Jacquetta of Luxembourg, Duchess of Bedford and Lady Rivers (*c.* 1416-1472)

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In 1483, parliament enacted a petition in support of Richard III's coronation stating that King Edward's marriage was made 'by Sorcerie and Wichecrafte, committed by the said [Queen] Elizabeth and her Moder Jaquett Duchesse of Bedford, as the comon opinion of the people, and the publique voice and fame is thorough all this Land'.[1] At the time, the queen's mother, the dowager duchess of Bedford and Lady Rivers, had been dead for eleven years. Yet this mention of her in the document indicates the strong feelings of hatred she could still incite. As the matriarch of the Wydeviles, she was after all somewhat accountable for bringing them so close to the throne.[2]

The conflict between Edward IV's family and the Wydeviles is central to our understanding of the events leading to Richard III's accession to the throne. Very little has been written, however, about Jacquetta of Luxembourg, arguably the most important figure behind the Wydevile's rise to power. Part of the reason for Jacquetta's obscurity lies in the fact that few of her personal documents have survived. There is no known correspondence and, although a will probably existed, it has been lost.[3] Her place of burial is also unknown. There are no portraits, and no personal seal. Only two manuscripts and an accounting receipt indicate her motto and signature, and perhaps something about her personality and tastes.[4] Yet much can be deduced from her family background and the surviving evidence of chronicles and other primary sources that mention her.[5] Through analysis of the information contained in these sources and the surrounding social and political context, we can obtain a strong sense of Jacquetta's character and her role in fifteenth century politics. What emerges is a strong, intelligent

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[1] *Rotuli Parliamentorum ut et Petitiones, et Placita in Parliamento* (hereafter *Rot. Parl.*), 6 vols, London 1767-77, vol. 6 (1777), pp. 240-41.

[2] Many different spellings of Richard's surname appear in primary sources, including 'Wydeville', 'Wydevyl', 'Wydewille' and similar variations. The modern spelling is 'Woodville'. I have chosen to use the spelling 'Wydevile', as written in the will of Richard, third Earl Rivers, for consistency throughout this paper.

[3] Evidence of an arbitration submitted to Edward IV regarding Edward Wydevile's title to the manor of Dodford, in Leicester, implies that Jacquetta bequeathed it to her son in her will. George Baker, *The History and Antiquities of the County of Northampton*, 2 vols, London 1822-30, pp. 353-54 (citing Knightley evidences).

[4] Cambridge, Pembroke College MS 307, John Gower, *Confessio Amantis*; British Library MS Harleian 4431, Various Works of Christine de Pizan, London; The National Archives (hereafter TNA), Accounts Various E101/143/13.

[5] In England, the London Chronicles of Robert Fabyan and that until recently attributed to William Gregory, both contemporaries of Jacquetta, are particularly helpful. Fabyan would have been an adolescent during the last decade of Jacquetta's life, and therefore his narrative of events affecting Jacquetta's life must be based on either his personal knowledge or that related by contemporaries. Gregory's Chronicle ends in 1470 and its author was thus also a contemporary of Jacquetta's. William Gregory, until recently accepted as its author, was mayor of London in 1451, and Stephen Forster, the other possible, but by no means certain, candidate for authorship, was mayor in 1454. See M. McLaren, 'Fabyan, Robert (d. 1513)', in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (hereafter *OxfDNB*), ed. H.C.G. Matthew and B. Harrison, 60 vols, Oxford 2004, vol. 18, pp. 878-80; M. McLaren, *The London Chronicles of the Fifteenth Century: a Revolution in English Writing*, Woodbridge 2002, pp. 29-33.

and independent woman, as capable of manipulation as many of her better known contemporaries.

Family Background and Marriage to the Duke of Bedford

Jacquetta was born *c.* 1416 into the Luxembourg family, an important noble family in France. At the time, John the Fearless, Duke of Burgundy, ruled the duchy of Burgundy and the counties of Flanders and Artois in France, and his brother Anthony ruled the duchy of Brabant.[6] By 1443 his son, Philip the Bold (1419-1467), had created a Burgundian state consisting in the north of Brabant, Limbourg, Flanders, Holland, Hainault, Zeeland and Luxembourg in the Low Countries, and in the south Burgundy, Macon and Charolais, separated by the county of Champagne, which belonged to the kingdom of France, and the duchy of Lorraine, which belonged to the Empire.[7] Jacquetta's family descended from the house of Luxembourg and formed part of the high nobility that ruled these territories.

Jacquetta's father was Pierre I of Luxembourg (1390-1433), Count of St Pol, Conversano (Naples) and Brienne (France), Lord of Enghien and Viscount of Lille, and her mother was Marguerite del Balzo (or des Baux) (d. 1469), daughter of Francesco, Duke of Andrea (Italy) and Sveva Orsini. They had nine children, of whom Jacquetta was the eldest child and Louis (1418-1475) was the eldest son.[8] Her great uncle, Waleran III of Luxembourg (1355-1415), Count of St Pol, married Richard II's half sister, Maud Holland (d. 1392).[9] Waleran's nephews, Jacquetta's paternal uncles, were powerful allies of the English in the war with France. Jean III, Count of Guise and Ligny and Lord of Beaurevoir, was a distinguished soldier who, despite his many military exploits, is mostly remembered for being the military commander in charge during the capture of Joanne of Arc in 1430. He released her to the duke of Bedford in exchange for 10,000 francs.[10] Louis of Luxembourg was bishop of Thèrouanne, a town northeast of Paris, by 1415, and later became archbishop of Rouen, cardinal, and bishop *in commendam* of Ely. In 1424 the duke of Bedford had him elected chancellor of France for Henry VI, and it was Louis who in 1433 negotiated Bedford's marriage to his niece Jacquetta. [11]

During Jacquetta's childhood her father served under the duke of Brabant, his cousin by marriage, in Enghien, and presumably Jacquetta grew up there. We do not know anything about her education, but we can assume it followed that of a young noble lady of her time. As the eldest child of nine, although closely followed by her brother Louis, she would have occupied a position of responsibility, and she would have known that she would marry for political reasons. The French chronicler Monstrelet informs us that her uncle Louis had planned her marriage to Bedford for some time.[12] Certainly, it

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[6] R. Vaughan, *Valois Burgundy,* London 1975, pp. 15-19.
[7] *Ibid.*, pp. 20-24.
[8] *Les Chevaliers de l'Ordre de la Toison d'or au XV^e Siecle: Notices Bio-Bibliographiques,* publiées sous la direction de Raphaël de Smedt, Frankfurt 2000, p. 22.
[9] E. Van Arenbergh, 'Luxembourg-Ligny (Waleran de Saint-Pol, comte de)', in *Biographie Nationale* (herafter *BN*), 44 vols, Brussels 1866-1985, vol. 12 (1892-93), pp. 624-25, at p. 624; M.M.N. Stansfield, 'Holland, Thomas, fifth earl of Kent (1350-1397)', in *OxfDNB*, vol. 27, pp. 695-96, at p. 695.
[10] Smedt, *Les Chevaliers*, pp. 29-31.
[11] E. Van Arenbergh, 'Luxembourg (Louis de)', in *BN*, vol. 12 (1892-93), pp. 617-21, at p. 619.
[12] *La Chronique d'Enguerran de Monstrelet: En Deux Livres Avec Pieces Justificatives 1400-1444*, 6 vols,

took place within only five months of Anne of Burgundy's death on 14 November 1432. If her marriage had indeed been planned for some time, it is possible that Jacquetta would have been taught English, and perhaps English customs, in preparation for her new position so close to the English throne.

Jacquetta's marriage to the duke of Bedford took place on 20 April 1433 in the cathedral of Thérouanne, and her uncle Louis presided over the ceremony. The only surviving description of Jacquetta dates from this time, although it was recorded several years later, and may not be completely accurate. Monstrelet tells us that at the time of her marriage she was about seventeen years of age and *frisque, belle et gracieuse*, all of which gave much joy and pleasure to her new husband.[13] The marriage was meant to strengthen the alliance with Burgundy, but it had the opposite effect. The duke of Burgundy, Philip the Bold, was offended at the haste with which Bedford contracted matrimony after his sister's death. He was also angry at the fact that Jacquetta's father had not asked him for permission as feudal overlord of the house of Luxembourg. Philip's relationship with Bedford suffered as a result of this, and they were not reconciled before Bedford's death. On the other hand, it may have suited Philip to use the marriage as an excuse to distance himself from the English, since he was beginning to respond to overtures of peace from the French.[14]

On 18 June 1433 Bedford and Jacquetta sailed to England, where the duke hoped to seek money and soldiers for the war in France and to defend his management of the war.[15] This was probably the first time that Jacquetta had set foot in England. Presumably she spent the next few months between her husband's seat at Fulbrook, in Warwickshire, and London, for Bedford was a central figure at court and in parliament during this time. On 8 July 1433 Jacquetta requested and was granted denization, whereby she obtained residence and rights of citizenship in England.[16] On 9 November a service was held at St Paul's for the death of her father, the count of St Pol, which she must have attended.[17] In 1434 she was granted the robes of the order of the Garter, presumably prior to April 23, the feast of St George. This was a great honour that had never been granted to Bedford's first wife. [18] By mid July 1434, just over a year after arriving in England, Bedford crossed the channel once more, travelling to Rouen via Calais and Thérouanne. He visited Paris that Christmas and New Year. Again, we must presume he took Jacquetta with him, since his stay in France was obviously meant to be extensive. Yet only fourteen months after landing in France, on 14 September 1435, Bedford died in his castle at Rouen.[19]

Jacquetta's first marriage had lasted only one year and five months. However, it

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Paris 1857-62, vol. 5 (1861), p. 55.

[13] 'lively, beautiful and gracious'. Monstrelet, *Chronique*, p. 56.

[14] J. Stratford, *The Bedford Inventories: The Worldly Goods of John, Duke of Bedford, Regent of France (1389-1435)*, London 1993, p. 18. Philip came to an alliance with Charles VII of France at the Congress of Arras in 1435, just as Bedford lay dying. See also, Vaughan, *Valois Burgundy*, p. 52.

[15] J. Stratford, 'John, Duke of Bedford (1389-1435)', in *OxfDNB*, vol. 30, pp. 183-90, at p. 188.

[16] TNA, Special Collections: Ancient Petitions, SC 8/121/6031, SC 8/121/6032; *Rot. Parl.*, vol. 4, p. 439.

[17] *The Great Chronicle of London*, ed. A.H. Thomas and I.D. Thornley, London 1936, repr. Gloucester 1983, p. 171.

[18] J.L. Gillespie, 'Ladies of the Fraternity of Saint George and of the Society of the Garter', *Albion*, vol. 17 (1985), pp. 259-78, at p. 272. Gillespie is unsure if it was 1434 or 1435, but refers to TNA, the Great Wardrobe Accounts for Henry VI, E101/408/17, covering the date 12 Henry VI (1 Sep 1433- 31 Aug 1434). The original document is now mostly destroyed by fire and unreadable.

[19] Stratford, *John of Bedford*, p. 188.

had a profound impact on her life. The surviving evidence in official and private records shows that she styled herself duchess of Bedford for the rest of her life, and the dower she obtained after Bedford's death made her an extremely wealthy woman. Bedford's final will was written on his death-bed, and is known from two surviving notarial copies. In it, he tried to leave a life-interest in most of his lands in England, France and Normandy to Jacquetta, except for La Haye-du-Puits (Manche), which he left to his bastard son. After their deaths, the lands were to revert to Henry VI, Bedford's named heir. Bedford's expected heir, his brother, the duke of Gloucester, was not mentioned in the will. This bequest is surprising, and went against English common law, which only entitled a widow to receive for life a third dower share in lands or annuities held by her husband at his death. English law did not allow Jacquetta to keep all of Bedford's lands for life, as he intended her to do. In addition, the majority of Bedford's lands in England and France were held by the crown in tail male and could thus not be inherited by his widow.[20] One cannot help but wonder why Bedford, who obviously knew all this, tried to provide otherwise in his will. The reasons must have been political. Bedford had used the income from his lands to achieve his objectives in the war in France, and most likely Bedford's provision for his wife was meant to keep as much of his wealth as possible under the control of those who supported the war in France. Clearly he viewed his brother, the duke of Gloucester, with whom he had quarreled in 1433 and 1435, as a threat to his objectives, and he may have felt that his nephew the king was too young and easy to influence. Perhaps Bedford was relying on Jacquetta's uncle, Louis of Luxembourg, to control his niece's possessions. Louis was one of Bedford's eight executors, and the main one responsible for Bedford's possessions in France and Normandy. He was the only one who had been an executor to Bedford's first will, when his wife Anne was still alive. He was also one of the three named executors (together with Cardinal Beaufort and Archbishop Kemp), one of whom had to be present in order for a quorum of executors to act on the final will.[21] Clearly Bedford was close to Louis and trusted him, and the two men must have shared the same goals.

Certainly, Jacquetta's importance as the recipient of even one third of Bedford's immense wealth was of great concern to the king, since she was very young and could therefore be expected to marry again. Her next husband would have her large fortune at his disposal and be able to wield considerable influence. On 28 February 1436, her uncle Louis and Lord Talbot were ordered to make her swear that she would not marry without the king's licence, and certify the same in chancery when the oath had been taken.[22] In the end, however, Jacquetta proved to have a will of her own. By 23 March 1437, much to her uncle's chagrin, she had married a young and handsome but comparatively pennyless knight named Richard Wydevile.[23]

The Lancastrian Years (1437 – 1461)

It is unclear how Richard and Jacquetta met, but Wydevile's father, the younger son of a

[20] Stratford, *The Bedford Inventories*, pp. 21, 22, 25-26.
[21] *Ibid.*, pp. 29-30.
[22] *CCR 1435-41*, p. 14.
[23] Monstrelet reports that her uncle and close friends were furious and that Richard was young, very handsome and well educated but his lineage was very inferior to that of Jacquetta. Monstrelet, *Chronique*, vol. 5, p. 272.

Northamptonshire gentry family, served in English France almost continuously from 1417 to 1435, as captain and bailiff, and Bedford's chamberlain.[24] His son Richard was knighted by Henry VI in 1426. He was retained to serve the king in France on 11 April 1433, entering into similar indentures in 1434 and 1439, and was a knight in Bedford's court in 1435.[25] It seems likely, therefore, that Jacquetta came into contact with him during her stay in France after July 1434.

Although we do not know the exact circumstances under which Richard and Jacquetta courted and wed, it is clear that Jacquetta's family were not pleased. The king, however, forgave them after imposing a fine of £1,000 on 23 March 1437.[26] Although this was a considerable sum, Jacquetta was a wealthy woman and the fine appears to have been fairly standard at the time, to judge from fines imposed on other noble ladies who married men without first obtaining the king's permission.[27] Jacquetta was not alone in making the choice to marry beneath her social sphere. Between 1428 and 1432 the king's own mother, Catherine of Valois, had married Owen Tudor, a mere squire, although her choices at the time were probably limited.[28]

Whether the king was as furious at the match as Jaquetta's uncle Louis, is debatable. Had she married a more powerful subject, the king might not have been quite as free to dispose of the remainder of her multiple lands, or to negotiate with her on exchanges of land. A more powerful magnate may also have been able to secure some of Jaquetta's lands on a permanent basis. In addition, such a husband would have had the additional leverage of Jaquetta's wealth added to his own. From this perspective, Richard may have been a convenient choice. From Jaquetta's point of view, love must have been an important factor in her decision. Richard could not protect her or secure her wealth, let alone add to it, in the same way as someone of Bedford's status. However, marriage to Richard must have given her a certain measure of independence in comparison to her first marriage, since in this marriage her income and status as duchess were far superior to those of her husband. In this sense, her choice of husband may be an interesting insight into Jaquetta's personality.

Henry VI granted Jacquetta's dower between June and November 1437.[29] While the entries on the patent rolls do not specify the total monetary value of the dower, we can estimate it by looking at the recorded grant made by Edward IV on 24 February

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[24] Lynda Pidgeon, 'Antony Wydevile, Lord Scales and Earl Rivers: family, friends and affinity: part 1', *The Ricardian*, vol. 15 (2005), pp. 1-19, at pp. 2-4; Michael Hicks, 'Woodville, Richard, first Earl Rivers', in *OxfDNB*, vol. 60, pp. 227-29, at p. 227.

[25] *The Complete Peerage of England Scotland Ireland Great Britain and the United Kingdom: Extant Extinct or Dormant* (hereafter *CP*), ed. Vicary Gibbs, 2nd edn, 14 vols, London 1910-40, 1998, vol. 11 (1912), pp. 19-20; Hicks, 'Richard Woodville', pp. 227-28.

[26] *CPR 1436-1441*, p. 53.

[27] In 1423 Margaret, Lady Roos, was fined £1000 for marrying Roger Wentworth without licence from the king, *Proceedings and Ordinances of the Privy Council of England*, ed. Sir H. Nicolas, 7 vols, London *1834-37*, vol. 3, p. 49. The same fine was imposed in 1442 on Katherine Neville, Duchess of Norfolk, for her second marriage to Thomas Strangways, a knight of her husband's household, *CPR 1441-46*, p. 61. In 1401, Elizabeth Fitzalan was fined 2000 marks (just over £1300) for marrying one of her husband's former servants, Sir Robert Gousill, *CPR 1399-1401*, pp. 541, 544-45. See R.E. Archer, 'Rich old ladies: the problem of late medieval dowagers', in *Property and Politics: Essays in Later Medieval English History*, ed. T. Pollard, Gloucester 1984, pp. 15-35, at p. 27.

[28] M. Jones, 'Catherine [Catherine of Valois] (1401-1437)', in *OxfDNB*, vol. 10, pp. 545-47, at p. 546.

[29] *CCR 1435-1441*, pp. 91,142.

1465, after Jacquetta's lands had been taken away, presumably due to her Lancastrian sympathies. It details Jacquetta's extensive dower lands at that time, as well as the income from certain rents, and the total sum amounts to £817 13s 5 d.[30] To understand the extent of Jacquetta's wealth and her position in society, it is helpful to compare this amount with the incomes of her contemporaries. Professor H.L. Grey concluded that the average English baronial income in 1436 (composed mainly of forty-two parliamentary peers and sixteen dowagers), including annuities, was £865 per annum, and without annuities it was £768 per annum.[31] In comparison, Richard's father's declared income from property in Kent and four other counties was £148, of which 80 marks derived from his annuity charged on the duchy of Lancaster estates.[32] The evidence thus indicates that Jacquetta ranked among the wealthiest subjects in England in terms of income.

Unfortunately, we do not know how much of this money she actually received. Income from land was not reliable and Henry VI's government suffered from many financial difficulties. Jacquetta probably was not always able to collect the money due to her from crown estates. In addition, she had to contend with disputes over her dower lands. Evidence of two such disputes survive. According to chancery records, Jacquetta and Richard sued the executors of Sir John Fastolf's estate claiming back rents in the manor of West Thurrok amounting to £180.[33] In France, Jaquetta's possession of the county of Harcourt, granted to her by Bedford twelve days before his death, was put aside by Henry VI's grant of Harcourt to Edmund Beaufort in tail male on 23 December 1435. Although Jaquetta and Richard brought actions against Beaufort in local courts, Beaufort remained in possession of Harcourt until it was lost to the French in 1449.[34] Considering the large number of lands and estates that Bedford bequeathed to Jacquetta in France and England, Jacquetta was probably engaged in legal disputes regarding land for much of her life.

Jaquetta's income also did not provide a good basis for establishing her family as powerful landowners. For this, she had to try to buy her thirds of land and convert them into whole manors, or use her money to acquire other lands or manors in fee simple. This required not just the money to purchase such land, but also the political influence to enable her to obtain the grants.[35] It is questionable how much of that necessary influence she and Richard had. The patent rolls contain multiple instances during the first few years after Bedford's death in which Henry VI granted the reversion of Jaquetta's third in lands and manors to more powerful subjects upon her death. He also exchanged dower lands for different lands, in order to free them for his disposal.[36] In addition, we know that Jaquetta sold some of her dower lands. In September 1440 she and Richard sold the

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[30] *CCR 1461-1468*, pp. 220-21.

[31] Grey based his study on taxation returns of 1436. T.B. Pugh, 'The magnates, knights and gentry', in *Fifteenth Century England 1399-1509*, ed. S.B. Chrimes, C.D. Ross and R.A. Griffiths, 2nd edn, Stroud 1995, pp. 86-128, at pp. 97-100. See also C. Dyer, 'Aristocratic incomes', in *Standards of Living in the Later Middle Ages: Social Change in England c. 1200-1520*, Cambridge 1989, pp. 27-48.

[32] Pugh, 'Magnates', p. 98.

[33] TNA, Court of Chancery pleadings, C 1/31/365, C 1/32/234, C 1/38/302.

[34] Stratford, *Bedford Inventories*, pp. 27-28, citing M.K. Jones, 'War on the frontier: the Lancastrian land settlement in eastern Normandy, 1435-50', *Nottingham Medieval Studies*, vol. 33 (1989).

[35] See M.A. Hicks, 'The changing role of the Wydevilles in Yorkist politics to 1483', in *Patronage, Pedigree and Power: In Later Medieval England*, ed. by C. Ross, Gloucester 1979, pp. 60-86.

[36] *CPR 1436-1441*, pp. 438, 479.

manor of Charleton in Somerset to the bishop of Winchester for £1000.[37] The only land received by Richard or Jaquetta from the king outright was the manor of West Thurrock, in Essex, which was granted to Richard by Henry VI on 20 December, 1448 in tail male 'for good service in the wars in France and Normandy'. The manor had been acquired by the duke of Bedford during his lifetime and left to Jaquetta in his will.[38] In addition, two inquisitions post mortem indicate that Jaquetta owned property in at least two different counties.[39]

We do not know how much time Jacquetta spent in France after Bedford's death, but given the evidence of the legal disputes regarding her dower lands in France and the fact that her second husband served intermittently in France until at least 1442, when he was made captain of Alençon, there is a good chance that she spent a considerable amount of time there for the first few years after Bedford's death.[40] Yet Richard seems to have travelled back and forth, and Jacquetta probably did too.[41] On 10 June 1440 they purchased the manor of Grafton Regis, in Northamptonshire, their main home.[42] They may also have owned or rented a home in London, although the only evidence of this comes from a letter written in 1465, so it is unclear if they had one in the early stages of their married life.[43]

In 1440 the Wydeviles' first son, Antony, was born,[44] having been preceded by three sisters in as many years: Elizabeth, Margaret or Joan and Anne.[45] Jacquetta's multiple pregnancies in such a short period are evidence that she must have accompanied her husband at least some of the time. Her fertility and ability to bear healthy children who survived was remarkable. She would have at least eight more children in the next eighteen or more years, making a total of fourteen children throughout her life, only two

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[37] E. Green, *Pedes Finium commonly called Feet of Fines for the county of Somerset, Henry IV to Henry VI*, London 1906, pp. 195-96. Some historians have claimed that this was done in order to pay for their marriage fine (see G. Smith, *The Coronation of Elizabeth Wydeville: Queen Consort of Edward IV*, London 1935, p. 45; J.R. Lander, 'Marriage and politics in the fifteenth century: the Nevilles and the Wydevilles', in *Crown and Nobility 1450-1509*, Montreal 1976, p. 105), but it should be noted that this occurred years after the fine was imposed and that the king exchanged Jaquetta's dower rights in the manor for other land on 13 November 1440. See *CPR 1436-1441*, p. 479. On 26 February 1442 Richard and Jaquetta were pardoned for granting possession of the remainder in the manor and other lands to the bishop and others without a licence. *CPR 1441-1446*, pp. 46-47.

[38] *CPR 1446-1452*, p. 205. Rents from this manor were the subject of a drawn out dispute with Sir John Fastolf's executors.

[39] TNA, Chancery: Inquisitions post mortem, C140/42/49.

[40] Stratford is of the opinion that Jacquetta lived mainly in France in the years immediately after Bedford's death. See Stratford, *Bedford Inventories*, p. 53.

[41] In 1437 he was chief rider in Salsey Forest. In 1439 he served under the earl of Somerset, taking part in the attempt to relieve Meaux. In November 1440 he represented England in lists at Smithfield against the Spanish knight Pedro de Vasquez, and in February 1440-41 he was a commissioner for collection of a subsidy in Northamptonshire. He went again to France with the duke of York in July 1441. From 1443 to 1449 there was a truce, and Richard presumably stayed in England. *CP*, vol. 11, pp. 19-20; Hicks, 'Richard Woodville', p. 227.

[42] *CPR 1436-1441*, p. 426.

[43] *Paston Letters and Papers of the Fifteenth Century*, ed. N. Davis, 2 vols, Oxford 1971, 1976, vol. 1, p. 314. A note written in a letter addressed to John Paston I, dated 18 August 1465, states 'Thomas Boswell dwellyng at the newe abbey at Toure Hill in my Lord Revers plase'.

[44] Michael Hicks, 'Woodville [Wydeville], Anthony, second Earl Rivers (c. 1440-1483)', in *OxfDNB*, vol. 60, pp. 224-27, at p. 224.

[45] A. Okerlund, *Elizabeth: England's Slandered Queen,* Gloucester 2006, p. 268.

of whom died young.[46] This must have taken up much of her time during the first twenty years of her marriage.

In November 1444 a large retinue headed by the duke of Suffolk sailed for France to escort the new queen, Margaret of Anjou, to England. Jacquetta and Richard were among them, since the duchess of Suffolk ordered one of the larger vessels, the *Swallow*, to be reserved for Jacquetta and her retinue, while Richard travelled in a smaller boat.[47] Margaret's arrival in England in 1445 affected Jacquetta's life considerably. Not only was the king marrying a French subject, but Margaret and Jacquetta were related and had similar backgrounds and upbringing, being members of that elite circle of families controlling the territories around France.[48] Jacquetta's sister was married to Margaret's uncle, Charles of Anjou,[49] and Margaret herself had been considered in 1433 as a bride for one of Jacquetta's brothers.[50] In comparison to Margaret, a young bride only fourteen years old, Jacquetta was an 'older' woman in her late twenties with several children. She would have been the ideal source of support for Margaret in her new surroundings, and the little evidence we have reinforces the view that Jacquetta and her husband greatly benefited from Margaret's arrival at court.

During the sixteen years in which Margaret of Anjou reigned as Henry VI's queen, Richard and Jacquetta enjoyed a privileged social position. Richard was created baron and lord de Ryvers, in tail male, on 9 May 1448.[51] Further honour was bestowed upon him on 4 August, 1450, when he became a knight of the Garter.[52] As for Jacquetta, Margaret's surviving jewel accounts, covering the years 1445-49 and 1451-53, give us a good indication of her status in court. Her servants received New Year's gifts from Margaret in every year except the last, and were paid 66s 8d, the highest amount paid to servants, in all but the first year, and in that particular year only the servants of the duke of Gloucester and the archbishop of Canterbury received similar sums. [53] Jacquetta herself received gifts in only two years, at the beginning of 1447 and 1452.[54] Yet in those years her gifts were of similar or higher value in relation to the other five duchesses who received gifts, indicating that she was among the three or four most important women at court, and was held in high regard by the queen.[55] In 1447 she received a silver cup costing £35 6d, as compared to a similar cup costing £37 16s given to Anne Neville, Duchess of Buckingham.[56] In 1452 she received a gold tablet with jewels, including

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[46] See Appendix 1 for known dates of birth, death and marriages of Jacquetta's children. **??????**

[47] Smith, *Coronation*, pp. 45-46 (citing Computus J. Breknoke, MS. B.M. Add. MS. 23938).

[48] Margaret's father, René of Anjou, was the heir to his great uncle, Cardinal Louis, Duke of Bar. D.E.S. Dunn, 'Margaret [Margaret of Anjou] (1430-1482)', in *OxfDNB*, vol. 36, pp. 638-45, at p. 638. Jacquetta's eldest brother, Louis of Luxembourg, was married to Jeanne de Bar, also Duke Louis' great niece. Duke Louis' sister, Bonne de Bar, had married Jacquetta's famous great uncle Waleran. See, S. LeFèvre, *Antonie de la Sale: la fabrique de l'oeuvre et de l'écrivain*, Droz, Geneva 2006, pp. 288-89.

[49] Smith, *Coronation*, p. 46.

[50] Dunn, 'Margaret of Anjou', at p. 639.

[51] *CP*, p. 20.

[52] Pidgeon, 'Antony Wydevile', part 1, p. 10.

[53] A.R. Myers, 'The account roll of Edward Ellesmere, Treasurer of the Chamber and Master of the Jewels of Queen Margaret of Anjou, for the Year 31-32 Henry VI', in his collected papers, *Crown, Household and Parliament: In Fifteenth Century England*, London 1985, pp. 211-229, at pp. 212, 217-18 and note 6.

[54] Myers, 'Account roll', p. 222 and note 6.

[55] Myers has pointed out that the value of the gifts varied from the beginning to the end of the surviving accounts based on Margaret's finances, which declined significantly. Myers, 'Account roll', pp. 212-13.

[56] TNA, Account of John Norys, treasurer of the chamber and keeper of the jewels of Queen Margaret,

sapphires, costing £16, whereas the gifts to Eleanor Beauchamp, Duchess of Somerset, and Anne of York, Duchess of Exeter, were valued at £10 and £10 17s 6d, respectively.[57] Possibly these were the only years when Jacquetta was at court to receive gifts, which thus us some idea of her whereabouts. Lack of gifts does not appear to reflect any particular falling out, since the other duchesses did not receive gifts every year either.

Although Jacquetta may have been honoured as a woman of the high nobility, the Wydeviles' influence did not extend beyond that, to judge by the negotiations for their children's marriages. In 1452 Jacquetta's eldest child, Elizabeth, Edward IV's future queen, was married for the first time, to John Grey.[58] Another of Jacquetta's daughters, also named Jacquetta, had married Lord Strange of Knockin by 1450, although both she and the groom must have been children at the time and the marriage would not have been consummated until a later time.[59] In 1460 Anthony married Elizabeth Scales, heir of Lord Scales.[60] These marriages, all to middle ranking families, albeit barons, show that the Wydeviles had some influence, but were not considered part of the high nobility, despite Jacquetta's lineage. It was only later, when Elizabeth became queen, that her status allowed her unmarried siblings to find matches among the members of the high nobility.[61]

From 1 September 1451 to 31 August 1455, the records show that Richard was absent from the Garter ceremonies because he was residing at Calais.[62] In 1454 and 1455 he was lieutenant of Calais, under the duke of Somerset.[63] We do not know whether Jacquetta went with him, or whether either, or both, of them travelled back and forth. The city of Exeter's receiver's account for Michaelmas 1450-51 shows that wine and wafers were delivered to Lady Rivers as a gift at the 'time when Lord Rivers was at Colcombe for the loveday between the Earl of Devon and Lord Bonville'.[64] This would indicate that Jacquetta accompanied her husband to Devon on business prior to his departure for Calais, and she may have moved with him. Yet the evidence also shows that Jacquetta remained in England at least part of the time. On 1 January 1452 she received a New Year's gift from Margaret, as already discussed, indicating that she was at court. In addition, a surviving receipt for assarts due to the Wydeviles from the forests between the bridges of Stamford and Oxton, dated 4 November 1455, shows Jacquetta's personal

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E101/409/17.

[57] TNA, Account of Edward Ellesmere, treasurer of the chamber and keeper of the jewels of Queen Margaret, E101/410/8. A gold tablet with jewels is also mentioned in the accounts for the year 1452-53 as the most valuable gift made that year: an offering made at the shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham valued at £29. Myers, 'Account roll', pp. 213, 222.

[58] M. Hicks, 'Elizabeth [*née* Elizabeth Woodville] (c. 1437-1492)', in *OxfDNB*, vol. 28, pp. 79-82, at p. 79.

[59] *CP*, vol. 12, p. 356. The groom is said to have been more than five in August 1449 and not yet of full age to enter into his possessions in 1462.

[60] Hicks, 'Anthony Woodville', p. 224.

[61] The marriages of Jacquetta's children have generated much discussion among historians. See Lander, 'Marriage and politics', pp. 94-126; Hicks, 'The changing role of the Wydevilles', pp. 60-86.

[62] J. Anstis, *The Register of the Most Noble Order of the Garter, From its cover in Black Velvet, usually called The Black Book: with Notes…*, 2 vols, London 1724, vol. 1, pp. 141-44, 147-48, 151, 154. In 34 Henry VI (1 September 1455 to 31 August 1456) the records do not mention Wydevile either present or absent. See vol. 1, p. 155 and note b.

[63] *CPR 1452-1461*, p. 176.

[64] Exeter receiver's account Michaelmas 1450-51, m.2, Devon Record Office, Exeter. Information supplied and transcribed by Hannes Kleineke. A large amount of wafers and wine were sent to Richard and Jacquetta.

signature. [65] This is evidence of her presence in England and shows that, at least in her husband's absence, she took an active concern in administrative affairs relating to her lands. In May 1455 the battle of St Albans was fought between the king's forces and those of the duke of York, with York emerging victorious. [66] Richard Wydevile was no longer retained in Calais, being one of Somerset's men, and must have returned to England.[67] For the next few years, there is not much evidence of Richard and Jacquetta's activities. Given the Wydeviles' Lancastrian affinities, it must have been a time of 'wait and see' for both of them, and Jacquetta was presumably still producing children until at least 1458.[68]

Two events that occurred during those years stand out and give us significant insight into Jacquetta's personality. By January 1460, Richard had been sent to Sandwich to defend it against the earl of Warwick, who was occupying Calais. Many sources agree that he was then captured, along with his eldest son, Anthony, and taken to Calais.[69] The author of Gregory's Chronicle, however, also mentions that Jacquetta was with them,[70] and Fabyan, though not mentioning Jacquetta, states that Richard was captured in his bed. William Worcester, the antiquary, writing in January 1460, mentions the assault at Sandwich against Richard and Anthony between 3 and 5 o' clock in the morning, and then states 'but my lady Duchesse ys stille ayen returned yn Kent'.[71] This leaves us with the impression that Jacquetta was staying with her husband at Sandwich and was surprised in the middle of the night by Warwick's men. The letter does not give us much information, but would indicate that Jacquetta was allowed to return to Kent, and not taken to Calais with Richard and Anthony. It might seem strange that Jacquetta was staying at Sandwich with her husband while he took command of forces in the middle of a military conflict. However, Fabyan records that Warwick himself brought his mother, the countess of Salisbury, to Calais shortly after.[72] Women clearly were not staying at home or out of the way.

The next incident involving Jacquetta occurred on 17 February 1461, when

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[65] TNA, Account of Edward Ellesmere, treasurer of the chamber and keeper of the jewels of Queen Margaret, E101/143/13. See Figure 2 which shows receipt with Jacquetta's signature. Receipts also survive for 6 May 1451 and 1455 and 4 November 1455, 1456, 1457 and 1458. All of them show at least partial evidence of a seal that probably belonged to Richard Wydevile. The remnants of the seals which survive for the years 1456-58 show a partial coat of arms which compares favourably with Wydevile's coat of arms as seen in his Garter stall, reprinted in D. Baldwin, *Elizabeth Woodville: Mother of the Princes in the Tower*, Gloucester 2002, illustration 18 between pp. 98-99. The receipt for November 1454 does not have evidence of a seal, because this part of the document has been cut off.

[66] H.E. Maurer, *Margaret of Anjou: Queenship and Power in Late Medieval England*, Woodbridge 2003, p. 119.

[67] Pidgeon, 'Antony Wydvile', part 1, p. 10; Hicks, 'Richard Woodville', p. 228.

[68] Catherine was presumably born around this time. C.S.L. Davies, 'Stafford, Henry, second Duke of Buckingham (1455-1483)', in *OxfDNB*, vol. 52, pp. 46-49, at p.49.

[69] R. Fabyan, *The New Chronicles of England and France*, London 1516, repr. 1811, p. 635; Davis, *Paston Letters*, vol. 1, p. 160; 'Gregory's Chronicle' (hereafter Gregory's Chron.), in *The Historical Collections of a Citizen of London in the Fifteenth Century*, ed. J. Gairdner, The Camden Society, 1876, repr. New York 1965, pp. 55-239, p. 206; C.L. Scofield, 'The capture of Lord Rivers and Sir Anthony Woodville, 19 January 1460', *English Historical Review*, vol. 37 (1922), pp. 253-54, at p. 254 (transcribing Chancery Inquisition, file 317).

[70] 'Gregory's Chronicle', p. 206.

[71] Davis, *Paston Letters*, vol. 2, p. 540 (letter to John Berney).

[72] Fabyan, *New Chronicles*, p. 636.

Margaret of Anjou's forces were preparing to march on London after their victory of the second battle of St Albans. Eager to protect the city from pillage, Richard Lee,[73] mayor of London, sent Jacquetta, the widowed duchess of Buckingham (Anne Neville), who was the prince of Wales' godmother, and the widow of Lord Scales, along with certain aldermen, to negotiate with Margaret.[74] This tells us that Jacquetta was close to Margaret, but also that she was considered capable of helping the people of London, and acting as one of the go betweens in negotiations to decide who could enter into London, an important event in the battle to secure the throne. She was also in London, rather than Grafton, at a time of uncertainty, while her husband and eldest son were held captive in Calais. All of these facts point to a woman of character, intelligence, and independence. Henry VI's infirmity required Queen Margaret to take on a more proactive role as monarch, and this brought women into the political scene to a greater extent than at many other times during the medieval period. They were the ideal intercessors. Margaret had great political power, and consequently the mayor of London viewed her female friends as powerful allies. For Jacquetta, this was very fortunate. In the summer of 1469, when she was accused of witchcraft, she was able to appeal to Richard Lee, who had again been elected mayor of London, to help her defend herself from these accusations. He must have been on good terms with her, for he was happy to return the favour.

On 29 March 1461 the battle of Towton decided the fate of the future monarch, Edward IV. Richard Wydevile, now Baron Rivers, headed a force of 6,000 to 7,000 Welshmen against Edward, and was captured, along with his son Antony, and sent to the Tower of London.[75] We do not know where Jacquetta was at this time, but news must have reached her soon after. Edward's victory marked the beginning of Yorkist rule. Jacquetta and her family would have to adapt quickly to their new circumstances.

The Yorkist Years: Mother in Law to Edward IV (1462-1472)

Despite Jacquetta's strong Lancastrian connections and her close ties to the queen, she was not in an unfavourable position to appeal to Edward. Her husband was not high enough up the political ladder to be a threat to the king, and from his future actions we may presume that he was predisposed to be loyal to the reigning monarch, whoever he might be. Jacquetta herself was still a member of an important family, close to the duke of Burgundy, and the duke of Burgundy, with his many territories, was a key player in

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[73] Richard Lee, a grocer, was alderman of London from 1452 until his death in 1472, and mayor in 1460-61 and again in 1469-70. He was knighted in 1471 for his participation in the defence of London against the attacks of the Bastard of Fauconberg. For a brief biography of Richard Lee and his family see A.F. Sutton and L. Visser-Fuchs, 'Richard III's books XIV: Pietro Carmeliano's early publications: his Spring, the Letters of Phalaris, and his Life of St Katherine dedicated to Richard III', *The Ricardian*, vol 10 (1994-96), p. 372 and nn. 119-23.

[74] *Calendar of State Papers Milan* 1385-1615 (hereafter *CSP Milan)*, ed. A.B. Hinds, London 1912, vol. 1, p. 50; C.L. Scofield, *The Life and Reign of Edward the Fourth: King of England and of France and Lord of Ireland*, 2 vols, London 1923, repr. 1967, vol. 1, pp. 145. See also, *An English Chronicle 1377-1461: A New Edition*, ed. W. Marx , Woodbridge 2003, pp. 98-99 (mentioning the duchess of Buckingham, but not Jacquetta); Fabyan, p. 638 (stating that the recorder and certain aldermen were sent to Margaret, '& ouer this, other secrete frendys were made vnto the quenys grace, to be good and gacyouse vnto the cytie').

[75] Jehan de Waurin, *Recueil des Croniques et Anchiennes Istories de la Grant Bretaigne, a Present Nomme Engleterre*, ed. W. Hardy and E.L.C.P. Hardy, 5 vols, London 1891, vol. 5, pp. 339-41; *CSP Milan*, vol. 1, p. 100.

England's economic and foreign policy. The Low Countries were England's most important overseas market, especially for cloth, and Duke Philip's influence was necessary to prevent France helping Margaret of Anjou recover her husband's throne.[76] In February 1461, when Margaret of Anjou's soldiers were trying to enter London after the second battle of St Albans, where the Lancastrians had been victorious, Cecily Neville had sent Edward's younger siblings, George and Richard, to the duke of Burgundy for protection 'the whyche were of the sayde duk notably resceyued, cherished, and honoured, and afterwarde sende home with meny grete yeftes unto Englond ayene'.[77] Edward himself sought to cement an alliance with Burgundy soon after his coronation by sending envoys to negotiate his marriage to the duke's niece. However, the duke did not consider Edward to be sufficiently established in his throne to accede to such a request.[78] Later, of course, Edward's sister, Margaret, would be married to Duke Philip's heir, Charles the Bold.[79]

It is therefore possible that Edward viewed Jacquetta as an asset to his court, and was all the more willing to pardon her and her husband. Jacquetta must certainly have pleaded for her husband and son to be released, and the chronicler Jean de Waurin tells us that her daughter, Elizabeth, also did so, and that the king was so enamoured that he acceded to their release.[80] Regardless of the veracity of these observations, the fact is that Richard Wydevile was never attainted, and on 12 July 1461 he obtained a general pardon with a grant allowing him to hold and enjoy his possessions and offices. His son, Anthony, obtained a similar grant on 23 July.[81] On 10 December 1461 Edward granted Jacquetta her dower for life by letters patent.[82] The order to pay the yearly rent and the arrears since the assignment of Jacquetta's dower lands, however, was not made until 24 February 1465, over three years later. During the intervening time, Jacquetta's lands remained in the king's hands.[83] It is probably no coincidence that by the time Jacquetta recovered her money, the king had married her daughter.

Those three years following December 1461 must have been a difficult time for Jacquetta. With her income frozen, the Wydeviles must have depended on Richard's income, which was small by comparison. They still had many children to support, and their situation must have been uncertain. At this point more than ever it was important for Richard to obtain the favour of the king, and this probably suited Edward at a time when loyalty was of the utmost importance. During this period Jacquetta disappears from surviving records, but she was to come back with a vengeance. On 1 May 1464, Edward secretly married Jacquetta's eldest daughter, Elizabeth, a widow and mother of two, at Grafton, the Wydevile's family home. Fabyan tells us that the wedding took place in the early morning hours in the presence of 'the duches of Bedforde her moder, y^{e} preest, two gentylwomen, and a yong man to helpe the preest synge'. According to Fabyan, after the wedding ceremony Edward consummated the marriage and then joined his party at Stony

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[76] C. Ross, *Edward IV*, London 1975, p. 105; Scofield, *Edward the Fourth*, vol. 1, p. 208. For Anglo-Burgundian relations see also Vaughan, *Valois Burgundy*, pp. 52-55.
[77] *An English Chronicle*, p. 99; Scofield, *Edward the Fourth*, vol. 1, p. 147.
[78] Scofield, *Edward IV*, vol. 1, pp. 211-12.
[79] The marriage occurred in 1468. Vaughan, *Valois Burgundy*, p. 55.
[80] Waurin, *Recueil*, vol. 5, pp. 352-53.
[81] *CPR 1461-1467*, p. 97.
[82] *CCR 1461-1468*, pp. 220-21.
[83] *CCR 1461-1468*, p. 220.

Stratford, pretending he had been hunting. A day or two later he sent to Grafton, to his bride's father, Lord Rivers, 'shewynge to hym yt he wolde come & lodge with hym a certeyne season, where he was receyued with all honoure, and so taryed there by the space of iiii. dayes. In whiche season, she nyghtly to his bedde was brought, in so secrete maner, that almost none but her moder was of counsayll'.[84]

Fabyan's account was written twenty-five years after the facts he describes, so we should not place too much reliance on the accuracy of his details. His main source for the marriage must have been the petition presented to parliament in 1483 in support of Richard III's accession. Apart from accusing Jacquetta and Elizabeth of using witchcraft and sorcery to bring about Elizabeth's marriage to Edward, as we have already seen, it also stated that the marriage 'was made privaly and secretely, without Edition of Banns, in a private Chamber, a prophane place, and not openly in the face of the Church'. [85] Even if Fabyan's description of the marriage cannot be verified, it provides an opinion of Jacquetta's involvement held by someone who lived close to her time, and may enlighten us on how Jacquetta was perceived after Henry VII's accession to the throne. In Fabyan's description, Jacquetta is the only person of importance at the wedding ceremony, implying that she must have been involved in its planning, and the only person who knows about Elizabeth being slipped into Edward's bed at night while he was a guest at her father's house. This also implies that her father, Richard Wydevile, did not know about the marriage until after it was over, and perhaps not until Edward or Jacquetta informed him of this during or after the king's visit. It is difficult to believe that he would have disapproved, but no explanation is offered as to why he was kept in the dark. Perhaps the author or his sources believed the plot was a uniquely female form of seduction, which a man would not have participated in. The surreptitious actions planned between mother and daughter paint a vivid picture of their relationship, and of the author's view of Jacquetta's personality. Clearly Jacquetta and Elizabeth were close, and we have ample evidence of this, as Jacquetta appears often in the records next to Elizabeth once she became queen. But the larger question is whether Jacquetta was somehow involved in the events that led up to Edward's marriage to Elizabeth. Edward must have been strongly attracted to Elizabeth upon meeting her, but it is hard to resist the idea that Jacquetta guided her daughter in the fine art of converting that attraction into a wedding vow. After all, Elizabeth and her two sons must have been living with Jacquetta at Grafton since her widowhood in 1461. Contemporaries certainly believed this possible, though they attributed it to witchcraft rather than female saviness. Fabyan tells us that 'What oblyquy ran after of this maryage, howe the kinge was enchauted by the duchesse of Bedforde, and howe after he wolde have refused her ... I here passe it ouer'.[86] Of course Fabyan was writing many years after Jacquetta's death, and after she had been accused of witchcraft both by Warwick and Richard III.

Whatever Jacquetta's real role at the time, the marriage certainly could not have occurred at a better time for her and her family, and effectively rescued them from obscurity. Jacquetta was finally restored to her income, her unmarried sons and daughters were married into the high nobility, and Richard became treasurer of England on 4 March 1466, was created earl Rivers on 25 May of that same year, and named constable of

[84] Fabyan, *New Chronicles*, p. 654.
[85] *Rot. Parl.*, vol. 6, p. 241.
[86] *Ibid.*

England on 24 August 1467.[87] During the years that followed the wedding, Jacquetta was actively present at Elizabeth's side, since she is often mentioned in surviving accounts. She took part in her daughter's coronation on 26 May 1465, following behind the elder duchess of Buckingham (Anne Neville), who carried the queen's train.[88] She attended Elizabeth's churching after the birth of her first daughter, Henry VII's future queen, in 1466.[89] Sometime between 4 March 1466 and 3 March 1467 she was invited to dine with the king and queen at the house of John Yonge, Mayor of London.[90] Most importantly, on 1 October 1470, shortly after her husband and son were executed, Jacquetta accompanied her daughter the queen and her three grandchildren when they fled to sanctuary at Westminster while Edward IV was temporarily deposed by Warwick.[91] A month later when Elizabeth gave birth in sanctuary to the future Edward V, Jacquetta was presumably present.

This decade of Jacquetta's life was marked by three important events, all of which have negatively influenced historians' perceptions of her. The details of these events have survived in chronicles and government records, and contribute much to our knowledge of Jacquetta's personality as well as providing an insight into the image that was created by or portrayed to her contemporaries. During the summer of 1468, Thomas Cook, a former mayor of London, was implicated in a treasonable plot to support Queen Margaret in exile. He was tried and found not guilty of treason, but was fined 8,000 marks by the king's council for the offence of misprision, that is, concealing the plot that had been revealed to him.[92] The author of the *Great Chronicle*, who is generally accepted as Robert Fabyan, narrates this episode in Cook's life and tells us that Jacquetta and her husband were so angry that the judge presiding in the trial, Sir John Markham, had exonerated Cook, that they caused him to lose his office. He explains that Jacquetta was 'extremely agayn the said sir Thomas, and all was because she might not have certain aras at hir pleasure & pryce belongyng unto the said sir Thomas'. According to the author, the tapestry in question was valued at £800 and was 'wrought In moost Rycchest wyse wt goold of the hool story of the Syege of Jherusalem'.[93] This story has been the subject of much debate among historians, revolving around the reasons for the trial, Lord Rivers' involvement (Fabyan alleged that he ransacked Cook's house), Jacquetta's greediness, the reasons for Markham's resignation, and the validity of the *Great Chronicle*'s account.[94] A careful look at the records shows that the actual facts may have been very different from those reported by Fabyan. Markham's resignation occurred five months after the end of the trial, and Cook paid his fine on 2 August in a single payment,

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[87] Hicks, *Richard Wydeville*, p. 228.
[88] Smith, *Coronation*, p. 15.
[89] *The Travels of Leo of Rozmital through Germany, Flanders, England, France, Spain, Portugal and Italy 1465-1467*, trans. and ed. M. Letts, Cambridge 1957, pp. 45-48.
[90] 'Gregory's Chronicle', p. 232; for John Yonge, see S.L. Thrupp, *The Merchant Class of Medieval London*, Michigan 1948 repr. 1992, pp. 376-77.
[91] Davis, *Paston Letters*, vol. 1, p. 564; Cora L. Scofield, 'Elizabeth Wydevile in the Sanctuary at Westminster, 1470', *English Historical Review*, vol. 24 (1909), pp. 90-91, at p. 90.
[92] A.F. Sutton, 'Sir Thomas Cook and his "troubles": an investigation', *Guildhall Studies in London History*, vol. 3 (1978), pp. 85-108, at pp. 92-96; Scofield, *Edward IV*, vol. I, pp. 459-62.
[93] *The Great Chronicle*, pp. 207, 208.
[94] See Sutton, *Sir Thomas Cook*, pp. 85-104; M.A. Hicks, 'The case of Sir Thomas Cook, 1468', *English Historical Review*, vol. 93 (1978), pp. 82-96.

with no discount being made for previously confiscated goods.[95] Fabyan was writing years after the event, and his knowledge would have been affected by the events that followed. In addition, it must be remembered that Fabyan was Cook's apprentice and therefore not an objective observer of Cook's troubles.[96] However, the interesting part for our purposes is the fact that Fabyan clearly believed that Jacquetta was the guiding force behind Cook's prosecution and excessive fine, as well as Markham's alleged dismissal as judge. This shows that he considered her a powerful woman capable of exerting considerable influence on both her husband and the king. She is portrayed as arrogant and greedy, but also strong and involved in political decisions. Whether the truth was as the chronicler says, or he was prejudiced against her or influenced by anti-Wydevile propaganda (which seems likely), or both, Jacquetta's role in the chronicler's account reveals something about the way in which she was viewed by some of her contemporaries.

The second of these revealing episodes had occurred a little before the trial of Cook. On 12 July 1467, before the battle of Edgecote, Warwick and the duke of Clarence released a manifesto attached to a petition by Kent rebels. In it, they spoke against the

> disceyvabille covetous rule and gydynge of certeyne ceducious persones; that is to say, the Lord Ryvers, the Duchess of Bedford his wyf, ... Ser John Wydevile and his brethren, Ser John Fogge, and other of theyre myschievous rule opinion and assent, wheche have cause oure seid sovereyn Lord and his seid realme to falle in grete poverte of myserie, disturbynge the mynystracion of the lawes, only entendyng to thaire owen promocion and enriching.[97]

Jacquetta was the only woman named in the manifesto, among important knights and influential men at court, all men of war, and the fact that she was mentioned shows that she was regarded as politically important in her own right, and not merely as Rivers' wife. The manifesto was meant as propaganda for the general public and written to appeal to the masses. Perhaps this is why Warwick and Clarence felt the need to clarify that the duchess of Bedford was Rivers' wife. There do not seem to be many other occasions during this period in which a woman was particularly singled out in this way. The duchess of York, for example, was not implicated in her husband's many quarrels with Henry VI and his councilors. Jacquetta's inclusion shows, at the very least, that Warwick and Clarence considered her powerful and influential in court and had a very personal hatred against her. Two years later, this hatred manifested itself again.

On 26 July 1469 Edward's forces were defeated at Edgecote, and on the 29th the king became Warwick's prisoner and was taken first to Coventry and then to Warwick Castle. Jacquetta's husband and son, Earl Rivers and Sir John Wydevile, were captured and beheaded by Warwick on 12 August. Shortly thereafter she was seized and taken to Warwick Castle by Thomas Wake, one of Warwick's esquires, and accused of sorcery. Wake caused to be brought to the castle 'an image of lead made like a man of arms of the length of a man's finger broken in the middle and fast with a wire, saying that it was made by her to use with witchcraft and sorcery'. Presumably the image was meant to represent the earl of Warwick. Wake also persuaded a local parish clerk to say that

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[95] Sutton, *Sir Thomas Cook*, pp. 89-91.
[96] *Great Chronicle*, p. 205.
[97] J. Warkworth, *A Chronicle of the First Thirteen Years of the Reign of King Edward the Fourth*, ed. J. O. Halliwell, Camden Society 1839, p. 46. See also A. Kettle, 'Parvenus in politics: the Woodvilles, Edward IV and the baronage 1464-1469', *The Ricardian*, vol. 15 (2005), pp. 94-113, at pp. 111-12.

Jacquetta had made two other images, one of the king and one of the queen.[98] At the time, the king was still a prisoner at Warwick Castle, and he appointed certain lords of the council to examine the witnesses against Jacquetta. Aware of her precarious situation, Jacquetta demonstrated great strength and determination. At the end of August she wrote to Richard Lee, Mayor of London, and his aldermen, asking them to intercede for her before the king and his council. As luck would have it, Richard Lee had also been mayor when Jacquetta's help was needed to negotiate with Margaret of Anjou in 1461, and he agreed to help her, evidence that he must not have believed the charges against her.[99] Fortunately for Jacquetta, Edward was shortly thereafter reinstated as king, and on 19 January 1470 she was able to clear her name before the Great Council. During depositions Wake denied being anything more than a messenger and the parish clerk refused to say what Wake wanted him to say, so the case against her had to be dismissed. Jacquetta then ensured that the Council's decision was recorded and exemplified under the great seal. [100]

This last episode shows that Jacquetta was capable of standing up for herself and facing her accusers, and that she was intelligent enough to know how best to secure her objectives. Her appeal to the mayor and aldermen is particularly interesting. At the time, her husband and son were dead, her daughter in sanctuary, and her son in law removed from power and at the mercy of his cousin Warwick, who hated the Wydeviles. The mayor and aldermen, however, were still capable of helping her, and appealing for their support shows great resourcefulness on Jacquetta's part. The particular accusations made regarding the images of the king and queen were very important since Edward's marriage to Elizabeth was central to the conflict at the heart of Warwick and Clarence's defection to the Lancastrian side. Hatred of the Wydeviles, fueled by Warwick and Clarence's resentment of their perceived influence over the king, were defining characteristics of Edward's reign. Placing the blame on Jacquetta's use of sorcery to bewitch the king excused him from responsibility for his actions in marrying Elizabeth and embracing the Wydevile family. The importance of these accusations is underscored by the fact that they were later revived by Richard III to support his right to the throne.

The surviving evidence regarding all the accusations made against Jacquetta while her daughter was queen is significant because it reflects contemporary views regarding her influence on the king and firmly includes her among the male dominated circle of powerful nobles which surrounded him. One senses a particular hatred towards her, not just as the wife of Lord Rivers, or as the mother of the queen. It is unclear, however, whether this is how all her contemporaries viewed her, or whether it is the image that has come down to us from Warwick and Clarence's personal vendetta against her as the matriarch of the Wydeviles. Even her involvement in Cook's trial may have been coloured by their efforts to discredit her and her kin, since the chronicler wrote many years later.[101] With so little surviving evidence of her life, these events have taken on

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[98] Scofield, *Edward IV*, vol. 1, p. 497-99; *Rot. Parl.*, vol. 6, p. 232; *CPR 1467-1477*, p. 190. Presumably the implication was that Jacquetta was using witchcraft to 'enchant' Edward, or had done so in the past.

[99] Sutton, *Sir Thomas Cook*, p. 103; Corporation of London Records Office, Journal of Common Council 7, f. 199.

[100] *Rot. Parl*., vol. 6, p. 232; *CPR 1467-1477*, p. 190.

[101] See Sutton, *Sir Thomas Cook*, pp. 103-104; A.F. Sutton and L. Visser-Fuchs, 'A "most benevolent queen" Queen Elizabeth Woodville's reputation, her piety and her books', *The Ricardian*, vol. 10 (1995), pp. 214-45, at p. 219.

great significance and left a negative impression among historians.

Possessions and Death

Jacquetta died on 30 May 1472.[102] Unfortunately, her will has not survived and her place of burial remains a mystery. The last years of her life had been fraught with danger and unrest. In August 1469 she had suffered the death of her husband and her son John. We do not know where they were buried or, if there was a funeral, whether she was able to attend it, since at the time her own life was in danger from Warwick's witchcraft accusations.[103] Their deaths must have been very painful for her, and her family's future must have seemed uncertain. Edward IV's recovery of the throne shortly after would have given Jacquetta renewed hope that the deaths of her husband and son had not been in vain. By the time of her own death the future looked brighter. Edward IV seemed finally secure on his throne and Elizabeth had provided him with a male heir, a healthy boy named Edward. The last significant rebellion of Edward IV's reign, Fauconberg's Kentish rebellion, had been suppressed. Henry VI, his only son and heir, another Edward, and the earl of Warwick were all dead. Jacquetta could rest in peace.

Despite Jacquetta's prominence and wealth, little physical evidence of her life has survived. Her coat of arms, the lion of Luxembourg impaled with John of Bedford's royal arms, can be seen in an illustration in the Salisbury Breviary dating from the time of her marriage to Bedford.[104] Two surviving fifteenth century manuscripts contain Jacquetta's signature, as well as her motto, *sur tous autres*. A third manuscript, largely destroyed by fire, is said to have belonged to her. In addition, the Bedford Psalter and Hours contains an entry relating to Jacquetta's daughter-in-law. It is hard to determine conclusively whether these manuscripts all belonged to Jacquetta, but it seems likely. The first manuscript containing Jacquetta's signature is an early fifteenth century copy of John Gower's *Confessio Amantis* (Cambridge, Pembroke College, MS 307). It is a finely written and ornamented vellum manuscript written in two columns. It bears Jacquetta's signature below the motto *Sur tous autres* in two places, and possibly a third, partly erased, on the last page.[105] The second manuscript, Harley MS 4431, is a large vellum volume containing twenty-nine separate works by Christine de Pizan. It is written in two columns and illuminated in gold and colours and was produced for Queen Isabeau of Bavaria (1371-1435), wife of Charles VI of France, and probably presented to her in January 1414. Presumably Jacquetta acquired the manuscript from the duke of Bedford, and her son Anthony inherited it upon her death. The duke of Bedford may have obtained

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[102] TNA, Chancery Inquisition Post Mortem, C140/42/49, 12 Edward IV, no. 49.

[103] The *Great Chronicle*, p. 208, states that they were executed and buried in Northampton.

[104] Bibliothéque Nationale, Paris (hereafter *BNP*), MS lat. 17294, f. 106, illustrated in Stratford, *Bedford Inventories*, p. 490, plate IV.

[105] M.R. James, *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Manuscripts in the Library of Pembroke College, Cambridge*, Cambridge 1905, pp. 273-75, at p. 273. The surviving motto and signature occur on the right hand margin of f. 125r and the bottom of the left column on f. 141r. See Figure 3 for a copy of the signature and motto on f. 125r, also reproduced in K. Harris, 'Patrons, buyers and owners: the evidence for ownership and the role of book owners in book production and the book trade', in *Book Production and Publishing in Britain 1375-1475*, ed. J. Griffiths and D. Pearsall, Cambridge 1989, p. 171. The manuscript bears early sixteenth-century notes of ownership by the goldsmith Sir John Mundy, alderman and mayor (1522-23) of London (d. 1537), and presumably it was owned by Jacquetta before him. Perhaps one of her heirs sold it or used it as payment for debts.

the manuscript when he purchased the library of Charles V in 1425. Jacquetta's signature, *Jaquete*, appears on the fly leaf (f. 1), next to that of her son Anthony Rivers, and the motto *Sur tous autres* occurs above her signature and is now barely visible. The same motto appears by itself on folio 327 in the lower margin.[106] A third surviving manuscript ascribed to Jacquetta's ownership is the largely burnt British Library Cotton Otto D ii, containing a collection of treatises on, and histories of, the crusades and the Holy Land, which included a text of Jean d'Arras' *Mélusine*, as well as the *Itinerarium* of Ricold de Monte Croce. Its ownership has been assigned to Jacquetta presumably based on a now vanished inscription in the manuscript.[107] It is not known how Jacquetta might have come to own this book, but possibly she inherited it from Bedford. It is possible that Jacquetta owned the Bedford Psalter and Hours, British Library MS Add. 42131, also inherited from the duke of Bedford. In the calendar is written the birth date of Anthony Wydvile's second wife, Mary FitzLewis, and this suggests that it many have belonged to Anthony and that he inherited it from his mother.[108] Finally, Richard Wydevile owned a fourteenth century romance of *Alexander* which he purchased in 1466. The vellum manuscript with its richly coloured miniatures is one of the treasures of the Bodleian library.[109]

It is difficult to draw conclusions about Jacquetta's taste or personality based on these books. They may represent a few of the many that she owned, and they may have been inherited from Bedford along with many other possessions for no particular reason other than that she was his wife at the time of his death. However, her signature in more than one place in both the Christine de Pizan and the Gower manuscripts may indicate that she enjoyed reading them, and certainly this seems to accord with what we know about Jacquetta. Christine de Pizan's tales and poems were entertaining, but she also had many moral teachings for noble ladies, and gave them an important place in society along side their male counterparts. With respect to Gower, at least one of his tales would have resonated strongly with Jacquetta: in his 'Tale of the Three Questions', young King Alphonse wishes to marry a knight's daughter because of her wit and beauty, but he is deterred by her lack of noble blood. Instead, he offers her anything else he can give. She asks for her father to be ennobled and when this is done she points out that there is no further impediment to his marrying her. The king then marries her for love.[110]

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[106] British Library, Harley MS 4431, see the online British Library Catalogue of Illuminated Manuscripts, (pp. 1-4). S. Hindman, 'The composition of the manuscript of Christine de Pizan's Collected Works in the British Library: a reassessment', *The British Library Journal*, vol. 9 (1983), pp. 93-123, at p. 93. J. Stratford, 'The manuscripts of John, Duke of Bedford: library and chapel', in *England in the Fifteenth Century: Proceedings of the 1986 Harlaxton Symposium*, ed. Daniel Williams, Woodbridge 1987, pp. 329-50, at pp. 339-40. F. 1 fly-leaf is also reproduced in L. Hellinga, *Caxton in Focus: The Beginning of Printing in England*, London 1982, p. 85, ill. 43.

[107] British Library MS Cotton Otho D. ii.. Mélusine was an ancestral romance of the families of Lusignan and Luxembourg. A.F. Sutton and L. Visser-Fuchs, *Richard III's Books: Ideals and Reality in the Life and Library of a Medieval Prince*, Stroud 1997, p. 223 and n. 37. Monte Croce (1242-1320) was an Italian Dominican missionary who travelled extensively through the Levant, keeping a record of his experiences. A note in the list of contents by Thomas James, Cotton's librarian *c*. 1625 states that the manuscript belonged to Jacquetta, Duchess of Bedford. Presumably James was relying on a now-invisible note somewhere in the manuscript. Information regarding this manuscript, the note by James and its possible provenance was provided by Dr J. Stratford.

[108] K. Scott, *Later Gothic Manuscripts 1390-1490*, 2 vols, London 1996, vol. 2, p. 170.

[109] MS Bodley 264. G. Guddat-Figge, *Catalogue of Manuscripts containing Middle English Romances*, Munich 1976, pp. 252-255; Sutton and Visser-Fuchs, *Richard III's Books*, p. 223.

[110] J. Gower, *Confessio Amantis*, ed. R. A. Peck, New York 1980, pp. 91-102; J.L. Laynesmith, *The Last*

Among the few manuscripts that we can associate with Jacquetta none is religious, unlike surviving manuscripts associated with Cecily Neville or Margaret Beaufort. This may just be chance, but there is also no surviving evidence of any religious foundations or endowments made by Jacquetta (although it is possible that this was due to a lack of sufficient financial resources). Based on the scant evidence we have, it does not appear that Jacquetta was more than conventionally religious. Her place of burial and her will might have served to enlighten us further on this subject.

Jacquetta of Luxembourg was an important woman in her time, and her life contributes to our understanding of the role of noble women at a time of great social and political upheaval in England. At least some of her contemporaries seem to have viewed her as arrogant, greedy and manipulative. Yet many of the hostile sources were written several years after her death, and would have been influenced by Warwick's anti-Wydevile propaganda and the events surrounding Richard III's accession to the throne. There is so little evidence surviving about her, that it is now difficult to separate fiction from reality. When one considers Jacquetta's life as a whole, however, it is difficult not to feel some admiration for her. As a young foreign bride in Lancastrian England she could not have foreseen how many twists and turns destiny had in store. Yet through it all she always found a way to come out ahead. She married beneath her for love, had fourteen children, and managed to raise herself and the Wydeviles to the highest sphere of power. Along the way, she had to overcome the full power of Warwick and Clarence's hatred for her and her family, which resulted in the death of her husband and her son, John, and in witchcraft accusations which might have ended her own life. By coming out ahead in all her ordeals, she made a lasting imprint on English history. Through her daughters her blood infiltrated the highest nobility in England for centuries to come, and her granddaughter, Elizabeth of York, became the first Tudor queen, from whom all the Tudors descended. Jacquetta's blood remains in the English royal line to this day.

Medieval Queens: English Queenship 1445-1503, Oxford 2004, p. 56.

Appendix 1: known dates of birth and death, spouses, and dates of marriage of Jacquetta of Luxembourg's children

Name	Dates*	Spouse and Date of Marriage
Elizabeth	(1437-1492)	m.1 John Grey (1452) m.2 Edward IV (1464)[111]
Margaret	(- bef. 1491)	Thomas Lord Maltravers (heir to Earl of Arundel) (Oct. 1464)[112]
Anne	(-1489)	m.1 William Bourchier (heir to Earl of Essex (bef. 15 Aug. 1467) m.2 George Grey, Earl of Kent and Lord Grey of Ruthin, brother of her sister Joan's husband (aft. 12 Feb. 1483)[113]
Jaquetta	(- bef. 1481)	John, Lord Strange of Knockyn (bef. March 1450)[114]
Anthony	(c. 1440 - ex.1483)	m.1 Elizabeth Scales (heir to Lord Scales) (1460) m.2 Mary Lewis (daughter and co-heir of Sir Henry Fitz Lewis and Elizabeth, fifth daughter of Edmund Beaufort, second Duke of Somerset (c.1480)[115]
Joan (or Eleanor)	(- bef. 1491)	m.1 Anthony Grey of Ruthin (heir to Earl of Kent) possibly m.2 George, Lord Strange[116]
Richard	(bef. 8/6/1446 -1491)[117]	unmarried
Mary	(-1479)	William Herbert, 2nd Earl of Pembroke, created Earl of Huntingdon on 4 July 1479 (Sep. 1466)[118]
John	(c. 1444 - ex. 1469)	Catherine Neville, dowager Duchess of

[111] M. Hicks, Elizabeth, pp. 79-82.
[112] *CP*, vol. 1, p. 249; D. MacGibbon, *Elizabeth Woodville (1437-1492): Her Life and Times*, London 1938, Appendix III, pp. 222-25, at p. 223.
[113] *CP*, vol. 5, p. 138; *CP*, vol. 7, p. 167; Dugdale says she married for the third time Anthony Wingfield but this must be incorrect since her second husband outlived her by four years; *The Baronage of England; or, An Historical Account of the Lives and Most Memorable Actions of Our English Nobility, Which had their Rise, after the end of King Henry the Third's Reign and Before the Eleventh Year of King Richard the Second*, ed. W. Dugdale, 2 vols, London 1676, p. 231; but see *CP*, vol. 7, p. 167; MacGibbon, *Elizabeth Woodville*, p. 223.
[114] *CP*, vol. 12 pt.1, p. 356. By February 1481 Lord Strange had remarried and his second wife Anne had died, *CPR 1476-1485*, p. 218.
[115] M. Hicks, *Anthony Wydevile*, pp. 224-227; MacGibbon, *Elizabeth Woodville*, Appendix III, n. 9, pp. 224-25.
[116] *CP*, vol. 7, pp. 165-66 and n. f.; MacGibbon, *Elizabeth Woodville*, p. 224.
[117] *CPR* 1441-1446, p.453; TNA, PROB 11, 8, f. 349-50, Will of Richard Wydeville, 1491.
[118] *CP*, vol. 10, pp. 402-3, MacGibbon, *Elizabeth Woodville*, p. 224.

		Norfolk (January 1465)[119]
John	(bef. 8/6/1446 - died young)[120]	
Edward	(aft. 1446 - 1488)[121]	
Lionel	(c. 1454 – 1484)	unmarried (Bishop of Salisbury)[122]
Catherine	(1457/8 – 1497)	m.1 Henry Stafford, Duke of Buckingham (1466) m.2 Jasper Tudor, Duke of Bedford (betw. 2 Nov. 1483 and 7 Nov. 1485) m.3 Richard Wingfield (by Feb. 1469)[123]
Lewis	died young[124]	
Martha		Sir John Bromley of Bartomley and Hextall, Shropshire[125]

* The precise dates of all the births is not known, but some can be guessed at based on other surviving evidence. *CPR 1441-1446*, p. 453 states that on 8 June 1446 Jaquetta had four sons, Anthony, Richard, John and John. Dugdale states that there were two sons named John, one of whom died young (Dugdale, p. 231). *CP* states that Anne was Jaquetta's third daughter (*CP*, vol. 5, 138 and vol. 7, 167). Dugdale mentions a daughter named Jaquetta in fourth place (Dugdale, p. 231), although it is unclear if he meant to place them in order of birth because he mentions Richard last of all her sons, while *CPR* puts him in second place. If Jaquetta was fourth, this would leave Margaret or Joan as the second daughter. The Milanese ambassador stated in a letter in 1469 that Jaquetta had 5 sons and 5 daughters, but the number of daughters is not consistent with the evidence as stated in the table above, which indicates that Jaquetta had 7 daughters by 1469 (*CSPM*, vol. 1, p. 131). Lastly, the will of Jaquetta's son Richard, dated 1491, only mentions his sisters Elizabeth and Katherine, so presumably they were the only ones still alive at this time (TNA, PROB 11, 8, f. 349-50, Will of Richard Wydeville, 1491).

[119] *CP*, vol. 9, p. 607, MacGibbon, *Elizabeth Woodville*, p. 224.
[120] *CPR* 1441-1446, p. 453; Dugdale, p. 231.
[121] Ross, *Edward IV*, p. 88.
[122] John A.F. Thomson, 'Woodville, Lionel (c. 1454-1484)', in *OxfDNB*, vol. 60, p. 227.
[123] C.S.L. Davies, 'Stafford, Henry, second Duke of Buckingham (1455-1483)', in *OxfDNB*, vol. 52, pp. 46-49; MacGibbon, *Elizabeth Woodville*, p. 224.
[124] Dugdale, p. 231.
[125] MacGibbon, *Elizabeth Woodville*, p. 224; Dugdale, p. 231.