

# SIR RICHARD DE WALDEGRAVE OF BURES ST. MARY, SPEAKER IN THE PARLIAMENT OF 1381-2

By J. S. ROSKELL, M.A., D.PHIL.

Not until 1376, so far as we know, did the Commons elect one of their own number to act as their spokesman before the King and Lords for the duration of a parliament. The early history of the Speaker's office belongs to a time when the royal authority was accidentally somewhat weak in its exercise—in 1377 old Edward III died to be succeeded by his grandson, Richard II, a mere boy—and when the Commons were rapidly gaining ground as a political force to be reckoned with.

We know next to nothing of what managerial functions were discharged in the Lower House by the Speaker at this date, or how influential was his position there. But clearly his functions were at least potentially important, and are likely to have been so in fact. The Speaker's own attitude to the political problems of the day may have been, in certain circumstances, of considerable significance for the Commons' deliberations. Or, at any rate, his political affiliations and connexions may have had their effect, however indirectly. So very many of the knights of the shire (or representatives of counties as distinct from boroughs), from among whom the medieval Speakers were invariably elected, were closely connected with the Court or with some great magnate (or even more than one) that an inquiry into their careers becomes advisable if we are to try to understand the atmosphere in which parliament met and did its business in this period. One of the main points of significance attaching to Sir Richard de Waldegrave's Speakership in the first parliament after the Peasants' Revolt of 1381 is that, fifth on the list of the Speakers, he is the first one of them to be a proper royal retainer.

Waldegrave's career is of interest, however, on other grounds. Between 1376 and 1390 he partly monopolized one of the two seats for his county of Suffolk: he was elected to the parliaments of 1376, October 1377, 1378, 1381, May and October 1382, February and October 1383, 1386, February and September 1388, and January 1390, that is, to twelve out of the twenty parliaments which met in this period.<sup>1</sup> His earlier military career, as a young

<sup>1</sup> *Official Return of Members of Parliament* 1, 194, 198, 200, 209, 211, 213, 215, 218, 229, 233, 235, 238.

man in the service of two heads of the great comital house of Bohun had been an exciting one; it may even have caught the attention of the poet, Chaucer, so remarkable are the resemblances between it and that of the knight of his *Canterbury Tales*. After being retained by Richard II, Waldegrave became steward of the lands of Queen Anne (of Bohemia), who came to England in the course of his Speakership. In the later years of the reign, he became a member of the royal Council. Too old at Richard II's deposition and Henry IV's accession in 1399 to accommodate himself to changed conditions at Court, Waldegrave then went into retirement, although he survived until 1410. Incidentally, he was the only knight of the shire for Suffolk ever to be elected to the Speakership in pre-Tudor times.

Sir Richard de Waldegrave was descended from a family which took its name from Walgrave in Northamptonshire where the Speaker himself still held lands. He was, in fact, a tenant here and at Batsaddle of a knight's fee, the seignory of which, in January 1376, was allocated (as part of her dower estates) to Anne, daughter of Sir Walter Manny, K.G. (by Margaret Marshall, countess of Norfolk) and widow of John de Hastings, earl of Pembroke, who had died in April 1375. Whether he inherited land in the vill of Hannington (close by Walgrave) and added by purchase to what he had, or whether he bought *all* his holding there, is not clear. He also had property in Northamptonshire at Twywell. He maintained his connexions with that county, although from early in his career his main territorial interests lay in the valley of the Stour, especially in and near Bures St. Mary, where he held the manor of Smallbridge. Since 1363 he had held a knight's fee in Wickhambrook in west Suffolk. In 1377 he purchased the nearby manor of Ousden; in 1393 he came (by reversion) into a manor called 'Merkys' in Raydon St. Mary, near Hadleigh in south Suffolk, within easy reach of Bures; and in 1405, in this county again, he secured a group of manors, all near to Bures, those of Polstead (with the advowson of the church there), Newland-hall in Polstead, and Leavenheath, as well as property in London, partly perhaps in exchange for his Lincolnshire manor of Brant Boughton. Just over the Stour from Bures, on the Essex side of the river, he also held Wormingford.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> *DNB*, xx. 477; *CCR*, 1374-7, 190; *ibid*, 1381-5, 92; *ibid*, 1377-81, 93-4; *ibid*, 1392-6, 69; *ibid*, 1405-9, 72, 75.

(The following abbreviations have been used in the footnotes:—

*DNB*—Dictionary of National Biography; *CPR*—Calendar of Patent Rolls; *CCR*—Calendar of Close Rolls; *CFR*—Calendar of Fine Rolls; *CChR*—Calendar of Charter Rolls; *Rot.Parl.*—Rotuli Parliamentorum; *PPC*—Proceedings and Ordinances of the Privy Council, ed N. H. Nicolas; *PRO*—Public Record Office).

The location of Sir Richard's chief estates at roughly the time of his Speakership is clear from the list of towns where, in his demesne lands, he secured a grant of free warren by royal charter on 10 May 1384: Walgrave, Hannington, and Twywell (Northants), Wormingford (Essex), and Ousden and Bures St. Mary (Suffolk).<sup>3</sup> It was apparently this last place that saw most of Waldegrave: it was his manor house of Smallbridge here that he received royal licence to crenellate, also on 10 May 1384, and it was in the parish church of Bures that he was buried in 1410, in accordance with his will.<sup>4</sup> Bures and others of his holdings in that vicinity came to Waldegrave through his marriage with Joan, daughter and heir of Robert Silvester of Bures and widow of Robert de Bures, whom he had married by 1363.<sup>5</sup>

The son of Sir Richard de Waldegrave of Walgrave (Northants) by his wife Agnes Daubeney, Sir Richard the Speaker was born in or about 1338—in 1386, in the deposition which he made in the famous heraldic suit of Scrope *v.* Grosvenor, he said that he was then 48 years old. In 1329 his father had crossed to France with Edward III and in 1337, as a member of the retinue of Bishop Henry Burghersh of Lincoln, accompanied him to Flanders where the bishop (an ex-treasurer) was in charge of the royal wool-selling operations. Sir Richard the father had been knight of the shire for Lincolnshire at the York parliament of 1335. (A John de Waldegrave, perhaps the Speaker's uncle, had sat for Northants in six parliaments between 1327 and 1341, probably the same who was Queen Philippa's 'serjeant and minister' of Rockingham forest and a justice of the peace in Northants in 1331.)<sup>6</sup> In his testimony in the Scrope *v.* Grosvenor plea of 1386 the Speaker refers to himself as having then been 'armed' for 25 years, that is, since about 1361. But he states that he had heard of the long-established right of the Scropes to the arms in question during the life-time of the earl of Northampton. This was clearly William de Bohun, created earl of Northampton in 1337 and Constable of England in the following year, who saw much foreign service in Edward III's wars with France. Young Waldegrave had been a beneficiary under the terms of the will of Elizabeth, countess of Northampton, in the spring of 1356. Almost certainly he was even then a member of their household, and it was doubtless as a Bohun retainer that (according to his deposition for Scrope) he was

<sup>3</sup> *CChR*, v. 293.

<sup>4</sup> *CPR*, 1381-85, 410; Lambeth Palace Library, Arundel Register, pars. II, fo. 49.

<sup>5</sup> *DNB*, *loc. cit.*; F. Blomefield, *Norfolk*, v. 1378; P. Morant, *Essex*, I. 182a; *Harleian Society*, XIII. 119; *ibid.*, XXXII. 295; *Feudal Aids*, v. 99. (In 1363 Sir Richard and Joan his wife had paid a relief for their knight's fee in the manor of Wickhambrook, held of the King as of the honour of Montgomery).

<sup>6</sup> *CPR*, 1330-34, 144, 186; *ibid.*, 1334-8, 418, 531.

with the army before Paris in April 1360 during what proved to be the earl's last expedition. After the earl of Northampton's death in September 1360, Waldegrave stayed on in the service of the family. The earl's son and heir was Humphrey, a minor, who in October 1361 also became heir to his uncle, Humphrey, earl of Hereford and Essex. In early January 1363 the young Humphrey de Bohun (now earl of Northampton, Hereford and Essex) was at Thorn on the Vistula, presumably with the object of assisting the Teutonic Knights in their perennial warfare with the heathen Letts, and Waldegrave was one of his company: the earl and he, together with three other knights, borrowed 2600 French *écus* from local merchants, undertaking repayment at Bruges in the quindene of Easter following. In the previous year Cypriot and Armenian knights had been to London seeking Edward III's assistance against the Turks, and in 1363 the King of Cyprus, Peter de Lusignan, was himself in England for the same purpose, returning home to win (in 1364) the victory that resulted in the treaty of which Waldegrave was to speak in his testimony in 1386. Sir Richard also stated that he had seen the disputed arms (properly differenced) being borne by a member of the Scrope family who was in the company of the earl of Hereford in the eastern Mediterranean (*outré la grande mere*) at 'Satillie' (Attalia) in 'Turkye', where took place an important treaty to which the King of Cyprus was party. Doubtless Waldegrave was also a member of Hereford's retinue there and, with almost equal certainty, at the taking of Alexandria in 1365, when Hereford was again with the King of Cyprus.<sup>7</sup>

Waldegrave had surely some of the qualifications possessed by the 'veray parfit gentil knight' of the prologue of Geoffrey Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*: the pilgrim knight had also ridden far 'in his lordes werre . . . as wel in Cristendom as in Hethenesse'; had been 'at Alisandre . . . when it was wonne'; 'in Lettowe [Lithuania] hadde he reysed'; had been at the victory of 'Satalie'; and 'in the Grete see at many a noble armee hadde he be'. Did, by any chance, Waldegrave's experiences, as but partly narrated in the deposition which he made on behalf of Sir Richard Scrope in the refectory of the abbey at Westminster on 15 October 1386, contribute anything to Chaucer's composite portrait of his ideal knight?

<sup>7</sup> N. H. Nicolas, *The Scrope v. Grosvenor Controversy*, i. 165-6; N. H. Nicolas, *Testamenta Vetusta*, i. 61; T. Walsingham, *Historia Anglicana* (Rolls Series), ed. T. H. Riley, i. 296, 299, 301; *The Anonimale Chronicle*, ed. V. H. Galbraith, 51, 170; *Archaeologia*, lxxiv. 115. (The design of the seals of the two bonds made at Thorn at Epiphany 1363 suggests that the seals of the earl and three of the four knights contracting the loan were specially made on the spot and by the same workman, they having seemingly left their seals in England).

The question is perhaps not without some piquancy. Among the eighteen other deponents, besides Waldegrave, on that very same autumn day of 1386, was Geoffrey Chaucer himself, then sitting for Kent, on the one and only occasion of his return as a knight of the shire, in the parliament which had been opened a fortnight before.

On 29 July 1366 Waldegrave took out royal letters patent authorising his appointment of attorneys to act for him in England while he was overseas. Why he was leaving home on this occasion is not clear, but it is almost certain that he left with the earl of Hereford who was again going overseas at the same time. According to further details that Waldegrave gave in 1386 of his familiarity with the arms of the Scrope family, it is clear that he was at Balyng-ham Hill (the 'mountayn de Baligate' of the *Anonimalle Chronicle*) and on the 'voyage de Caux' by which are meant respectively the expedition led by Lancaster into the Pas-de-Calais in 1369 (when the duke was accompanied by the earl of Hereford) and the immediately subsequent plundering expedition, led by the earl of Warwick into Lower Normandy and the 'insula de Caws', to which both the St. Albans chronicle of Thomas Walsingham and the *Anonimalle Chronicle* refer. Less than two years later seemingly Waldegrave was again serving as a member of the military retinue of the earl of Hereford. The earl's wife's brother-in-law, Thomas Holland, step-son of the Black Prince, at the jousts in Plymouth on 24 July 1371 granted Waldegrave and his heirs male leave to bear his helm—'party per pale argent and gules, crowned or'. Waldegrave was Holland's companion-in-arms. The jousts took place at an assembly of an English fleet that was to take the earl of Hereford to Brittany on a diplomatic mission, and Hereford was a witness to Holland's grant to Waldegrave.<sup>8</sup> Certainly, in the following summer, Waldegrave was a member of the Bohun retinue once more, when the earl joined the expedition which Edward III himself intended to lead to the relief of La Rochelle; one among the fifty-one knights of Hereford's company, Waldegrave came to the muster on 8 August 1372, over three weeks after the earliest arrivals. The expedition was prevented by adverse winds from reaching Brittany, but it was not until 6 October that Hereford's retinue returned to England with the royal forces and eventually landed at Sandwich.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>8</sup> CPR, 1364-7, 303; *Scrope v. Grosvenor Controversy*, loc. cit.; *Historia Anglicana*, i. 307-8; *The Anonimalle Chronicle*, 59-62, 177; *The Complete Peerage*, vii. 154; G. F. Beltz, *Memorials of the Order of the Garter*, 221<sup>b</sup>.

<sup>9</sup> Exchequer, Queen's Remembrancer, Ancient Miscellanea, PRO., E101/xxxii/20.

Earl Humphrey died on 16 January following (1373), leaving as his heirs two daughters, the elder of whom was soon contracted in marriage (in 1374) to the youngest of Edward III's sons, Thomas of Woodstock, and the other (in 1380) to the heir of Lancaster, Henry of Bolingbroke. There is no sign of Waldegrave's being drawn into the circle of Woodstock, which happened to a number of the members of the Bohun affinity. Hereford's premature death—he was only thirty years old—was doubtless a tragedy from the point of view of Waldegrave's career. He did, however, retain a connexion with his late lord's widow, the dowager countess of Hereford (Joan, daughter of Richard, second earl of Arundel), who lived on till 1419, and in the 1380's, and later, he is to be found acting as a feoffee in certain of the Bohun estates in Essex in her interest and in the interest of his late lord, Earl Humphrey.<sup>10</sup>

These connexions maintained Waldegrave's ties with some of the members of the late earl's entourage. One of these was Sir John de Burgh of Burgh Green (Cambs) and Kirklington (Notts), who early in 1377 made Waldegrave one of the grantees of annual rents amounting to £300 from his Nottinghamshire and Yorkshire estates.<sup>11</sup> A more influential link that the old Bohun attachment supplied was with Sir Guy de Brian, who was summoned to parliament among the knights banneret for the last forty years of his life, from 1350 to 1390. Under-chamberlain to Edward III in 1348, from August 1359 to May 1361 Sir Guy had been steward of the royal household. He was made a knight of the Order of the Garter in 1369. He was a member of the liaison committee of Lords requested by the Commons in the parliament of 1373 and in the Good Parliament of 1376, and in the latter session was one of the nine lords specially chosen to afforce the royal Council. At the beginning of Richard II's reign, from 4 August 1377 to 16 March 1378, Guy was acting chief chamberlain to the young king, and he was one of only three lords who served on each of the parliamentary commissions of reform appointed during the sessions of 1379, 1380 and 1381. He was one of the feoffees and executors of Humphrey de Bohun, late earl of Hereford, and when, in May 1387, he was the surviving Bohun feoffee in the manor of Roding Margaret (Essex), the re-feoffment which he then made appointed Waldegrave as a feoffee along with Thomas Arundel, bishop of Ely and chancellor of England, and another old Bohun retainer and executor to the late earl, Sir John de Gildesburgh (Speaker in both the parliaments of 1380). Waldegrave's own daughter, Alice, married into the Brian family, being very probably the wife of Sir Guy's son and heir, another Guy, who died, some four years

<sup>10</sup> CCR, 1385-9, 116, 425-6; CPR, 1401-5, 377; *ibid.*, 1405-8, 386.

<sup>11</sup> CCR, 1374-7, 229, 537-9.

before his father, in 1386. The connexion between Waldegrave and the elder Sir Guy had clearly at times been on a closely personal level and of some considerable importance to them both: on 1 June 1375 Sir Guy entered into two recognisances, undertaking in one to pay Waldegrave 500 marks, and in the second to pay £2000 at Michaelmas 1376.<sup>12</sup>

When this second Brian bond fell due, Sir Richard de Waldegrave had just served for the first time as knight of the shire for Suffolk in the Good Parliament of April—July 1376. He was then about thirty-eight years old. His fellow-knight was Sir William Wingfield, who, although fifty years of age, was also acting in this capacity for the first time. The daughter of the cousin of Sir William Wingfield (Katherine) had married Sir Michael de la Pole, chancellor of England from 1383 to 1386 and created earl of Suffolk in 1385, and Sir William was certainly later on closely connected with the De la Pole family.<sup>13</sup> He may very well have represented the De la Pole interest in Suffolk, for which he was to be returned to half of the parliaments sitting between 1376 and 1390. However this may be, Waldegrave and Wingfield were elected together in that period to no fewer than nine parliaments, Waldegrave serving in those fourteen years on three other occasions with a different partner, Wingfield once only. Four times, in 1382 and 1383, they were re-elected together.

When first returned to Suffolk in 1376 Waldegrave, with his estates in the west of the county and in the Stour valley and with his Bohun connexions, was probably well known in the region. But his interest in local administration, especially so far as the Crown was concerned, had been negligible, and not until the end of 1382 was he to be made a justice of the peace in Suffolk. Before 1376, in fact, Waldegrave had served on only two royal commissions: one by patent of 16 May 1371, when with a group of Lincolnshire notables, headed by the bishop of Lincoln, he was appointed to value the property of the nuns of the Gilbertine house of Sempringham, whose rights were being disregarded by the master, prior and canons, and to provide for the nuns' proper maintenance; the other, by patent of 18 March 1375, when he was associated with

<sup>12</sup> T. F. Tout, *Chapters in Medieval Administrative History*, vols. III and IV, *passim*; *CPR*, 1401-5, 377 (In 1404, of these feoffees in Roding Margaret only Arundel, the dowager countess's younger brother, now archbishop of Canterbury, and Waldegrave were still alive); *CCR*, 1422-9, 126 (Guy son and heir of Sir Guy de Brian, certainly married an Alice who was executrix to her father-in-law, see *The Complete Peerage*, II, 362); *CCR*, 1374-7, 229.

<sup>13</sup> In 1392 he witnessed deeds of the earl of Suffolk's heir, in April 1396 was his feoffee, and in October 1396 was godfather to his younger son, William, who was to become earl in 1415 and duke of Suffolk in 1448 (*Complete Peerage*, XII, part 1, p. 443).

Chief Justice Cavendish and William Wingfield in an oyer and terminer following some assaults in his own neighbourhood at Polstead. After his election to the Good Parliament of 1376 Waldegrave began to find employment on short-term, royal commissions in East Anglia. On 29 April and again on 1 July 1377 he was made a commissioner of array in Suffolk to help meet the threat of French invasion, and in the meantime (on 16 June) was appointed to act on an oyer and terminer after complaints by Bishop Despenser of Norwich of attacks on him and his men in his own borough of Bishop's Lynn.<sup>14</sup>

Waldegrave sat in Richard II's first parliament of October 1377, to which a remarkable number (one out of every three) of the knights of the shire of the Good Parliament were once again returned. He took the opportunity of the visit to London to get a royal patent on the day before the dissolution of the parliament (4 December 1377), which exempted him for life from serving on juries or in the offices of mayor, sheriff, escheator, coroner, collector of parliamentary subsidies, and so on, against his will. He seems to have managed to do much more, for it was now that he became attached to the Ricardian court. If he needed influence to get himself placed in the royal household, other than his own, it is likely that he could call on the new chief chamberlain, Sir Guy de Brian, and perhaps on Warin de Waldegrave, an esquire who steadily served the young king's half-brother (John Holland, later earl of Huntingdon) and who was almost certainly a kinsman of Sir Richard's. Conjectures on one side, by the time the parliament was over Waldegrave had been retained as a 'King's knight', and on 6 December 1377 (the day after the dissolution), as staying with the king with the approval of the royal council, he was granted for life the custody of the castle and lands of Moresende (Northants), recently enjoyed by Alice Perrers, Edward III's mistress, whose condemnation to forfeiture in the Good Parliament had been renewed during the recent parliamentary session.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>14</sup> *CPR*, 1370-4, 110; *ibid.*, 1374-7, 144, 497, 502; *ibid.*, 1377-81, 38.

<sup>15</sup> *ibid.*, 1377-81, 73-4. In June 1386 the Speaker was a feoffee of Waryn de Walgrave in John Holland's Yorkshire manor of Langton. In February 1391 he shared with John Holland, Warin Waldegrave and others, a grant of the manor of Milton by Gravesend (Kent), forfeited by Sir Simon Burley in 1388 (*CPR*, 1388-92, 418). Warin was an unusual name, but it was current in Sir Richard's family. I have not been able to establish the precise nature of the kinship between this Warin and the Speaker. Warin was an esquire of John Holland as early as March 1378, when a *donum* was paid at the Lower Exchequer to Holland 'per manus Warini Waldegrave armigeri sui' (Issue Rolls, *PRO*, E 403/465, mem. 17, cf. E 403/499, mem. 17). In 1385 Warin was Holland's feoffee in Westmorland and Yorkshire (*CCR*, 1392-6, 224), and in 1394 in Holland's manor of Great Gaddesden (Herts) when it was being granted to the nunnery of Dartford (Kent) (*CPR*, 1391-6, 373). In February 1392,



This custody or stewardship of Moresende castle and manor was confirmed to Waldegrave on 1 February 1378, but then for only nine years and in return for a rent (equivalent to its 'extended' value) payable in the Exchequer. This rent was altered to (or defined as) 40 marks a year in December 1380. Parliament was then meeting at Northampton, and the writ was dated there. Presumably Waldegrave was in the town, but he was not a knight of the shire. His occupation of Moresende at one point, in August 1378 (following a commission of inquiry as to what was included in his grant and its value), had been actually threatened by a resumption, but clearly he had come to terms.<sup>16</sup> Shortly afterwards he was re-elected to parliament and was over at Gloucester on this account for the autumn parliament of 1378.

Waldegrave was not returned to any of the three parliaments of the next two years (1379-80), but he served in the meantime on quite a number of local commissions by royal appointment. On 8 August 1379 he was made an investigator of under-assessments to the poll-tax and evasions of it in Suffolk. He was one of those ordered, on 14 October following, to arrest and bring before the royal Council Edmund Bromfield and those who had abetted him in his installation as abbot of Bury St. Edmunds; Bromfield had secured his provision to the abbacy by Pope Urban VI contrary to the result of a capitular election (which had been confirmed by the King) and in contempt of the statute of Provisors and the royal authority.<sup>17</sup>

In February 1380 Sir Richard was present at the Blackfriars in London when (by order of the parliament then sitting) an examination of the facts at issue in the case of Thomas, son of Sir Robert Roos, *versus* John earl of Pembroke and William lord Zouche of Haringworth took place before the King's justices. Pembroke and Zouche had petitioned in parliament as the heirs of Sir William de Cantilupe, after being impleaded by Roos regarding certain lands in Yorkshire alleged to have been granted him by Cantilupe by means of an enfeoffment; the examination revealed that the enfeoffment was conditional on Cantilupe's not returning from one of John of Gaunt's military expeditions and that, because he did

*Footnote 15 continued*

described as of Northants, Warin was Holland's mainpinner in a grant of wardship (*ibid.*, 20). Further, it was as Holland's servant and at his request that Warin was exempted for life from jury service, etc., in January 1394 (*ibid.*, 361).

<sup>16</sup> *CFR*, 1377-83, 50, 68, 222; *CCR*, 1377-81, 152; *CPR*, 1377-81, 250.

<sup>17</sup> *CFR*, 1377-83, 163; *CPR*, 1377-81, 420. (For the subsequent long dispute with the papacy over the abbacy which only ended in 1385, unsuccessfully for Bromfield, see Dugdale, *Monasticon Anglicanum*, III., 110).

return, the enfeoffment was annulled and surrendered. Waldegrave was one of Pembroke's tenants in Northants and it is possible that he was present at the inquiry as counsel to the young earl and even to Lord Zouche as well, for he was well known to the latter; but he was more probably there as a king's knight, perhaps in support of Sir Guy de Brian who was also present with the Chief Baron of the Exchequer and some royal sergeants-at-law.<sup>18</sup>

Not long after this incident, on 20 March 1380, Waldegrave was included on a commission of array in Suffolk, against the contingency of a French invasion, and on 15 April on a commission to inquire into the alleged extortion of fines from the men of Sudbury (Essex) at an unlicensed weekly market set up at Colchester by the town bailiffs. He had not been elected to the parliament of January 1380. Nor was he elected to the second parliament of the year which met at Northampton from 5 November to 6 December; it is, however, very likely that he was in attendance here as a member of the royal court, especially because of his interests in the county—a licence to elect an abbot of St. John's, Colchester, was authorised by a patent dated at Moresende on 27 November and warranted by a signet letter, and it looks as though either the keeper of the signet (Robert Braybrooke) or Archbishop Sudbury, the chancellor, stayed with Waldegrave there, for accommodation in Northampton itself is known to have been difficult to get during the parliament.<sup>19</sup>

On 16 March 1381 Waldegrave was appointed to serve on the commission set up to investigate instances in Essex of under-assessment to (and evasion of) the triple poll-tax voted in the Northampton parliament, as he had been in Suffolk nearly two years earlier. He does not appear to have suffered to any remarkable extent in the Peasants' Revolt, which this poll-tax and these inspectoral commissions especially did so much to foment, although south Suffolk was thrown into turmoil in the late spring of 1381 and Bures St. Mary itself was in some measure affected by the rising. The crisis of the rebellion was virtually over when on 24 June Waldegrave was appointed with others to inquire into and restore the losses in Norfolk suffered by John Helyng, who had been an usher of the King's chamber for nearly forty years, had only recently vacated the office of steward of the liberty of the abbey of Bury St. Edmunds, and was still bailiff-itinerant of Norwich. The princess of Wales, the King's mother, Joan of Kent, had certain of her Essex manors ransacked and destroyed, and on

<sup>18</sup> *Rot. Parl.*, iii. 79b. (On 21 October 1382 he attested an important deed of Lord Zouche, *CCR*, 1381-5, 220).

<sup>19</sup> *CPR*, 1377-81, 472, 475, 560.

14 September 1381 Waldegrave was accordingly put on an inquiry into this damage with authority to imprison offenders.<sup>20</sup>

To the first parliament to meet after the rising, summoned eventually for 3 November 1381, Waldegrave was elected as knight of the shire for Suffolk for the fourth time. The Commons chose him to be their Speaker. This may not have been at the very outset of the session. On 18 November he asked to be excused of the office, the first of the Speakers to do what soon became common form, but he was charged by the King to continue and so made his 'protestation'. At that point of the session the Commons were 'en partie de variance', regarding what they had been ordered to offer advice about, and Sir Richard Scrope, the new Chancellor, recapitulated the Commons' 'charge', especially on the subject of the repeal of Richard II's letters of manumission to the peasants. The result was a mass parliamentary declaration in favour of their annulment. The session was otherwise noteworthy for the Commons' resumption of the practice (in abeyance since 1378) of seeking a liaison committee from the Lords; for the rejected claim of the Commons to receive a report of the Lords' advice to the King before they put forward their own; for the refusal of the Commons to make any grant of direct taxation; and for the difficulties which they testily raised over the renewal of the wool subsidies and on the subject of the King's pardon for those involved in the Peasants' Revolt. During the session, on 16 November, William Lord Zouche was one of the witnesses to a grant to Waldegrave of certain lands and rents in Hannington (Northants).<sup>21</sup>

After the King's wedding to Anne of Bohemia and her coronation in January 1382, parliament reassembled for another session—after the first parliamentary adjournment of the reign—and this second session lasted from 27 January to 25 February, when the wool subsidy was renewed until mid-summer 1386. Again, however, economy was the keynote of suggestions for governmental reform. In the meantime, on the day after the close of the first session, on 14 December 1381, Waldegrave had been appointed to a commission to keep the peace and suppress, with armed force if necessary, any rebels in Suffolk. This commission was renewed after the second parliamentary session, by patent of 8 March 1382, and once again on 21 December 1382, at these times with larger powers, including the authority to call out the *posse comitatus* and punish those failing to assist.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>20</sup> *CFR*, 1377-83, 249; A. Réville, *Le Soulèvement des travailleurs en Angleterre en 1381*, 60; *CPR*, 1381-85, 76, 78.

<sup>21</sup> *CCR*, 1381-5, 92.

<sup>22</sup> *CPR*, 1381-5, 86, 141, 247.

Waldegrave and his fellow shire-knight in the previous parliament, Sir William Wingfield, were both re-elected to the Westminster parliament of May 1382. The two men were apparently on very good terms and at least on this occasion lodged together in Fleet Street at the 'Sword of the Hoope'. Here on 8 May, the second day of the parliamentary session, two 'trussing cofres' of Waldegrave's, containing jewels worth 40 marks and his seal, were stolen; a couple of days later Waldegrave informed the Chancellor in case his seal should be misused, and his fellow shire-knight attested the truth of the matter. The name of the Speaker in this parliament has not come down to us; and there is no knowing whether or not Waldegrave was re-elected to the office, as Sir John Gildesburgh had been in 1380. How closely Waldegrave had become attached by this time to the developing court party, is made clear by the fact that sometime before November 1382 he was appointed as steward of the lands of Richard II's Queen, Anne of Bohemia. Just when the appointment was made is not known. But it was in this capacity that, on 1 November 1382, he and John Bacon, chamberlain of the Exchequer (and also keeper of the King's signet), were authorised by the Exchequer to have oversight of the prior of Eye as farmer of the priory, a dependency of the Norman abbey of Bernai. Queen Anne was patron of this alien priory, having been granted in May 1382 (as part of her dower) the honour of Eye. Incidentally, she had also then been granted the castle and manor of Moresende (Northants) of which Waldegrave was the lessee. Hence, perhaps, his inclusion amongst her officials.<sup>23</sup>

To the short parliament of 6-24 October 1382 Waldegrave and Wingfield had been (for a second time) re-elected for Suffolk. During the session Waldegrave was witness to charters of grants or enfeoffments respectively made by William Lord Zouche of Haringworth and Sir Simon Burley, the King's under-chamberlain and close friend.<sup>24</sup> On 20 December following, for the first time he was included in the commission of the peace for Suffolk. Then, for the third time running, he and Wingfield were re-elected to parliament in February 1383. Just before and during the session he stood surety in Chancery for a Northamptonshire man, Andrew Brown of Glapthorn, who was being sued for debt by three of his creditors, two of them local men, one a London goldsmith.<sup>25</sup> On 15 March, within a week of the end of the parliament, Waldegrave was put on a royal commission of inquiry into a complaint of a daughter and coheir of Sir John d'Argenten and her husband,

<sup>23</sup> *CCR*, 1381-5, 130; *CFR*, 1377-83, 330.

<sup>24</sup> *CCR*, 1381-5, 220, 620.

<sup>25</sup> *CPR*, 1381-5, 254; *CCR*, 1381-5, 283.

Sir Ivo FitzWaryn, of an assault made by her bastard half-brother, William d'Argenten, on them and their friends at the burial of Sir John at Halesworth (Suffolk) in the previous November, and of the seizure of the prior of the Austin canons of Wymondley (Herts) at Newmarket Heath, when on his way to the funeral, so that he was forced to send for and surrender certain deeds entrusted to his custody at the priory by the late Sir John who was patron of the house.<sup>26</sup> A fortnight or so later, Sir Richard was appointed to an inquiry into certain concealments and withdrawals of rents and services pertaining to the two Suffolk hundreds of Blything and Wangford, both held by royal grant by a former yeoman of the household of the Black Prince and a servant of Richard II before and since the beginning of his reign (William Joce).

It was in the next year, on 10 May 1384, that, directly warranted by a letter under the royal signet, Waldegrave's grant by special grace of the right of free warren in the demesnes of his principal manors in Northants, Suffolk and Essex, passed the great seal (Sir Michael de la Pole had been chancellor since 13 March 1383). On the very same day, again solely by signet warrant, Waldegrave secured a licence under the great seal to crenellate his manor-house of Smallbridge at Bures St. Mary.<sup>27</sup> These grants were made at Clarendon in the middle of the Salisbury parliament, the first parliament for two and a half years to which Waldegrave had not been returned. (For the fourth successive time, he and Wingfield had been together re-elected to the autumn parliament of 1383.)

In view of the support which Richard II had every reason in these years to hope for and encourage in the City of London, it is interesting to note that when, on 7 February 1384, John Northampton (the duke of Lancaster's man in city politics) had led a great number of the London gildsmen through Cheapside intending to overturn his successor in the mayoralty, Nicholas Brembre, news of the riot was brought to the latter when he was at dinner with Sir William Walworth, Sir John Philipot, and other aldermen, at Sir Richard Waldegrave's house in St. Michael Hoggelane.<sup>28</sup> Brembre was, of course, to identify himself completely three years later with the party of the prerogative and, in 1388, to suffer condemnation for treason because of his support for the King. Incidentally, it looks as though Waldegrave had bought himself a town-house in the City since the 'accident' of May 1382.

<sup>26</sup> CPR, 1381-5, 260.

<sup>27</sup> *ibid.*, 261, 410; CChR, V. 293.

<sup>28</sup> Ruth Bird, *The Turbulent London of Richard II*, 83.

Waldegrave's local interests in East Anglia were, however, now being considerably stimulated and extended by his court connexions. In the middle of September 1384 he was included in a commission to inquire into rebellions and attacks on royal officials at Lowestoft and to bring before Chancery all those indicted. He was associated on 10 February 1385 in an investigation regarding the King's rights over certain sands in Mersea Island in Essex, with a view to exploiting the fishing there. (The commission was later postponed until Easter.) On 14 April following he was put on a commission of oyer and terminer following an appeal in a ransom case pending before the Court of the Constable and Marshal. Five days later, he was appointed to take the musters of the forces under the command of the two admirals, the prior of St. John of Jerusalem and Sir Thomas Percy, brother of the earl of Northumberland. A week later still, on 26 April, he was made a commissioner of array in Suffolk, part of the general measures to meet a threatened French invasion; strict orders to proceed with the array were sent out in the middle of June.<sup>29</sup> Serious though the French threat was, Richard II led a short campaign into Scotland in the late summer. Waldegrave went on the expedition in the King's own company with a retinue of 7 men-at-arms and 18 archers.<sup>30</sup>

For the greater part of this year Sir Richard was a member of a small syndicate of four, of whom he was the most important, granted the custody of the temporalities of the bishop of Norwich, Henry Despenser, who had been sentenced in the parliament of 1383 to undergo this form of forfeiture for his failure to perform his military contracts with the King in his unsuccessful Flemish crusade of that year. Farmed for over a year by the escheators of Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex and Hertfordshire, the temporalities of the see were on 22 February 1385 granted by the Council to Waldegrave, Sir Edmund de Thorpe, William Winter, and Richard Wayte, to be held at farm for a yearly rent of 500 marks payable in the Exchequer, for as long as they should be in the King's hands. Early in the next parliament, on 24 October 1385, at the request of the neighbouring bishop of Ely (Thomas Arundel), Despenser's temporalities were restored, not (if we may believe the St. Albans chronicler) without opposition or ill-will from the Chancellor, De la Pole, now recently created earl of Suffolk; Waldegrave and his fellow-lessees were given orders for their livery.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>29</sup> *CPR*, 1381-5, 503, 587 (cf. *CCR*, 1381-5, 613), 596, 589 (cf. *CCR*, 1381-5, 556); T. Carte, *Catalogue des Rolles Gascons, Normans et François*, II, 149.

<sup>30</sup> Issue Rolls, *PRO*, E 403/508, mem. 21. (On 19 August 1385 he was advanced £40 'in partibus borealibus' by two tellers of the Exchequer).

<sup>31</sup> *CCR*, 1385-9, 4; *CFR*, 1383-91, 86; *CPR*, 1385-9, 34.

During the session—Waldegrave was for a third time running not elected—he was on 26 November included in an oyer and terminer commission with powers of imprisonment, appointed following a report that the bond tenants of Little Haugh (Suffolk) claimed to be free and had formed a sworn league to refuse their customary services. As a result of a petition in the parliament, to which the King and Lords assented, an assize of novel disseisin against the abbot of Bury St. Edmunds was superseded; Waldegrave was one of the justices taking the assize.<sup>32</sup> On 6 June 1386 he was on a commission to arrest the archdeacon of Sudbury and bring him before the Council (the order being, however, cancelled three weeks later). He was put on a commission of array for Suffolk on 18 June against the possible event of a French invasion.

No more than five days before the only parliament of this year met on 1 October, and when Waldegrave and Wingfield were almost certainly already knights of the shire-elect for Suffolk once more, the Suffolk commissioners of array were told of the special danger from the French invasion forces to the port of Orwell, and were ordered to follow the instructions of two knights of the Chamber purposely sent down to inspect that port and neighbouring harbours.<sup>33</sup> The threat perhaps, the panic in England certainly, was real enough, and this helps us to an understanding of the crisis out of which arose a threat to depose the King and the successful impeachment of the Chancellor, De la Pole.

In the increasing political bitterness of the next two years there is no cause to think that Waldegrave, despite his close associations with the Court and the curialist party, needed to plot and steer any difficult course. He had many links with both sides in the big constitutional and political crisis that was blowing up. On 15 October 1386 he was prepared to back with his testimony Richard Lord Scrope's claim in the heraldic plea which had been raised in the Scottish campaign of 1385 between this magnate and a Cheshire knight, Sir Robert Grosvenor—he had been, in fact, one of the commissioners to take evidence nominated by Scrope to the Constable on 28 May 1386.<sup>34</sup> Lord Scrope, it is true, was brother-in-law of the impeached Chancellor and spoke in his defence in the Lords, but he was also to be a member of the parliamentary commission which this 1386 session produced, and to which the King was to take such strong exception on the ground that its appointment was even an act of treason. Waldegrave soon became, moreover, indirectly connected with the new (and

<sup>32</sup> CPR, 1385-9, 88; CCR, 1385-9, 106.

<sup>33</sup> CPR, 1385-9, 179, 256; 176, 214.

<sup>34</sup> N. H. Nicolas, *The Scrope v. Grosvenor Controversy*, I. 49, 165-6.

to the King unwelcome) Chancellor, Thomas Arundel, bishop of Ely, when on 15 May 1387 he and the bishop were made co-foffees in the manor of Roding Margaret and other Bohun property in Essex. Another of the co-foffees was the former Speaker of 1380, Sir John Gildesburgh of Essex, an old Bohun retainer (like Waldegrave himself) who had joined the affinity of Thomas of Woodstock, the foremost of the opposition magnates; by April 1388 Waldegrave was one of Gildesburgh's own feoffees.<sup>35</sup> He was also feoffee to Joan, dowager countess of Hereford, the widow of Humphrey de Bohun (who had died in 1373) and sister of Richard, earl of Arundel, and of the new Chancellor.<sup>36</sup> In November 1387 the earl was to join Woodstock as an Appellant against the chief members of the royalist party. Before the appeal was brought before the Merciless Parliament in February 1388, Woodstock, Arundel and Warwick had been joined as Appellants by the earl of Derby (Henry of Bolingbroke, Lancaster's heir) and Thomas Mowbray, earl of Nottingham. When, on 9 December 1386, a commission of oyer and terminer was appointed, following a complaint by Mowbray of assaults on his men at Witchingham in Norfolk, Waldegrave was a member of the commission, quite possibly by Mowbray's nomination. Whether Waldegrave was still the Queen's steward of estates is not known, but his connexions with the Court were, of course, of long standing by this time. He certainly knew well, as we have seen, at least one of the appellees of 1387-8, the ex-mayor of London, Sir Nicholas Brembre, to whom he was also feoffee-to-uses at Northholt and Down (Middlesex), estates which were forfeited by Brembre's conviction in the Merciless Parliament but restored to the feoffees in March 1396.<sup>37</sup>

What Waldegrave's attitude was to the events of 1386-8, it is not possible to say with any certainty. But judging from the commissions he was appointed to serve while the parliamentary commission was in control of the royal authority he was not regarded as 'unsafe' from its own point of view. On 28 April and again on 24 July 1387 he was appointed justice of the peace in Suffolk, and on 23 and 30 May he was made by the Council a member of inquiries into the smuggling of wine to Flanders from Orwell and from other east coast ports, from the Thames northwards.<sup>38</sup> Moreover, ten years or so later, in November 1397, he saw fit to take out a general pardon for all past treasons (and other offences) which it is difficult to imagine him having committed in other

<sup>35</sup> *CPR*, 1401-5, 377; *CCR*, 1392-6, 442; *ibid.*, 1385-9, 623, 632, 638, 645; *ibid.*, 1389-92, 71; *ibid.*, 1392-6, 253.

<sup>36</sup> *CCR*, 1385-9, 116, 425-6.

<sup>37</sup> *CPR*, 1385-9, 264; *ibid.*, 1391-6, 690.

<sup>38</sup> *ibid.*, 1385-9, 254, 324-5, 385.



circumstances than those of 1387-8.<sup>39</sup> He was, besides, re-elected knight of the shire for Suffolk to both the Merciless Parliament of February 1388 and to the Cambridge parliament of the following September. Nevertheless, it was not until after Richard II had re-asserted himself against the Appellants in May 1389 that Waldegrave derived any direct profit from the forfeitures resulting from the condemnations of the Merciless Parliament. This was by no means considerable: on 10 July 1389, by assent of the Great Council and for 700 marks paid to the King's use, he was one of a syndicate of sixteen (almost all Essex notables) who received an out-and-out grant of the manor of Sacombe (Herts), forfeited by Sir John Holt, Justice of Common Pleas, as a result of the judgement against him in the Merciless Parliament; not until May 1398, after the annulment of the acts of this parliament, was Holt restored against the grantees of 1389 (of whom only half were now alive). On 16 February 1391 Waldegrave shared with the King's half-brother and son-in-law of the duke of Lancaster, John Holland (since 1388 earl of Huntingdon), his own presumed kinsman, Warin de Waldegrave (an old servant of Holland's), and a few others, a grant of the manor of Milton by Gravesend, which had been forfeited by Sir Simon de Burley after his condemnation in the Merciless Parliament nearly three years before.<sup>40</sup> On 15 July 1389 Waldegrave had been made for the first and only time a justice of the peace for Essex. He was not re-appointed when the commission was re-constituted on 10 November following, but he was then again appointed a justice for Suffolk and in this capacity he was to act until the end of the reign, being re-appointed in June 1390, December 1391, February 1392, January 1393, June 1394, December 1396, and July 1397.<sup>41</sup>

Waldegrave never again served as knight of the shire after his third re-election running to the first parliament of Richard II's majority, that of January 1390; this was the twelfth parliament that he had attended in fourteen years, and the eighth time that he had been re-elected. Apart from his regular activity as J.P. in Suffolk, he served on a number of local commissions in the next few years. He was a member of a commission of oyer and terminer set up on 11 October 1390 to inquire into a complaint of the grandmother of the earl of Nottingham, Margaret, dowager countess of Norfolk, of breach of her closes and park and theft of chattels worth £700 at Chesterford (on the border of Essex and Cambridge-shire). On 8 February following he was put on another inquiry

<sup>39</sup> Ancient Petitions, PRO, SC8, file 252, no. 12555; CPR, 1396-9, 184.

<sup>40</sup> CPR, 1388-92, 80; CCR, 1396-9, 276; CPR, 1388-92, 380.

<sup>41</sup> CPR, 1388-92, 135, 139, 342, 525-6; *ibid.*, 1391-6, 292, 439; *ibid.*, 1396-9, 96, 229.

into close-breaking in Suffolk, and on 24 November 1391 he was told by the Council to make certain arrests. In March 1392 he was included in a commission of array in Suffolk, and in July following in an abortive commission (it was enrolled in Chancery but not delivered) to investigate in Suffolk the export trade in English gold coins which was yielding those exploiting it a 20% profit (according to Chancery information). In January 1393 he served on an inquiry into a petition of Aubrey, uncle and heir of the recently deceased Robert de Vere, duke of Ireland, Richard II's former favourite, who had fled to Flanders at the end of 1387 rather than face the Appellants in the Merciless Parliament, where he had nevertheless been sentenced to forfeiture for treason; Aubrey claimed certain of the forfeitures in Cambridgeshire, Middlesex and Essex, as automatically exempt under an entail of 1341.<sup>42</sup>

In February 1391, as co-grantee of Sir Simon de Burley's manor of Milton by Gravesend, Sir Richard de Waldegrave was referred to as 'senior', and henceforward a number of private deeds to which they were party differentiate between a Richard 'senior' and a Richard 'junior', a Richard 'the father' and a Richard 'the son'. (Over a century four successive heads of the family were, in fact, all called Richard and were all knights.) The grant of Milton by Gravesend apart, no other official record of Sir Richard the Speaker's activities during the last 20 years of his life, whether in letters patent, letters close, or in notices in Council memoranda, etc., draw any distinction between him and his son, who was also a knight. Not all of the references made simply to a plain Sir Richard de Waldegrave can be, therefore, safely taken to allude to the Speaker. It is reasonably certain, however, that the Sir Richard who on 2 November 1393, as a King's knight, was appointed by the King to be attendant on the Council (that is, to be a member of it) with a fee of 100 marks a year, and who on the same day was retained for life to stay with the King with another additional annuity of £40, was the erstwhile Speaker; warranted by letters of privy seal and with the assent of the Council, both grants passed the great seal as letters patent on 22 May 1394. Both annuities were quite certainly granted to one and the same man: half-yearly instalments of both were regularly paid simultaneously to the one Sir Richard at the Lower Exchequer.<sup>43</sup>

Still a member of the Council certainly as late as the end of the year of 1397, Waldegrave was one of that group of knights and esquires (especially conspicuous among whom later on were the

<sup>42</sup> *CPR*, 1388-92, 349, 437, 527; *ibid.*, 1391-6, 88, 166 (cf. *CCR*, 1392-6, 287), 236.

<sup>43</sup> *CPR*, 1391-6, 414, 415; Issue Rolls, PRO., E 403/548, mem. 9; *ibid.*, 549, mem. 7; *ibid.*, 551, mem. 8; *ibid.*, 554, mem. 9.

notorious triumvirate, Sir John Bussy, Sir Henry Green, and Sir William Bagot) who were being introduced into Richard II's Council from the middle of the last decade of the reign onwards and who came to be much relied upon by the King in his bid for autocratic power, men of considerable efficiency, expertise, and technical endowment. It was upon such men that the extensive judicial functions being assumed at this time by the Council mainly depended. In this connexion it is interesting to note that, sometime between March 1395 and the end of the year 1397, there was pending before Waldegrave and Lawrence Dru esquire (who by the later date was a member of the royal Council 'en cas cour-sables de la ley et non pas autrement') the appeal of treason originally laid before the Council by Richard Piryman against John Cavendish, a fishmonger of London, both of whom were in the prison of the King's Bench; late in 1397 Cavendish petitioned that the process should be transferred for determination to the Court of the Constable and Marshal, but the King merely turned the matter over to the Council.<sup>44</sup> Occasionally in 1396 and 1397 Waldegrave was put on commissions to hear appeals against judgements given in those now very rapidly expanding prerogative courts, the Court of the Constable and Marshal (*alias* the Court of Chivalry) and the Court of Admiralty.<sup>45</sup>

In these years of his membership of the King's Council, apart from his being a justice of the peace for Suffolk, Waldegrave was very much more free (than had formerly been the case) from royal commissions of local significance. In fact, the only local commissions of a casual sort of which he was a member after he joined the Council were a commission set up in August 1395 to inquire (in two Suffolk hundreds) into cases of concealment of rents and services and one appointed some two months or so later to investigate a case of treasure trove at Stowmarket. In the meantime, local ties were doubtless the cause of his being chosen by his neighbour, Sir John Howard, in August 1394 to be one of his attorneys in England during his absence with Richard II's first expedition to Ireland. In July 1397 Waldegrave was to act in a similar capacity for Roger Mortimer, earl of March, who was about to proceed to Ireland as the King's lieutenant.<sup>46</sup>

<sup>44</sup> *PPC*, i. 77-8; J. F. Baldwin, *The King's Council during the Middle Ages*, 142, 504 (Not until 1397 did Sir Henry Grene become the King's retainer, but as a Northants man he was already known to Waldegrave who, in February 1394, was one of his mainperners in Chancery when Grene undertook not to 'maintain' his young nephew, Thomas, in a legal suit pending in the Common Bench, *CCR*, 1392-6, 260.)

<sup>45</sup> *CPR*, 1396-9, 23, 58, 83, 89, 165.

<sup>46</sup> *ibid.*, 1391-6, 650, 652, 507; *ibid.*, 1396-9, 186.

Between the sessions of Richard II's last parliament, in which the King took his revenge on his opponents of 1387-8 and established his absolute rule, Waldegrave, despite his membership of the Council, saw fit to re-insure himself personally against all eventualities by petitioning for and securing on 14 November 1397 a patent granting him a general pardon for all past treasons, insurrections against his allegiance, felonies, champerties, maintenances, procurements of false indictments, etc., of which he could ever be indicted, appealed, or impeached. On the very same day he also secured a patent of exemption for life from service on certain types of royal commission and in certain royal offices, an exemption drawn in larger terms than the one he had taken out in 1378; he was now, for example, freed from the liability to service as a justice of the peace, justice of labourers, and commissioner of array.<sup>47</sup> On 3 April 1398 he was one of 28 persons, for particular causes moving the King and Council, separately ordered (under penalty of £200) to lay aside all excuse and appear before the Council at Westminster on 21 April to declare what the Council should lay before them at their coming. It is, of course, possible that in the troubles of 1387-8 Waldegrave had acted with a degree of circumspection which now exposed him again, in spite of the general pardon he had obtained in November 1397, to some form of recrimination. But it is more likely that he and the others summoned to appear before the Council were among these 'certaines sufficientz gentz' of London and sixteen counties of S.E. and S. England (Suffolk and Essex among them) required to swear oaths to maintain the acts of the parliament of 1397-8 and, again acting as the proctors of their shires, to submit the people thereof to the King as having behaved like traitors (*tanquam proditores*), in order to afford the King a pretext for extorting great fines to buy back his goodwill. The resulting fines or 'plesaunces' are said to have been either £1000 or 1000 marks for each shire.<sup>48</sup> Whether Waldegrave continued to be a member of the Council in this time of mounting dissatisfaction with Richard II's autocratic tendencies is not known, but it is perhaps significant that he now falls out of sight until after the revolution of 1399, when Richard II was deposed in favour of Henry of Bolingbroke.

By this time turned sixty years of age, Waldegrave seems to have virtually abandoned political life. He was never again to occupy a position on the Suffolk bench of justices and neither was his son, Sir Richard. Whether it was the father or the son who was appointed to an oyer and terminer commission following a

<sup>47</sup> CPR, 1396-9, 184, 262; Ancient Petitions, PRO., SC 8, file 252, no. 12555; *ibid.*; file 221, no. 11004.

<sup>48</sup> CCR, 1396-9, 277; M. V. Clarke, *Fourteenth Century Studies*, 105-6, 112-4.

breach of close at the priory of Earl's Colne in November 1400, who served on a commission of array for the defence of the Suffolk coast in the summer of 1402, or who attended a Great Council along with 13 other knights from East Anglia, is not clear.<sup>49</sup> The father was in November 1403 the only one of the feoffees (by deed of 15 May 1387) of the Bohun manor of Roding Margaret (Essex) to have survived, apart from Thomas Arundel, archbishop of Canterbury, and these two remaining feoffees then granted the manor to Henry IV who granted it in mortmain to the Great Hall in the University of Oxford. On 16 October 1404, during the Coventry parliament, Sir Richard saw fit to secure an *inspeximus* and confirmation of the patent (taken out nearly seven years before) exempting him for life from being made to serve on royal commissions against his will.<sup>50</sup>

The upsets, domestic, political and military, of Henry IV's reign did not touch the old Sir Richard nor, for that matter, his son, who did, however, take part in 1402 in the capture of Couquet and the isle of Rhé in Brittany. In November 1405 both father and son, formerly bound with others in £2000 to Sir Thomas Rempston, K.G. (an east Midlands magnate, who had been a member of Bolingbroke's retinue before his accession and, since then, constable of the Tower and a member of the Council), had a release of all actions following their quitclaim to Rempston of the Lincolnshire manor of Brant Boughton, seemingly in exchange for certain manors (near Bures St. Mary) in Polstead and Leavenheath and certain property in London. On 28 June 1406 a Sir Richard de Waldegrave was made a commissioner of inquiry in East Anglia into concealments of profits and extortions by all local royal officials who rendered accounts in the Exchequer, into the value of all royal sources of income demised at farm, and into annuities and other charges on these sources, and on the same date was made a commissioner for raising Crown loans; whether this was the father or the son it is again not possible to say. It is, however, almost certain that it was the former Speaker who on 22 January 1408 was one of the grantees of a royal licence to found a chantry in Foulness in Essex and to endow it with a small amortized estate belonging to the Bohun family; among Waldegrave's

<sup>49</sup> CPR, 1399-1401, 414; *ibid.*, 1401-5, 114; PPC, ii, 86.

<sup>50</sup> CPR, 1401-5, 377, 482. In 1405, according to the St. Albans chronicler who was suitably impressed by the event, a dragon appeared near Sudbury, hard by the vill of Buryra (probably Bures), and the serfs of Sir Richard de Waldegrave, on whose demesne it was found, shot at it with arrows, but with no effect. After the whole *patria* had been summoned, it made off into a marsh and was not seen again. (*Annales Johannes de Trokelowe*, etc. (Rolls Series), ed. H. T. Riley, 402).

co-licensees were Archbishop Arundel and the dowager countess of Hereford, Joan de Bohun, the mother of Henry IV's first wife.<sup>51</sup>

Sir Richard did not long survive this last transaction. On 22 April 1410, as 'Richard de Waldegrave, knight, senior', he made his will at Smallbridge (Suffolk), providing for his burial on the north side of the parish church of Bures next his wife, Joan, who had predeceased him in 1406. He made certain bequests of money and vestments to the church and its clergy, of vestments to the church of Walgrave (Northants), of a missal (recently bought in London) to the chapel of St. Stephen at Bures, and of a vestment to his chantry at Polstead. He gave £5 to the nearby Dominican priory at Sudbury; 5 marks to the Franciscans of Colchester and the same amount to the Augustinians of Clare; and 2½ marks each to the Carmelite and Franciscan houses at Ipswich. Separate bequests went to individual friars, including one of an annuity for life of £4. To his son, Richard, he left a missal, a chalice, and a vestment of white and red, perhaps a cloth of Richard II's livery whose colours these were. His executors, who were to have the rest of his personalty to dispose of, were rectors of parishes in the two dioceses where lay the bulk of his estates (London and Norwich): the rectors of Bulmer, Hetlingswell and Coney Weston. Waldegrave died on 2 May, and probate was granted by Archbishop Arundel, in virtue of his prerogative jurisdiction, at Ford near Canterbury on 28 May 1410.<sup>52</sup>

<sup>51</sup> *CCR*, 1405-9, 72-5; *CPR*, 1405-8, 154, 200, 386; *CCR*, 1385-9, 116.

<sup>52</sup> Lambeth Palace Library, Arundel Register, pars. II, fo. 49a. Blomefield (*History of Norfolk*, v. 1378) says that he died on 2 May 1400; a Harleian Society note of the epitaph on his tomb at Bures, that it was in 1400 (*Harleian Society*, xxxii, 295); Morant (*Essex*, I, 182a), that it was on 2 May 1401; N. H. Nicolas (*Testamenta Vetusta*, I, 158), that his will is dated 22 April 1401 and that he died 2 May 1401; and the *DNB* (xx, 477) that he died on 2 May 1402. The dates of the will and probate in Archbishop Arundel's Register are, however, conclusive evidence that it was in 1410 that Sir Richard the Speaker died.