'Arrayed as if for War': Tactical innovation and technological change in Late Medieval and Early Modern rebellions (1381-1554)

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ABSTRACT

Rebellion in Late-Medieval and Early Modern England has generally been regarded as posing little military threat to the realm, with conflicts between loyalists and insurgents commonly dismissed as one-sided routs of hopelessly outclassed, poorly armed peasants. More detailed investigation, however, suggests that rebels could be tough and resourceful opponents, with access to effective weaponry, training, and leadership, and that government forces faced stiff resistance when supressing popular insurgencies. By exploring the resources available to uprisings ranging from the Peasants' Revolt to Wyatt's Rebellion, this article will also assess their implications for England's uncertain position within the European military context.

Late-medieval and Early Modern England experienced repeated instances of socio-economic, political, and, increasingly, religious upheaval, which, on several occasions, escalated into open and sustained rebellion against the Crown, its policies, or its local representatives. The first of these hitherto unseen outbreaks of popular disorder erupted in 1381, when the Great or Peasants' Revolt united vast numbers of the realm's inhabitants against harsh taxation to fund England's wars with France and repressive labour laws imposed in the aftermath of the Black Death.[1] This widespread and dangerous uprising was followed, after an interval of almost seventy years, by Jack Cade's revolt of 1450, which took place on the eve of the civil conflicts subsequently known as the Wars of the Roses, and articulated popular grievances concerning the costs and outcomes of campaigns in France and Henry VI's political mismanagement.[2] During and after this long-running episode of internal strife, England witnessed a spate

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[1] Rodney Hilton, *Bond Men Made Free: Medieval Peasant Movements and the English Rising of 1381* (London: Methuen, 1973), pp. 63-72.

[2] I. M. W. Harvey, *Jack Cade's Rebellion of 1450*, (1991, Clarendon Press, Oxford), pp. 32-33.

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of localised revolts, exemplified by the 1497 Cornish rising, prefiguring the much larger and more dangerous Pilgrimage of Grace, a multi-regional rebellion that, in 1536-1537 threatened to derail Henry VIII's fiscal and religious policies.[3] The brief reigns of Edward VI and Mary, occurring in a period of political and financial instability throughout the mid-sixteenth century, acted as catalysts for further disorder, as demonstrated by the series of disconnected but simultaneous risings of the 1549 'Commotion Time', and by the revolt of Sir Thomas Wyatt in 1554.[4] It was only as a result of the greater levels of governmental control accomplished throughout Elizabeth's rule that rebellion ceased to be an effective weapon against the Crown, as the limited success of the Northern Earls in 1569 and, more resoundingly, the abortive Essex Rebellion of 1601 reveal.[5]

While the aforementioned instances of rebellion have been repeatedly scrutinised with regard to their social, cultural, or political implications for Late-Medieval and Early Modern England, they are seldom, if ever, considered as military events. This is an interesting and troubling omission given the prevalence of collective, organised violence involving confrontations between government forces and insurgents, which took place on a far larger scale than the attacks on individuals and property commonly associated with popular revolt and civil disorder.[6] In some cases, these engagements were relatively limited affairs, with conflicts between rebel and loyalist detachments at London Bridge in 1450, Guildford in 1497 and Wrotham in 1554 probably occurring at the level of skirmishes or raids, with fewer than 1000 combatants per side.[7] Other actions, however, either involved greater numbers of participants, as was the case during the prolonged, chaotic street fighting in Norwich between the East Anglian rebels of 1549 and the armies of the Marquis of Northampton and Earl of Warwick, or embodied more conventional forms of warfare such as sieges and battles. For instance, insurgents not only assailed fortified sites, including Queensborough Castle in 1450, Carlisle in 1537, St Michael's Mount in 1549, and Cooling Castle in 1554, with

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[3] Antony Goodman, *The Wars of The Roses: The Soldiers' Experience* (Tempus: Stroud, 2005), pp. 61-70; Geoffrey Moorhouse, *The Pilgrimage of Grace: The Rebellion that shook Henry VIII's Throne* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2002), p. 97.

[4] Andy Wood, *The 1549 Rebellions and the Making of Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 51-53; David Loades, *The Wyatt Rebellion* (Oxford: Davenant, 2000), pp. 1-2.

[5] Anthony Fletcher and Diarmaid MacCulloch, *Tudor Rebellions*, 5th ed. (London: Pearson Longman, 2004), pp. 116-18.

[6] Roger Manning, *Village Revolt: Social Protest and Popular Disturbance in England, 1509-1640* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1983), pp. 2-3.

[7] Glenn Foard and Richard Morris, *The Archaeology of English Battlefields: Conflict in the Pre-Industrial Landscape* (York: Council for British Archaeology, 2012), p. 6.

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varying degrees of success, they also conducted more protracted siege operations, including a month-long investment of Exeter in 1549.[8] By far the most dramatic manifestation of these conflicts, however, was the series of battles fought between large rebel and loyalist armies, with encounters at Billericay and North Walsham in 1381, at Blackheath in 1497, and at Dussindale, Clyst Heath, and Sampford Courtenay in 1549, to name only a representative sample, costing many thousands of lives.

Despite these numerous examples of military actions undertaken in connection with rebellion, historians are often reluctant to credit popular insurgencies as representing a significant threat, preferring instead to categorise them as civil policing actions with little wider significance. Traditional histories of the Great Revolt, for instance, described insurgents as 'poorly armed; lacking order, true discipline, and good weapons', while Fletcher and MacCulloch's comprehensive survey of Tudor rebellions asserted that once military force was deployed against them 'extinction […] became only a matter of time'.[9] Ultimately, these attitudes are perhaps summarised most effectively in Duffy's succinct statement that, when hostilities ensued, 'a peasant force was no match for the professionals'.[10] Conclusions such as these, although frustratingly dismissive of what appear to be relatively large sample of evidence, are, however, understandable and, to an extent, unsurprising given the attitudes to rebel armies found within contemporary and subsequent narratives. When discussing Sir Thomas Wyatt's followers in 1554, for instance, the chronicler John Proctor claimed that 'most of them [were] void of all policy and skill', while Alexander Neville, writing more than quarter of a century after the 1549 risings, memorably branded the Norfolk insurgents as 'a great company of country clowns'.[11] Such accounts habitually inflate the size of rebellions while disparaging their military strength, and have undoubtedly influenced the presentation of their participants as poorly equipped, disorganised, and militarily incompetent. This appearing to confirm existing biases against popular revolts, particularly those mistakenly identified as peasant risings, with even the Great Revolt

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[8] For full details of the siege of Exeter see John Hooker, *The Description of The Citie of Excester By John Vowell Alias Hooker*, ed. W.J. Harte, J.W. Schapp and H. Tapley-Soper (Exeter, 1919), pp. 48-68.

[9] Phillip Lyndsay and Reg Groves, *The Peasants' Revolt 1381* (London: Hutchinson, 1950), pp. 166-67; Fletcher and MacCulloch, *Tudor Rebellions*, p. 76.

[10] Eamon Duffy, *The Voices of Morebath, Reformation and Rebellion in an English Village* (London: Yale University Press, 2001), p. 133.

[11] John Proctor, *The Historie of Wyates Rebellion: With the Order and Manner of Resisting the Same* (London: Robert Caly, 1554), p. 69; Alexander Neville, *De Furoribus Norfolciensium Ketto Duce* trans. Richard Woods (London: Richard Woods, 1615), p. 29.

of 1381 involving the participation of non-peasants, while subsequent movements integrated a far broader cross-section of English society.[12]

In addition to simply presenting another facet in the history of rebellions, reappraising these events has important implication for understanding England's place within the context of the European 'Military Revolution'. Proponents of this theory have argued that the Late-Medieval and Early Modern eras witnessed substantial changes in technology, tactics, and military organisation, which, collectively amounted to either a sudden transformation or an incremental transition in warfare.[13] Improvements in the effectiveness and availability of gunpowder weapons, for example, are widely regarded as one of the period's signature military developments and are variously claimed to have rendered medieval fortifications and armaments obsolete, or to have contributed more subtly to a gradual refinement of existing tactical methodologies.[14] Adherence to these overall trends within the British Isles, however, remains a contentious issue, with an uneven developmental path, wherein older weapon systems and tactics were retained, being cited as proof that England remained insulated and isolated from European innovations.[15] This can be seen in the equipment of infantry soldiers, with continental armies utilising pikes and handheld firearms, while English forces continued to employ the realm's traditional armaments of the bill, an infantry staff weapon adapted from an agricultural tool, and bow, commonly associated with victories over France in the Hundred Years War.[16] Although recent historiography has begun to challenge these longstanding assumptions, suggesting that England remained abreast of developments in warfare through links with Europe and a policy of modernisation, practical illustrations of these processes are few and far between.[17] Where mainland

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[12] Alastair Dunn, *The Peasants' Revolt: England's Failed Revolution of 1381* (Stroud: Tempus, 2002), pp. 12-13; Hilton, *Bond Men Made Free*, pp. 220-21.

[13] Michael Roberts, 'The Military Revolution, 1560-1660', in *The Military Revolution Debate: Readings on the Military Transformation of Early Modern Europe*, ed. Clifford Rogers (Boulder: Westview Press, 1995), pp. 13-36; Clifford J. Rogers, 'The Military Revolutions of the Hundred Years' War', in *Warfare in Early Modern Europe 1450-1660*, ed. Paul Hammer (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), pp. 21-58.

[14] Geoffrey Parker, 'The "Military Revolution", 1550-1660 – a Myth?' in Hammer, *Warfare in Early Modern Europe*, pp. 1-20; Bert Hall, *Weapons and Warfare in Renaissance Europe* (London & Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997).

[15] Charles Oman, *A History of the Art of War in the Sixteenth Century* (London: Methuen & Co, 1937), p. 368.

[16] Niall Barr, *Flodden 1513, The Scottish Invasion of Henry VIII's England*, (Stroud: Tempus, 2001), pp. 52-53.

[17] James Raymond, *Henry VIII's Military Revolution, The Armies of Sixteenth-Century Britain and Europe* (London: Tauris Academic Studies, 2007), pp. 1-2; David Grummitt, *The*

Europe fought extended conflicts, such as the Italian Wars, England's military campaigns against France and Scotland tended to be of shorter duration and produced far fewer actions, with many assessments limiting their consideration to the battles of Flodden and Pinkie.[18] It is here that the study of rebellions can produce useful evidence.

Where there is sufficient evidence to analyse rebel forces, their component members often appear to be surprisingly well armed, possessing levels of personal equipment on a par with more conventional armies. Accounts of the 1381 revolt, for instance, identify a varied arsenal including 'single and double-headed axes […], swords, bows and arrows', and noted how, during the tense moments after Wat Tyler's death at Smithfield 'the commons saw him fall, and […] began to bend their bows' before being persuaded to lay down their arms by King Richard.[19] Further evidence for insurgents' use of archery can be found in descriptions of the 1549 risings, where the capture of St Michael's Mount by Cornish rebels was reportedly accomplished 'with a whole shower of arrows', and where loyalists in Norwich were targeted by 'a mighty force of arrows; as flakes of snow in a tempest'.[20] Similarly, Sir John Smyth, in arguing for the bow's continued utility at the close of the 1500s, cited purported testimonials from loyalist officers as to the combat effectiveness of mid-century rebels who were, in his words, 'all bowmen, swords and bills'.[21] While Smyth's motivations in praising the bow are subjective, his choice of rebellions, rather than international warfare, as a source of evidence highlights the extent to which insurgents could bear similar equipment.

In some cases, chronicles and contemporary eyewitnesses assert that rebels could gain access to more advanced military technologies, of the kind associated with Renaissance warfare. When reporting the suppression of the 1549 Western Rebellion in Devon and Cornwall, for example, Lord John Russell wrote in a letter to the Privy Council that 'we have taken xv pieces of ordnance, some brass and some iron', corroborating repeated references within chronicle accounts attesting to the insurgents' possession

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Calais Garrison: War and Military Service in England, 1436-1558 (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2008), p. 1.

[18] Gervase Phillips, *The Anglo-Scots Wars, 1513-1550: A Military History* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1999), pp. 2-8.

[19] Thomas Walsingham 'Chronicon Angliae' quoted in Richard Dobson, *The Peasants' Revolt of 1381* (London: Macmillan, 1970), pp. 179-80; 'Anonimalle Chronicle' quoted in Dobson, *The Peasants' Revolt*, p. 166.

[20] Richard Carew, 'The Survey of Cornwall (1602)', *Devon and Cornwall Record Society*, n.s., Vol. 47 (2004), p. 155; Neville, *De Furoribus*, p. 56.

[21] Mathew Champion, "Kett's Rebellion 1549: A Dussindale Eyewitness?," *Norfolk Archaeology*, Vol. 43 (2001), pp. 642-45; John Smythe, *Certain Discourses Military*, ed. J.R. Hale (New York: Cornell University Press, 1964), p. 95.

and use of artillery.[22] Equally, in 1554, Sir Thomas Wyatt amassed a sizeable collection of guns for his advance on London, using these weapons to force the surrender of Cooling Castle and secure a crossing over the Thames at Kingston.[23] Wyatt's rebels were also notable for the high standards of their personal armaments, with accounts observing the presence of small quantities of gunpowder small arms and pikes, both of which were relatively rare in England outside of specialised formations such as urban militias and magnate retinues.[24] In documenting the rebel defeat outside London, Holinshed attributed Wyatt's unusually low casualties to the near-identical nature of the opposing forces' equipment, claiming that 'at the push of the pike […] upon their joining with the Queen's soldiers, the one part could not be discerned from the other'.[25] This, if Holinshed can be believed, illustrates the potential similarities in the armament of rebels and loyalists, a conclusion that can be further sustained by analysis of contemporary legal documents.

Such sources, while having their own implicit biases, particularly regarding the use of formulaic language, offer a further perspective on the armaments employed by insurgents, and so can complement narrative accounts and the descriptions of chronicles.[26] In the aftermath of the Great Revolt, for instance, regional inquisitions, such as that conducted as East Rudham in Norfolk, provide verifiable evidence of how suspected rebels, such as Robert Fletcher of Hunstanton outfitted themselves with 'arrows, bows, and other arms' when mobilising against the Crown.[27] Nearly one hundred and seventy years later, in 1549, the population of Norfolk evidently retained access to military grade equipment, as evidenced by the reports of local Quarter Sessions, which, in the aftermath of the rising, recorded the theft of weapons and body

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[22] Lord John Russell to Privy Council, August 1549. MS. Harleian 523, British Library, London.

[23] W.P.M Kennedy, 'The Imperial Embassy of 1553/4 and Wyatt's Rebellion', *English Historical Review* Vol. 38 (1923), pp. 251-58; Anonymous, *The History of The Life, Bloody Reign and Death of Queen Mary, Eldest Daughter to H.8* (London: D. Brown, 1682), p. 70.

[24] John Gough Nichols, ed., *The Chronicle of Queen Jane, and of two years of Queen Mary, and Especially of the Rebellion of Sir Thomas Wyatt. Written by a Resident in the Tower of London*, (London: Camden Society, 1850), p. 45.

[25] Raphael Holinshed, *Chronicles of England, Scotland and Ireland*, (London: John Harison, 1586), p. 1731.

[26] Rodney Hilton, 'Introduction,' in *The English Rising of 1381*, eds. R.H. Hilton and T.H Aston (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), p. 5.

[27] 'East Rudham Inquisition, 11 July, 1381' quoted in Edgar Powell, *The Rising in East Anglia in 1381* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1896), p. 135.

armour from local storehouses by rebels 'arrayed as if for war'.[28] On a larger scale, the indictment of Robert Kett, the supposed leader of the revolt in this region, furnished a comprehensive list of the kinds of equipment associated with the insurgents, including 'cannons, halberds, lances, bows, arrows [and] breast-plates', prior to their defeat at the battle of Dussindale.[29] In presenting these findings, the document characterised Kett's followers as being 'armed and arrayed in warlike manner', suggesting that they were, to all intents and purposes, indistinguishable from a conventional military force.[30]

If these references to military equipment are to be believed, a conclusion encouraged by the consistency of chronicles, personal testimony, and legal documents, then it follows that successive rebel forces must have developed an effective means of obtaining such supplies. This theory can be substantiated through analysis of England's shire militia system, a comprehensive organisation capable of providing insurgents with the arms, training, and logistical support necessary to sustain their campaigns. Although the militia was initially intended for peacekeeping and domestic defence, with able-bodied individuals between the ages of 16 and 60 being assigned obligations according to their wealth by the 1285 Statute of Winchester, incremental reinterpretation of the statute saw the body become progressively more militarised.[31] This process was sporadic throughout the fourteenth century, with the wealthy increasingly expected to fund rather than serve in the militia, while poorer individuals were categorised into England's standard troop designations of men at arms, hobelars, or archers, and exhorted to undertake weapons training via proclamations such as that of Edward III in 1363.[32] Such measures may have had implications for the training, equipment, and organisation of the 1381 rebels, with Eiden noting their capacity to coordinate the assembly of armed men, and to strike at local and national government targets.[33] Furthermore, some insurgents may have benefitted from their membership of maritime communities such as Fobbing, Corringham, and Stanford-le-Hope, with

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[28] Jane Whittle, "Lords and Tenants in Kett's Rebellion, 1549," *Past and Present,* Vol. 207 (2010), pp. 18-20.

[29] 'Indictment of Robert Kett' quoted in Stephen Land, *Kett's Rebellion: The Norfolk Rising of 1549* (Ipswich: Boydell, 1977), pp. 140-42.

[30] Land, *Kett's Rebellion*, pp. 140-42.

[31] Michael Powicke, *Military Obligation in Medieval England: A Study in Liberty and Duty* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1962), pp. 119-20.

[32] Powicke, *Military Obligation*, p. 199.

[33] Herbert Eiden, 'Military Aspects of the Peasants' Revolt of 1381', in *The Fighting Essex Soldier: Recruitment, War and Society in the Fourteenth Century*, eds. Christopher Thornton, Jennifer Ward, and Neill Wiffen (Hatfield: Hertfordshire University Press, 2017), p. 149.

analysis of the 1372 Essex mariners' survey indicating that these settlements were longstanding sources of manpower for the wars with France.[34] Accordingly, inhabitants of these areas, including at least 2 of the 28 rebel leaders from Fobbing, may have served at sea as archers or men at arms from the 1370s onwards, gaining weapon-handling and, potentially, combat experience in the process.[35]

By the mid-fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, however, the ongoing militarisation of the militia had made the body as a whole far more reflective of an army raised for war than an institution dedicated to maintaining law and order, giving insurgents correspondingly greater access to weaponry and to personnel trained in its use. When discussing Cade's rebellion of 1450, for instance, Bohna presents the rising as being sufficiently well organised and equipped to constitute a conflict between the Kentish militia and the Crown, rather than taking the form of a peasant revolt.[36] Similarly, in assessing the Pilgrimage of Grace, Bush suggested that the majority of its participants would have drawn upon their pre-existing arms and armour, while making use of established organisational structures.[37] By establishing a connection between rebel armies and legitimately raised military forces, such studies suggest that regional muster rolls, outlining each community's reserves of manpower and their armament, could be used as evidence for the military assets available to rebel commanders. While these findings elucidate individual risings, the continuation of near-identical methodologies across a large timeframe encompassing multiple insurgencies suggests a larger pattern was at work, one in which rebels routinely appropriated the personnel, equipment, and infrastructure of the shire militia for their own ends.

When documenting a revolt's inception and subsequent expansion, accounts frequently emphasised the use of traditional means of mobilisation, such as 'the ringing of bells' and 'firing of beacons', to collect supporters and supplies from across rebellious regions.[38] In 1549, for instance, the insurgents' control of Norfolk was sufficient for them to appoint their own commissioners, who had responsibilities for requisitioning a range of stockpiles useful for their war effort, including 'shot, powder,

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[34] Andrew Ayton and Craig Lambert, 'Shipping the troops and fighting at sea: Essex ports and mariners in England's wars, 1337-89', in Thornton, *The Fighting Essex Soldier*, pp. 125-32.

[35] Ayton and Lambert, 'Shipping the troops', pp. 111-12, p. 129.

[36] Montgomery Bohna, 'Armed Force and Civic Legitimacy in Jack Cade's Revolt, 1450', *English Historical Review* Vol. 477 no. 118 (2003), p. 568.

[37] Michael Bush, *The Pilgrimage of Grace: A Study of the Rebel Armies of October 1536* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996), pp. 56-57, pp. 421-22.

[38] Neville, *De Furoribus*, p. 10.

ammunition, corn, cattle, money, and everything else'.[39] Similarly, when amassing their armies, insurgents often made use of pre-established mustering grounds employed by the shire militia to inspect and train prospective recruits, establishing a degree of continuity, and a veneer of legitimacy, to rebel assemblies. Mousehold Heath outside Norwich, to take one notable example, had long served as a mustering site before it was appropriated by followers of the so-called 'king of the commons' Geoffrey Litster in 1381, and by Robert Kett's forces in 1549.[40] Equally, during the Pilgrimage of Grace, rebel contingents assembled at a range of local muster points, including Hambleton Hill near Lincoln, Sandford Moor in Westmoreland, and Westwood Green near to the Yorkshire town of Beverly, before amalgamating their various 'hosts' near Pontefract.[41] Notably, areas for which muster rolls are available, such as Bridport in Dorset, indicate continual improvements in the quantity and quality of their inhabitants' equipment, with records showing that the militia possessed no bows in 1319, but had a large stockpile of these and other weapons and armour by 1458.[42] Equally, the distribution of bows between urban boroughs and rural hundreds, with numbers in the former increasing to resemble the latter as the fourteenth century progressed, highlights the obtainability of such armaments and reinforces Goodman's conclusions that late-medieval England was 'awash with weaponry', an assertion with clear significance for popular revolts.[43]

Just as with sources detailing the use of military equipment, the sometimes generic descriptions found within chronicles can be supplemented through legal documents, which provide more thorough accounts of specific instances of mustering, and attest to the involvement of local militia officers and administrators. During the 1381 revolt, for instance, indictments identify a string of village officials, including bailiffs, reeves, and constables, alongside priests and other influential figures, who employed their local connections to raise forces from surrounding areas.[44] A similar web of local affiliations can be detected in 1549, for example in the case of Constable Christopher Amis, who was accused by Robert Themilthorpe, lessee of Tunstead Manor, of leading the inhabitants of several towns including Sco Roston and Tunstead to join rebels gathered

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[39] Nicholas Southerton, *The Commoyson in Norfolk, 1549*, ed. Susan Yaxley (Dereham: Larks Press, 1987), p. 252.

[40] Charles Oman, *The Great Revolt of 1381* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1906), p. 80.

[41] Moorhouse, *The Pilgrimage of Grace*, pp. 52-54, p. 71, p. 91.

[42] Powicke, *Military Obligation*, p. 222.

[43] Powicke, *Military Obligation*, pp. 222-23; Goodman, *The Soldiers' Experience*, p. 91.

[44] Christopher Dyer, 'The Social and Economic Background to the Rural Revolt of 1381', in *The English Rising of 1381*, eds. Hilton and Aston, pp. 15-17.

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on Mousehold Heath.[45] On many occasions, rebel support derived from the relatively wealthy and upwardly mobile portions of the commons, with those theoretically responsible for maintaining civil order actively assisting in and directing popular revolt. In one instance during the 1381 risings, Thomas Haseldon, a JP and influential retainer of John Duke of Lancaster, reportedly had his manors at Steeple Morden and Gilden Morden attacked by rebels from Cambridge, aided and assisted by the town bailiffs.[46] Equally, analysis of the pardon lists associated with Cade's revolt, and Quarter Sessions for insurgents killed in Norfolk in 1549, has revealed that many participants in these incidents were prosperous yeomen smallholders drawn from the upper echelons of the commons.[47] Such individuals had a degree of respectability and typically served as non-commissioned officer equivalents within the shire militia, presenting a radically different image than the impoverished and desperate rural multitude envisaged by contemporary chroniclers.[48]

As well as exploiting the militia's manpower and weaponry, insurgents also showed a clear aptitude for military organisation, resisting the assumption that civil unrest was, by its very nature, chaotic and unplanned. In 1381, for example, the rebels of Kent and Essex synchronised their movements to attack local or central government officials and administration, while also mustering support across the length of both counties, culminating in their simultaneous arrival at Blackheath and Mile End on 12 June.[49] The systematic targeting of regional sheriffs, escheators, and members of the judiciary throughout the rising, even following the rebels' entry into London, is likewise indicative of a high degree of command and control by demonstrating continued contact between the insurgents' leadership and their more distant followers.[50] Similar levels of organisation by the commons can be seen during the Pilgrimage of Grace, which maintained an extensive system of beacons, watches, and messengers even after its initial dispersal, and by the 1549 revolts, wherein members of the regional gentry

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[45] Whittle, 'Lords and Tenants', p. 12.

[46] Powell, *The Rising in East Anglia*, pp. 44-45.

[47] Harvey, *Jack Cade's Rebellion*, p. 11; Diarmaid MacCulloch, 'Kett's Rebellion in Context', *Past and Present* Vol. 84 (1979), pp. 45-49.

[48] Gervase Phillips, 'To Cry "Home! Home!": Mutiny, Morale, and Indiscipline in Tudor Armies', *The Journal of Military History* Vol. 65 No. 2 (2001), p. 320.

[49] Nicholas Brooks, 'The Organization and Achievements of the Peasants in Kent and Essex in 1381', in *Studies in Medieval History presented to R.H.C. Davis*, eds. Henry Mayr-Harting and R.I Moore (London: Hambledon, 1985), pp. 252-57.

[50] Brooks, 'Organization and Achievements', pp. 260-61, p. 266.

were often swiftly imprisoned or driven into hiding via coordinated action.[51] In almost all cases, rebels' reported use of market days, festivals, and other official gatherings as cover for their assembly of forces, and, presumably for preliminary meetings, illustrates the sophistication with which their campaigns were planned and further refutes assertions that popular risings were spontaneous and unstructured.[52]

Late-Medieval and Early Modern insurgents not only demonstrated planning, organisational, and logistical skills, but also sought to appropriate the leadership structures of conventional English armies by persuading or coercing members of the gentry to associate themselves with popular revolt. Although, the presence of these individuals was not a prerequisite for success, as proven by the effectiveness of risings from which the gentry were absent or excluded, rebel groups fulfilled a twofold objective in acquiring the support of their social superiors. Firstly, the participation of members of the gentry offered a means of legitimising revolt, making risings more comprehensive in nature and providing appropriate representatives to negotiate with the Crown.[53] In this respect, the Pilgrimage of Grace, which owed its unusually long duration and initial success to its widespread, albeit in many cases reluctant, backing from amongst the regional gentry, illustrates the political advantages on offer to insurgencies able to attract gentry supporters.[54] Beyond these, essentially ceremonial, roles, more involved rebel gentry could directly assist in the recruitment, training, and leadership of armies, drawing upon their experience of warfare and upon their administrative function as militia captains and retinue leaders. In 1381, for example, Geoffrey Litster's revolt recruited Sir Roger Bacon of Beaconsthorpe, who was instrumental in the capture of Norwich, while the 1549 Western Rebellion saw gentlemen including Sir Humphrey Arundell, Robert Smyth, and Sir Thomas Pomeroy openly commanding forces in battle against their loyalist opponents.[55] Similarly, the leaders of Wyatt's revolt, which included several prominent Protestant gentlemen,

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[51] R.W. Hoyle, *The Pilgrimage of Grace and the Politics of the 1530s* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 310; Julian Cornwall, *Revolt of the Peasantry, 1549* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1977), 63-68, 78-80.

[52] S.T. Bindoff, 'Ket's Rebellion 1549', *The Historical Association* (1949), p. 10; MacCulloch, 'Kett's Rebellion in Context', pp. 39-40; Amanda Clair Jones, 'Commotion Time' The English Risings of 1549', (PhD Diss., University of Warwick 2003), pp. 219-20; Brooks, 'Organization and Achievements', p. 249.

[53] Hilton, *Bond Men Made Free*, p. 123.

[54] Hoyle, *Pilgrimage of Grace*, pp. 144-48.

[55] Powell, *Rising in East Anglia*, p. 3; Alexander Hodgkins, 'They Would Yield to no Persuasions […] but most Manfully did Abide the Fight': A Military Assessment of the Western Rebellion', *Transactions of the Devonshire Association for the Advancement of Science, Literature and Art* Vol, 147 (2015): pp. 121-22.

were able to draw upon their own networks of followers to assist in the mustering of some 2000 men within just over a week at Rochester.[56]

While the exact numerical strength of rebel armies is impossible to determine, even with the aid of administrative and narrative sources, the available evidence indicates that, in many cases, such forces were of considerable size. The Pilgrimage of Grace, for instance, is often cited as the largest gathering of rebels before the civil wars of the 1640s, with an estimated 40,000 combatants under arms.[57] In contrast to the inflated and essentially unverifiable claims made by accounts of the Peasants' Revolt, which asserted that there were over 100,000 insurgents gathered in London alone, the existence of detailed muster records enable the Pilgrimage's approximate membership to be inferred.[58] At the other extreme, a similar process informs assessments of Cade's Revolt, with the subsequent pardon lists probably being produced via a transcription of names from the rebellion's muster rolls, as illustrated by its organisation according to parish and hundred boundaries.[59] Although the list omits certain regions and categories of rebels, particularly those deemed insufficiently important to require a named pardon, there is ample evidence to assess the rising as mobilising at least 4000 men.[60] As Cade's and, later, Wyatt's rebellions illustrate, even relatively small revolts could pose a clear threat when occurring near to the capital, particularly where the speed and unexpected nature of a uprising caught loyalist forces by surprise.[61] Nonetheless, where insurgents ventured to directly oppose government soldiers in battle, accounts indicate that they deployed considerable numbers, with the armies of 1549 possessing the manpower to fight a string of large actions against loyalist forces in Devon and Norfolk.[62]

The points of similarity between rebel and loyalist armies were not solely confined to military technology and personnel, but also extended into the strategic and tactical sphere, with insurgents frequently demonstrating knowledge of and adherence to the era's standard practices in campaigning and field warfare. During the 1381 revolt, for instance, rebels arguably drew upon the methodology of the *chevauchée* employed by English armies operating in France and Scotland through their emphasis upon mobile

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[56] Fletcher and MacCulloch, *Tudor Rebellions*, pp. 92-94.
[57] Bush, *The Pilgrimage of Grace*, p. 419.
[58] Dobson, *The Peasants' Revolt*, p. 26.
[59] Harvey, *Jack Cade's Rebellion*, p. 75.
[60] Harvey, *Jack Cade's Rebellion*, p. 79.
[61] Michael Hicks, *English Political Culture in the Fifteenth Century* (London: Routledge, 2002), p. 209.
[62] Richard Brooks, *Cassell's Battlefields of Britain and Ireland* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2005), pp. 307-12.

warfare to bypass heavily defended strongholds in favour of vulnerable, high-value areas of strategic significance.[63] While the aims of this approach differed from action taken against a hostile realm, insofar as insurgents prioritised administrative and political targets over causing long-term economic damage, analysis of the speed with which rebel armies travelled indicates that they possessed sufficient numbers of horses to conduct warfare in this manner. When detailing the movements of the Kent and Essex rebels, for example, Brooks observed that, between 9 and 12 June, both groups would have covered at least 85 and 70 miles respectively, while also securing military objectives en-route, a near-impossible feat had the insurgents not been mounted.[64] These conclusions can be supported by accounts of the loyalist victory at Billericay, where the king's forces reportedly captured as many as 800 horses, and by numerous references within official documents to rebel messengers, leaders, and supporters riding rather than moving on foot.[65] A similar degree of mobility can be detected in some later risings, as shown by the speed with which the Pilgrimage of Grace assembled its forces, by records showing that extensive numbers of its insurgents were both 'horsed and harnessed', and by mentions of 'Wyatt and his company on horseback' in 1554.[66]

Further evidence of engagement with the era's military context is apparent where rebels constructed fortified camps to exercise control of surrounding regions and provide protection against enemy forces, a practice so widespread in 1549 that the year was subsequently known as the 'camping time'.[67] While insurgents' use of camps has often been regarded as a sign of timidity and inertia, with their 'inkennelled' position supposedly denoting an unwillingness to commit to aggressive action against the government, such measures were a staple of Renaissance warfare and accorded crucial strategic and tactical benefits.[68] At the conclusion of the Western Rebellion, for instance, a vastly outnumbered group of insurgents made their last stand at a hilltop camp outside the village of Sampford Courtenay in Devon, a position which was described as being 'encamped as well by the seat of ground as by the entrenchment of the same'.[69] During the battle, the rebels exchanged artillery fire with loyalist gunners and ambushed approaching soldiers in the surrounding fields, before eventually fleeing

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[63] Michael Prestwich, *Armies and Warfare in the Middle Ages: The English Experience* (Newhaven: Yale University Press, 1996), pp. 200-201.

[64] Brooks, 'Organization and Achievements', pp. 256-57, pp. 268-69.

[65] Eiden, 'Military Aspects', p. 151; Brooks, 'Organization and Achievements', p. 268.

[66] Bush, *The Pilgrimage of Grace*, p. 7, p. 421; Nichols, *Chronicle of Queen Jane*, p. 39.

[67] Jones, 'Commotion Time', pp. 4-5, pp. 307-17.

[68] Hicks, *English Political Culture*, p. 208; Michael Mallett, *Mercenaries and their Masters: Warfare in Renaissance Italy* (London: The Bodley Head, 1974), p. 177.

[69] Lord John Russell to Privy Council.

as their camp was stormed by Sir William Herbert's forces.[70] Despite their frequent association with mid-Tudor revolts, however, encampments of this nature were far from a new development, with a particularly impressive example, reportedly 'dykyd and stakyde well a-bowt, as hyt ben in the londe of warre', being constructed on Blackheath almost a century earlier by Cade's insurgents.[71]

Rebel armies also constructed field fortifications when preparing for battle, illustrating familiarity with techniques that, during the Late-Medieval period, were rapidly developing into standard practice, as proven by their effectiveness in defeating the French at Poitiers and Agincourt, and ultimately, an English force at Castillon.[72] When describing the preliminaries to the encounter at North Walsham, in 1381, for example, accounts noted how insurgents 'surrounded their place of assembly with a ditch in military fashion' and 'placed their carts and carriages behind them' to protect their flanks and rear.[73] This position was further strengthened with defensive obstacles so that advancing loyalists 'found the openings of the road blocked with timbers and towers, and other impediments', while, at Billericay in the same year, rebels 'used ditches, stakes and carts besides enjoying the more secure protection of woods and forests'.[74] In the Renaissance, tactics of this nature, which sought to disrupt attacking forces and expose them to concentrated firepower, had become a routine part of warfare, as demonstrated by their use at Cerignola and Ravenna, and, in an English context, at St Albans and other battles of the Wars of the Roses.[75] Consequently, similar approaches were employed in later insurgencies, illustrating the transference of tactical methodologies between conventional warfare and rebellion. At Dussindale, in 1549, rebels redeployed in a night march from their camp on Mousehold Heath to the nearby valley, where they 'devised trenches and stakes […] set up great bulwarks

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[70] Hodgkins, 'Yield to no Persuasions', 140-45; Cornwall, *Revolt*, pp. 197-200.

[71] James Gairdner, ed., 'Gregory's Chronicle: 1435-1450', in *The Historical Collections of a Citizen of London in the Fifteenth Century* (London: Camden Society, 1876), pp. 177-96. *British History Online*, accessed 6 January 2017, http://www.british-history.ac.uk/camden-record-soc/vol17/pp177-196.

[72] Clifford Rogers, 'Tactics and the face of battle', in, *European Warfare: 1350-1750,* ed. Frank Tallett and David Trim (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), pp. 204-206; Hall, *Weapons and Warfare*, pp. 115-120.

[73] Walsingham 'Chronicon' quoted in Dobson, *The Peasants' Revolt*, p. 260.

[74] John Capgrave 'Liber de Illustribus Henricus' quoted in Powell, *The Rising in East Anglia*, 37-40; Walsingham "Chronicon" quoted in Dobson, *The Peasants' Revolt*, p. 311.

[75] Stephen Turnbull, *The Art of Renaissance Warfare: from the Fall of Constantinople to the Thirty Years War*, (London: Greenhill Books, 2006), pp. 67-70; Sean McLachlan, *Medieval Handgonnes: The First Black Powder Infantry Weapons* (Oxford: Osprey, 2010), p. 45.

of defence […] and placed their ordnance all about them' to resist the Earl of Warwick's army.[76] This situation was mirrored by Devonian insurgents prior to the battle of Clyst Heath, who, in a remarkable feat of stealth and cunning, entrenched themselves overnight to encircle an encamped loyalist force, which was then bombarded with artillery 'as soon as the daylight served'.[77]

On occasions where confrontations between rebels and loyalists escalated into full-scale battle, insurgents were often observed to exhibit both bravery and tactical acumen. In the first instance, the 'valour and stoutness' of rebel soldiers, while sometimes grudgingly conceded by hostile chronicles, was frequently mentioned by contemporary commentators.[78] When describing the fierce fighting at Sampford Courtenay for example, Lord Russell admitted that 'we wished our power a great deal more not without good cause' and noted how, even following his victory 'all this night we sat on horseback' for fear of a rebel counterattack.[79] At Dussindale, the Spanish Ambassador similarly reported how 'the Earl of Warwick had defeated the peasants […] but with greater loss on his side than he cared to confess', while a reported eyewitness account from Warwick's son, Ambrose Dudley, attested to the effectiveness of the rebels' archery.[80] Perhaps the most eloquent proof of rebels' perceived value as combatants was the conscription of defeated insurgents from the 1549 and 1554 revolts to serve overseas in the garrisons of the Calais Pale, illustrating that, despite their open defiance of loyalist forces, effective soldiers were a resource too highly prized to be wasted.[81]

The extent of insurgents' tactical abilities can be discerned from their previously described use of defensive positions and field fortifications, but also by repeated mentions of their manoeuvring and fighting in formation. Accounts of Wyatt's revolt, for example, make frequent reference to the rebels 'marching in good array' under banners including 'ensigns' and 'ancients', illustrating a degree of military discipline.[82] This mirrors earlier descriptions of the Western rebels deploying 'under banners displayed' and using military music, and, earlier still, how the 1381 insurgents, upon

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[76] Southerton, *The Commoyson in Norfolk, p.* 259.

[77] Hooker, *Description*, p. 78.

[78] Hooker, *Description*, pp. 78-79.

[79] Lord John Russell to Privy Council.

[80] Martin A.S. Howe and Royall Tyler, ed. *Calendar of State Papers Spanish*, vol. 9, (Hereford: The Hereford Times, 1912), p. 446; Smythe, *Certain Discourses Military*, p. 95.

[81] Jonathan Davies, *The Tudor Art of War 1485-1603* (Bristol: Stuart Press, 2001), p. 11; Phillips, *The Anglo-Scots Wars*, pp. 50-51.

[82] Nichols, *Chronicle of Queen Jane*, p. 48.

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their submission to King Richard 'did cast down their bows, and so brake their array'.[83] Such references to rebels deploying, moving, and fighting in formation, combined with the use of banners and music to retain their array, should come as no surprise given the frequent association between insurgents and England's semi-professional soldiers. Throughout the later Middle Ages and Renaissance, until the creation of the Elizabethan Trained Bands, the realm's armies were assembled in an ad-hoc fashion, with substantial numbers of troops drawn from indentured followers and, increasingly, regional militias.[84] While these forces were sometimes supported by small numbers of professional soldiers and foreign mercenaries, in many cases, as at the 1513 battle of Flodden, they skilfully and successfully fought alone.[85] Rebellions could thus draw upon a large pool of recruits, most of whom were trained in the rudiments of weapon-handling and drill, and some of whom would have served abroad prior to their involvement in revolt. This was particular apparent for participants in the uprisings of 1381 and 1450, which followed sustained conflicts where rebel supporters may have gained previous military experience. Preliminary investigation of the Soldier in Later Medieval England database supports this conclusion by showing several matches between the names of indicted rebels and of deployed military personnel in the years immediately preceding each rising.[86]

Insurgents also, on occasion, operated in a less-conventional fashion, employing guerrilla tactics of deception, ambush, and surprise attacks during their encounters with loyalist adversaries.[87] Jack Cade's occupation of London, for instance, was arguably enabled, psychologically if not strategically, by his ambush and destruction of

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[83] John Hayward, *The Life and Raigne of King Edward the Sixth* (London: John Wolfe, 1599), pp. 146-47; Hooker, *Description*, p. 75; Jean Froissart 'Chroniques' quoted in Dobson *The Peasants' Revolt*, p. 198.

[84] Luke Macmahon 'Chivalry, Military Professionalism and the Early Tudor Army in Renaissance Europe: A Reassessment', in *The Chivalric Ethos and the Development of Military Professionalism*, ed. David Trim (Leiden: Brill, 2002), pp. 184-86.

[85] Raymond, *Henry VIII's Military Revolution*, pp. 34-37.

[86] *The Soldier in Later Medieval England*, accessed 7 August 2017, http://www.medievalsoldier.org/dbsearch/. For instance, a search for William Roger, one of the principal indicted rebels from Essex in 1381, produces records showing naval service as an archer in 1378. While it is, of course, impossible to conclusively prove that this was the same individual, the link between Essex rebels and service at sea has been further explored by Ayton and Lambert's article.

[87] Alexander Hodgkins, 'A great company of country clowns': Guerrilla Warfare in the East Anglian and Western Rebellions (1549)', in *Unconventional Warfare from Antiquity to the Present Day*, ed. Brian Hughes and Fergus Robson (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), pp. 177-196.

a pursuing detachment led by William and Sir Humphrey Stafford near Sevenoaks, an unexpected reverse that served to demoralise government forces and encouraged King Henry to abandon the capital.[88] Equally, in 1549, the Norfolk rebels successfully defended Norwich against the Marquis of Northampton, and skilfully resisted the forces of the Earl of Warwick for several days, by dint of their effective use of the urban landscape to negate the qualitative advantage possessed by foreign mercenaries with superior equipment.[89] When establishing their defences at Dussindale, the insurgents also made use of captive gentry as human shields, 'placed in the fore rank of their battle, coupled two and two together', demonstrating a ruthless disregard for the conventions of war in pursuit of tactical benefit.[90]

Given that the armies assembled in rebellion can be proven to be relatively large, well armed, organised, and possessed of a reasonable proficiency in military techniques, alongside a degree of tactical knowledge, questions remain regarding their frequent defeat by loyalist forces. Interestingly, despite, or perhaps because of insurgents' military strength, England's largest and most dangerous rebellions were not suppressed in the field, but rather through policies of negotiation, deception, and betrayal. The Great Revolt of 1381, for example, is most commonly remembered for the meetings between King Richard and the rising's leaders, with the final conference at Smithfield resulting in Wat Tyler's death in an altercation often presented as a pre-planned assassination.[91] Although the King initially acceded to Tyler's demands, the subsequent renunciation of his promises, combined with the destruction of rebel groups which refused to disperse, at Billericay and North Walsham, illustrates that such concessions were merely a means of buying time until sufficient military forces could be assembled. A similar, albeit slower-paced approach, was followed in 1536, when the forces of the Pilgrimage of Grace were poised to advance into southern England. Lacking the means to confront the rebels in battle, Henry VIII's representatives instead succeeded in drawing out negotiations at Doncaster, encouraging the insurgents to suspend their campaign until a parliament could be convened to consider their grievances in detail. The parliament, unsurprisingly, remained nebulous, allowing the Tudor state to simply await a loss of patience amongst the rebels, which duly occurred the following year, when a number of poorly coordinated outbreaks of renewed revolt provided justification for the suppression of the movement and the arrest of its leaders.[92]

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[88] Harvey, *Jack Cade's Rebellion*, pp. 84-85.

[89] Andy Wood, 'Kett's Rebellion', in *Medieval Norwich*, eds. Carole Rawcliffe and Richard Wilson (London: Hambledon and London, 2004), pp. 283-88.

[90] Hayward, *Life and Raigne*, 1672.

[91] Dunn, *Peasants' Revolt*, p. 135.

[92] Hoyle, *Pilgrimage of Grace*, pp. 10-11, pp. 299-300.

Where military force was deployed against rebel armies, most notably in 1549, there were a number of reasons which can explain loyalists' capacity to defeat insurgents. Firstly, forces assembled by the Crown either tended to have exclusive access to the most advanced military technologies available within the realm, or to deploy substantial quantities of these arms in support of more traditional weapons, which rebels typically remained wholly reliant upon. For example, the Earl of Warwick's soldiers, who defeated the Norfolk rebels at Dussindale, consisted entirely of cavalrymen, gunners, and pike and shot armed infantry, comprising a specialist task force drawn from a much larger army equipped with the realm's standard weapons of bow and bill.[93] Similarly, in 1554, accounts describe Queen Mary's army, which confronted Wyatt's rebels outside London, as using 'handguns […] pikes, bows and bills', emphasising the extent to which Renaissance era English forces employed a mixture of traditional and modern weapons.[94] Both of these examples can, incidentally, help to address questions surrounding how far Tudor England's modernisation of its armament extended beyond the realm's largest action at Pinkie, which saw a similar combination of old and new technologies. When considered alongside similar examples of smaller-scale warfare, such as Ancrum Moor in 1545, for instance, the suppression of rebellions indicates that changes to the realm's arsenal were not reflected solely in major conflicts, but instead represented an alteration in the equipment of English armies by the Crown at all levels.[95]

However, it was not solely a matter of superior military technology that allowed Late-Medieval and Renaissance English armies to suppress revolts. While both loyalists and insurgents often assembled the core of their forces from militiamen, government soldiers were more likely to be drawn from more experienced or better trained sources of recruitment. This often resulted from the use of magnate retinues, comprising powerful bodies of soldiers under the direct control of leading nobles, gentry or churchmen, as a reliable and effective defence against insurgency, particularly during the fourteenth century, prior to the creation of an effective militia organisation.[96] Where the monarch did not personally suppress revolt, as King Richard did at Billericay, such individuals and their followers were either deputised to act on his behalf or, as in the case of Bishop Henry Despenser in Cambridge and Norfolk,

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[93] Alexander Hodgkins, 'Reconstructing Rebellion: Digital Terrain Analysis of the Battle of Dussindale (1549)', *Internet Archaeology* Vol. 38 (2015), accessed 4 January 2017, doi:10.11141/ia.38.3.
[94] Proctor, *The Historie of Wyates Rebellion*, p. 69.
[95] David Caldwell, "The Battle of Pinkie," in *Scotland and War: AD79-1918*, ed. Norman Macdougall (Worcester: Billing, 1991), pp. 61-94; Glenn Foard, 'Scottish Battlefield Inventory: Ancrum Moor' (unpublished work, Battlefields Trust, 2006), pp. 3-4.
[96] Prestwich, *Armies and Warfare*, pp. 80-96.

acted on their own initiative.[97] Although the number, size, and independence of magnate retinues declined during the sixteenth century, as the Crown sought greater control over its subjects, they still played a vital role in the realm's security by providing an additional source of manpower, especially for foreign conflicts like Henry VIII's 1513 invasion of France.[98] In 1549, retinues such as those of William Grey de Wilton, William Parr, and William Herbert, were often attached to government armies opposing rebels due to the perceived loyalty, access to better-quality equipment, and greater combat experience of their members.

This is not to imply that the militia, while often compromised at a local level by association with or appropriation by rebel forces, was incapable of challenging insurgency. In many cases, particularly during sixteenth-century rebellions, garrisons and urban militia formations provided a valuable addition to loyalist armies, as illustrated in the case of Captain Drury's company, a detachment of pike and shot despatched to Norfolk as part of the Earl of Warwick's army. According to chronicle accounts, Drury's soldiers formed an elite contingent within Warwick's forces and played a vital part in the recapture of Norwich and the subsequent rebel defeat at Dussindale.[99] Notwithstanding this frequent focus on Drury's role, it appears that large numbers of semi-professional soldiers from other regions were similarly involved in several days of urban combat within Norwich, highlighting the extent to which the shire militia could give valuable support to more-experienced troops. Similarly, in 1554, the combat effectiveness of Thomas Wyatt's rebels was vastly increased by the defection of a complement of London militia at Rochester, which, having been sent to aid the Duke of Norfolk, instead brought substantial numbers of disciplined and well-equipped soldiers to join the insurgents.[100]

Sources for the 1549 risings have also noted the involvement of foreign mercenaries, originally mustered for a campaign in Scotland, in suppressing these revolts, with the armies of Lord Russell and the Earl of Warwick receiving assistance from several companies from as far afield as Germany, Albania, and Italy.[101] While some historians

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[97] J.A. Tuck "Nobles, Commons and the Great Revolt of 1381," in *The English Rising of 1381* ed. Hilton and Aston, pp. 196-97; Anthony. Goodman, *The Wars of the Roses: Military Activity and English Society 1452-1497* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1981), pp. 134-36.

[98] John Jeremy Goring, 'Social Change and Military Decline in Mid-Tudor England', *History*, Vol. 60 (1975): pp. 189-91; Raymond, *Henry VIII's Military Revolution*, pp. 82-83.

[99] Cornwall, *Revolt*, p. 170; Neville, *Furoribus*, pp. 57-58.

[100] Fletcher and MacCulloch, *Tudor Rebellions*, p. 95; Proctor, *Wyattes Rebellion*, pp. 47-48.

[101] Brooks, *Battlefields of Britain and Ireland*, p. 306.

have been quick to point to the involvement of these soldiers as proof of the Tudor state's inadequate army, the hiring of mercenary bands was commonplace in sixteenth century Europe, and thus is more reflective of England's participation in the period's military culture than of the realm's isolation from it.[102] Such troops, which included landsknecht pike and shot formations, light and heavy horsemen, and infantry armed with gunpowder small arms, not only provided greater quantities of less-common weapons and personnel, but, more crucially, were hired specifically for their skill and experience. Ultimately, it was this greater military experience and discipline, common to foreign mercenaries, magnate retinues, and elite militia units alike, that gave loyalist forces a qualitative edge that rebels, despite their evident skill in weapon-handling drill and the use of formations, struggled to match.

It can thus be concluded that rebel armies presented a greater threat than their typical depictions suggest, and that the study of campaigns and battles connected with such events can reveal far more about the military history of Late-Medieval and Early Modern England than has previously been assumed. While rebel armies were not of the highest quality, they evidently had access to reasonably effective levels of military equipment and organisation, and intelligently employed their available assets when opposing loyalist forces in battle. This not only makes the actions themselves worthy of further study, particularly where such encounters can be placed into dialogue with more conventional instances of international conflict, but also has deeper implications for analysing English warfare in the era. For example, information regarding rebel forces, which frequently drew upon the shire militia as a source of recruitment and supply, can provide an illustration of the ways in which similar armies were constructed in England at this time. Perhaps more significantly, the loyalist forces responsible for suppressing revolt, which encompassed a far broader cross-section of the realm's military resources, can be assessed as examples of Renaissance-era English armies, adding to the often limited selection of evidence connected with international conflict. Closer investigation of this resource may thus facilitate additional avenues of exploration, helping to enhance our understanding of a relatively little-known facet of military history.

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[102] John Gilbert Miller, *Tudor Mercenaries and Auxiliaries 1485-1547* (Charlottesville: Virginia University Press, 1980), p. xi; David Potter, 'The International Mercenary Market in the Sixteenth Century: Anglo-French Competition in Germany, 1543-50', in Hammer, *Warfare in Early Modern Europe*, p. 157.