How did Hawkwood make money in times of peace?

There was a time when the owners of shops and businesses in Chicago had to pay large sums of money to gangsters in return for 'protection'.

If the money was not paid promptly, the gangsters would quickly put a man out of business by destroying his shop.

Obtaining 'protection money' is not a modern crime.

As long ago as the fourteenth century, an Englishman, Sir John Hawkwood, made the remarkable discovery that people would rather pay large sums of money than have their life work destroyed by gangsters.

Six hundred years ago, Sir John Hawkwood arrived in Italy with a band of soldiers and settled near Florence.

He soon made a name for himself and came to be known to the Italians as Giovanni Acuto.

Whenever the Italian city-states were at war with each other, Hawkwood used to hire his soldiers to princes who were willing to pay the high price he demanded.

In times of peace, when business was bad, Hawkwood and his men would march into a city-state and, after burning down a few farms, would offer to go away if protection money was paid to them.

Hawkwood made large sums of money in this way.

In spite of this, the Italians regarded him as a sort of hero.

When he died at the age of eighty, the Florentines gave him a state funeral and had a picture painted which was dedicated to the memory of 'the most valiant soldier and most notable leader, Signor Giovanni Haukodue'.

After Sir John Hawkwood settled near Florence six hundred years ago, he hired soldiers to the princes of city-states in times of war.

In times of peace, he threatened to destroy a city-state unless protection money was paid.

In spite of this, the Italians regarded him as a sort of hero.

Sir John was eighty when he died, and the Florentines not only gave him a state funeral but had a picture painted of him, dedicated to his memory.

News that Hawkwood and his men were approaching caused panic among villagers who prepared to defend their farms.

Hawkwood had a bad reputation among farmers because they knew he would not hesitate to kill them and to burn their farms.

The farmers fought very hard.

even though they were poorly armed.

With their sticks and spades, they were no match for Hawkwood's well-armed soldiers who had horses, swords and bows and arrows.

During the battle, a great many farmers were killed.

After Hawkwood destroyed their farms, he sent a message to the prince of the city-state demanding a large amount of protection money.

He said that if this money were paid, he would go away and cause no more trouble.

However, if it wasn't paid, he would invade the city.

To Hawkwood's amazement, this demand was refused, so he and his men invaded the city.

As a result, many buildings were destroyed and thousands of people were killed, including quite a few of Hawkwood's soldiers.

The city people fought very hard until Hawkwood and his men were finally driven off.

Because the city people defended themselves so well, Hawkwood never attacked them again.

He and the prince even became friends.

He leaves the room anytime he wants to have a smoke. If you have got a headache (you have a headache), you should take an aspirin.

I had some damage to my car, but 1 have now had it repaired.

I prefer to wait here.

I would rather wait here.

I would sooner wait here.

I prefer not to wait here.

I would rather not wait here.

I would sooner not wait here.

It would be better if he waited here.

I'd rather he waited here.

It would be better if he didn't wait here.

I'd rather he didn't wait here.

I'd rather go to the cinema.

I'd rather he left earlier.

I'd rather you didn't speak to him.

I'd rather not speak about it.

I'd rather my father settle the account.

She'd rather you didn't tell anyone about it.

What 'protection' did Chicago gangsters give to those who paid them? They left those people's business premises unharmed.

Sir John Hawkwood's Italian name, 'Giovanni Acuto', was one which he earned through his sharp practice of selling his 'protection'.

The Italians regarded Hawkwood as a sort of hero in that they could not help admiring his boldness and bravery.

Obtaining 'protection money' is a crime which has been practiced for a long time.

People prefer paying large sums of money to having their life work destroyed by gangsters.

Princes used to hire soldiers from Hawkwood.

They would refuse to go away unless protection money was paid to them.

On his death at the age of eighty, the Florentines gave him

Six hundred years have passed since Sir John Hawkwood arrived in

Princes who were prepared to pay the high price he demanded.

Hawkwood made large sums of money like this.

The bravest soldier and most notable leader.