

It is through the poaching and trespassing activities of the medieval inhabitants of the dale, that we can add further depth to our understanding of the fourteenth century landscape and its actors.

On a cold Monday in January 1293, five men, including Roger the Miller of Farndale and Walter Blackhous of Farndale went hunting in a part of West Rosedale that belonged to St Mary's Abbey and at an unknown place in the forest they killed a soar⁶⁷, and a hart⁶⁸, with bows and arrows⁶⁹. They were all outlawed.

In 1315, one of Britain's worst storms halved the crop yield and half a million perished. As the price of crops increased many were driven to supplement their diets by hunting. Where previously common rights were exercised in royal forests, such as Pickering, it was a criminal offence. Such men must have been skilled bowmen, potentially also those who may be called upon to fight for their king. However when they hunted in the royal forests they faced onerous penalties. The hunters were chased by the king's foresters and were often caught, tried, fined and sometimes excommunicated or outlawed.

Richard de Farndale and Thomas of Farndale, were excommunicated for stealing at Pickering Castle on 12 August 1316. *To the Most Serene Prince, his Lord Edward by the Grace of God, King of England, illustrious Lord of Ireland and Duke of Aquitaine, his humble and devoted clerks, the Reverend Dean and Chapter of the Church of St Peter, York; custodians of the spiritualities of the Archbishopric while the See is vacant; Greetings to him to serve whom is to reign for ever. We make known to your Royal Excellency by these presents that John de Carter, ... Henry of Rossedale, ... Thomas of Farndale, John of Ampleford, ... Richard of Farndale ... Robert of Rypon, ... our Parishioners, by reason of their contumacy and offence were bound in our authority by sentence of greater excommunication, and in this have remained obdurate for 40 days and more, and have up to now continued in contempt of the authority of the Church. Wherefore we beseech your Royal Excellency, in order that the pride of these said rebels may be overcome, that it may please you to grant Letters, according to previous meritorious and pious*

67 A sow or female boar

68 An adult male deer, generally a red deer over five years old.

69 North Riding Records Yorks, *The Honour and Forest of Pickering*, 1894, Volume II at page 110, possibly folio 222 in the Coucher Book.

custom of your Realm, so that the Mother Church may, in this matter, be supported by the power of Your Majesty. May God preserve you for His Church and people.

On 1 July 1323 Adam, son of Simon the Miller of Farndale, and Richard, son of John the Miller, with three other unknown men, came into Pickering Forest in a place called Petreneldel, and took two deer. When they had been chased by the forester, they sent away one deer, which the foresters carried to the castle of Pickering, but the wrongdoers carried away the other deer with them and *thereupon did their will*. They do not come to a hearing on 3 October 1334 and the sheriff was ordered to apprehend them. Later, Adam and Richard came before the justices and asked to pay for licence to make concord for their offence so that they could be redeemed. Adam paid 26s 8d and Richard paid 40s for this licence, and they found *mainpernors* (or guarantors) for these amounts⁷⁰.

John de Farndale was released from excommunication at Pickering Castle on 23 February 1324. This may have related to a prior poaching offence. *We make known to Your Royal Excellency, by these presents that William de Lede of Saxton, John of Farndale and John Brand of Howon, our Parishioners, lately at our ordinary invocation, according to the custom of your Realm, were bound by sentence of greater excommunication and, contemptuous of the power of the Church, were committed to Your Majesty's Prison for contumacy and offences punishable by imprisonment; and have humbly done penance to God and to the Church, wherefore they have been deemed worthy to obtain from us in legal form the benefit of absolution. May it therefore please Your Majesty that we re-admit the said ... William ... to the bosom of the Church as faithful members thereof and order their liberation from the said prison. May God preserve you for His Church and the people. Given at Thorpe, next York, 9 April 1324⁷¹.*

On 23 June 1325 John, son of Richard de Westgil of Farndale, and Robert, his brother came into Pickering Forest in a certain place called Soterlund, with one mastiff, and bows and arrows, and they took there

70 The Great Cowcher of the Duchy of Lancaster, The National Archives, DL42/1 Folio 217, DL 42/1/23/U22 folios 217 to 218v, Close Rolls 22 August 1323, 17 Edward II page 15 and 16, North Riding Records Yorks, The Honour and Forest of Pickering, 1894, Volume II at page 96, 217 to 218.

71 The National Archives C 85/181/61.

one fawn and carried away the game with them and thereupon did their will. They were ordered to appear at a hearing of the matter on 3 October 1334, but did not appear and the sheriff was ordered to apprehend them. They later paid for a licence to make concord for their redemption. They acknowledged that from that time, they would *not forfeit anything in the said forest*⁷², a promise which they were unable to keep.

In 1330, Richard Mosyn, of that part of west Rossedale which belongs to the Abbot of S. Mary's, William Troten of Spaunton, Roger del Mulne of Farndale, Robert, son of Peter of Rossedale, Walter Blackhous of Farndale, went on a Monday in January to some unknown place within the forest and killed a soar and slew a hart with bows and arrows. All were outlawed. In 1331 John, son of William Fabri (the Smith) of Farndale, and many others captured a young hart at Leasehow, with bows and arrows and hounds⁷³.

Robert Farndale, son of Simon the Miller of Farndale, and Robert Farndale, son of Peter of Farndale, were fined for poaching at Pickering Castle in 1332. Robert was outlawed with others for killing a hart in the forest. On 24 September 1332, Robert Farndale, son of Simon, hunted a stag at Flaskes in Pickering Forest⁷⁴.

The eyre justices (the old French word *erre*, means journey) were judges who were sent out from the central courts at Westminster Hall around the counties. Generally they travelled out every seven years, but the interval changed from time to time. They considered a miscellany of cases, known as pleas arising during the period since the last eyre. The first eyre was in 1166, when Henry II appointed Geoffrey de Mandeville and Sir Richard de Lucy. *Henry's policy of asserting the legal rights of the Crown did not make him popular. Eyres were sudden, frightening descents that not only tried legal cases, but generally asserted royal power, including by aggressive imposition of higher taxes and feudal*

⁷² The Great Cowcher of the Duchy of Lancaster, The National Archives, DL42/1 Folio 218v, DL 42/1/23/U22 folios 217 to 218v, North Riding Records Yorks, The Honour and Forest of Pickering, 1894, Volume II at page 100.

⁷³ *Ibid*, Folio 224.

⁷⁴ Patent Rolls, North Riding Records, York, The Honour and Forest of Pickering, Volume II, The Coucher Book of the Duchy of Lancaster Records, page 66.

Table 2 Mainpernors

Poacher	Amount of Fine	Guarantor (mainpernor)	Payer of fine
Roger, son of Gilbert of Farndale	1s 8d	John son of Abbas	Nicholas de Repyngale
John de Hutton	2s	John Albred	John Albred
Thomas Makaunt	1s	Roger son of Gilbert of Farndale	Roger son of Gilbert of Farndale
Peter son of Gervase	2s	Elias Cokerell	Elias Cokerell
Peter son of Gervais	2s	Roger merchant of Pickering	John Cokerell
Robert Westgill	3s 4d	John, son of Richard de Westgill	Nicholas de Farndale
John Shepherd of Farndale	3s 4d	Nicholas de Repyngale	Nicholas de Repyngale
William the Smith of Farndale	2s	Nicholas de Farndale	Nicholas de Farndale
John Alberd	2s	Robert son of Richard de Westgill	William the Smith
John, son of Walter	2s	John Alberd	John Alberd
William the Smith of Farndale	2s	Nicholas de Repyngale	Nicholas de Repyngale
Alan son of Nicholas of Farndale	3s 4d	Richard son of John the Miller of Farndale	John Alberd
Alan son of Nicholas of Farndale	3s 4d	Adam son of Simon the Miller of Farndale	John Alberd
John son of John Miller	2s	William the Smith	William the Smith
Nicholas de Repyngale	5s	Adam son of Simon the Miller of Farndale, Richard son of John Miller	Walter Trusseleygh

*extractions*⁷⁵. Six eyres were appointed in 1176. The eyres were the primary source for local justice until the reign of Edward II.

A Forest Eyre had taken place at Pickering under a commission to Alexander de Kirketon and Ralph de Dacre on 10 June 1280. Since little administration occurred during the chaotic reign of Edward II, it does not appear that another Eyre took place until the commencement of the reign of Edward III (1312 to 1377). An eyre hearing picking up cases over many preceding decades took place at Pickering on 3 October 1334⁷⁶ and continued to sit at six monthly intervals until 1339. The President of the Court was Sir Richard Willoughby, a successful lawyer whose legal career had made him rich. He was briefly Chief Justice between 1338 and 1340, but was demoted and charged with corruption. He threw himself on the King's mercy and was pardoned on payment of 1,200 marks.

Under medieval forest law, *mainpernors* were individuals who acted as guarantors for others. *Mainpernors* vouched for the accused's future appearance in court, preventing them from fleeing justice within the forest jurisdiction. A significant amount of business was dealt with during the October 1334 Eyre, with regular appearances by the folk of Farndale: see Table 2 on the previous page.

At that same hearing, Thomas Wake was summoned to account for fines for straying animals at Middleton on an unknown date. He claimed that the fines had already been paid. John de Farndale gave his evidence in the matter⁷⁷.

Roger the Miller of Farndale; Robert, son of Peter of Farndale; Walter Blakhous of Farndale, and Ralph de Heued of Farndale came into Pickering Forest at an unknown place with bows and arrows and killed a four year old buck and hunted a stag *and carried away with them the*

75 Robert Tombs, *The English and their History*, 2023, page 66.

76 *The Duchy of Lancaster Records, from the North Riding Record Society. The Honour and Forest of Pickering*, Edited by Robert Bell Turton, 1897, page 23 and 28 and 34, North Riding Records, Volume IV by the North Yorkshire Record Society, the Honour and Forest of Pickering, 1897, page 23 and 28

77 The Great Cowcher of the Duchy of Lancaster, The National Archives, DL42/1 Folio 314v, North Riding Records Yorks Volume III, The Honour and Forest of Pickering, 1894, Edited Robert Bell Turton, page 161

game and thereupon they did their will. They were ordered to appear at the hearing of the Eyre on 3 October 1334, *but although they were living in the country, they did not appear*. Therefore the sheriff was ordered to *make them come*. However the Sheriff failed to apprehend them, since they had withdrawn into hiding, and so the search was continued while meantime they were declared to be outlaws⁷⁸. The case was heard at six monthly intervals seven times until September 1339 when the sheriff was ordered to hunt them from county to county and if they were still not found, they were to be permanently outlawed⁷⁹.

A decade later such low level poaching activity had blossomed into organised crime. On 17 January 1348 at Westminster, there was a commission of *oyer and terminer* to determine allegations relating to a long list of names including William Smyth of Farndale the younger and Richard Ruttok of Farendale for *breaking in to the park at Egton, hunting and carrying away the property of the owner with deer, and for assaulting the owner's men and servants causing their inability to work for a long time, for which they were fined 1 mark*⁸⁰.

A Commission of *Oyer and Terminer* was a legal commission to judge serious offences. It literally means 'to hear and determine' in Anglo-French. The commissioners were the judges of assize together with others named in the commission. They were commanded to make diligent inquiry into misdemeanours committed in the counties specified in the commission, and to hear and determine the cases arising according to law. The inquiry was by means of the *grand jury*. After the *grand jury* had filed the bills of indictment, the commissioners proceeded to hear and determine by means of the *petit jury*.

Another Commission of *oyer and terminor* was given to William de Greystok on 6 December 1353 concerning a list of evildoers, including John Colinman of Farnedale, who had lately *broke the closes, houses and parks of William son and heir of William Latymer, tenant in chief at Danby and hunted therein and carried away deer, and assaulted his men and servants whereby he lost their service for a great time*⁸¹.

78 *Ibid*, Folio 222, DL 42/1/35/U9, Folio 221v to 223v

79 *Ibid*, Folios 277v to 278v, 279 to 280v, 280v to 282, 282 to 283v, 283v to 284v, 284v to 286, 286 to 287, 287 to 289v.

80 Calendar of Patent Rolls, 21 Edward III, Part III, page 472.

81 Calendar of Patent Rolls, 27 Edward III, Part III, page 541.

William Blakhose of Farndale, John Cokrell the Younger of Farnedale and Hugh Moigne of Farnedale were all fined 20s for poaching fish in 1366⁸².

There was another Commission of *Oyer and Terminer* ordered on 8 November 1367 on another complaint by the hapless William Latymer, knight, that various individuals including William of Farndale and William Blakehose of Farndale *broke his closes at Danby, Leverton, Thornton in Pykerynglith, Symnelyngton, Scampton, Teveryngton and Morhous, in the County of York, entered his free chace at Danby and his free warren at the remaining places, hunted therein without licence, felled his trees there, fished in his several fishery, took away fish, trees, deer from the chace, hares, conies, pheasants and partridges from the warren departed, trod down and consumed the corn and grass there with certain cattle and assaulted and wounded his men and servants*⁸³. The matter was to be heard afresh on 6 March 1369 at Westminster⁸⁴.

On 20 November 1372, at Westminster another Commission, once again on the complaint by the harassed William Latymer, investigated an allegation that a number of individuals including John Porter of Farndale, Hugh Bailly of Farndale, Adam Bailly of Farndale, and others, *entered his free chace at Danby co York, hunted therein without licence and took deer therefrom, and assaulted his men and servants*⁸⁵.

There was a significant cattle and horse rustling expedition in 1384 in Northumberland involving John Farndale. On 10 December 1384, at Westminster, a Commission of *Oyer and Terminer* investigated a serious raid in which various individuals including John Farndale broke their close, houses and hedges at Wittonstalle and Fayrhills, in Northumberland and *seized 30 horses, 20 mares, 100 oxen and 100 cows valued at £200 and carried them off with goods and chattels, assaulted his men, servants and tenants and so threatened them that they left his service*⁸⁶. The scale of this heist was extraordinary.

82 Calendar of Patent Rolls, 40 Edward III, Part I, pages 280 to 281.

83 Calendar of Patent Rolls, 41 Edward III, Part II, page 63.

84 Calendar of Patent Rolls, 43 Edward III, Part I, page 263.

85 Calendar of Patent Rolls, 46 Edward III, Part II, page 243.

86 Calendar of Patent Rolls, 8 Richard II, Part I, pages 507 and 508

On 19 April 1396 a pardon was allowed to Robert de Wodde of Farndale, for the death of John Hawlare of *Kirby Moorseved*, killed there on Monday, the eve of the Purification⁸⁷.

On 2 May 1398 at Westminster, a Commission of *Oyer and Terminer* was granted to Henry de Percy, earl of Northumberland, on a complaint by Hugh Gascoigne, parson of Staynegreve, that several individuals including Thomas Wolthwayt of Farnedale, *and other armed malefactors broke his close and houses at Steingreve, assaulted him, fished in his several fishery there, and took away his fish and goods and chattels to the value of 200 marks as well as 1000 marks in money, and assaulted his men and servants. For 4 marks paid in the hanaper*⁸⁸. A hanaper was a medieval cup or drinking vessel, no doubt used as a receptacle for fines.

On 16 April 1445 Lawrence Hoggesson of Farndale and John Farndale of Stillyngton, in County Durham, were to answer the complaint of Thomas Bishop of Durham touching on trespass⁸⁹.

The extent of this activity, all involving folk of the dale, reflects the continuing tension between the indigenous communities, deprived of their ancient common law rights, and the impositions upon them of the Crown and the nobility. It provides perspective on the sense of unfairness that gave rise to the Robin Hood stories, and to new ideas of basic human rights that started to emerge in Magna Carta. However perhaps justifiable misdeeds seem over time to have evolved into more sinister crime.

A dynamic dale with ancient roots

The richness of evidence thus provides a detailed picture of the very first inhabitants of Farndale. We know of eight individuals (Gilbert, Nicholas, Adam, Simon, John, Robert, Hugh and Alfred) of a first generation who were probably not so different in age, who might perceivably have been brothers or part of the same family. Alternatively they may have been unrelated, but were simply those who took the name of the dale as they started to live there. However we interpret their relationships, they were

87 Calendar of Patent Rolls, 19 Richard II, Part II, page 695.

88 Calendar of Patent Rolls, 21 Richard II, Part III, page 365.

89 Calendar of Patent Rolls, 28 Henry VI, Part I, page 306.

of the same community who claimed the working dale from ancient forest.

Prior to the occupation of Farndale and until the thirteenth century, the agricultural community of the wider Kirkbymoorside estate was focused on the Minster of St Gregory at Kirkland and stretched to such places as Welburn, Harome, Nawton, Great Barugh, Normanby, Kirkby Misperton and Marton, all of which are name checked in the Domesday record as places of ancient community. There had been some modest inroads into the dales, to Fadmore, and the area of Spaunton, near Lastingham. Spaunton has evidence of agricultural use back to Roman times⁹⁰. The Roman Villas of Beadlam⁹¹ and Hovingham⁹² are both within the bounds of these agricultural lands, dating to the third century CE. These were likely to have been the heart of their own estates, perhaps feeding the hungry Roman legions of *Eboracum*. This would suggest that the estate of Kirkbymoorside had ancient roots, perhaps back to these Roman estates.

The lands of the Kingdom of Deira, later Northumbria and then the County of York, were ravaged over time by the Anglo-Saxon-Jute invasions following Roman collapse in the early fifth century, and the Scandinavian invasions which followed the raid on Lindisfarne in 793 CE. Roman Eboracum, Deiran Eoforwic, and Scandinavian *Jorvik*, only thirty or so miles to the south, was variously ravaged and subsumed into these new political units. Immediately before the Conquest in 1066, Harold defeated Hardrada and his treacherous brother Tostig at Stamford Bridge near York, and after Harold's defeat, the vicious William, unimpressed with northern resistance to his new reign, punished these lands with his Harrying of the North.

Yet despite its proximity to such violence, and perhaps because of it, the agricultural lands of the Kirkbymoorside estate, nestled as they were at the far corner of the vale lands and into the protection of the edges of the

90 *Excavation Report: A Romano-British site near Hutton le Hole*, Raymond Hayes, *The Ryedale Historian*, Volume 2, 1966, page 12.

91 *Beadlam Roman Villa: Assessment of the Landscape Setting. Aerial Investigation and Mapping Project*, David Knight and Andrew J Roberts, 2022; *Excavations on the Roman Villa at Beadlam, Yorkshire*, David S Neal, *Yorkshire Archaeological Report* No 2.

92 *Ryedale and North Yorkshire antiquities*, George Frank, 1888, page 82.

dales, were a place where stability had a chance to endure over generations. Whilst an integral part of the momentous events occurring only a few miles away, these were lands which could likely avoid the bloodshed and even flourish, at the edge of the drama. Indeed the richness of the archaeological evidence suggests exactly that.

The estate of Kirkbymoorside was thus a place of relative stability and successful agriculture, which stretched back through Norman, Scandinavian, Anglo Saxon, Deiran, and Roman times with a degree of consistency. It may have had its roots in the Brigantian period which preceded the Roman, and perhaps to the Beaker folk whose remains still lie within its territory, particularly the Ryedale windypits⁹³ and on the high moors. Those who settled in Farndale from about 1220 were likely to have been descendants of this ancient community.

The occupation of Farndale from the early thirteenth century was a continuation of this process, and the first folk of Farndale brought their own rich cultural and historic identity, and no doubt a deep rooted agricultural experience.

The most beautiful woman in all the realm of England

In the mid fourteenth century, Farndale was part of the lands which fell to the Stuteville-Wake and Kent heir, Joan Plantagenet (1328 to 1385), who came to be known as the Fair Maid of Kent. She was the daughter of Margaret Wake, 3rd Baroness Wake of Liddell and Edmund of Woodstock, the First Earl of Kent, and the youngest son of Edward I. The Fair Maid provides glamour to Farndale's story.

The young Joan had been brought up, a royal princess in the Plantagenet court of Edward III and her domain was the royal courts in southern England and France. She was cousin of the King.

In 1340, aged only thirteen, Joan had secretly married the twenty six year old Thomas Holland, her Knight. She had not first gained royal consent, which she was required to do as a royal princess. Shortly after the wedding, Holland left for the continent as part of the English expedition into Flanders and France. The following winter, while Holland was

93 *The Discovery and Exploration of the North Yorkshire Windypits*, Roger G Cooper, *the Ryedale Historian*, No 9, 1978, page 11.

still overseas, Joan's family arranged for her to marry William Montagu, son and heir of William Montagu, first Earl of Salisbury, who had helped Edward III to secure his throne from the Mortimer regime.

When Holland returned from the French campaigns in about 1348, his marriage to Joan was revealed. Holland confessed the secret marriage to the King and appealed to the Pope for the return of his wife. In 1349, the proceedings ruled in Holland's favour. Pope Clement VI annulled Joan's marriage to Salisbury and Joan and Thomas Holland were ordered to be married in the Church.

Joan had relinquished her place in the Salisbury title, for the lowly, though impressive, knight, Thomas Holland. Joan and Thomas had five children. It was Joan, the royal princess, who inherited the titles of Kent and Liddell after the death of her brother John in 1352. Far to the north from the royal court, part of her new landholdings included Farndale. It is not likely that she ever visited her lands at Kirkbymoorside and so sadly was probably never seen in Farndale. She was more interested in royal politics and courtly intrigue than in the tedious administration of her distant landholdings.

In 1353 an Inquest taken at York during Edward III's reign confirmed Joan's Stuteville holdings in Kirkbymoorside. It included the *manor with its members in Farndale, Gillyngmore, Brauncedale and Fademore (extents given, with field names), held of John de Moubray by service of 1½ knights' fees. The extent of Kirkeby includes a weekly market on Wednesday and a fair on the feast of the Nativity of the Virgin; and the manor is charged time out of mind by the ancestors of the earl with 26s. 8d. yearly to the prioress of Keldholm and 13s. 4d. yearly to the vicar of the church of Kirkeby for tithe of the mill. Decrease in value of land &c. through the pestilence*⁹⁴.

Although practical ownership of Kirkbymoorside had been of the House Stuteville since about 1175, the complexities of the feudal hierarchy meant that the Stutevilles continued to hold the land of House Mowbray.

Thomas Holland, whose modest possessions were unlikely to have kept Joan in the style to which she was accustomed, but whose military

charm seems to have nevertheless entranced her, therefore took title to Joan's lands, though he was not summoned to take the formal title of Earl of Kent until 1360. With the Kent and old Stuteville landholdings, the couple could live more luxuriously.

On the death of Thomas Holland in Normandy in 1360, came an *Order to deliver to Joan who was wife of Thomas de Holand earl of Kent the manors of Cotyngnam, Witherton, Buttercrambe, Kirkeby Moresheved (with lands in Farndale, Gillyngmore, Brauncedale and Fademore), Cropton (with tenements in Middleton and Haretoft), Aton and Hemebyngton, with the members, lands etc thereto pertaining, taken into the king's hand by the death of the earl, together with the issues from the date of his death*⁹⁵ ... *The manor, with lands &c. in Farndale, Gillyngmore, Brauncedale and Fademore, held of John de Moubray by homage and fealty and by service of a knight's fee and a half.*

So the Kent and old Stuteville lands passed back to Joan.

The lovely Joan did not have to wait long before marrying the heir to the throne. On 10 October 1361 Joan married her cousin Edward, the Black Prince, son of Edward III, the Prince of Wales.

For a short while Farndale was held directly by the Black Prince, the lad who had earned his spurs at Crécy, the military hero of Poitiers.

However in 1365 Joan and her new husband, the Black Prince, formally settled the Kirkbymoorside manor on her son by her former husband, Thomas Holland, the Second Earl of Kent, and Alice FitzAlan, his wife and their heirs, with reversion to the prince and herself. So Joan's direct interest in Farndale passed on to her Holland sons. Perhaps her elevated lifestyle meant that by 1365 she was not so bothered about retaining her northern lands in her direct ownership. The Kent and Kirkbymoorside lands thus passed down to the line of the Hollands.

There is a record though that the Black Prince ordered his keeper of the Farndale wood to deliver a single oak, suitable for shingles, for the roofing of Gillamoor chapel. So Joan and the heir to the throne did retain some interest over the Farndale lands. Farndale had after all been a royal

hunting ground⁹⁶. Joan and the Black Prince had two sons of their own, Edward of Angouleme (1365 to 1370) and the surviving second who became Richard II of England.

The French chronicler Jean Froissart called Joan *en son temps la plus belle de tout la roiaulme d'Engleterre et la plus amoureuse*, "the most beautiful woman in all the realm of England, and the most loving". The immortal title of the "Fair Maid of Kent" seems to have been adopted later, though Froissart did refer to her as *cette jeune damoiselle de Kent*. She was described in the Herald Chandos' *Le Prince Noir*, as *Une dame de grant pris, Qe belle fuist, plesante et sage*, "a lady of great worth, who was beautiful, pleasant, and wise."

It was Joan whose honour, it was later suggested, Edward III protected in a famous incident which was claimed to have given rise to the motto of Edward's new Order of the Garter, *honi soi qui mal y pense*.

Joan's son Prince Richard was next in line to succeed his grandfather Edward III, who died on 21 June 1377. Richard was crowned as Richard II the following month at the age of 10. As Queen Mother, Joan exercised considerable influence during the early years of her son's reign. She enjoyed respect as a venerable royal dowager.

Joan died on 7 August 1385 aged 57 and was buried beside her first husband, Thomas Holland, as requested in her will, at the Greyfriars in Stamford, Lincolnshire. The Black Prince had built a chantry chapel for her in the crypt of Canterbury Cathedral in Kent, where he himself had been buried with ceiling bosses sculpted with likenesses of Joan's face. There are plenty of historical novels⁹⁷ written about the lovely Fair Maid, the most renown of Farndale's proprietors.

96 John Rushton, *The History of Ryedale*, 2003, page 126.

97 *The Shadow Queen*, 2018 by Anne O'Brien; *The Fair Maid of Kent*, 2017 by Caroline Newark and *The First Princess of Wales*, 2020 by Karen Harper provide fictional depictions to fill the unknown gaps between the historical evidence, of Joan of Kent's life at the English court in which her mother, Margaret is a supporting character. There are also many biographies such as by Anthony Goodman, 2017.

Dispersal

*Then a soldier, full of strange oaths, and bearded like the pard, jealous in honour, sudden and quick in quarrel, seeking the bubble reputation even in the cannon's mouth*⁹⁸.

Simon the Miller of Farndale had a son, John and it was probably he, Johanne de Farendale, who had crossed the moors to Egton by 1301, where he paid 22d in Edward I's subsidy⁹⁹. At about the same time Willemo de Farendale had moved to Danby where he paid 3s¹⁰⁰. These were a new generation of pioneers who left the dale to seek new opportunities taking the name of the dale to define themselves.

By 1314, John de Farndale was a sub tenant of Thomas Wake in Rosedale, the dale adjacent to Farndale. John held 6 acres of land near the vill of Cropton. He grew five acres with oats, which had been grown every year between about 1314 and 1334 and one acre was wasteland¹⁰¹. Cropton is at the head of Rosedale, but from later records, it is apparent that John's land may have been at Hartoft, near Rosedale Abbey today. Johanne de Farndale, paid taxes at Cropton de Arthoft of 2s 1d in the Lay Subsidy of 1327¹⁰² and 2s in the same place in the 1333 subsidy¹⁰³.

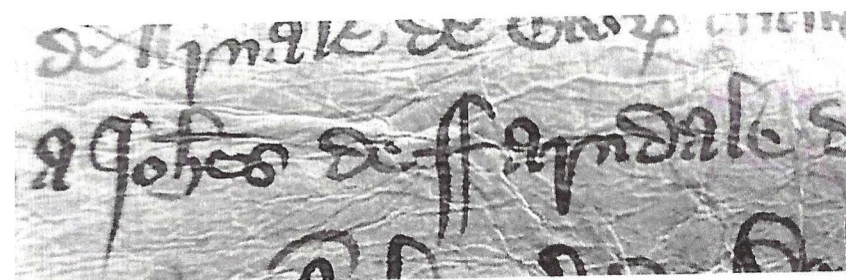


Photo 5. Johan de Farndale's loan of 1336 (Chancery Records, The National Archives).
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98 William Shakespeare, *As You Like It*, Act II Scene VII

99 *Yorkshire Lay Subsidy* 1301, Yorkshire Archaeological Society Record Series Volume 21, 11897, ed William Brown page 28 to 29.

100 *Ibid.*, page 26.

101 The Great Cowcher of the Duchy of Lancaster, The National Archives, DL42/1 Folio 248.

102 The Duchy of Lancaster Records, North Riding Record Society, *The Honour and Forest of Pickering*, Edited by Robert Bell Turton, Volume IV, 1897, page 143.

103 *Ibid.*, page 154

Three years later, John de Farndale of Hovingham in the Wapentake of Ryedale was a debtor to Thomas de Wrelton, a chaplain of Yorkshire in the sum of £8 and the transaction was recorded by Henry de Belton, Mayor of York and William Gra, Clerk taken on 16 April 1336. The first term of the loan was to last until 19 May 1336. (Photo 5) The writ was endorsed by Ebor' Coram Justic' de Banco¹⁰⁴.

It may have been by about 1338, having taken a loan at Hovingham, that John set up a new business as a saddler in York. In 1363, Johannes de Farnedale was admitted as a freeman of York as a *sadler*¹⁰⁵.

His son, *Johannes de Farndall, fil Johannis de Farndall, sadler*, was admitted as a freeman of York by patrimony in 1397¹⁰⁶.

In a third generation of this family, John de Fernedill was admitted as a freeman in York in 1408 as a *boucher*¹⁰⁷, most likely working in the Shambles, from the Anglo-Saxon *fleshammels*, the shelves or benches where meat was displayed the street, and York's medieval street of butchers' shops. This John was likely John Farodell who served under Henry Percy and John of Gaunt in Scotland between 1383 to 1389¹⁰⁸ and under Thomas Mowbray as part of a standing force in the Scottish marches in 1389¹⁰⁹, alongside his brothers Henry Farendon¹¹⁰ and William Faryndon¹¹¹.

Davy Farndyn was perhaps the fourth generation of this same family, who served extensively in France during Henry V's campaigns at Harfleur¹¹² and later a man at arms at Rouen¹¹³ where he served under Richard Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick, the superintendent and gaoler of

104 The National Archives C 241/115/94.

105 *Register of the freemen of the city of York* from the city records, 1279 to 1759, 1897 page 58.

106 *Ibid*, page 101

107 *Ibid*, page 113.

108 British Library, Cotton Roll XIII.8, m2, The National Archives, E101/39/38, m3d and E101/40/5, m2.

109 The National Archives E101/41/17, m1 and m2.

110 *Ibid*, m2.

111 *Ibid*, m5.

112 Muster Roll, the National Archive E101/48/17, E101/48/19.

113 Bibliothèque Nationale de France, MS. Fr. 25768, no. 433, Fr. 25769, no. 447, Clairambault 166, no. 30; Bibliothèque Nationale de France, MS. Fr. 25769, no. 501; The British Library, Add. Ch. 11668.

Joan of Arc during her trial and execution. Perhaps a descendant of the first Farndale community stood guard over the martyr as she was burnt at the stake in 1431.

William Farndale moved to Doncaster, perhaps from York, at about the time of the Black Death and was possibly another son of the saddler, John Farndale. William was a chaplain at the parish church of St George's in Doncaster by 1356¹¹⁴. In 1369, five acres of land at Loversall, just south of Doncaster, was transferred to him by Robert Rypers, when he was still a chaplain¹¹⁵ and he received other gifts of land¹¹⁶. Then from 8 January 1397¹¹⁷ until 31 August 1403¹¹⁸ William was the vicar of Doncaster¹¹⁹. It was probably his brother, Nicholaus de ffarnedale, and his wife Alicia, who paid the controversial 4d poll tax in 1379 in Doncaster¹²⁰.

Due to the lowered population after the Black Death, there was a food excess which was sold for profit to inspire a new middle class. As more tax was demanded and impositions designed to keep the villeins in their place, resistance grew, leading to the Peasants' Revolt in 1381.

The Lollards, religious reformers led by John Wyclif, had enjoyed the support of the Fair Maid, but the violent climax of the popular movement for reform reduced the feisty Joan to a state of terror. Nevertheless, on her return to London, when she found her way barred by Wat Tyler and his mob of rebels on Blackheath, she was saluted with kisses and provided with an escort for the rest of her journey.

Whilst initially appearing to understand the demands of the rebels, by the time the episode was over the young Richard II disdainfully declared *rustics you were and rustics you are still. You will remain in bondage, not as before, but incomparably harsher.*

114 Nottinghamshire Archives, Reference DD/FJ/1/291/5.

115 Deed in the Records of the Exchequer, The National Archives E 40/111457, Feoffment by Robert Ripers of Loversall to Sir William Farendall, chaplain.

116 Title Deeds, A Calendar to the Records of the Borough of Doncaster, Volume 1, Royal Charters and Ancient Title Deeds.

117 Archbishop Registers, York, Register 14 f.62 (recto) entry 4.

118 *Ibid*, Register 16 f.38 (recto) entry 5.

119 See also The History and Description of St George's Church at Doncaster by John Edward Jackson, 1855, page lxxvii.

120 *Genuki* extract from Yorkshire Archaeological and Topographical Journal, 1379 Subsidy Roll for Doncaster.

Whilst the rebel leaders were executed, the changed circumstances meant that serfdom was slowly replaced in England, providing an alternative course to other European nations.

The Doncaster family were at Campsall, a few miles north of Doncaster, by the sixteenth century and later moved to Cleveland and are the probably the ancestors of the modern Farndale family. Campsall is in the heart of Barnsdale forest, the original setting for the Robin Hood legends, and likely to have been one of the locations where the oral tradition was first written.

The coincidence of a family forced to a life of poaching in fourteenth century Pickering Forest; part of the armies of archers and men at arms during the Hundred Years' War; and living in the place where the Robin Hood stories were first set and captured in writing, suggests a continuity of experience that persevered after the folk of the dale had left it. Perhaps there was some inspiration for the oral tradition of the most famous outlaw from the poachers from Farndale who had been the subject of arbitrary justice in the fourteenth century.

There was another line of Farndale folk who left the dale and made their mark. Walter de Farndale, who paid £1 for five oxen to the agisters in 1310, suffered a violent death at Cayton at the hands of Hugh de Faulkes of Lebreton on 29 May 1327 who was pardoned for Walter's death on condition that he joined an expedition against the Scots¹²¹. The recruiting methods of the Wagner group have a deep history.

His son is likely to have been another Walter de Farndale, who became a vicar at St Werberg in Hoo in faraway Kent but then moved to Haltwhistle in Northumberland to become its vicar in 1338¹²². He then became Master of Elishaw Hospital in the Parish of Elsdon in 1340 and 1342¹²³ and Master of Leysingby Hospital near Carlisle in 1341¹²⁴. He

121 Calendar of Patent Rolls, 1 Edward III, Part II, page 112
 122 *Fasti Dinelmense*, Durham, Suretees Society Volume CXXXIX, page 44.
 123 *Ibid*, page 192.
 124 *Ibid*, page 44.

was later a parson of Upmeadon Church in Sussex in 1347¹²⁵ and Warden of St Margaret's Chelmsford in 1349¹²⁶. He was later at Blendeworth¹²⁷.

William Farndale, probably Walter's son, was a chaplain at Darley near Harrogate by 1358¹²⁸. On 7 May 1370, a pardon was granted to William Farndale of the King's suite at Caley for the death of John de Spaldyngton *whereof he is indicted of any consequent outlawry*¹²⁹. Spaldyngton is about twenty kilometres southeast of York. Caley is more difficult to identify, but there is a location, about ten kilometres southwest of Harrogate, called Caley Hall. Since Caley is in the vicinity of both Cayton and Darley, the association seems correct. It also seems likely that it was this William Farndale who settled at Sheriff Hutton, the home of the Nevilles along with Raby and Middleton Castle. William therefore moved his family into the centre of English political affairs, through the period of the Hundred Years War and on to the Wars of the Roses, in which the Nevilles would play a central role. In doing so, a family that had been firmly rooted in the Yorkshire interests of House Lancaster at Pickering, would place itself at the heart of a family that would play a key role in establishing the Yorkist dynasty, before belatedly realigning with the Lancastrians¹³⁰.

On 23 February 1398 William Farndale, who had probably taken some ecclesiastical post at Sheriff Hutton, made his will at Schyrefhoton in which he left 100s for a chaplain at the parish church to celebrate services for his soul for a year; 20s for putting lead on the south roof of the church; 1d to every poor person in the parish on the day of his death; £4 to his wife Juliana and to his son Richard; 2 bullocks and 2 plough beasts to his daughter Agnes; and 2 cows to his daughter, Helen¹³¹.

125 Calendar of Close Rolls, 21 Edward III, Part I, page 234.
 126 Calendar of Patent Rolls, 23 Edward III, Part I, page 277.
 127 Calendar of Papal Registers Relating to Great Britain and Ireland, Volume 3, 1342-1362, pages 521 to 529, 2 Id. Aug. Avignon (f. 258.).
 128 Calendar of Patent Rolls, 32 Edward III, Part II, page 110.
 129 Calendar of Patent Rolls, 44 Edward III, Part I, page 393.
 130 The wily Richard Neville, Kingmaker, supported Richard of York's Yorkist uprising and the accession of the Yorkist Edward IV, before a fall out which led him to switch his allegiance to the Lancastrians and the short recovery of the Crown by Henry VI.
 131 Wills in the York Registry 1389 to 1514, page 60 and Volume 2 folio 13.

His son Richard Farndale was a veteran soldier in the armies of Richard II, Henry IV and Henry V in Scotland and France. When Richard died in 1435 he also left a will¹³² in which he left his impressive armoury of a bascinet¹³³, a breastplate, his vembraces¹³⁴, his rerebraces¹³⁵ and his grey horse. He seems to have been of a new class of professional soldier who began to challenge chivalric traditions. He may have joined an expedition to France in 1380¹³⁶.

His son Richard Farendon was an archer and man at arms in a Scottish Expeditionary Force who appeared in Retinue Lists on 24 June 1400¹³⁷ where the army assembled at York met by Ralph Neville and Henry Percy. The army of 13,000 men was one of the largest raised in medieval England. Henry IV's army marched to Leith, but did not progress much beyond. Whether Richard was part of Henry V's army who besieged Harfleur and then won against the odds at Agincourt is not recorded, but Richard Farndon was an archer and part of the garrison at Harfleur by 1417¹³⁸ and later in the 1421 campaign¹³⁹.

Richard had three daughters, Margorie, Agnes and Alice, who witnessed the Wars of the Roses from the lands of the Nevilles. From Middleton and Sheriff Hutton Richard Duke of York administered northern affairs for a decade, before his subsequent reign as the tyrant (or perhaps victim of a smear campaign) Richard III. The effigy of the teenage child of Richard and Anne Neville is still to be found in Sheriff Hutton Church.

In the century following the first settlement of Farndale, many of the folk of that place had dispersed, to experience at first hand the progress of the Plantagenets, the Hundred Years War, and the Wars of the Roses.

132 *Ibid*, page 60 and Volume 3 page 441.

133 A Medieval combat helmet

134 Armoured forearm guards

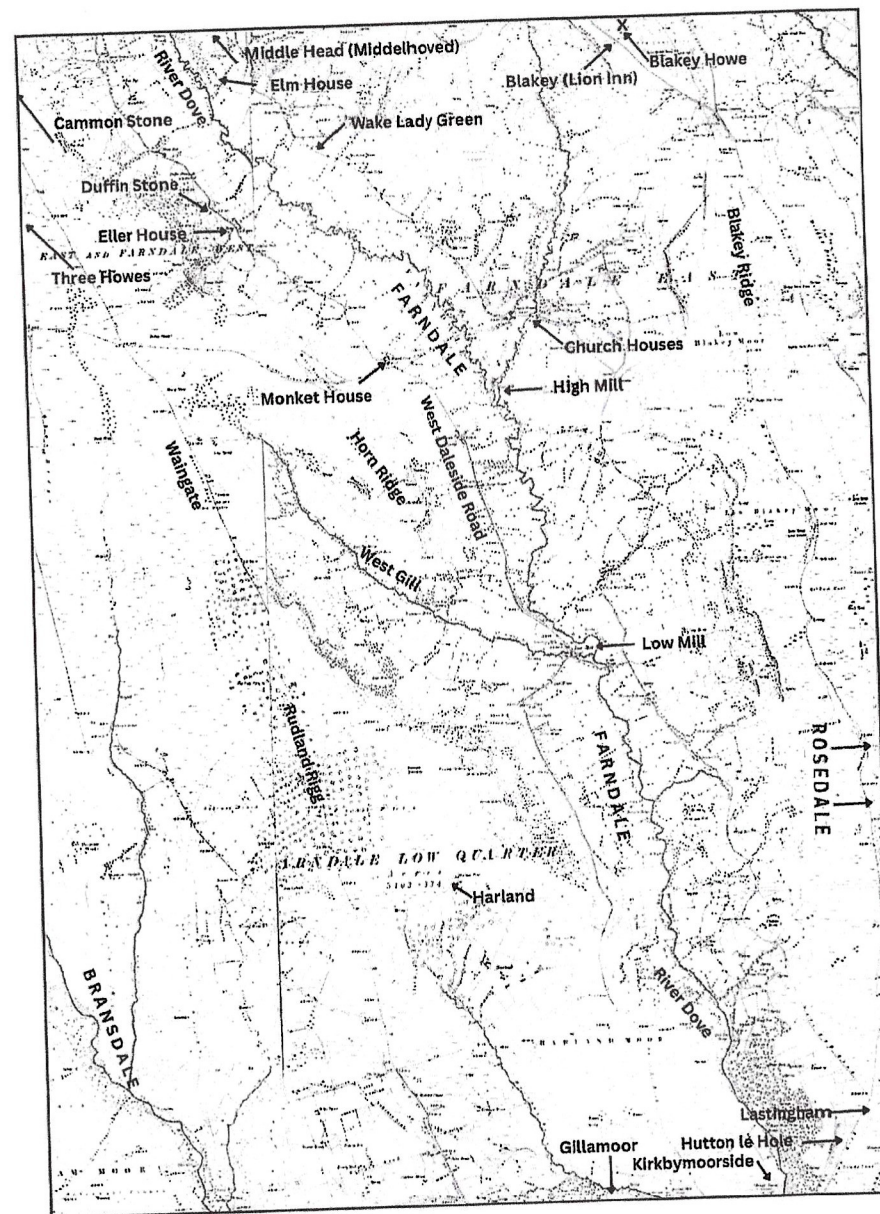
135 Armour to protect the upper arm and shoulder

136 The National Archives E101/39/7, No 1 m4 and E101/39/7, No 4 m1, Particulars of the account of William de Wyndesore, engaged in the expedition to Brittany, with retinue rolls, 3 to 4 Richard II, on pouch of 5 rolls.

137 The National Archives E101/42/16, m34, Retinue roll of various persons, probably for Henry IV's Scottish expedition, 43 membranes.

138 The National Archives E101/48/17, Imperfect muster roll of the garrison of Harfleur, 5 Henry V in eleven membranes

139 The National Archives E101/49/37, m4, Particulars of the account of Richard Wydeville, Seneschal of Normandy and captain of Gisors and la Tour de Chaumont, with muster rolls, 8 to 9 Henry V, in eleven membranes.



Map 4 Farndale in the 19th Century.

Ordnance Survey 6" to 1 Mile, sheets 58, 59, 73 and 74 (1857 - 95) © National Library of Scotland

For Farndale in the early 21st century see Google Earth image on rear cover.

The Crucible

Humberston's Survey of 1570 described 71 tenements in Farndale, 40 on the east side and 31 on the west, together with two mills and a few cottages paying altogether just over £54 in rent. He observed that *the townes, hamlettes, and dales of Farnedale, Braundesdale, Fadmore, and Gyllymore were inhabyted with many welthy and substancyall men, and haue very good fermes whereas the towne of Kyrkeby is a market towne, inhabyted all with pore people*¹⁴⁰.

The dale remains a lovely place in the North York Moors National Park. It is said that the famous daffodils were first introduced into Farndale by the Rievaulx monks. It continues to be a thriving agricultural community, having withstood a post war threat to flood it as a reservoir.

It is also the crucible of my family story. All those who still bear the name of the dale are descended from the same family and from those who first cleared the sleeping forest for agricultural use in the twelfth century. My family are probably the descendants of John Farndale, perhaps the son of Simon the Miller, who had left the dale by the turn of the fourteenth century. Although never to return, we have retained the name of our dale since we left it in the early fourteenth century.

Richard Farndale, August 2025

Richard Farndale BA (Hons), LLB (Dist), LLM (Dist), FRGS is a former artillery officer and lawyer. He was Chairman of the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators in Scotland and practiced in dispute resolution in the Scottish Courts and arbitral tribunals. Richard's father, the late General Sir Martin Farndale KCB started to research the history of the Farndale family in the 1950s and Richard has continued that research since Martin died in 2000. The research is a two generation endeavour.

The specificity of the name, rooted to a particular valley to the south of the North York Moors, has made it possible to follow the family story back to medieval times and to tell the wider story of the places of the family's roots.

The rules of evidence, at the heart of dispute lawyers' practice, have a useful application to historical research. Richard generally tries to

¹⁴⁰ Yorkshire Archaeological Journal, 1893, Vol 17, p146.

achieve the higher standard of proof in law ('beyond reasonable doubt') where the evidence allows, and then endeavours to build the narrative by adopting the civil standard ('on a balance of probability' or 'more likely than not' approach). This helps to retain a rigidity to the analysis of historical material, by building a narrative from the available primary sources to the highest standard that the evidence allows.

Richard's website which tells the story of the Farndale family and their journey through two thousand years of British history is told at www.farndalefamily.co.uk.

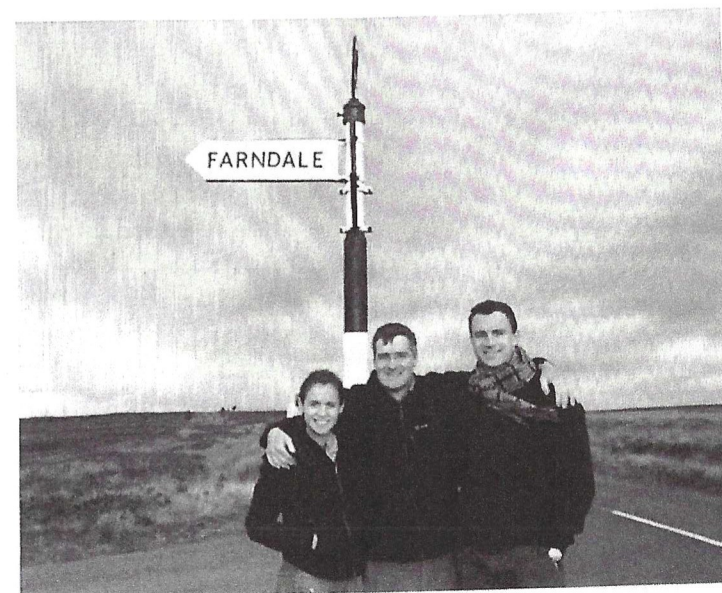


Photo 6: Sarah, Richard and Jamie Farndale. © the author

YORKSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Society exists to promote the serious study of Yorkshire's past through events, lectures and visits to sites of interest. Many of these activities are held in association with local affiliated organisations throughout the County and / or through the Society's specialist sections - Prehistory Research, Roman Antiquities, Medieval History, Industrial History, and Family History. The Society also produces a number of printed publications:

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