

# Richard Neville, 5th Earl of Salisbury

**Richard Neville, 5th Earl of Salisbury** and **7th and 4th Baron Montacute** KG PC (1400 – 31 December 1460) was a Yorkist leader during the early parts of the Wars of the Roses.<sup>[1]</sup>

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## Background

Richard Neville was born in 1400 at Raby Castle in County Durham. Although he was the third son (and tenth child) of Ralph de Neville, 1st Earl of Westmorland, Richard Neville was the first son to be born to Ralph's second wife, Joan Beaufort, Countess of Westmoreland. The Neville lands were primarily in Durham and Yorkshire, but both Richard II and Henry IV found the family useful to counterbalance the strength of the Percys on the Scottish Borders – hence Earl Ralph's title, granted in 1397, and his appointment as Warden of the West March in 1403. Ralph's marriage to Joan Beaufort, at a time when the distinction between royalty and nobility was becoming more important, can be seen as another reward; as a granddaughter of Edward III, she was a member of the royal family.

The children of Earl Ralph's first wife had made good marriages to local nobility, but his Beaufort children married into even greater families. Three of Richard's sisters married dukes (the youngest Cecily, marrying Richard, Duke of York), and Richard himself married Alice Montacute, daughter and heiress of Thomas Montacute, the Earl of Salisbury.

The date of Richard and Alice's marriage is not known, but it must have been before February 1421, when as a married couple they appeared at the coronation of Queen Catherine of Valois. At the time of the marriage, the Salisbury inheritance was not guaranteed, as not only was Earl Thomas still alive, but in 1424 he remarried (to Alice Chaucer, granddaughter of the poet Geoffrey Chaucer). This second marriage was without issue and when the Earl Thomas Montacute died in 1428, Richard Neville and Alice were confirmed as the Earl and Countess of Salisbury. From this point on, Richard Neville will be referred to as Salisbury.

Salisbury came into possession of greater estates than, as a younger son, he could reasonably have expected. Strangely, his elder half-brother John apparently agreed to many of the rights to the Neville inheritance being transferred to Joan Beaufort – Salisbury would inherit these on her death in 1440. He also gained possession of the lands and grants made jointly to Ralph and Joan. Ralph's heir (his grandson, also called Ralph) disputed the loss of his inheritance, and although

Richard Neville	
<span></span> <div>Drawing of Salisbury's effigy, from the Earl of Warwick's tomb, 1453 (after C. Stothard)</div>	
Born	1400 <div>Raby Castle,<span> </span>County Durham,<span> </span>England</div> <span></span>
Died	31 December 1460 (aged 60) <div>Pontefract Castle,<span> </span>Yorkshire</div> <span></span>
Cause of death	Beheaded
Resting place	Burghfield, <span> </span> Berkshire
Title	5th Earl of Salisbury ( <i>jure uxoris</i> )
Tenure	3 May 1429 – 31 December 1460
Other titles	7th & 4th Baron Montagu <p>6th Baron Monthermer</p>
Years active	c. 1420–1460
Spouse	Alice Montacute, 5th Countess of Salisbury
Issue	Cecily, Duchess of Warwick <p><i>more...</i></p> Richard, 16th Earl of Warwick

the younger Ralph agreed to a settlement in 1443, it was on unequal terms – Salisbury kept the great Neville possessions of Middleham and Sheriff Hutton, as well as the more recent grant of Penrith. Only Raby Castle returned to the senior branch. The Neville–Neville feud was later to become absorbed into the destructive Percy–Neville feud. Salisbury's marriage gained him his wife's quarter share of the Holland inheritance. Ironically, his Salisbury title came with comparatively little in terms of wealth, though he did gain a more southerly residence at Bisham Manor in Berkshire.

## Warden of the West March

The defence of the Scottish Border was carried out by two Wardens– that of the East March (based at Berwick-upon-Tweed) and that of the West March at Carlisle. Both offices had been held by the Percy family in the fourteenth century, and their support of King Henry IV seemed to have paid off in 1399, when Henry Percy was appointed Warden of the West March and his son Hotspur as Warden of the East March. But Hotspur rebelled, and his father was held to be complicit in his treason. After Hotspur was killed at the Battle of Shrewsbury, Ralph Neville was employed by King Henry V to capture the elder Percy. His reward was to succeed the Percys as Warden of both Marches. Under Henry V, the Percys were restored to their lands, and eventually, in 1417, to the East March. The West March, however, was to become an almost hereditary Neville appointment.

Salisbury became Warden of the West March in 1420. It was one of the most valuable appointments in England, worth £1,500 in peacetime and four times that if war broke out with Scotland. Although, unlike Calais, it did not require a permanent garrison, the incessant raiding and border skirmishes meant that there would always be a ready supply of trained and experienced soldiers at the Warden's command. Salisbury must have been high in Henry V's estimation, as he was also appointed Justice of the Peace in Cumberland, Westmoreland, and Durham. In 1431 he accompanied the young King Henry VI to France for his coronation, and on his return was made Warden of the East March.

In 1436 he resigned both posts, although this may have originally intended as a means of forcing the crown to make good its arrears of payment. When his resignation was accepted, he accompanied his brother-in-law Richard, Duke of York, to France, taking 1,300 men-at-arms and archers with him. He returned the following year, and in November became a member of the King's Council. He did not resume either of the Wardenships, as the Percy–Neville dispute took up most of his time, but when this was resolved in 1443 he resumed the Wardenship of the West March. Although this was at a reduced fee of just under £1,000, the money was secured on specific sources of Crown income, not on the frequently uncollectable tallies. This may reflect his experiences of 1436.

## Neville and Percy

At the end of 1443, from his principal seat at Middleham Castle in Wensleydale, Salisbury could look with some satisfaction at his position. He was a member of the King's Council and Warden of the West March. His brother Robert was the Bishop of Durham, and another of his brothers, William, had the custody of Roxburgh castle. He had seven children, four boys and three girls. In 1436 the two oldest children, Cicely and Richard, made excellent marriages to the son and daughter of Richard de Beauchamp, 13th Earl of Warwick.

It was becoming apparent that the rise of the Nevilles was coming to an end. The king, who during the late 1430s had started to exercise personal rule, was more concerned to promote the fortunes of his closest relatives – and Salisbury was only related by a junior, illegitimate and female line. In this context, the local rivalry between the Nevilles and the Percys in the north of England was likely to take on greater importance. A strong and capable ruler would be able to control such feuds, or even profit by them. A weak king could find the disputes spreading from local to regional or national conflict.

The Percys had lands throughout northern England, while the Nevilles northern lands were concentrated in north Yorkshire and in Durham. As Warden of the West March, Salisbury was in a position to exert great power in the north-west, in spite of holding only Kendal and Penrith. The Percys resented the fact that their tenants in Cumberland and Westmorland were being recruited by Salisbury, who even with the

	Thomas Neville (died 1460)
	Alice, Baroness FitzHugh
	John, Marquess of Montagu
	George, Archbishop of York
	Joan, Countess of Arundel
	Katherine, Baroness Hastings
	Eleanor, Countess of Derby
	Margaret, Countess of Oxford
<b>House</b>	House of Neville
<b>Father</b>	Ralph Neville, 1st Earl of Westmorland
<b>Mother</b>	Joan Beaufort
<b>Nationality</b>	English
<b>Residence</b>	Middleham Castle
<b>Wars and battles</b>	Anglo-Scottish border conflict Hundred Years' War Neville–Neville feud Percy–Neville feud Wars of the Roses
<b>Offices</b>	Warden of the Marches Lord Chancellor Lord Chamberlain



Arms of Richard Neville, 5th Earl of Salisbury, KG

reduced grant of 1443 still had great spending power in the region. The senior Neville line (now related by marriage to the Percys) still resented the inequitable settlement of their inheritance dispute.

The fifteenth century could be regarded as the peak of "bastard feudalism" – when every subject needed a "good lord". In return for a commitment by the retained man to provide (usually) military support, the lord would give his retainer a small annual fee, a badge or item of clothing to mark his loyalty (livery) and provide help for him in his disputes with his neighbours (maintenance). Northern England was a long way from Westminster, and rapid legal redress for wrongs was impossible.<sup>[2]</sup> With his economic power as warden, Salisbury could provide better support for Percy tenants than Northumberland, unpaid for the East March for years, could hope to.

In 1448, during the renewal of the war with Scotland, Northumberland took his forces through Salisbury's West March – a grave breach of etiquette. Northumberland was defeated at the Battle of Sark, and his son Lord Poynings was captured. The fact that Salisbury lost 2,000 horses trying to respond to this attack, and was then excluded (along with Northumberland) from the subsequent peace negotiations, can only have inflamed relations between the two families. Over time, the ill will might have receded, but Northumberland's second son, Lord Egremont, spent the next few years stirring up trouble in Yorkshire – particularly York, situated between the Percy estates of Spofforth and Healaugh, and Neville's castle at Sheriff Hutton.

On 24 August 1453, Thomas Percy, Lord Egremont, assembled a force of men-at-arms and archers perhaps as large as 1,000 strong, intending to waylay Salisbury and his family at Heworth Moor, outside York, as he made for Sheriff Hutton. Salisbury had been attending the wedding of his son Thomas in Tattershall Castle, Lincolnshire, and although his escort would have been smaller, it would have been better armed than Egremont's York craftsmen and tradesmen. Salisbury and his retinue fought them back, arriving unscathed at Sheriff Hutton, but the episode marked the beginning of what was virtually a private war. The bride, Maud Stanhope was the widow of Lord Willoughby of Eresby, his son would become a Yorkist. Another of the Yorkist party, John Neville, was later Lord Montagu. Maud was due to inherit the manors of Wressle and Burwell from her uncle, Lord Cromwell, who had obtained them from the Percys through litigation. Historian John Sadler argues this was the first incident in the Yorkist/Lancastrian affinities lawless squabble leading to civil war.<sup>[3]</sup>

## Neville and York

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Salisbury turned to the cause of Richard, Duke of York, who made him Lord Chancellor in 1455. When King Henry tried to assert his independence and dismiss Richard as Protector, Salisbury joined him in fighting at the First Battle of St Albans, claiming that he was acting in self-defence. In 1458 he participated in The Love Day, an attempt at reconciliation held in London. After the Battle of Blore Heath, in which he was notably successful, Salisbury escaped to Calais, having been specifically excluded from a royal pardon. He was slain on 30–31 December 1460, the night after the Battle of Wakefield.

## Death and burial

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After the Yorkist defeat at the Battle of Wakefield, Salisbury himself escaped the battlefield but was captured during the night. Upon discovery, the battle worn and now traitor to the realm was taken to the Lancastrian camp. Although the Lancastrian nobles might have been prepared to allow Salisbury to ransom himself, due to his large wealth, he was dragged out of Pontefract Castle and beheaded by local commoners, to whom he had been a harsh overlord.<sup>[4]</sup> An alabaster effigy is in St Mary's Church in Burghfield in Berkshire.

He was buried first at Pontefract, but his sons transferred his body to the family mausoleum at Bisham Priory and erected an effigy. It was brought to Burghfield after the Dissolution of the Monasteries. The effigy of a lady alongside him wears a headdress which is not thought to be of the right date to be his wife, but she may be one of the earlier Countesses of Salisbury buried at Bisham.

## Marriage and children

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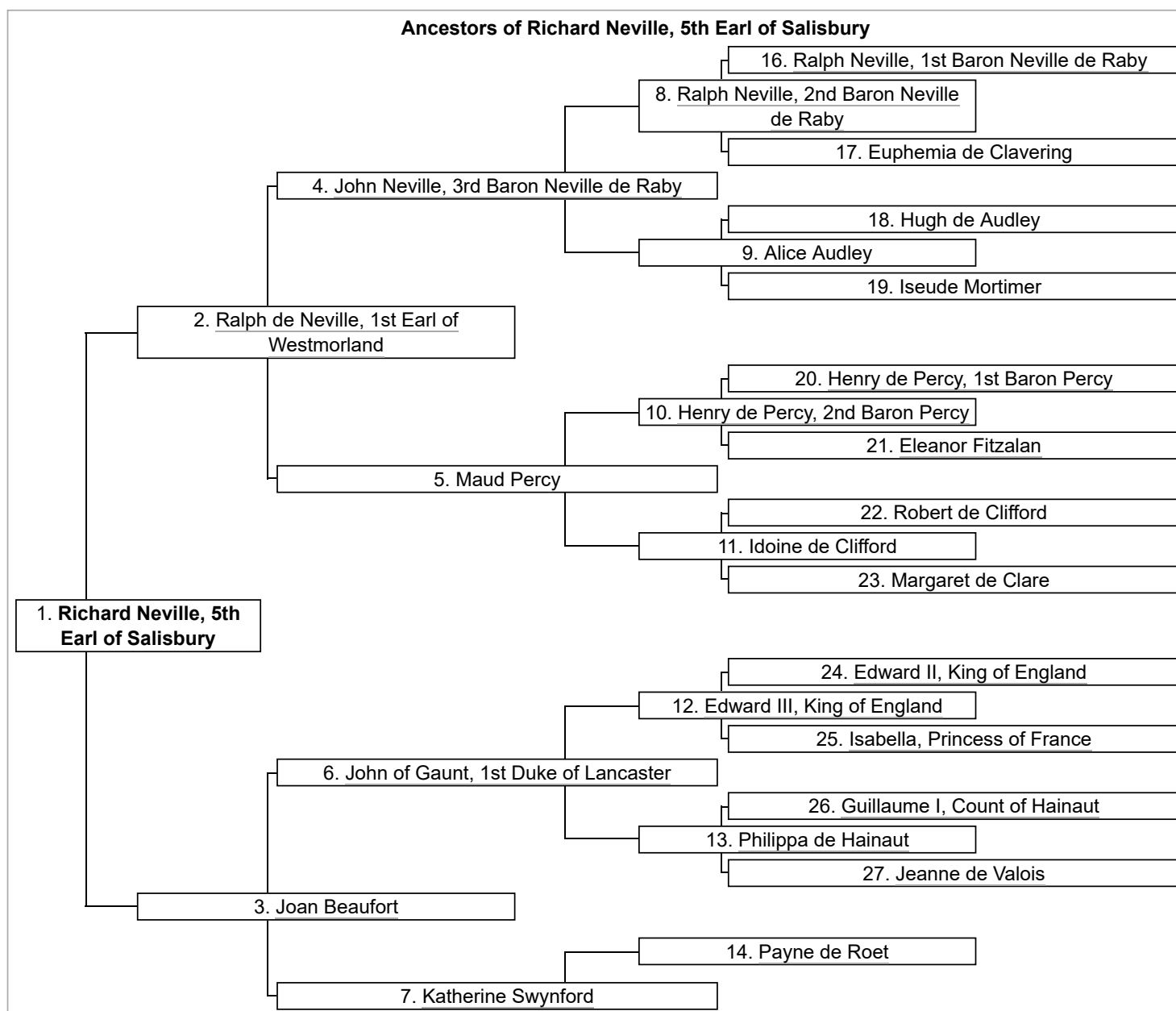
He and his wife, Alice Montague, had twelve children:

- Joan Neville (c.1423–1462), who married William FitzAlan, 16th Earl of Arundel, and had issue.
- Cecily Neville (c.1426–1450), who married Henry de Beauchamp, 1st Duke of Warwick, had one daughter, Anne Beauchamp, 15th Countess of Warwick. On her death, her title passed to her paternal aunt Lady Anne, wife of her maternal uncle, Richard Neville.<sup>[5]</sup>

- Richard Neville, 16th Earl of Warwick (1428–1471), known as the 'Kingmaker', married Lady Anne Beauchamp and had issue.
- Alice Neville (c.1430–1503), who married Henry FitzHugh, 5th Baron FitzHugh. Their daughter, Elizabeth, married William Parr, 1st Baron Parr of Kendal, thus making them great-grandparents of Catherine Parr, sixth wife of King Henry VIII.
- John Neville, 1st Marquess of Montagu (?1431–1471), married Isabel Ingaldesthorpe, had issue.
- George Neville (1432–1476), who became Archbishop of York and Chancellor of England
- Katherine Neville (1442–1503), who married first William Bonville, 6th Baron Harington, and second William Hastings, 1st Baron Hastings, had issue.
- Sir Thomas Neville (bf. 1431–1460),<sup>[6]</sup> who was knighted in 1449 and died at the Battle of Wakefield. He was the second husband of Maud Stanhope (30 August 1497, who married firstly Robert Willoughby, 6th Baron Willoughby de Eresby (d. 25 July 1452), and thirdly Sir Gervase Clifton, beheaded 6 May 1471 after the Battle of Tewkesbury.<sup>[7]</sup>
- Eleanor Neville (1447–<1471),<sup>[8]</sup> who married Thomas Stanley, 1st Earl of Derby, and had issue.
- Margaret Neville (c.1450–1506), who married John de Vere, 13th Earl of Oxford.
- Ralph Neville
- Robert Neville

## Ancestry

See:<sup>[9]</sup>



## Notes

1.  Tait, J. (1894). "Neville, Richard, Earl of Salisbury (1400–1460)". In Lee, Sidney. *Dictionary of National Biography*. **40**. London: Smith, Elder & Co.
2. Robert Crackenthorpe murder case is given as an example of corrupt local justice
3. Sadler, J. (2010). *The Red Rose and the White*. Longman. pp. 1–2.
4. Dockray, Keith, *The Battle of Wakefield and the Wars of the Roses* ([http://www.richardiii.net/downloads/Ricardian/essay\\_wakefield.pdf](http://www.richardiii.net/downloads/Ricardian/essay_wakefield.pdf)) (PDF), p. 14, retrieved 30 June 2009
5. Cokayne, G. (1912). Vicary Gibbs, ed. *The Complete Peerage*. **2** (<https://archive.org/details/completepeerage02coka>). St. Catherine Press. p. 428.
6. Hicks, M. (1998). *Warwick the Kingmaker*. Oxford. p. 24.
7. Cokayne 1959, pp. 665–6; Richardson I 2011, pp. 512–13; Richardson IV 2011, p. 335; Harriss 2004; Harris 2002, p. 79.
8. Bennett, M. (2004). "Stanley, Thomas, first earl of Derby (c. 1433–1504)". *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (online ed.). Oxford University Press. doi:10.1093/ref:odnb/26279 (<https://doi.org/10.1093%2Fref%3Aodnb%2F26279>). (Subscription or UK public library membership (<http://www.oxforddnb.com/help/subscribe#public>) required.)
9. see: G. E. Cokayne and Vicary Gibbs *The Complete Peerage of Great Britain and Ireland* op cit

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## External links

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- Lundy, Darryl (ed.). "Richard de Neville, 5th Earl of Salisbury" (<http://www.thepeerage.com/p10199.htm#i101984>). *The Peerage*.
- *War of the Roses: Richard Neville, Earl of Salisbury (1400–1460)* (<http://www.luminarium.org/encyclopedia/neville.htm>)
- *Royal Berkshire History: Richard Neville, Earl of Salisbury (1400–1460)* ([http://www.berkshirehistory.com/bios/rneville\\_eofs.html](http://www.berkshirehistory.com/bios/rneville_eofs.html))

<b>Political offices</b>		
Preceded by <b><u>John Kemp</u></b>	<b><u>Lord Chancellor</u></b> 1454–1455	Succeeded by <b><u>Thomas Bouchier</u></b>
Preceded by <b><u>Thomas Stanley, 1st Baron Stanley</u></b>	<b><u>Lord Chamberlain</u></b> 1460–1460	Succeeded by <b><u>Lord Hastings</u></b>
<b>Peerage of England</b>		
Preceded by <b><u>Thomas Montacute</u></b> Restored in 1421	<b><u>Earl of Salisbury</u></b> <i>(jure uxoris</i> by <b><u>Alice Montacute</u></b> ) 1428–1460	Succeeded by <b><u>Alice Montacute</u></b>

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