Cambs.) and Holton (Oxon.) with George Neville, Archbishop of York and other feoffees. From a petition presented to parliament by Fowler's widow, Jane, in 1485 it appeared that the exchange was made at the request of Edward IV, since the manor of Hambleton was adjacent to Fotheringhay.¹⁰⁵ Not surprisingly, as men standing well in favour with the king and as joint stewards of Woodstock, Quatremains and Fowler were exempt from the Act of Resumption of 1467.¹⁰⁶ Indeed, Quatremains was referred to as a member of the king's council on 17 November.¹⁰⁷ He was appointed a commissioner of sewers in Oxfordshire on 22 July 1468, and it was probably in December 1468 that he wrote to his 'trusty and well-beloved cosyns', Thomas Stonor and Humphrey Forster, saying that he had been in Oxford on the king's business, that the sheriff had shown him two commissions concerning 'the grant of the lords and commons', and that the sheriff wanted him to write to the [tax?] commissioners to come to Oxford for a meeting.¹⁰⁸ With his wife, Sybil, he witnessed an Oxfordshire land deal on 7 February 1469, and two days later Quatremains himself headed a panel of trustees for a property transaction in Chicheley, Buckinghamshire.¹⁰⁹

Quatremains was an obvious reappointment to the Oxfordshire bench on 17 February 1468, and equally so he was a candidate for removal by the Readeption government under Warwick 'the kingmaker' when new commissions of the peace were issued on 14 November 1470.¹¹⁰ However, his removal from office was probably part of a

¹⁰¹ *C.P.R.*, 1461-67, 278, 301; *C.F.R.*, 1461-71, 101, 106.

¹⁰² *C.P.R.*, 1461-67, 346, 347, 389.

¹⁰³ *V.C.H. Berks.* iv, 380.

¹⁰⁴ *C.C.R.*, 1461-68, 367, 378-79; *C.P.R.*, 1461-67, 538.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 1467-77, 18, 40; *V.C.H. Oxon.* v, 171; *R.P.*, vi, 307.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, v, 588.

¹⁰⁷ J.R. Lander, *Crown and Nobility, 1450-1509* (1976), 314, citing P.R.O. C81/1547.

¹⁰⁸ *C.P.R.*, 1467-77, 101; *Stonor Letters and Papers, 1290-1483*, i, ed. C.L. Kingsford (Camden 3rd ser.xxix, 1919), 99. Kingsford suggested the grant referred to the subsidy voted in the summer of 1468.

¹⁰⁹ *C.C.R.*, 1468-76, Nos. 170, 252.

¹¹⁰ *C.P.R.*, 1467-77, 625.

general purge of known Yorkist administrators rather than the removal of an active political or military figure; in any case, by this time, Quatremains was too old to have played a very active role. Little is heard of him for several months, except for the fact that on 8 February 1471 a John Nowers of Tackley (Oxon.) was pardoned for not answering a plea of debt for 40s. owed to him; and that he corresponded with Thomas Stonor, possibly on 12 April 1471, about a lawsuit in which he was engaged against John Barentyne.¹¹¹ With the restoration of Edward IV, he was soon back on commissions: on 11 May 1471 (just a week after the battle of Tewkesbury) he was included in an Oxfordshire commission of array; on 4 June he headed a panel charged with the arrest of one Peter Marmion, gentleman, and others; and on 12 June he was reappointed a justice of the peace in Oxfordshire.¹¹² On two occasions in 1471 Quatremains's name was associated with Sir Ralph Verney, who was knighted by Edward IV upon the king's return from Tewkesbury and who was to sit for the City of London in the parliament of 1472-5; in August when a group of London merchants gave a bond in £15 to Quatremains, Verney and others; and in November when they were involved in a transaction relating to Sherborne manor (Hants.).¹¹³

Pardoned on 12 February 1472 as 'of Rycote, esquire . . . alias late of London, esquire' and appointed a commissioner of array for Oxfordshire on 7 March, Quatremains was elected knight of the shire on 24 September, taking first place to Richard Croft, the other parliamentary knight.¹¹⁴ The parliament to which he had been elected was to last, with prorogations, from 6 October 1472 until 14 March 1475 – the longest before the Reformation Parliament. Its composition reflected the strength of the Court and its circle, symbolized by the choice of Speaker in William Allington of Bottisham (a feoffee of Bishop William Grey, who himself was connected with Archbishop Thomas Bourchier), who was returned for Cambridgeshire. The principal reason for calling the parliament was to provide finance for a war against Louis XI of France, which Edward IV wanted to carry out as a punishment for Louis's support of the Lancastrians during 1470-1. In the event, parliament supported the king handsomely, but the campaign of 1475 lasted only a few weeks, before being concluded by the Treaty of Picquigny (August 1475).¹¹⁵ One of the other main items of business of the parliament was the passing of an Act of Resumption. Quatremains obtained exemption from the Act in respect of a grant of Wickmere manor (Norfolk) – a fact which could be indirect proof that he did attend some of its sessions.¹¹⁶

Nearly two months after parliament had opened in 1472, Quatremains was nominated a justice of the peace and of the quorum for Oxford (30 November); and when he was reappointed on 5 April 1475 he was also made a justice for the University.¹¹⁷ In the meantime he had headed a commission in Oxfordshire in August 1473 into unpaid farms and other monies due to the king.¹¹⁸ On 16 February 1474, when he and his nephew, Richard Fowler, had their appointments renewed as joint stewards of Woodstock, Handborough, Stonesfield and Wootton, they were described as 'king's

¹¹¹ *C.P.R.*, 1467-77, 226; *Stonor Letters*, i, 119-20.

¹¹² *C.P.R.*, 1467-77, 285, 286, 625.

¹¹³ *C.C.R.*, 1468-76, Nos. 723, 812. For Verney, see Wedgwood, *Biographies*, 906.

¹¹⁴ *P.R.O.* C67/48, m.1; *C.P.R.*, 1467-77, 350. The election indenture was made between the sheriff of Oxon. and Berks. and 46 electors (*P.R.O.* C219/17/2, pt.2/79). The first elector was Humphrey Forster esquire, who had been shire-knight in 1467-8 and who was a nephew by marriage of Quatremains.

¹¹⁵ The proceedings of the parliament of 1472-5 are given in *R.P.*, vi, 3-166.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 82.

¹¹⁷ *C.P.R.*, 1467-77, 626; *P.R.O.* C66/529, m. 24d./535, m. 18d.

¹¹⁸ *C.P.R.*, 1467-77, 406.

councillors'; and twelve days later they were included in the quorum of the Oxfordshire justices.¹¹⁹ On several other occasions during these years the two men seem to have been closely associated: in May 1474 they were co-feoffees for the manor of Shabbington (Bucks.); on 6 December 1475 they and others entered into a bond before the mayor and aldermen of London to ensure the payment of £758 19s.1½d. to the use of Hugh and Margaret Fenn, when they came of age; and on 24 February 1476 they were appointed to a wide-ranging commission to survey the castle and lordship of Windsor, the royal estates in Old and New Windsor and Ascot, and the manors of Woodstock, Handborough, Stonesfield and Wootton, with power to deal with rents, the customs and works of the king's bondmen and free tenants, and to audit the accounts of the constables, farmers and other officials from Michaelmas 1473.¹²⁰ Previously, on 17 August 1475, Quatremains had been granted joint custody of the nunnery of Godstow until a new abbess was appointed.¹²¹

We have already seen that Richard Quatremains was involved in dealing in real estate as early as 1419.¹²² He was, in fact, to be concerned with land and property transactions throughout his career, sometimes in the course of building up his own estates. By 1428 he was holding land in Oxfordshire (Ascot, North Weston, Rycote, Great Milton, Shirburn manor and castle) of Richard, Earl of Warwick, together with land in Toddington (Beds.) and Corston (Wilts.).¹²³ At first he seems to have acquired three parts of Shirburn, but it took him some time to establish fully his claim to the fourth part, which he appears to have done by 1460, after disputes with the Collingridge family.¹²⁴ Ascot manor in Great Milton was known as 'Fynes' or 'Fiennes' manor because it had been purchased of Sir Richard Fiennes, but Quatremains lost control of it in the 1450s.¹²⁵ His trustees were successful plaintiffs in a suit concerning North Weston between 1455 and 1460.¹²⁶ He and Richard Fowler acquired the manor of Tubney (Berks.) in 1464, but soon disposed of it.¹²⁷ The family residence since the 14th century had been at North Weston, near Thame, which is described in a deed of June 1449 as 'Quatremains Manor'.¹²⁸ The lands at North Weston together with their lands at Great Milton formed one estate. In 1474 the court rolls of Great Milton recorded that Richard Quatremains had some 400 sheep enclosed on Chilworth Field.¹²⁹

¹¹⁹ Ibid., 422; P.R.O., C66/531, m. 18d.

¹²⁰ C.C.R., 1468-76, No. 1268; *Cal. Letter Books . . . of London*: L, ed. R.R. Sharpe (1911-12), 136; *Stonor Letters*, i, p. xxix; C.P.R., 1467-77, 573.

¹²¹ C.F.R., 1471-85, No. 317.

¹²² Above, note 13.

¹²³ *Inquisitions and Assessments relating to Feudal Aids . . . preserved in the Public Record Office, 1284-1413*, 6 vols. (1899-1920), iv, 192, 193, 197, 198; Carter, *Quatremains*, 35-6.

¹²⁴ *V.C.H. Oxon.* viii, 184, 186. Sometime between 1454 and 1460 Quatremains was the defendant and William Collingridge the plaintiff in a Chancery suit concerning Ascot and Shirburn manors, in which the former set out his reply at length (P.R.O. C1/26/208). Quatremains denied having obtained West Shirburn 'by feen'd means' and claimed that Justice Cottesmore had awarded him the manor. It is interesting that he and the judge were connected by marriage (see above, note 22). In 1444 and 1455 Quatremains had created an enfeoffment of Shirburn, with remainder to his nephew, Richard Fowler (C.C.R., 1441-47, 216; *ibid.*, 1454-61, 268; *Bedfordshire Wills proved in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury, 1383-1548*, ed. Margaret McGregor (Beds. Rec. Soc. lviii, 1979), 133.

¹²⁵ *V.C.H. Oxon.* vii, 127, 173.

¹²⁶ Carter, *Quatremains*, 41; *V.C.H. Oxon.* vii, 127, ref. to P.R.O. KB27/778, mm. 38, 38d.

¹²⁷ *V.C.H. Berks.* iv, 380. By 1480 Tubney had been made over to William Waynflete, Bishop of Winchester, for his foundation of Magdalen College, Oxford (*ibid.*).

¹²⁸ C.C.R., 1461-68, 143; *V.C.H. Oxon.* vii, 127. The site of the house is now occupied by North Weston Manor Farm, built c. 1535 (Jennifer Sherwood and Nikolaus Pevsner, *Buildings of England: Oxon.* (1974), 818).

¹²⁹ *V.C.H. Oxon.* vii, 127, 133.

About four years before his death, on 28 July 1473, he and his trustees were licensed to grant the manors of Wilbraham (Cambs.) and Halton (Oxon.) in mortmain to provide for a chantry in the church of St Michael, Rycote (Oxon.), where prayers were to be said for the good estate of the king and queen, and for Richard and Sybil Quatremains and for their souls after death.¹³⁰ Following the issue of writs of *diem clausit extremum* to the escheators in Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Cambridgeshire and Wiltshire, and to the mayor and escheator of London on 12 September 1477, the inquisitions revealed that he died on 6 September; that he held no lands in chief in Buckinghamshire; and that he had disposed of his manor of Corston, worth £10 a year, but that he held the manor of Halton (Oxon.) valued at £10 a year, a tenement in Bread Street, London, worth 4 marks, and another in Fish Street, worth 40 marks, together with a dye-house in St Peter's parish, Paul's Wharf, worth 5 marks.¹³¹ His other estates at North Weston and Shirburn had been settled on his wife, Sybil, and his nephew, Richard Fowler, and were therefore not included among his holdings proper; whereas the manor of Rycote belonged to his wife.¹³² Richard Fowler had, in fact, predeceased Richard Quatremains earlier in the year and accordingly it was his son, also Richard, who inherited; Sybil Quatremains survived until 1483.¹³³ Although no will is extant, he must have made one, since his wife was referred to as his executrix in a Chancery suit.¹³⁴

A fine altar tomb with the brass effigies of Richard Quatremains and his wife, Sybil, has survived in the south transept of the church of St Mary, Thame. Unfortunately the head of Sybil is missing, as are four of the five heraldic shields. Between and below Richard and Sybil is a third figure which, it has been suggested, may be that of Richard Fowler, their nephew. The two male figures are depicted in armour. The brass was almost certainly made during Quatremains's lifetime, most likely about 1460, since the date in the inscription round the edge of the tomb has not been completed. The inscription runs as follows:

O certeyne dethe that now hast ouer throw
 Richard Quatremayns Squyer and Sibil his wife that lie here now full [lowe]
 That with rial princes of Counsel was true and wise famed.
 To Richard Duke of york and aftur with his Sone kyng Edward the iiiii named.
 That foundid in the Churche of Thame a Chauntrie vi pore men and a fraternite:
 In the worshipp of Seynt Cristofere to be relevid in perpetuyte.
 [They] that of her almys for ther Soulis a paternoster and [Ave] devoutly wul Sey
 of holy ffadurs is grauntid they pardone of dayes forty alwey.
 wiche Richard and Sibil oute of this worlde passid in the yere of oure lord A MCCCClx –
 Uppone their Soules Jhesu haue mercy Amen.¹³⁵

Although no armorial glass of Quatremains is extant, its one-time existence in Haseley

¹³⁰ C.P.R., 1467–77, 399. Architecturally the church is important 'because it is entirely of one build and unaltered' (Sherwood and Pevsner, *op.cit.* note 128, 747).

¹³¹ Stated by the jurors at the inquisitions held at Aylesbury, London, Upavon and Thame (P.R.O. C140/62/44, mm. 2, 4, 6, 8).

¹³² C.F.R., 1471–85, No. 405; *Calendarium Inquisitionum Post Mortem sive Escaetorum*, Record Commission iv (1828), 384; Carter, *Quatremains*, 52–3; V.C.H. Oxon. vii, 173.

¹³³ A writ of *diem clausit extremum* was issued in respect of Sybil on 26 May 1483 (C.F.R., 1471–85, no. 717). Her *i.p.m.* gave her as holding the manors of North Weston, called 'Quatremains', Thame, and Great and Little Rycote (P.R.O. C140/62/44).

¹³⁴ Carter, *Quatremains*, 53.

¹³⁵ Contractions in the inscription have been extended and words now lost given in brackets. For a more detailed description of the tomb chest, brass and inscription, see W.R. Barker, 'Monumental Brasses in the Churches of Thame, Holton and Great Tew, Oxon., with Biographical and Genealogical Notices', *Jnl. of the Oxford University Brass-Rubbing Society*, i(4) (May, 1898), 140–45. Dr. W.J. Blair kindly drew my attention to this article.



Plate 1. Tomb chest of Richard Quatremains esquire and his wife, Sybil, in the church of St Mary the Virgin, Thame. On the top of the tomb chest are the brasses of Richard and his wife [head now missing], with a third brass below, believed to be that of Richard Fowler, nephew of Richard Quatremains. Only one of the original five heraldic shields has survived. The tomb measures 93" \times 46½" \times 40½" (236 cm. = 120 cm. \times 103 cm.). Photograph by Norman S. Lilley of Thame, with permission kindly granted by the Vicar of Thame, the Rev. Christopher Neal, and the Churchwardens.

church was recorded by John Leland and in Rycote chapel by the antiquary Richard Lee in 1574. Lee described the glass at Rycote as depicting Quatremains and his wife, Sybil (Englefield), as kneeling figures, he in armour and she in a robe, each having the arms of their respective families on their backs. The Quatremains arms were: *gules, a fess azure between four dexter hands coupé argent*.¹³⁶

The significance and interest of the career of Richard Quatremains is, however, wider than the inscription on his brass would suggest. Indeed the very length of his life was unusual, but the continuity of the evidence firmly indicates that we are dealing with the same man. His connections with the House of York were certainly important – close

¹³⁶ *Parochial Collns. made by Anthony à Wood and Richard Rawlinson*, pt. 2, ed. F.N. Davis (Oxon. Rec. Soc., 1922), 169; *The Visitations of the County of Oxford*, ed. W.H. Turner (Harl. Soc. v, 1871), 2. At Waterstock there was once much armorial glass to the Danvers family and their connections, who included the Quatremains and Bruley families (Richard Quatremains's sister, Maud, married John Bruley and their daughter, Joan, married John Danvers). (Peter A. Newton and Jill Kerr, *Corpus Vitrearum Medii Aevi: Great Britain*, i: *County of Oxford* (1979), 209–10.)

enough to ensure his removal from the Oxfordshire bench at the Readeption in 1470 – but they belonged to the later part of his life, whereas he owed his early employment as a customs official in London to his links with Thomas Chaucer, cousin of Henry Beaufort, Bishop of Winchester, a pillar of the Lancastrian régime. Yet such labels as ‘Lancastrian’ and ‘Yorkist’ can be misleading, even irrelevant, for the essential point about Quatremains was his ‘typicality’ as a ‘man of business’ and a member of the gentry. From about 1430 (while still maintaining his ties with London) he became increasingly occupied with his duties and responsibilities as an Oxfordshire squire, taking his place with other south-midland gentlemen such as Drew Barentyne, Richard Fowler, Thomas Stonor and John Throckmorton as commissioner, feoffee, witness, patron and benefactor (he provided for six almshouses at Thame), a justice of the peace, sheriff and knight of the shire. Indeed, his circle of friends and associates was quite wide and extended beyond London and Oxfordshire. It is interesting that several of his relations were sometime members of the Commons: two nephews were returned to the parliament of 1467–8, William Fowler for Buckinghamshire and Humphrey Forster for Oxfordshire; while another nephew, Thomas Fowler, and two great-nephews, Thomas Danvers and his brother, William, were elected as burgesses to the parliament of 1472–5 (for Wycombe, Downton and Taunton respectively).¹³⁷ Also sitting in 1432 was a scattering of knights of the shire whose ‘parliamentary memories’ stretched back to the beginning of the century and, in some cases, even earlier. Such, for example, were Roger Hunt (Hunts.), who first sat in 1407; Sir Humphrey Stafford (Dorset), who had been returned for Staffordshire in 1406; and Sir Thomas Waweton (Derbys.), whose parliamentary career had begun in 1397, with his election for Huntingdonshire.¹³⁸ From these and other men Quatremains could have gained much knowledge of the ways of the Commons.

In Richard Quatremains, then, we have a good example of a man who went through the *cursus honorum* of a 15th-century country gentleman, one of sufficient calibre, experience and standing who, while attached to the service of the Crown or nobility, was nevertheless able to maintain an independent line of conduct.¹³⁹ For him, as for many of his fellows, the ordered running of his locality was perhaps the first priority; and therein lies much of the explanation of the fact that he was able to move from service under the Lancastrian government to service under its successor. Truly Richard Quatremains could have said of himself, as did his one-time associate John Throckmorton, ‘I have been all the days of my life in my country’s service in the world, as the world asketh.’¹⁴⁰

¹³⁷ For the Danvers family, see F. Macnamara, *Memorials of the Danvers Family* (1895).

¹³⁸ Roskell, *Commons*, 193, 216–18, 233–34.

¹³⁹ Cf. McFarlane, ‘To show that one M.P. was the steward of one lord, that another owed his advancement to the influence of a second lord... does not prove that these men never used their own judgement and were willing to be used passively by their leaders’ (*Nobility*, 293).

¹⁴⁰ Quoted by R.A. Griffiths, ‘Public and Private Bureaucracies in England and Wales in the Fifteenth Century’, *T.R. Hist. S.*, 5th ser. xxx (1980), 114.