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My verie good lorde : the influence of Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester

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Thesis Abstract

THESIS TITLE: My Verie Good Lorde: The Influence of Robert Dudley, Earl Of Leicester
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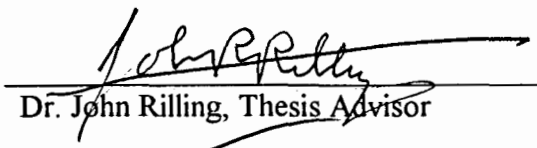
The position of Robert Dudley as one of the most influential courtiers and statesmen during the reign of Elizabeth I originated with the affection that queen held for him. For this reason, historians have often discounted his role in Elizabethan politics and patronage. His contemporaries, however, recognized his unique status and frequently wrote him, requesting his assistance to obtain ecclesiastical and secular offices, assistance in purchasing land, and other favors. He responded successfully to many requests, and his influence with Elizabeth made him one of the most powerful nobles in England. This thesis explores the many requests addressed to Robert Dudley and is based on two main sources: the Dudley Papers at Longleat House, and the Pepys Manuscripts at Magdalene College, Cambridge. An analysis of these collections will show that Dudley merited the attention that he received, and successfully employed his influence with Elizabeth to assist his protégés.

Thesis Approval

I certify that I have read this thesis and find that, in scope and quality, it satisfies the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.



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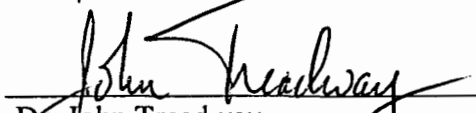

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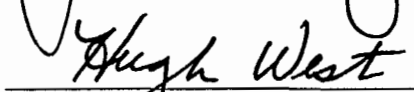

Dr. Hugh West

MY VERIE GOOD LORDE: THE INFLUENCE OF ROBERT DUDLEY, EARL OF LEICESTER

By

JONATHAN PERRY WESTON

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Notes on the Text

Several features of this document must be explained in order to avoid confusion. When referring to a date such as 4 January 1561 I have retained old style dates when giving the day and month but have used new style dating for the years. This was done to avoid adjusting every date to reflect the change from the Julian to Gregorian Calendar, which occurred in 1582 but was not adopted in Great Britain until 1752. In many instances I have attempted to retain the original spellings of a document but I have extended abbreviations such as "Yo^{r} L." to read "Your Lordship", or some derivation thereof, attempting to be consistent with the spelling of the original document, and indicating with [brackets] which alterations were mine. To maintain as accurately as possible the spellings of the originals I have also retained the sixteenth-century "ij" usage instead of "ii" or "2" in numbers present in some letters. I am not confident that the Historical Manuscripts Commission Report on the Pepys Manuscripts has retained original spellings. When quoting from that work I have attempted only to cite those items which appeared in quotation marks. Some obviously maintain sixteenth-century spellings, but most appear to have been modernized.

Acknowledgements

I am grateful for the assistance of the following people and institutions during the completion of this project. At the University of Richmond, I would like to thank Professor John Rilling for his advice during the preparation of this thesis and Professors John Treadway and Hugh West, who served as readers, as well as Professor Barbara Sella, who translated several letters from Italian. In addition, the Inter-Library Loan staff lent invaluable help in securing copies of books and articles not available at the University of Richmond.

Some of the institutions which allowed me to review parts of their holdings through inter-library loan include the College of William and Mary; Duke University; Mary Washington College; Loyola Notre Dame; and the University of Cincinnati. I am especially grateful to the last institution, as they parted with their microfilm copy of the first five volumes of the Dudley Papers for several weeks, significantly reducing the amount of original documents that I needed to read in England.

A grant from the University of Richmond Graduate School of Arts and Sciences allowed me to travel to London and Warminster in Wiltshire. In London I was a frequent visitor to the Institute of Historical Research, in the Senate House at the University of London, and the Public Record Office at Chancery Lane. While in Warminster I reviewed, with the help of the Archivist, Mrs. Kate Harris, the complete collection of Dudley manuscripts at Longleat House, the home of the Marquess of Bath.

While in London, accomodations were provided by Mr. and Mrs. Brian and Marie Mercer, who were most helpful, especially when I needed to get to the train station and otherwise when I had to navigate around London during a breakdown of the Central and District & Circle underground lines that all but eliminated east-west travel in the city. As I discovered, the city is quite extensive. They also pointed out numerous opportunities to experience the variety of London culture during evenings and weekends.

Many thanks as well to all those whom I have neglected to mention here, but without whose consideration and assistance this project would never have materialized.

Jonathan Weston

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Richmond, Virginia

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List of Abbreviations

CPR	*Calendar of the Patent Rolls, Elizabeth I*
CSP Domestic	*Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series*
CSP Scottish	*Calendar of State Papers, Relating to Scottish Affairs*
CSP Spanish	*Calendar of State Papers, Relating to Spanish Affairs*
DNB	*Dictionary of National Biography*
DP	*Dudley Papers at Longleat*
HMC	*Historical Manuscripts Commission*
HMC Pepys	*HMC Report on the Pepys Manuscripts*
HMSO	*Her (His) Majesties Stationery Office*
MSS	*Manuscripts*
OED	*Oxford English Dictionary, Second Edition*
PRO	*Public Record Office*
SP 12	*State Papers Domestic, Elizabeth I*

Introduction

When Elizabeth I ascended the English throne on 17 November 1558, she inherited a realm which had in recent years seen religious turmoil. Her brother Edward VI (b. 1537; r.1547-53) had inherited the throne at age ten and in his name the leading English nobles continued the reform of the English Church that had begun under Henry VIII. They introduced a Book of Common Prayer in 1549 and a revision to the same in 1552, and in 1551 allowed Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury, to devise Forty-two Articles of Faith that clearly established an Anglican polity and Protestant theology.

Edward VI succumbed, in all likelihood, to tuberculosis on 6 July 1553, ushering in the reign of Mary Tudor, who set about to restore Roman Catholicism in England. She began to remove Protestant bishops from office, going so far as to have Cranmer burnt at the stake on 21 March 1556. Many Protestants fled the realm in fear of her persecutions, and consequently became known as the Marian Exiles. These individuals, who encountered Calvinism and other forms of Protestantism while living overseas, would figure prominently in religious reforms during the reign of Elizabeth. Adding to their fear was the 1553 contract for the marriage of Mary to Prince Philip of Spain, an unpopular treaty which was immediately greeted with a rebellion, led by Sir Thomas Wyatt, Sir Thomas Carew, and Henry Grey, the Duke of Suffolk. Mary's troops suppressed the rebellion, in the wake of which she ordered the execution of many prisoners, including Lady Jane Grey, whom John

Dudley, Duke of Northumberland and father of Robert Dudley, had attempted to proclaim queen after the death of Edward.

Fortunately for the exiles, Mary reigned briefly, and when she died there was much rejoicing among her Protestant subjects. The new queen encountered a profusion of eager courtiers, all clamoring for a place at her court or a position in her government. Some, like William Cecil, had been civil servants under Edward VI but were displaced by Mary and hoped that Elizabeth would restore them to their offices. Many others were ecclesiastics, most deprived of office and in many cases exiled abroad, who looked for an opportunity to advance religious reform in England. Others were noblemen who had lost, because of their Protestant sympathies, a great deal of wealth and power, and hoped to recapture their former glory. Finally, there was Robert Dudley, later Earl of Leicester,[1] a man roughly the same age as Elizabeth, whose father had been one of the most powerful nobles in England before his execution, and who immediately found exceptional and unique favor with the new queen.

Their relationship defied description and indeed has been the subject of considerable historical speculation. Elizabeth appeared completely enraptured by the young courtier, refused to remain apart from him, and showered him with numerous gifts of lands, prompting scandalous gossip about the two. Yet she denied him the prize he most coveted: her hand in marriage. That affection translated into influence – the kind of prestige that led to a flood of letters asking Dudley to speak with the queen on matters including the purchase of lands,

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[1] During this work Robert Dudley will generally be referred to as either Dudley or Leicester, depending on the years discussed. Before 29 September 1564, he was Lord Robert Dudley, but on that date the queen created him Earl of Leicester. Hence after that date he will be referred to as Leicester. In this introduction, however, the names may occasionally be used interchangeably.

relief of prisoners, legal assistance in suits great and small, and obtaining offices both ecclesiastic and secular. In this respect Dudley can be seen as representative of the great patrons of the Elizabethan age, men who either commanded an enormous amount of respect for their advice to the queen, like Cecil, or possessed vast landed wealth, and were therefore in a position to influence local and national politics through their court connections. The patronage of Robert Dudley extended into all facets of Elizabethan life, encompassing local offices, bishoprics, university posts, parliamentary seats, theatrical pursuits, literary works, mercantile activities and many more areas not enumerated here.

Dudley's patronage of reform-minded preachers and writers formed probably the best-remembered portion of his career, but the present work will attempt to show the breadth of his influence and patronage. As his career evolved, Dudley received a steadily increasing number of letters from persons known collectively as "Puritans," reflecting his growing sympathies to their cause. The basis for this study are the great volumes of letters, preserved in the Dudley Papers at Longleat and the Pepys Manuscripts at Magdalene College, Cambridge, that Robert Dudley received during his adult career. Using these documents, one can determine the nature of Dudley's role in Elizabethan politics and religion, two areas that quite often could not be separated. Furthermore, his involvement with the cause of international Protestantism, leading to English intervention of the mid-1580s in the Dutch revolt against Spain, can be seen in its infancy and maturity.

In order to show this, the present study will begin with a brief discussion of the life of Robert Dudley. An analysis of the relevant documents in the Dudley Papers and the Pepys

Manuscripts will follow in Chapter Two, which will also divide the letters into definite categories. Using these categories, the particulars of Robert Dudley's influence, both ecclesiastical and secular, will then be considered in Chapters Three and Four, citing numerous examples from original documents.

The reasons for a study of Robert Dudley are numerous, but perhaps the best reason is that, until recently, he has been misunderstood by many historians. Though he stood in a position to wield an enormous amount of influence and power, his relationship with the queen led many historians to discount his role. Perhaps this stemmed from the notion that a man who owed the bulk of his influence to the affections of the queen was therefore nothing more than a prominent courtier rather than an important statesman. Indeed this seemed to be the treatment he received in many histories of Elizabethan England written before the twentieth century. The first of these, William Camden's *The History of the Most Renowned and Victorious Princess Elizabeth*, appearing in the early seventeenth century, set the tone for later historical discussions of Dudley.

William Camden wrote of Leicester that "he Preferred Power and Greatness, which is subject to be envied, before solid Vertue. . . ."[2] Camden spent little time discussing Leicester, most of it negative, considering his importance during the reign of Elizabeth, but it must be remembered that he wrote with the assistance of William Cecil, Lord Burghley, who gave Camden access to his papers. From this collection Camden developed a personal bias in favor of Burghley, which was not uncommon for men writing with the backing of powerful

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[2] William Camden, *The History of the Most Renowned and Victorious Princess Elizabeth: Selected Chapters*, ed., with an introduction by Wallace T. MacCaffrey (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970), 330.

patrons. According to Wallace T. MacCaffrey, Camden generally related negative views of the earl: ". . . he [Camden] went out of his way to paint the blackest possible picture of . . . Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester. He never fails to report the most discreditable allegations about the favorite."[3] While this was a slight exaggeration, Camden considered Leicester to be self-serving and in his summation of Leicester's reputation he claimed that while "people talked openly in his Commendation, . . . privately he was ill spoken of by the greater part."[4]

In addition to the papers of Lord Burghley, Camden had probably also encountered *Leicester's Commonwealth* (1584), most likely put together in France by a variety of writers and distributed by Jesuits, which attacked Leicester's ancestry and charged him with all manner of crimes, ranging from adultery to murder (several murders, in fact, including those of his first wife and the Earl of Essex). D. C. Peck, who has authored several articles on the subject and edited the most current printing of the book, recently attempted to fix the authorship of this work. Peck felt that *Leicester's Commonwealth* "can be shown to have emanated, not from [Robert] Parsons's ' Jesuit' party, but from a group of lay Catholic exiles, partisans of the Queen of Scots, who were based principally in Paris, more specifically from a subgroup among them composed of formerly pro-Anjou [Alençon] courtiers recently hounded from the English Court (in their view at least) by Leicester himself."[5] This party, according to Peck, included Charles Arundell and Thomas Lord Paget, with Thomas Morgan

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[3] MacCaffrey, introduction to Camden, *The History of Elizabeth*, xxxviii.

[4] Camden, *The History of Elizabeth*, 330

[5] D. C. Peck, ed., *Leicester's Commonwealth: The Copy of a Letter Written by a Master of Art of Cambridge (1584) and Related Documents* (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1985), 4. The Anjou referred to in the quote is François, Duke of Alençon and later Duke of Anjou, who during the 1570s courted Elizabeth.

taking a minor role in the production of the book.[6] Interestingly, both Lord Paget and Charles Arundell appeared in a Spanish document, an "Account of the Money owing to Englishmen for their allowance up to the end of the year 1586."[7]

Some of the information contained in *Leicester's Commonwealth* probably came from an ironic source – Douglass Sheffield, who after an affair with Dudley that produced a son had married Sir Edward Stafford, Ambassador to France. Arundell had visited Stafford several times while in Paris, probably garnering some information through casual conversation with the couple.[8] Though he probably derived only a small amount of gossip from these conversations, Arundell and his compatriots had little difficulty assembling the tract. *Leicester's Commonwealth* so tainted the earl's reputation that Elizabeth issued a decree in 1585 against its dispersal and the distribution of other slanderous works. The works had been issued, according to the decree,

> to the manifest contempt of hir Maiesties regall and Sovreigne authoritie, and [included] . . . one most infamous conteyninge slanderous and hatefull matter against our verie good lorde the Erle of Leycester, one of hir principall noblemen, and chiefe connsellors of Estate, of which most malitious and wycked imputacions hir Maiestie in hir owne cleere knowledge doethe declare and certifie his innocence to all the world. . . .[9]

The decree was promulgated with little effect, for when Leicester died in 1588 there was no one to defend him. Burghley was not likely to publish a defense, and Sir Philip Sidney, who

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[6] *Leicester's Commonwealth*, 13.

[7] *CSP Spanish*, vol. 3 (London: HMSO, 1896), 690. The document indicated that Lord Paget was owed over 925 crowns while Charles Arundell merited nearly 1200. There was no indication of the purpose of these payments, but it must be considered that the men could have been in Spanish employ at the time.

[8] *Leicester's Commonwealth*, 15. Interestingly, Derek Wilson, *Sweet Robin: A Biography of Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester 1533-1588* (London, Hamish Hamilton, 1981), suggested that Leicester actually helped Lady Douglass marry Edward Stafford in 1579 (p. 227).

[9] *SP 12*, vol. 179, no. 44.

had previously issued a defense of Leicester's ancestry in 1585, had been killed in the Netherlands. Leicester's reputation was therefore firmly established by *Leicester's Commonwealth*, which undiscriminating historians subsequently relied upon as evidence.

The scandals described within found their way into historical fiction. In his novel *Kenilworth* (1820), Sir Walter Scott was particularly scathing, devoting the entire work to a fictional account of the death of Amy Dudley. Though highly inaccurate, the popularity of Scott's work left the English public with a tainted view of Leicester's role in her death.

In a similar fashion the noted historian James Anthony Froude did not openly condemn *Leicester's Commonwealth.* He did, however, say that he would not use it as evidence, and left the judgment of the work to the reader.[10] In 1881, Froude published his twelve-volume work entitled the *History of England from the Fall of Wolsey to the Defeat of the Spanish Armada*, of which six volumes covered the first thirty years of the reign of Elizabeth. Froude was far more negative in his treatment of Leicester than was Camden, and in describing the earl often suggested that "Dudley combined in himself the worst qualities of both sexes. Without courage, without talent, without virtue, he was the handsome, soft, polished, and attentive minion of the Court."[11] Froude relied heavily on the papers of Burghley and the Spanish Correspondence, both of which carried inherent biases, the one anti-Leicester and the other pro-Catholic.[12] Curiously though, Froude sympathized with

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[10] James Anthony Froude, *History of England from the Fall of Wolsey to the defeat of the Spanish Armada* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1881), vol. 7, 288.

[11] Froude, *History of England*, vol. 7, 88.

[12] The Spanish papers, typically correspondence between Spanish Ambassadors and King Philip, are valuable because they provide an interesting insight into court politics and are probably less personally biased than those of

Leicester's plight in the Netherlands, probably owing to his dislike of Elizabeth's indecisiveness in the matter, even if he thought that Leicester was incompetent as a commander. He also sympathized with Leicester's efforts because the earl fought for Protestantism against Catholic domination. Froude displayed a pro-Protestant bias throughout his work, and though he had no great admiration for Leicester he still viewed him as a champion of religion in this case.

In direct contrast to Froude was the work of Frederick Chamberlin, *Elizabeth and Leycester*[13] in which the author set about to defend Leicester in no uncertain terms. Unfortunately Chamberlin spent too much time tarnishing Burghley's reputation as a way to defend Leicester, often misreading letters and ignoring arguments that would undermine his interpretation of Leicester's life. In spite of his defects as a historian, Chamberlin represented what can be termed a turning point in the study of Leicester. Works prior to his were generally negative and biased against Leicester, while works afterward consisted of more balanced studies which did not discount his role in English affairs simply because his influence stemmed from Elizabeth's affection for him.

Five works written after 1940 focused on Leicester in a biographical format, placing great emphasis on his relationship with the queen.[14] These works fell into two categories: those that centered mainly on the relationship between Leicester and Elizabeth, which

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Burghley. They do, however, show a strong Catholic viewpoint, and should be taken as such, becoming more bitter and charged with gossip as Leicester emerged as a Puritan leader.

[13] Frederick Chamberlin, *Elizabeth and Leycester* (New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1939).

[14] Milton Waldman, *Elizabeth and Leicester* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1945); Elizabeth Jenkins, *Elizabeth and Leicester* (New York: Coward-McCann Inc., 1961); Alan Kendall, *Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester* (London: Cassell, 1980); Derek Wilson, *Sweet Robin* (1981); and Alan Haynes, *The White Bear: Robert Dudley, The Elizabethan Earl of Leicester* (London: Peter Owen, 1987).

stripped away false reports about him but revealed little concerning his role in English affairs; and works that continued to discuss Leicester in a biographical fashion but made an effort, although somewhat limited, to reveal his place in Elizabethan society. No one work stood out as a definitive biography of Leicester, however, nor did any biography sufficiently explain such complex issues as Puritanism or international politics for a truly clear picture of Leicester's role to emerge. A scholarly, multi-volume work might be the best way to illuminate his career, but so far none has been produced.[15]

Fortunately several authors have explored broader Elizabethan subjects in greater detail and placed some degree of emphasis on the role of Leicester in the context of their subjects.[16] It must be understood that the papers of Leicester were not as well preserved either in quality or number as those of Burghley due to dispersal and destruction, and the overall source material for a study of Leicester is therefore limited. For this reason many authors have been reluctant to assign him a position which approached the status of Burghley in Elizabethan court politics, but have nevertheless produced a more complete picture of her court. Further, his standing has been transformed from that of a self-promoting courtier and social climber to that of an active Councilor, one who rivaled Cecil in influence and used that influence to great effect.

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[15] Both Burghley and Sir Francis Walsingham were the subject of multi-volume works by Conyers-Read, while Leicester, whose importance has yet to be fully realized, remains the subject of a few scattered single-volume works.

[16] Several of the most important works of this nature include Wallace T. MacCaffrey, *The Shaping of the Elizabethan Regime* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968) and *Queen Elizabeth and the Making of Policy, 1572-1588* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981); Patrick Collinson, *The Elizabethan Puritan Movement* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967); and Michael Barraclough Pulman, *The Elizabethan Privy Council in the Fifteen-Seventies* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971).

Dudley became one of the greatest patrons in Elizabethan England because of his relationship with the queen. He left his mark on English affairs through his activities as a patron, which included both ecclesiastical and secular interests. One author, Eleanor Rosenberg, in *Leicester, Patron of Letters* (1955) made perhaps the only detailed study of any single aspect of Leicester's life, namely his support of nearly 100 writers who dedicated their works to him.[17] These works covered a variety of topics, including histories, translations and religious works, and they showed Leicester's importance in establishing several printers, and in supporting scholars and Puritan polemicists.

Men who sought help in obtaining preferment of some sort often turned to Dudley. Some were recommended to him by men of lesser influence, but many dedicated books and pamphlets to him in an effort to gain his assistance in advancing their careers. Rosenberg discussed Leicester's patronage of these writers in order to reveal the breadth of Elizabethan literature, but in so doing revealed how often people turned to him for support. Not only was this true of writers, but also of many who needed help with suits or wished to have land grants from the crown. Indeed many persons turned to Dudley because of his influence with Elizabeth. In order to discover the origins of that influence, the life of Robert Dudley, including his relationship with the queen, must be examined before proceeding to a discussion of the multitude of letters which requested his influence.

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[17] Eleanor Rosenberg, *Leicester, Patron of Letters* (New York: Octagon Books, 1976; reprint, New York: Columbia University Press, 1955).

Chapter One

Background: The Life and Times of Robert Dudley

Robert Dudley, the fifth son of John Dudley, Duke of Northumberland, and grandson of Edmund Dudley, held a position of almost unrivaled prominence at the court of Queen Elizabeth I. Yet considering that his father and grandfather were both executed for treason, the question arises how Robert Dudley became one of the most influential men in England. It is true that he owed much of his prestige to the affections of the queen, but historians have tended to discount his role in English affairs. The often scandalous aspects of his life are part of the reason for this appraisal, and hence they deserve attention not only for their colorful nature but also to serve as background to the task of evaluating Dudley's influence.

Dudley was born on 24 June 1532, although that date is open to some dispute. Some historians have given the year 1533, but 1532 appears more reasonable as a date largely because a miniature portrait of Dudley done by Nicholas Hilliard in 1576 indicated that he was forty-four years of age at the time and thus was born in 1532.[1] The exact year is not important; it is sufficient to know that he was very close in age to Elizabeth, who was born on 7 September 1533.

During his youth, Robert became acquainted with Elizabeth because both were tutored by Roger Ascham. By the 1540s he had been placed by his father in the household of

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[1] See Appendix A for a reproduction of the miniature and other portraits.

Edward VI as an ordinary gentleman of the King's bedchamber, and was considered to be a friend of the young king. It seems reasonable to argue that his father might have used Robert as his mouthpiece with Edward to influence the monarch. This could have been part of an overall strategy to improve his position, but paled in comparison to the Duke of Northumberland's attempt to alter the English succession. Upon the death of Edward in 1553, Northumberland made an unsuccessful effort, assisted by his sons, including Robert, to proclaim Lady Jane Grey as queen. As a result the family members were imprisoned in the Tower (specifically the Beauchamp Tower) and several were executed for treason during the reign of Queen Mary.

During his imprisonment, Robert possibly again encountered Elizabeth, who was for a time imprisoned in the Tower during 1554 as a consequence of the Wyatt Rebellion. This should not be exaggerated, since they were kept under guard in separate towers and no record survived of any personal meeting between them. It is possible that messages could have been sent by means of guards who had been bribed, but there is no evidence for this. According to the historian Alan Haynes, "The notion that he saw much of Princess Elizabeth is in doubt; it is probably a romantic fiction concocted to explain the extraordinary bond of affection that grew between them."[2] In fact Elizabeth spent only two months in the Tower before she was moved to Woodstock, further limiting the time during which she and Dudley could have arranged a meeting or sent messages.[3] Given the limited time frame and the lack of supporting evidence, the most likely argument is against their meeting in the Tower.

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[2] Haynes, *The White Bear*, 25.

[3] Kendall, *Robert Dudley*, 21. The dates given were 18 March -19 May 1554.

The imprisoned Robert almost certainly expected to be executed as his father had been, but was spared through the intervention of his mother Jane, who for months pleaded for clemency. Through her persistent pleas, he and his surviving older brothers Henry and Ambrose gained their releases from the Tower late in 1554, shortly before their mother died in January of 1555.[4] Thereafter Robert participated in tournaments between the English and Spanish after King Philip II, who had married Mary Tudor, arrived in England. Philip sought a way to ease tensions between English and Spanish courtiers and so he organized several tournaments for that purpose.[5] Through the tiltyard activities Philip found worthy soldiers to assist him in his conflict with France, into which he had drawn England. Apparently Dudley's skill on the tiltyard and as a courtier[6] impressed Philip, as he and his brothers joined Philip at the siege of St. Quentin in 1557. Henry Dudley was killed there, leaving only Robert and Ambrose to carry on the family name. Robert then returned to England where he lived at the estate of Hemsby until the death of Queen Mary in 1558.

After Mary's death, Dudley went to Hatfield House to inform Elizabeth that she had become queen of England. During her coronation procession, according to Richard C. McCoy, "Dudley and his brother escorted her through the city, taking the positions closest to

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[4] Richard C. McCoy, *The Rites of Knighthood: The Literature and Politics of Elizabethan Chivalry* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), 31.

[5] Richard C. McCoy, "From the Tower to the Tiltyard: Robert Dudley's Return to Glory," *The Historical Journal* 27, no. 2 (1984): 426. It seems curious that Philip's way of easing tensions was to sponsor a series of essentially violently adversarial contests. McCoy explained it as a source of pride for the English, who could show their worthiness on the battlefield, and that it was a "safer, more civilized outlet for the aggression which had been exploding daily. . ." (430).

[6] McCoy, "From the Tower to the Tiltyard," 430.

her litter."[7] Shortly thereafter she appointed Robert Master of the Horse with the annual income of 100 marks, a minor position with a significance insufficient to explain the number of requests he received for the use of his influence with Elizabeth.[8] Therefore, his familiarity with Elizabeth went well beyond what seemed appropriate for his office. Indeed many considered Dudley to be her early choice for a husband, but bitterly opposed the potential match. Certainly Dudley had numerous contacts with Elizabeth in his youth, but these did not explain her affection for him. He did not appeal to her intellect in the same way as William Cecil, but rather she seemed smitten with him for his handsome countenance and his ways as a courtier.

In fact, Cecil emerged as a powerful statesman several years before Dudley. He recognized the potentially dangerous consequences of the English political situation, the most important factors of which were England's status as a Protestant nation, and the unwed queen's lack of an heir apparent. English relations with foreign powers were intertwined with these two issues, since several Catholic princes were proposed as possible consorts for the queen. Without a firm succession, the English crown lay exposed to the threat of foreign invasion by a Catholic power, and in 1559 Cecil perceived a threat from France.

The threat centered on Scotland, where Protestant Scots had overthrown the regency of Mary of Guise. This left the Scottish crown in turmoil, because the heir to the throne, Mary Stewart, had married Francis II (king of France 1559-60). Firmly Catholic, the Guise

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[7] McCoy, *The Rites of Knighthood*, 32. The information derives from the College of Arms MS M6, fol. 41v., which showed Robert Dudley "leading the palfrey of honor." See Appendix A for a reproduction.

[8] *CPR*, vol. 1 (London: HMSO, 1939), 61. Dated 11 January 1559.

faction posed a threat to the Protestants in Scotland and, Cecil believed, to the English crown. Hence he advised the English Privy Council to support Hamiltonian claims in Scotland and to send an army to repel the French. Elizabeth, in her typical fashion, was reluctant to send troops or spend money to correct a potential problem, but Cecil won out, and the French agreed to withdraw. Soon afterward, Elizabeth sent Cecil to negotiate the Treaty of Edinburgh, and according to MacCaffrey, "the overwhelming success of Cecil's policy transformed his status; from being merely a newcomer of promise and competence, he vaulted into the first rank of contemporary politicians and to what must have seemed a decisive position of leadership in the circle of Councillors close about the throne."[9]

While the successful English intervention in Scotland served to explain Cecil's influence with Elizabeth, Dudley did not appear in a decisive role. Though highly influential with the queen he was not yet on the Privy Council and so excluded from the majority of the debate. However the events of 1559-60 profoundly affected his career. In December 1560, Francis II died, and the power of the Guise faction in France waned, providing more security in England from foreign invasion (at least by way of Scotland). Although one threat had diminished, the status of Mary Queen of Scots as a young widow and a claimant to the English throne seriously affected the question of the English succession.

Mary had a strong claim to the English throne, since she was the grand-daughter of Henry VIII's sister Margaret Tudor, and her presence in Scotland after 1561 worried the English. They feared that should Elizabeth die suddenly without issue, England would again

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[9] MacCaffrey, *Shaping*, 88.

be ruled by a Catholic monarch, resulting in civil war and foreign intervention. For this reason Elizabeth was pressured by all parties to take a husband, but while she most likely would have chosen Dudley over any other (if she ever really wanted to marry), bitter opposition to this possibility arose in the persons of the Duke of Norfolk and the Earl of Sussex. Cecil so loathed the thought of a match between Dudley and Elizabeth that at one point he contemplated resignation.[10]

An uncertain succession led to much fear among the English concerning what would happen should the queen die without issue. The reigns of Edward VI and Mary Tudor had been brief, leading many to believe that the same could be true of Elizabeth, and as she had no husband or children their anxiety appeared justified. Although many recommended suitors including foreign princes like the Archduke Charles of Austria, Elizabeth's personal inclination was against taking a husband, but she may have been tempted by Dudley.[11] Certainly the Spanish ambassadors Count de Feria (until the spring of 1560) and Alvarez de Quadra, Bishop of Aquila (d. 1563), indicated that Dudley had a hold on her passions. English nobles assumed the same, but were not willing to allow the descendant of executed traitors to become consort to the queen.

Dudley's detractors had several reasons for their attitude toward him. His ancestors had been self-serving and ambitious, and there was no reason to doubt that Robert was any

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[10] MacCaffrey, *Shaping*, 99.

[11] Esther Clifford, "Marriage of True Minds," *Sixteenth Century Journal* 15, no. 1 (Spring 1984): 39. Clifford claimed Elizabeth had a "hysterical aversion to matrimony" (39), which echoed the sentiments of Carolly Erickson, whose psychoanalysis of Elizabeth led to a conclusion that her childhood experiences, especially considering Henry VIII's execution of several of his wives, resulted in her fear of marriage.

different. He was constantly in the company of the queen, and consequently inundated with requests for his influence with Elizabeth, yet his official position did not correspond to his influence. In addition, he had no title during the first few years of her reign and was not a member of the long-established noble houses of the land such as the Howards. Any wealth he had obtained originated from the queen, and men like the Duke of Norfolk (a Howard) deeply resented him for his bold behavior with her. Moreover Dudley had been married to Amy Robsart since 1550 (a marriage that probably gave more benefits to the Robsarts than to the Dudleys) and she, although rumored to be sick with "a malady in one of her breasts,"[12] was still alive in early 1560.

It was then that events clouded his reputation. At the worst possible time, Amy Dudley died under mysterious circumstances on 8 September 1560, leading many to gossip that Robert had arranged her death in order to marry the queen. Some of his contemporaries did not believe that Amy had simply fallen down the steps at Cumnor Place and broken her neck.[13] Though two juries absolved him of wrongdoing in the death of his wife, any hopes he might have entertained of marriage to the queen were effectively ended at that time.

A vague but substantial threat of rebellion, centered on the Duke of Norfolk, loomed if Elizabeth should marry Dudley. Even before the death of Amy Dudley the Spanish Ambassador reported that Norfolk had declared that "if Lord Robert did not abandon his

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[12] *CSP Spanish*, vol. 1 (London: HMSO, 1892), 58.

[13] Ian Aird, "The Death of Amy Robsart: Accident, Suicide, or Murder – or Disease?," *English Historical Review* 71 (Jan. 1956): 69-79. Aird suggested that her death was actually due to deposits on her spine caused by breast cancer, but no confirmation is possible since a 1946 fire destroyed the church in which she was buried.

present pretensions and presumption he would not die in his bed."[14] This was not the only reference to the designs of Norfolk made in the Spanish Correspondence. Ambassador de Quadra reported to the Duchess of Parma on 29 October 1559 that

> a plot was made the other day to murder Lord Robert, and it is now common talk and threat. The plot was headed by the Duke of Norfolk, the Earl of Surrey [perhaps he meant Sussex], and all the principal adherents of the Archduke.[15] The Queen and Robert are very uneasy about the Duke of Norfolk, as he talks openly about her lightness and bad government. People are ashamed of what is going on, and particularly the Duke, as he is Lord Robert's enemy.[16]

The ambassadorial dispatches, while gossip-laden and usually exaggerated,[17] indicated that at the very least Norfolk would have gone to great lengths to prevent a marriage between Dudley and Elizabeth. Considering the way in which Norfolk met his end (in the aftermath of a plot against the government – see pages 33-36) it is not entirely unreasonable to think that he would have attempted some kind of violence against Dudley and perhaps against the regime as well.

Faced with real opposition, Dudley turned to Spain for help, through Ambassador de Quadra. Dudley spoke to de Quadra about a marriage to Elizabeth and hinted at restoring "religion by means of a general *Concilio.*"[18] In other words, England would have sent representatives to the Council of Trent in return for Spanish military assistance should a civil

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[14] *CSP Spanish*, vol. 1, 113.

[15] Charles of Austria, who had been proposed as a suitor for the hand of Elizabeth.

[16] *CSP Spanish*, vol. 1, 107.

[17] Jenkins, *Elizabeth and Leicester*, 55, 59. Jenkins also felt that de Quadra was actually responsible for spreading many of the rumors about Amy Dudley which tainted Robert Dudley's reputation. The assertion cannot be proven one way or the other, but de Quadra does not strike one as being bright enough to have conceived this design on his own to tarnish Dudley's reputation.

[18] *CSP Spanish*, vol. 1, 179.

war result in England. The cautious King Philip responded to de Quadra's overly enthusiastic report with a letter dated 17 March 1561, in which he advised the bishop to obtain it "in writing and signed by her [the queen]. . . ."[19] Philip must have felt it was a ruse, but Dudley persisted. In June 1561, he and Elizabeth were left alone on a river boat with de Quadra, and began to toy with him, suggesting that he marry them on the spot, though Elizabeth jokingly said that the bishop did not have enough command of English to perform the ceremony.[20]

This incident suggests that the whole affair may indeed have been a ruse, but to what end, and urged by whom? If the impetus for talk of marriage came only from Dudley then Elizabeth would have made no jest since she would have had no knowledge of the plan. On the other hand, if Elizabeth instigated Dudley's maneuvers, she did so only to delay or discover any Spanish thoughts of intervention in English affairs. However the truth is clouded by lack of evidence. Dudley and Elizabeth spent so little time apart that they did not pass many letters between themselves, letters which might have solved this puzzle many years ago.

Nevertheless an intriguing possibility existed regarding Dudley's role in this matter. In correspondence with Dudley, Elizabeth often referred to him with a cryptic symbol of two eyes (õõ). This symbol might have indicated only the great familiarity of their personal relationship or that their friendship might have had a more unusual component. If Dudley indeed served as Elizabeth's two eyes, perhaps his role roughly corresponded to that of an

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[19] *CSP Spanish*, vol. 1, 185.

[20] *CSP Spanish*, vol. 1, 208.

informant.[21] This would explain many apparently irregular circumstances from which Dudley emerged unscathed in spite of his questionable dealings, including his relationship with Spain and his later involvement with the Norfolk plot. Personal ambition on the scale displayed during these two dealings could not have pleased the queen, yet she apparently had little difficulty with his entanglements. Since his dealings with Spain and the Duke of Norfolk entailed possible civil wars, it was unreasonable for Elizabeth to have simply turned a blind eye to his intrigues unless a hidden objective lay beneath his involvement.

Elizabeth might also have known of Dudley's desire to marry her (which seems quite likely given their familiarity) but played along with his advances in order to convince the Spanish of their intent to marry. If this was true, it would mean that she never had a desire to wed the royal favorite, or was at the very least too nervous about the prospects of civil turmoil to abandon all caution. In Either case, the waiting game she played gave her councilors time to discover the extent of Spanish intrigues in England, but whether Dudley took an active and willing part in such an enterprise or pursued it for personal motives remains to be seen.

The real question of Dudley's motives touches the sincerity of his advances to de Quadra. If Dudley fully intended to pursue Catholic support, he would have done so only because he feared rebellion should he wed the queen, and wished powerful allies to assist him. Though extremely ambitious, a trait he inherited from his father, why would a man by the 1570s so staunch in his support of Puritans behave as though he were sympathetic to the

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[21] Kendall, *Robert Dudley*, 125.

Catholic cause?[22] It is possible (if he was not acting as an infiltrator) that his own beliefs were not secure in 1561 and hence remained subordinate to his desire to marry Elizabeth.

Consequently he looked for assistance wherever he could find it, but the likelihood of Dudley holding Catholic sympathies was remote. He had a Protestant upbringing, helped his father attempt to prevent the accession of the Catholic Mary Tudor (for which he was imprisoned), and in his later years became the greatest patron of Puritans in England. One can safely argue that in reality his beliefs fell on the Protestant side but had not yet drifted from the mainstream, nor were they deep enough in 1561 to outweigh his ambition. Therefore Dudley could seek Spanish help without too many pangs of conscience.

When Spanish assistance proved unlikely, he urged English involvement in France, where factional conflict had been brewing between Catholic Guises and French Protestants like the Prince of Condé. From 1562-63, Dudley advised lending troops and money to Condé and the Huguenots. England did send troops, commanded by Ambrose Dudley, by this time the Earl of Warwick. The French, however, saw the English troops as intruders and their appearance in France, instead of assisting a Protestant rebellion, served temporarily to unite the parties.[23] The English expedition eventually returned home after having been devastated by plague at Newhaven (Havre de Grace). An unfortunate victim was de Quadra, who

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[22] The term Puritan originated only in the mid 1560s and thus is inappropriate when used before that time. It is also a blanket term used to describe a wide range of Protestant groups which differed from the Anglicans in either polity of theology or both.

[23] Kendall, *Robert Dudley*, 49. In fact the Peace of Amboise between the Huguenots and Catholics was arranged in 1563 but did not last much beyond the English departure from France.

contracted the virus after the Englishmen had returned, and was subsequently replaced by Don Diego Guzman de Silva.

The motive for English involvement at Newhaven remains unclear. MacCaffrey insisted that "Dudley was the moving spirit in this whole enterprise"[24] but could offer little explanation of Dudley's motives. Perhaps Dudley wished to check the power of the Guises and identify himself with the Huguenot cause (as well as the cause of International Protestantism), hoping for their support in his efforts to marry Elizabeth should the Huguenots seize power in France. His support of the Huguenots contrasted with his earlier effort to gain the support of King Philip, and suggested that though his real religious sympathies leaned toward the Protestant side, in the early 1560s they were not yet firm enough to counteract his ambitions.

English involvement in France might have been an effort to stir up trouble in that country in order to distract the French from contemplating a breach of treaty, but resulted in English forfeiture of claims on Calais and restitution of 220,000 crowns to the French government. At any rate it did not seem to damage Dudley, and Cecil did not oppose intervention. The result, according to MacCaffrey, was that "by the summer of 1563 the Queen's government rested on an ill-assorted triad of leaders – Elizabeth herself, Secretary Cecil, and Lord Robert Dudley."[25]

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[24] MacCaffrey, *Shaping*, 126.

[25] Ibid., 140.

Certainly King Philip recognized Dudley's growing role in English affairs, as evidenced by his instructions to de Silva, which testified to the sway Dudley held over the queen: "It will be necessary for the success of your operations, and for other things that may occur from day to day to secure the goodwill of Lord Robert, who is so great a favourite with the queen of England that he can influence her to the extent you have been already informed. You with your kindness will try to win him over. . . ."[26] The extent of this "kindness" was uncertain. Perhaps it entailed small gifts, money or even information, but the instructions from Philip did not mention any particulars.

Guzman de Silva sent conflicting reports in his various dispatches. On one occasion he indicated to Philip that "Robert still looks to marry the Queen,"[27] but on another he claimed that Margaret Lennox had "sent word to me that I may be sure that the Queen's marriage with Lord Robert will not take place. She says he is undeceived and has told her so himself."[28] These dispatches proved both the uncertainty of the situation and the unreliability of court gossip, and created the impression that neither Dudley nor Elizabeth were willing to divulge their true intent in the matter. It was, however, becoming increasingly evident that the queen would marry no one, not even the royal favorite.

It was during this period, on 20 October 1562, that the queen elevated Dudley to the Privy Council. Earlier that month, she had contracted smallpox, raising fears among her subjects that she would die. The somewhat delirious queen gathered her Councilors and

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[26] *CSP Spanish*, vol. 1, 352.

[27] *CSP Spanish*, vol. 1, 366.

[28] *CSP Spanish*, vol. 1, 379. Perhaps one of her intrigues to get her son into the succession.

requested that Dudley be made Lord Protector of the realm in the event of her death. Her Councilors humored her, but probably had no intention of allowing another Dudley to reach the pinnacle of power. Fortunately for the Council the queen recovered and they were not forced to reach a decision, although Dudley became a Councilor in the aftermath and debate over the English succession increased in intensity.

Two issues overlapped regarding the English succession: Elizabeth's lack of a husband and the question of who should assume the crown in the event the queen should die without issue. If Elizabeth married, any of her children would have been the rightful heirs of England, and the succession would have been settled. To that end, her councilors urged her to take a husband, and possible suitors ranged, at one time or another, from the King of Sweden to the Archduke Charles of Austria to the Duke of Alençon, with varying degrees of support for each. The House of Commons urged Elizabeth to marry in the aftermath of her smallpox scare, and copies of this plea and her response are among the Dudley Papers preserved at Longleat House in Wiltshire.[29] In the address of the Commons to Elizabeth of 28 January 1563, the members set forth many reasons for the queen to marry, all with the security of the realm in mind. The Commons feared both civil war and foreign intervention, and used the examples of the Wars of the Roses and the intervention of Edward I in Scotland (from 1304-05, many years after the death of Alexander III left that nation in turmoil) in order to convince the queen of the gravity of the situation. Furthermore the Commons reminded her

[29] *DP* III, 33. Elizabeth's response to the Commons address was contained in *DP* III, 37.

of contemporary troubles in Scotland and France, and of the threat of foreign Catholic intervention.

Elizabeth responded by politely putting off a decision, saying that she would seek advice from her Council. She thanked the Commons for their concern about the safety of the realm, reminded them that she was fully cognizant of her own mortality, and assured them that the issue would be resolved. She had little intention of ever marrying, however, and may have extended marriage negotiations as a way to postpone perceived foreign threats of invasion. In this respect she was vastly different from her Councilors. Some, like Cecil, rarely failed to advise her to marry, while Dudley typically opposed her suitors owing both to his wish to be her husband and his fear of civil conflicts resulting from the Catholicism of the foreign candidates. According to Camden, Dudley's objections to foreign princes involved seven principal issues: 1) Children of such matches often suffered mental afflictions; 2) Foreign influences entered the realm; 3) Princesses who marry increased the prestige of the foreign kingdom rather than their own; 4) Princesses then would become subject to foreigners; 5) Secrets of the realm would become known to foreigners; 6) Foreign husbands would prefer their nationals over Englishmen; 7) English money would flow to foreign countries to pay for the wars in which the foreign nation became involved, and England would be drawn into those conflicts.[30] Though xenophobia was a factor in several these reasons, the English experience with Spanish courtiers during the reign of Mary suggested that at least some of the rationales had demonstrable truths behind them.

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[30] Camden, *The History of Elizabeth*, 77.

Although no one could persuade Elizabeth to marry, possible successors could be discussed, whether privately, in council, or in parliament.[31] Mary Queen of Scots stood next in line but was the least desirable of the candidates because of her religion and connections with the Guise family. After Mary, the next closest claims on the throne came from Margaret Douglas, Countess of Lennox and her sons Henry Stuart, Lord Darnley, and Charles Stuart. The Stuart men were both cousins of Mary Queen of Scots and grandsons of Margaret Tudor by her second husband. In addition Catherine Grey, granddaughter of Henry VIII's sister Mary, had a claim on the throne by virtue of her Tudor bloodlines. A more distant but still reasonable claim was that of Henry Hastings, the Earl of Huntingdon, whose ancestry dated back through the Yorkist line to Edward III. Though he possessed the weakest legal claim, Huntingdon appealed to many Englishmen because he was the only firmly Protestant male among the claimants.

To each claim Elizabeth had an objection. She was by nature a woman jealous of any challenge to her authority and resented Mary Queen of Scots, who had continually claimed to be the heir to the English throne. Moreover the queen had no great love for Catherine Grey, who had married the Earl of Hertford without her permission. Elizabeth placed her in the Tower, where she gave birth to a son, and by 1563 had borne him a second son. Though Hertford repeatedly wrote to Dudley for help,[32] he was eventually fined £10,000, prompting

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[31] See Appendix B for relevant genealogical tables.

[32] *SP 12*, vol. 34, no. 4, no. 6, no. 12. These may have been drafts since the handwriting is so sloppy as to almost defy description. Nevertheless they are pleas for help in relieving the queen's displeasure over his marriage to Lady Catherine.

him to write again to Dudley for assistance.[33] In this case Dudley's influence counted for very little, since the one thing Elizabeth despised was a challenge to her authority.

She was willing, however, to stall the question of her own marriage. With Catherine Grey imprisoned, one claimant had been effectively removed, and so Elizabeth set about to disrupt any marriage plans of Mary Queen of Scots. While Mary indicated a desire to wed her cousin Darnley, thus creating an extremely strong claim on the English throne, Elizabeth did the unthinkable and offered Dudley as a potential husband for the Queen of Scots. Dudley wanted to be close to the throne, but it was the English throne and Elizabeth he desired. Similarly, Mary coveted the English throne, but not through a marriage to Dudley, whom she described as too low in birth or status to suit her. Elizabeth responded by giving him the title Earl of Leicester on 29 September 1564. Of that title, Ambassador de Silva remarked in a letter to King Philip that it was "usually given to the second sons of the Kings of England."[34] Dudley had not been made a duke (the highest non-princely rank, at that time held only by Norfolk, and probably withheld from Dudley to appease the duke), but the prestige attached to his title was enough to show her subjects how much Elizabeth valued Leicester. Ironically, Lord Darnley served as the sword bearer during the ceremony,[35] a role that was also intentional, as Elizabeth was aware of Mary's infatuation with him.[36] The queen wished to

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[33] *SP 12*, vol. 46, no. 74. This one was obviously dictated to a secretary, since it lacked the sloppy handwriting and excessive strikeouts of the previous three letters.

[34] *CSP Spanish*, vol. 1, 382.

[35] *SP12*, vol. 34, no. 115.

[36] Kendall, *Robert Dudley*, 64.

communicate her displeasure and in the process made a thinly veiled effort to stall the marriage plans of the Queen of Scots.

Although the offer delayed Mary's marriage plans slightly, she nevertheless wed Darnley on 29 July 1565, in spite of Elizabeth's outright refusal to name her as heir. While Mary's claim became stronger and probably had Spanish support, her future unraveled in February 1567 when her lover Bothwell "kidnapped" her and murdered Darnley, likely with her knowledge, and then married her in May of that year. The Scottish nobility, led by the James Stewart, the Earl of Moray, revolted and imprisoned her at Lochleven. She then abdicated in favor of her son by Darnley, James VI, leaving Moray as Regent. In May 1568, however, she escaped to England, where her presence continued to pose problems for the English succession.

The idea of marrying Leicester to the Queen of Scots effectively allowed Elizabeth to do something that she had intended for several years. In creating Dudley as the Earl of Leicester she gave him a formal, titular expression of the generous favors she had heaped upon him since her accession. She advanced him politically, bestowing upon him many appointments, including a grant for life of the Lieutenancy of the Castle and Forest of Windsor.[37] Throughout his life he continued to obtain similar posts, such as a grant of the office of Chamberlain of the County Palatine of Chester in 1565,[38] High Steward of the County of Gloucester in 1575[39] and in 1578, Chancellor and Chamberlain of the Welsh

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[37] *CPR*, vol. 1, 324. Dated 24 November 1559.

[38] *CPR*, vol. 3 (London: HMSO, 1960), 320. Dated 2 July 1565.

[39] C. R. Eldrington, ed., *A History of the County of* Gloucester, vol. 8, The Victoria History of the Counties of England, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1968), 147.

counties of Anglesey, Carnarvon and Merioneth.[40] Furthermore, in 1564 she appointed him Chancellor of Oxford.

In addition to the many offices he held (the preceding were but a small portion), Dudley received large land grants from the queen, making him one of the greatest landowners in the realm. His lands spread from North Wales to the midlands, and included properties in the counties of Denbigh (in Wales), York, Bedford, Middlesex, Hertford, Essex, Leicester, and Warwick. His major holding, that of Kenilworth Castle in Warwick, was bestowed upon him in 1563[41] and was the scene of a lavish artistic production during a 1575 visit of the queen.

Those favors were much more substantial than a title in real, monetary terms, and included export licenses, all of which were extremely lucrative. Some of the more advantageous licenses included several which allowed him to export undressed woolen cloths, totaling about 80,000 cloths by 1565.[42] Leicester turned a hefty profit by selling part of the license to John Marsh and several others of the Merchant Adventurers for the sum of £6666 13s. 4d.[43] Like most nobles, however, Leicester also spent lavishly, especially on gifts to the queen, and was often in debt in spite of his great holdings.[44] Certainly the great

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[40] *CPR*, vol. 7 (London: HMSO, 1982), 429-30.

[41] *Longleat Dudley MSS*, Box I, D; also Box II, 11.

[42] *CPR*, vol. 2 (London: HMSO, 1948), 244-5.

[43] *Longleat Dudley MSS*, Box 2, 10.

[44] Wilson, *Sweet Robin*, 144. Lawrence Stone's *The Crisis of the Aristocracy: 1558 - 1641* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965) can provide a far more complete picture of this phenomenon, common amongst the Elizabethan nobility, whose excesses in the name of keeping up appearances often drove them into debt.

festivities of 1575, held at Kenilworth, constituted a major portion of his expenses with regard to the queen, and was perhaps a last glorious attempt to convince her to marry him.

A lure of marriage to the queen was probably a factor in Dudley's earlier involvement with the Bertano Correspondence (which dated from September 1563 to December 1565), a scheme which aimed to reconcile England and the Roman Catholic church.[45] The breach, which had occurred during the reign of Henry VIII, especially grieved the Church of Rome because of its peculiarities. Unlike reforms in parts of continental Europe, in England the monarch replaced the Pope as the leader of the church of England and confiscated monastic lands. During the reign of Elizabeth, Dudley benefited from this arrangement on numerous occasions as the queen distributed former monastic lands among her nobility.

Though the English nobility profited from the distribution of monastic lands, England could hardly have been described as unified in its religious practices. Officially the Church of England was the only recognized entity in the realm, but even issues as seemingly simple as whether to refer to the monarch as "head" or "governor" of the Church produced lengthy and often bitter debates. In matters of polity, the debate was even more intense. While the government supported the existing order of bishops, many factions rejected that arrangement since it too closely resembled the Roman polity. Ideological conflicts such as these spilled over into Parliament, where the queen forbade debates on the subject and demanded conformity. While the existing polity provoked factional dispute amongst the English, it did

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[45] Kenneth Bartlett, "Papal Policy and the English Crown, 1563-1565: The Bertano Correspondence," *Sixteenth Century Journal* 23, no. 4 (Winter 1992): 643.

not prevent a shared dislike of Catholicism, a fact lost on Catholic plotters such as the Italian Gurone Bertano, who initiated a clandestine effort to undermine the Anglican polity.

According to Kenneth Bartlett, Bertano's plan involved a reconciliation of England and Rome, and consisted of the following elements:

> Pope Pius IV was convinced to support a scheme proposed . . . by Bertano which guaranteed Elizabeth four thousand soldiers as protection after her reconciliation with Rome, and thirty thousand crowns to induce Protestant courtiers . . . to support such a policy. Also, the queen would receive ecclesiastical tenths, and all present owners of former monastic lands would be confirmed in their titles. Finally, the queen would have the right to name four cardinals and Lord Robert Dudley would have the privilege to name one.[46]

It is immensely important to note that as the correspondence continued, the plan became more outrageous, probably a result of a lukewarm reception in England. By 5 December 1563, Bertano wrote Cecil that perhaps the Pope could marry Dudley and Elizabeth, declare Dudley king and designate his brother Ambrose a cardinal.[47] Even more outlandish was the final desperate design of Bertano, which called for 30,000 scudi to Cecil, 20,000 to Dudley, as well as the aforementioned soldiers and other terms.[48]

From the rapid and bizarre evolution of the plan it should be clear that the English never seriously considered it. Dudley had no objection to the possibility of marrying Elizabeth but probably considered the other aspects a bit too risky to undertake. According to C. G. Bayne, Leicester remarked to Sebastian Bruschetto in September 1565 "that the

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[46] Ibid., 650. The original document, in Italian, from Gurone Bertano to Luis de Requesens on January 26, 1565 has been published in C. G. Bayne, *Anglo-Roman Relations, 1558-1565* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1968; reprint, Oxford: n.p., 1913), 313-16.

[47] Bartlett, "Papal Policy," 652.

[48] Bertano to Requesens, 2 November 1565, printed in Bayne, *Anglo-Roman Relations*, 322-3.

undertaking was very difficult, involving, as it did, the whole frame of the state. . . ."[49] Leicester's caution in this affair was inconsistent with his earlier intrigues regarding Spain, and suggested that either his motivation was lukewarm or that he deferred action to Cecil, whose task it was to uncover the plan.

Cecil, no doubt, would never have seriously followed through on the design, and most likely encouraged the correspondence for three aims: discovering of papal policy toward England; providing time for the English to stabilize their political situation, as it related to foreign powers; and discovering the extent of Leicester's ambition with regard to the queen.[50] Cecil found nothing with which to remove Leicester from court, and so Leicester retained his status as the royal favorite. Considering Elizabeth's knowledge of the correspondence and Leicester's limited involvement, it can be suggested that she prevented him from becoming too deeply embroiled and referred the bulk of the communication to Cecil. A further implication of this theory is that the trio could have been working together toward the same goal.

There is in fact more evidence to suggest that Elizabeth, Leicester, and Cecil were working together in the affair. According to Bayne, Bertano said in a conference with Pope Pius IV that the trio "had recently asked him to send them his secretary, Sebastian Bruschetto, since he could not come to England himself. He explained that he proposed to

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[49] Ibid., 214. This is essentially Bayne's translation of part of a letter from Bruschetto to Bertano, dated 8 October 1565, printed in Bayne, *Anglo-Roman Relations*, 320-22.

[50] Bartlett, "Papal Policy," 658. I have serious doubts as to the last aim. Bartlett seemed very eager to portray Dudley as cynical, scheming, and excessively ambitious, as did Bayne.

use Sebastian as the negotiator of this scheme. . . ."[51] There would be no reason for all three to make this request if they acted independently of each other. With their support, Bruschetto came to England where he was "warmly received and taken into Leicester's service on a salary of 200 crowns (about £30) a year and his living."[52] Bruschetto in fact was known to be in correspondence with Dudley as early as June 17, 1564, when he informed Dudley that he would contact Bertano on his behalf.[53] Since the entire Bertano correspondence had begun with an initiative from Bertano to Cecil via Bruschetto's father Antonio,[54] the choice of Sebastian as an agent of Leicester could not have been a surprise to Cecil.

The whole incident appeared to be a joint effort by Elizabeth, Cecil, and Leicester to uncover the true extent of Papal designs on England. What they discovered must have been a comfort to them, since the use of a mere 4,000 soldiers to assist Elizabeth during a restoration of Catholicism would have been insufficient assistance during a civil war. The Pope, it seemed, was willing to assist but would not commit enough support to make the design workable. Militarily, at least, the threat from Papal quarters paled in comparison to a fear of Spanish intervention.

If Leicester had been warmly receptive to the Bertano plan and pursued it actively, it would not have been reasonable for Elizabeth to easily forgive traitorous actions like those proposed in the correspondence. To do so would have meant that she was so smitten with

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[51] Bayne, *Anglo-Roman Relations*, 210.

[52] Bayne, *Anglo-Roman Relations*, 211. This represents Bayne's translation of ". . . con provisione de 200 escudi l'anno e il vito. . . ." from the printed letter from Bertano to Requesens of 26 January 1565, 315.

[53] *HMC Pepys*, 25 (I, 171). The listing in parentheses refers to the original document in the collection.

[54] Bayne, *Anglo-Roman Relations*, 209.

Leicester as to remit any offense against her, and if that had been the case she probably would have married him in spite of the consequences. Since this did not happen, there is no reason to assert that Leicester seriously considered backing Bertano's wild ideas, even if they re-opened the possibility of his marriage to Elizabeth. It is more likely that Leicester involved himself only with the knowledge of Elizabeth and only to a degree which she was willing to support. Though denied this opportunity to marry the queen, Leicester still managed to further entrench himself in her favor by behaving discreetly in the matter.

In the late 1560's, Leicester, who had become secure in his position as the royal favorite, became involved in the Norfolk plot, which also involved Norfolk, Sir Nicholas Throckmorton, the Earl of Arundel, and the Earl of Pembroke.[55] For reasons unknown to posterity, this entailed a truce in the often tumultuous relationship between Leicester and Norfolk, who worked secretly toward several goals. The design had four main elements: an attempt to marry Norfolk to the Queen of Scots, who had recently escaped to England; a larger move to restore Mary in Scotland in return for her toleration of Protestantism; declaration of Mary as heir presumptive of England; and an effort to remove William Cecil from office.[56] The potential removal of William Cecil would have eliminated Leicester's main opponent at court, and so he must have supported this portion of the plan. Whether he fully endorsed the remaining elements depends on whether one accepts the claims of Norfolk and his ally the Earl of Sussex.

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[55] MacCaffrey, *Shaping*, 308.

[56] Ibid., 310, 314.

Sussex wrote Cecil in September 1569 to inform the secretary that Arundel, Pembroke and Leicester had moved Norfolk to attempt the marriage.[57] Norfolk himself similarly indicated that the marriage scheme originated with Leicester.[58] The only possible motive for Leicester was to convince Elizabeth to marry him by forcing the succession issue through the Norfolk match. In order to preserve the Tudor claim on the throne, Elizabeth would then have to marry and produce issue, most likely with Leicester. However, this does not directly lead to the conclusion that Leicester proposed the scheme, though he certainly knew of it and was not opposed to the idea.

The benefits to Leicester of a match between Norfolk and Mary could not have escaped his attention, but the conspirators saw William Cecil as an obstacle to their plans. Thus the elements of the plan were linked together – one could not succeed without the others and so the idea of removing Cecil surfaced. Though privy to this segment of the plot, Leicester was unaware of another aim, the restoration of Catholicism through a rebellion led by Norfolk. Apparently Norfolk used as a messenger one Roberto Ridolfi, a man whose zeal for his Roman Catholic faith convinced him that Norfolk could guarantee success.[59] This side of the plot may only have been known to Norfolk and his closest allies, but not Leicester, who most certainly would have dissented, since by 1569 he had become a staunch supporter of Puritan causes.

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[57] *CSP Scottish*, vol. 2, 674.

[58] *CSP Scottish*, vol. 4, 33.

[59] MacCaffrey, *Shaping*, 315.

Although the full extent of his involvement in the Norfolk Plot remained uncertain, Leicester definitely had intimate knowledge of many of the details. The curious aspect of his dealings in this matter concerns the Duke of Norfolk, who only three years earlier had been his vocal opponent. By 1566 the two were able to identify their adherents by small colored articles of clothing, purple for Leicester and yellow for Norfolk.[60] Whether Leicester was involved for his own personal gain or as a means to exact revenge upon Norfolk by revealing the plot is debatable. It is also possible that he remained involved so long as he thought the plot involved removing Cecil and securing his own marriage to the queen, but that he looked for a way out when the plot took on pro-Catholic overtones. On 6 September 1569, Leicester revealed to Elizabeth what details he knew, seriously jeopardizing Norfolk's position.[61]

Norfolk retreated to his residence at Kenninghall rather than face the queen, prompting some to conclude that a rebellion would soon follow.[62] Norfolk eventually went to Windsor and was then taken to the Tower, leaving his allies in the north, the Earls of Northumberland and Westmoreland, to fend for themselves. Sensing the sudden awkwardness of their situation, they rose in rebellion, entering the Cathedral at Durham and attempting to restore the Catholic Mass. In response, Elizabeth sent the Earl of Sussex, in

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[60] *CSP Spanish*, vol. 1, 511. The conflict did not originate with Leicester and Norfolk, however. Stone, in *The Crisis of the Aristocracy* discussed it (Stone, *Crisis*, 399) as the third generation of a Howard/Dudley family feud: In 1509 Thomas Howard, the Earl of Surrey, sat in judgment over Edmund Dudley, who was executed. John Dudley, the Duke of Northumberland, kept the Duke of Norfolk in the Tower from 1549-53, but was himself executed for his attempt to proclaim Lady Jane Grey as queen. Norfolk then returned to his former status as the highest ranking nobleman of the realm, but as we have seen resented Robert Dudley's intimacy with the queen.

[61] Wilson, *Sweet Robin*, 213.

[62] Kendall, *Robert Dudley*, 125.

command of royal troops, to repel them.[63] The earls, who could not muster significant support from local Catholics, fled to Scotland, where Northumberland was captured.[64] Norfolk's connections with the earls undermined what support he had left in council, and he was tried by a jury of peers including Leicester, convicted by the same, and executed for High Treason on 2 June 1572, in the aftermath of both the Northern Rebellion and the Ridolfi Plot.[65]

The execution of Norfolk left Leicester and William Cecil (created Lord Burghley on 25 February 1571) as the two main foci of opinion on the Privy Council. They were often at odds especially concerning Elizabeth's marriage plans (inscrutable as they were) and in regards to foreign affairs such as the French civil/religious conflicts and the Dutch revolt against Spain. Leicester's religious convictions led him to counsel intervention in these situations, while Burghley remained cautious and advised negotiation. English involvement in foreign affairs might have eventually encompassed open warfare, which would have placed the crown in jeopardy. As the English succession had not been settled, any foreign entanglements had precarious repercussions for the safety of the realm.

In spite of the danger to England without a predetermined succession, Elizabeth showed no real inclination to marriage. Proposals came from many foreign potentates, all of

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[63] MacCaffrey, *Shaping*, 336.

[64] Ibid., 347.

[65] The Northern Rebellion was a dismal failure but quite alarming to the crown, which feared the release of Mary and the removal of Elizabeth from the throne. Norfolk's connection to the earls was by marriage: his sister had married Westmoreland (MacCaffrey, *Shaping*, 338). In 1571, the Ridolfi Plot involved Norfolk as well, since the duke had met with the Italian and was later implicated by the Bishop of Ross, who had full knowledge of the affair. See MacCaffrey, *Shaping*, 408-18, for more complete information.

which were entertained as long as possible before the queen inevitably declined. Even the highly favored Leicester made little progress with Elizabeth and by the 1570s had resigned himself from the possibility of marriage to the queen. He became involved with two notable women in the middle years of that decade, perhaps on the advice of Throckmorton.[66] The first, Lady Douglass Sheffield, a daughter of William Baron Effingham, later claimed to have married Dudley in May 1573 though her claim could not be proven in the Star Chamber in 1603.[67] The two did have a son, however, who they named Robert, and who was also a claimant in the 1603 suit. Leicester acknowledged Robert as his own son, but could not make the boy his heir as the child was illegitimate.

Whatever the truth of Lady Sheffield's claims, it is certain that the Earl of Leicester did marry Lettice (Lætitia) Knollys, recent widow of Walter Devereux, the Earl of Essex (whose death was attributed to Leicester by his detractors), in a secret ceremony performed in 1578.[68] The Frenchman Jean de Simier, in order to discredit the advice of Leicester on a possible marriage of Elizabeth with François, Duke of Alençon (after 1574 the Duke of Anjou[69]), revealed to Elizabeth the reality of Leicester's union with Lettice. This greatly

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[66] Ann Hoffman, *Lives of the Tudor Age 1485-1603* (NY: Harper and Row, 1977), 150. The entry indicated that it was Throckmorton who advised Leicester to test the queen's favor for him by a discreet affair. To Dudley this apparently meant fathering a child by Lady Sheffield, and then secretly marrying Countess Essex.

[67] *Longleat Dudley MSS*, Boxes VI - VIII.

[68] *DP* III, 61. The ceremony was performed by Leicester's chaplain Humphrey Tyndall, at Wanstead on September 21, 1578. Tyndall made this deposition after Simier's revelation, and said that Leicester "had a good seazon forborne marriadge in respect of her maiesties displesure. . . ." In attendance were the earls of Pembroke and Warwick, Roger Lord North, Sir Francis Knollys (father of the bride) and Richard Knollys.

[69] The use of the name Anjou has led to much confusion. Francis' brother Henry was the Duke of Anjou until he became Henry II in 1574, at which point Francis became the Duke of Anjou. The title of Alençon has been used here to circumvent this distinction.

aroused the anger of the queen, since the marriage had been performed without her permission. After an initial banishment from court, Leicester slowly returned to the favor of Elizabeth, who forgave him but despised Lettice for the remainder of her life.

Simier, in fact, was the agent of Alençon in England, responsible for courting the queen on his master's behalf. His revelation of Leicester's marriage may have been intended to push the queen toward Alençon, a prospect which revolted Leicester. For his part, however, the earl saw benefits in an alliance with France, which he advocated mainly due to the presence of Spanish troops in the Netherlands. The threat of Catholic invasion from this area and/or rebellion had been proven to exist, so Leicester looked for a strategic move to counter the possibility. An alliance with Spain was out of the question, as they were potential invaders, but the French remained a possibility while the Duke of Alençon courted Elizabeth. In fact when Elizabeth denied Alençon her hand, she instead gave him a large sum of money to support French intervention in the Dutch revolt, thus intervening in the Low Countries without actually committing English forces. Alençon enjoyed little success in this endeavor and died in 1584, which not only left the Dutch rebels without immediate support but also terminated the Valois line in the French succession.

Leicester had become a strong proponent of the Protestant Dutch rebels fighting against the forces of Catholic Spain in the Netherlands, and for several years he advised intervention. He was always countered by the ever-cautious Burghley until 1585, when Elizabeth agreed to send troops to the Netherlands. That same year, Elizabeth chose Leicester to command the English forces, but he immediately ran into almost insurmountable

difficulties, some due to the particulars of the situation, some due to the indecisiveness of the queen in providing support for her troops, and some of his own making.

His first and ultimately worst mistake was to accept the title of governor-general, something Elizabeth strictly forbade him to do, but which was probably necessary in order to exert effective control over the provinces. In this situation his wife was of little help, as she planned to join him in the Low Countries with a large entourage, the magnificence of which led some to believe that the earl was setting up his own court.[70] As a result, Elizabeth forbade the countess to cross the Channel and sternly reprimanded Leicester for his arrogance. Leicester lost valuable time while arguing the particulars of his command relationship to the queen. This was not his only error, however, as he constantly bickered with his commanders, especially Edward Norris. In addition, Elizabeth did not provide adequate financial support for the English troops, which forced Leicester to finance much of the expedition from his own funds. This proved to be a financial disaster for the earl, who soon desired his recall from the Low Countries. Adding to his wish for deliverance was the death on 17 October 1586 of his nephew Sir Philip Sidney from gangrenous complications of a wound received in action near Zutphen. Not only did this greatly grieve Leicester but it also proved disastrous for the Puritans, who looked to the young Sidney as the ideological heir of Leicester in religious matters.

Leicester returned to England out of favor, but managed to restore himself to the Queen's good graces, and soon returned to the Netherlands in 1587, only to fail yet again as a

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[70] Jenkins, *Elizabeth and Leicester*, 313.

commander. Following his final departure, several of the men he left behind as governors of key fortresses and cities betrayed his trust and handed over their charges to the Spanish.[71] Although Leicester was unsuccessful in attempting to repel the Spanish, his troops and those of the Dutch rebels prevented the Spanish from capturing a suitable landing place for the Armada to pick up troops for its planned invasion of England.

After his final return to England, Leicester was placed in command of English defense forces which he encamped at Tilbury. The need to use them never arose owing to the demise of the Armada, and it seemed things would soon return to normal. After the demise of the Armada, Elizabeth considered making him Lieutenant-General of England and Ireland, but Cecil dissuaded her because he feared the power that Leicester might have obtained with that office.[72] The argument proved to be irrelevant, for Leicester died on 4 September 1588. When Elizabeth learned of his death, according to Esther Clifford "she locked herself in her bedchamber and stayed there, without giving a sign of life until, on the third day, Burleigh and some of the alarmed members of her council ordered the door broken in. . . ."[73] Moreover, she continued to keep with her the final letter he sent to her, with the marginal note "his last letter," that she had written on the document.[74]

Leicester had amassed a huge debt during his Dutch campaign, and after his death some of his lands were seized in order to pay off his liabilities to the crown. His death not

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[71] Sir William Stanley handed over Deventer, and Sir Rowland Yorke handed over Zutphen.

[72] Froude, *History of England*, vol. 12, 520.

[73] Clifford, "Marriage of True Minds," 44.

[74] *SP 12*, vol. 215, no. 65. The document has since been removed from the bound volume and placed in a museum. Unfortunately the note that replaced it did not indicate the specific museum.

only left the Puritan movement without influential leadership, but also prevented him from defending himself from libels such as *Leicester's Commonwealth.* His political opponents understandably declined to defend him, especially Burghley, who had a long-standing personal dislike for Leicester, and no love for the extreme Puritans as well. As a result, scandalous stories of Leicester's life remained the accepted views of him among historians writing before the twentieth century.

Though these accounts portrayed Leicester poorly, during his lifetime his credit with the queen brought him a flood of letters asking for the use of his influence. Many of these letters have been preserved in various collections scattered throughout England. The letters form the basis for the remainder of this study, and will be analyzed collectively in the next chapter before proceeding to the contents of specific documents.

Chapter Two

Influence: The Evidence

Several main bodies of evidence exist which give insight into the influence of Robert Dudley. The Dudley Papers at Longleat compose the first major source, offering only sporadic coverage due to fire and water damage, with the longest stretch of undamaged articles running from 1559 to mid-1561. A few documents from the 1570s form part of the collection but often display signs of damage (tears, burns, water spots), and documents from the last few months of Leicester's life are well preserved. In all there are twenty volumes, but only the first four contain letters, while the remainder consist of inventories (an interesting topic in themselves but not directly relevant here). In addition, boxed items, mostly on large vellum sheets, are preserved at Longleat, including official land grants to Dudley, his marriage contract with Amy Robsart (drawn up by their parents), his creation as Earl of Leicester, and his appointment as Chancellor of Oxford.

Aside from the Dudley Papers, the State Papers (Domestic) of the Reign of Elizabeth I at the Public Record Office (Chancery Lane branch) provide valuable letters. They cover a variety of subjects, but among the more interesting are letters from the Earl of Hertford, who complained of the burden placed on him by the imprisonment of his wife Catherine Grey. Other letters show Dudley's involvement in various mining and mercantile interests, including a mining venture in Cumberland and cloth trading in Barbary.

The Pepys Manuscripts, maintained at Magdalene College, Cambridge, include many letters sent to Dudley. They are better preserved than the Dudley Papers and more complete

during the years 1564-69. They fill a large gap and display similar characteristics to the Dudley Papers. The Pepys Manuscripts reveal a greater emphasis on news reports from abroad as French and Dutch problems heated up. Nevertheless, numerous requests in the Pepys Manuscripts for Leicester's influence, together with similar requests in the Dudley Papers, show that close to 40 percent of all letters he received petitioned for his assistance in some way.

Another major collection, the Cottonian Manuscripts, is not part of this study because of time constraints. These papers supply information relating to the period 1574-88 and which contain an extensive selection of papers that had been preserved by Sir Arthur Atye, one of Leicester's secretaries.[1] Apparently his secretaries and other servants saved copious but fragmented amounts of his papers, a common practice during the era,[2] but the broad dispersal of the collections made the task of historians of Leicester quite difficult. In fact for many years historians feared that the papers had been lost altogether in the destruction of Kenilworth in 1649, during the English Civil War.[3] Although the papers survived, some have certainly been lost over more than 400 years, while the remainder have been so widely distributed that reviewing them all would be a major feat of scholarship in itself. This constitutes part of the problem in producing a definitive biography of Leicester, which has yet to emerge but may be forthcoming in the next two decades.

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[1] Simon Adams, "The Papers of Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, II. The Atye-Cotton Collection," *Archives* 20, no. 90 (1993): 131.

[2] Simon Adams, "The Papers of Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, I. The Browne-Evelyn Collection," *Archives* 20, no. 87 (1992): 64.

[3] Ibid., 63.

Thus the Dudley Papers, Pepys Manuscripts, and Cottonian Manuscripts constitute the bulk of Leicester's correspondence, but many smaller collections contain sufficient papers to be considered a viable source. Letters received by Robert Dudley do not constitute the only pertinent source about his life. The correspondence of Spanish Ambassadors with King Philip and other powerful Spanish officials lacks the specificity of the preceding sources, but does provide a clear picture of Spanish ambitions in England (i.e., Catholic restoration) while also showing, through sheer number of references, the importance of Leicester in affairs of state. While obviously biased toward Catholic aims and loaded with unreliable gossip, some letters, in spite of their exaggerations, indicate that Dudley's influence with Elizabeth grew dramatically during the early years of the reign. The earliest of these suggests that Dudley's importance exceeded the scope of his office (Master of the Horse): in December 1558 Ambassador de Feria recommended that Dudley should receive a pension of approximately 1000 crowns from Philip, which implied that he was already considered highly influential with Elizabeth.[4] The importance of this reference cannot be underestimated, as it showed that only a few months after the accession of Elizabeth, Dudley, whose official position had only minor significance, had gained great favor and was in a position to assist those who came to him asking for something from the crown.

Further evidence of his credit with Elizabeth comes from the letters he received as early as 1559 from all quarters of England. As his prestige grew, so too did the number of requests. But from whom did these letters emanate and what, specifically, did they request?

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[4] *CSP Spanish*, vol. 1, 11.

For this purpose the Dudley Papers form the basis of arguments, with supporting evidence coming from the Pepys Manuscripts. Because the Cottonian Manuscripts were not consulted, large gaps in years appear in this study, but any established pattern probably would not vary substantially during the excluded years. As this study investigates approximately one-third of Dudley's correspondence, it should stand as a representative sample.

A pattern becomes apparent when one classifies the letters received by Robert Dudley. The main categories are as follows: Requests for Influence; Foreign News; Domestic News; Letters of Thanks; and Miscellaneous letters. The first category, Requests for Influence, will be discussed in Chapters Four and Five due to its many sub-categories, but the other classifications can be briefly defined here. Foreign News Reports consist of any letters originating either abroad or in England which discuss events in nations other than England. Usually these letters detailed the progress of foreign wars, court intrigues or treaty negotiations. Domestic News Reports typically enumerated any issues specific to England, such as local political events or reports on the medical status of a friend of Leicester. One letter, for example, described the circumstances of a blood-letting performed on the queen.[5] Letters of Thanks form another category, consisting of all letters thanking Dudley for various favors ranging from the use of his influence to his gifts of animals, but are limited in numbers for reasons which will be discussed later in this chapter. Finally, the category of Miscellaneous letters includes such mundane topics as sending animals, usually hawks or dogs, from one person to another, or an account of a sea voyage.

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[5] *DP* I, 20. Dated 2 July 1559.

These categories are distributed in a particular fashion established in the Dudley Papers, a pattern which suggests that most of the letters received by Robert Dudley pertained to requests for the use of his influence. If the pattern in the Pepys Manuscripts closely corresponds to that in the Dudley Papers, it may be inferred that it holds for the letters he received in years not covered by the two collections, including those destroyed or not located. Only a study of the Cottonian Manuscripts can confirm this hypothesis, but it seems unlikely that the Cottonian collection would deviate dramatically from the other collections.

In considering the Dudley Papers, a logical step, in order to clarify the categories of subject matter, is to place in tabular form the numbers of each category of letter. The tabular data refers to only subject matter, not to individual letters. Some letters (about 10) contain more than one subject, so each subject has been listed once. For example, Henry Goodere wrote to Leicester on 14 March 1571, asking Leicester to "remembre me touching my sute to the Quene her majestie" and also made a request in favor of the bearer of the letter, for whom he asked "If your L[ordship] have any Burgesshipp yet ungeven your L[ord-ship] may doo well to bestowe one

Table 1: Breakdown of the Dudley Papers by Subject

Category	Number	Percentage of Total
Influence	109	48.7
Foreign News	26	11.6
Domestic News	26	11.6
Letters of Thanks	12	5.3
Miscellaneous	51	22.8
Totals	**224**	**100.0**

Table 2: Breakdown of the Pepys Manuscripts Pertaining to Robert Dudley by Subject

Category	Number	Percentage of Total
Influence	75	31.9
Foreign News	98	41.7
Domestic News	22	9.4
Letters of Thanks	13	5.5
Miscellaneous	27	11.5
Total	**235**	**100.0**

upon him; for he is a mete man of his yeres, for the place."[6] These are separate requests for Leicester to use his prestige and so this particular letter is considered to have two entries under influence in Table 1.

The Dudley Papers clearly contain a high percentage of letters petitioning for help, but ascertaining whether the Pepys Manuscripts show a comparable pattern is critical. A similar table can be constructed for the Pepys Manuscripts, once again considering only subject matter, with just nineteen letters consisting of multiple subjects.

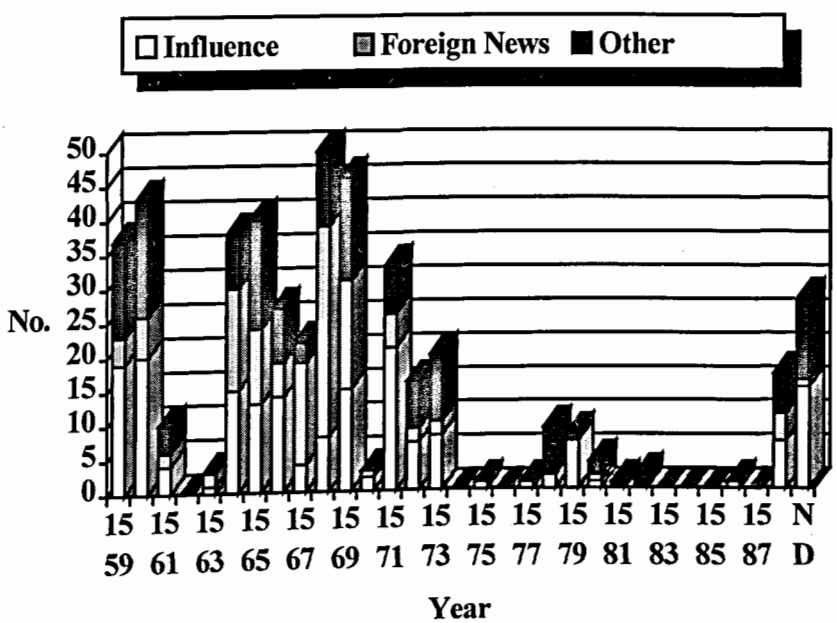
The main area of discrepancy between the two tables touches the first two categories. Instances of influence peddling drop from about 48 percent to just under 32 percent, while foreign news reports more than triple. The latter change is far easier to explain than the first. While the Dudley Papers cover the years 1559-60 in great detail, the bulk of the Pepys Manuscripts pertain to 1564-69. Since Dudley was raised to the Privy Council in 1562, after which he took a greater role in affairs of state, foreign news reports should have increased

[6] *DP* I, 220.

dramatically after his elevation in order to reflect his larger role in affairs of state (See Graph 1 for a yearly breakdown). However, this does not answer the other question, which pertains to the drop in requests for his influence. It does not seem reasonable that fewer people would seek his assistance after he became a Privy Councilor. A tentative answer comes from the incomplete nature of documents from this era, combined with normal fluctuations in requests. There may also have been an initial rush of enthusiasm when Elizabeth came to the throne, as people scrambled to obtain choice appointments for themselves or their protégés.

A further consideration deals with French civil conflicts after 1562, which would yield a large increase in foreign news updates while not substantially affecting other subjects. A yearly breakdown is in order here, as it might assist in establishing a pattern. This in turn will help formulate generalizations about the yearly breakdown of all letters received by Robert Dudley, which will allow an educated guess as to the full picture of his influence.

Graph 1: Yearly Breakdown of Subjects in the Dudley Papers and the Pepys Manuscripts



The information in Graph 1 shows the yearly breakdown of subjects in letters from the Dudley Papers and Pepys Manuscripts. In this graph, the lowest portion (in white) of each bar represents requests for influence, while the middle portion (light gray) consists of news reports from abroad and the upper portion (dark gray) is composed of all other subjects. The final entry on the year axis is the abbreviation "N D" which indicates the number of subjects contained in undated letters. The total number of subjects represents both the Dudley Papers and the Pepys Manuscripts.

Graph 1 indicates that an increase in reports from abroad, which roughly coincided with conflicts in France and the Netherlands, as well as disorder in Scotland, appeared from 1564-69. Further scrutiny of the source of foreign news dispatches during this period showed that most of them originated in France ($^{50}/_{93}$ = 53.76 percent, with no other point of origin showing more than nine letters). Furthermore, a letter may have originated in one country, but sometimes discussed events in another. This was most common in letters from France, where the situation in the Netherlands was discussed nearly as frequently as French civil turmoil.

The increase in foreign dispatches was most dramatic in 1568, when Leicester received at least twenty-two dispatches from France alone, but this year was probably just anomalous since its pattern differed markedly from the other years in the survey. For other years, the Pepys Manuscripts revealed a minimum of ten dispatches per year from France, a pattern that most likely held true for a longer period, but the incomplete nature of the data makes this hypothesis only a guess. Judging solely based on 1568, when reports came with a

frequency of about one per week, the numbers from other years may have been diminished in some way, whether by destruction of the documents or their removal to another collection.

Foreign news reports increased after Dudley became the Earl of Leicester, which appeared to be sensible because he was by that time heavily involved in Privy Council activities. His agents abroad probably did more for him than merely giving updates on the latest battles, however. In *Invisible Power: The Elizabethan State Services 1570-1603*, Alan Haynes suggested that Leicester, along with Burghley and Sir Francis Walsingham, "directed their own private secret services that were yoked to serve the intentions of the regime. . . ."[7] Specifically, their agents "purposed two essential things . . . : the defeat of foreign threats to Elizabeth; and the consolidation of the grip of Protestantism."[8] By planting men in foreign courts, Leicester hoped to gain "inside information" which might help him formulate his own goals in foreign affairs, and if the messages he received were of help to Elizabeth, it could only have increased his influence with her.

While Haynes recognized the limitations of the various collections of Dudley papers, since the incomplete nature of these documents is a major disappointment for historians, he indicated that Leicester received substantial information from his sources. Although according to Haynes Leicester's totals of incoming papers "only surpassed . . . [Burghley] in 1582," Haynes calculated that Leicester could have received close to 100 items per year.[9]

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[7] Alan Haynes, *Invisible Power: The Elizabethan State Services 1570 -1603*, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992), xvi.

[8] Ibid., 156.

[9] Ibid., 13. Haynes' numbers must come from sources other than just the Dudley Papers and Pepys Manuscripts. Whether he extrapolated from available data is unknown.

This number is far in excess of what survives in the Dudley Papers and Pepys Manuscripts combined! If one carried the argument to its logical conclusion, one would realize just how many papers may have been destroyed or lost over the centuries. In spite of these limitations, what remains is immensely valuable for the information it reveals about the scope of Leicester's prestige.

Aside from the increase in foreign news dispatches shown from 1564-69, Graph 1 also shows a slight yearly drop in requests for influence. Excluding the years 1567-68, which show only a small number of requests and were probably aberrations from the norm, the other years represented in the Pepys collection revealed a small drop. Requests for influence in those years averaged about fourteen separate petitions, while the years represented by the Dudley Papers average approximately nineteen inquiries. As a percentage, the drop seemed more drastic than it was in reality. When total numbers are small, any change, no matter how slight, appears to be a large percentage change, but in this case the reality was that the drop may have amounted to only one letter every two months. Therefore, the diminished numbers seen in the Pepys Manuscripts should not be exaggerated and should rather be seen as confirming the general frequency of requests for influence in the Dudley Papers. Furthermore, the deviation was so small that it can be easily attributed to destroyed or misplaced documents.

Documents from the Pepys and Bath collections have been treated separately, but as a whole they comprise about ten years worth of data, or about one-third of all extant letters received by Dudley. In Table 3 the previous tables are totaled, which should provide a representative sample of subjects. This sample should roughly correspond to the pattern for all letters received by Dudley from 1559-88, aside from unexpected deviations.

Table 3: Breakdown of Subjects in Letters Received by Robert Dudley

Category	Number	Percentage of Total
Influence	184	40.1
Foreign News	124	27.0
Domestic News	48	10.5
Letters of Thanks	25	5.4
Miscellaneous	78	17.0
Total	**459**	**100.0**

Clearly requests for Leicester's influence outpaced all other categories in Table 3, but it is safe to argue that the numbers of foreign news reports were underemphasized, since critical years of the Dutch revolt were not included in the Bath and Pepys collections..[10] Even so, the most important conclusion which can be derived from Table 3 is that a great many people sought out Leicester, hoping that his prestige could secure them what they desired.

A curious aspect of Table 3 lies in the limited numbers under the heading "letters of thanks" which leads to speculation that either men were ungrateful, many documents are

[10] This applies only to the totals from Table 3. The numbers from the Pepys manuscripts show a larger percentage of foreign news reports than the Dudley Papers. This probably stems from Dudley's increasing role in foreign affairs after his elevation to the Privy Council in 1562. If the full range of years were represented, the pattern followed might roughly correspond to that of the years 1564-65, which show a 3:2 ratio of requests for influence to foreign news reports.

missing, or Leicester was unusually unsuccessful in using his influence. Numerous examples of his failures but also many of his successes have been recorded by historians, so the answer may cannot be derived from any single explanation. In many cases, discovering whether Leicester enjoyed success appears to be a reasonably simple matter, but ascertaining specifically who held minor local offices during a given period can be nearly hopeless. Records of that nature are not abundant in the same way as registers of Members of Parliaments or lists of justices of the peace. Hence in some cases discovering whether Leicester was successful will be relatively easy, but in others virtually impossible.

Nevertheless it is clear that a multitude of individuals wrote to Leicester petitioning him for help of some sort. The categories into which these requests fell are summarized in Table 4, with the numbers in each category representing subject matter in the original letters. There are instances, as in the first two tables, where multiple subjects appeared in the same letter, a fact not reflected in these numbers. In the letters, those who wrote to Leicester sought favors ranging from being excused from Parliament to assistance obtaining an ecclesiastical post. Many requested favors for themselves, while others asked on behalf of their servants or family members.

Table 4: Categories of Requests for Influence

Category	Number
Ecclesiastical Affairs	28
Secular Office	18
Assistance with Lands	17
Help with Unspecified Suit	16
Financial Assistance	16
Help a Prisoner	13
Misc. Recommendations	12
Recall from Foreign Post	10
Other	54
Total	**184**

Only the first category, "Ecclesiastical Affairs," stands out as more important than the rest due to sheer numbers of letters. The category of "Other" should not be considered for that purpose, since it is composed of many miscell-aneous (and often apparently trivial) subjects and includes many letters asking for help in a cause to be explained by the bearer. The exact subject of these letters remains, unfortunately, unknown.

The eight specific categories (not including "Other") comprise a wide range of subjects, and deserve brief attention in order to define them. The first, "Ecclesiastical Affairs," includes both requests to obtain church posts as well as petitions for assistance promoting a particular religious viewpoint. Typically these letters were addressed to Leicester because of his connections with the Puritans. People did not just seek ecclesiastical positions through Leicester; on eighteen occasions men wrote him seeking a "Secular Office," usually sheriff of a county or a local burgesship.

Almost as frequent were inquiries regarding "Assistance with Lands," which implored Leicester to assist in the obtaining of specific pieces of property. In addition, petitioners pleaded for legal help from Leicester, though they often did not indicate the specifics of their suits, which formed the category of "Help with Unspecified Suit." Still

others wished for relief from debts or the remission of monetary fines, for which they requested "Financial Assistance" from Leicester. This did not necessarily mean that they expected Leicester to send money, but rather they simply wanted him to appeal to the appropriate authorities, who would then reduce the debt or fine. Fines were not the only punishments for which Leicester received petitions. On thirteen occasions men and women wrote to him so that he might "Help a Prisoner" by securing a release or allowing a transfer into what can effectively be termed "house arrest."

Another category of requests was that of "Miscellaneous Recommendations," in which the supplicant endorsed a particular man as a servant, whether for service to Leicester or the queen. Finally, the last classification, "Recall from Foreign Post," usually consisted of a plea for license to return to England from abroad. Typically the men making these requests were ambassadors who found their expenses to be excessively burdensome.

The variety of inquiries sent to Leicester showed that his reputation was not limited solely to Puritan affairs. Whether people wrote to him for offices or for legal assistance, it was obvious that they believed he was in a position to assist them. The sheer number of requests seen in the Dudley Papers and Pepys Manuscripts, though perhaps only one-quarter of the total that he may have received in his lifetime, testified to that fact.

Men and women from all stations wrote to Leicester, excepting common farmers. This included his family, other Privy Councilors, noblemen and ladies (earls and their countesses), minor courtiers (usually knights of varying degrees of fame), ecclesiastics including several bishops and many Puritan preachers, academic men (owing to his association with Oxford), ambassadors, informants in foreign countries, merchants, and even

an occasional foreign magnate. In this respect he was probably no different from other highly influential councilors such as Burghley, but in all likelihood his fame (or infamy according to historians writing before the twentieth century) outshone most other men of his standing. That fame brought him a veritable avalanche of requests, many of which will be treated individually in the next two chapters, beginning with his ecclesiastical associations.

Chapter Three

Influence: Ecclesiastical

The single greatest aspect of Leicester's patronage, drawn from the evidence in the Dudley Papers and the Pepys Manuscripts, was his support of ecclesiastics.[1] Numerous requests sent to him fell into two main areas: those letters asking him to obtain a religious appointment and those letters reminding him of his ties to reforming preachers and the Puritan cause. In this chapter, the majority of both types of requests will be reviewed, relying heavily on the original documents. Further, Leicester's possible motives for his support of clergymen will be considered.

It must be remembered that the term "Puritan" lacks specificity. The "Puritans" consisted not of a unified set of beliefs but of a range of religious groups whose only real links were their distaste for the Anglican polity confirmed by Elizabeth and their loathing of Catholicism. Their objections to the Anglican polity stemmed from what they perceived as relics from the Roman Catholic past. A particularly tense subject concerned vestments, the ecclesiastical garb worn by Roman Catholic priests and in large measure retained by the Elizabethan Settlement. In the mid-1560s, reformers reacted to what they perceived as a lack of reform by criticizing the retention of elaborate garb. They instead desired simple, unadorned garments as part of their effort to purify the English Church of its Roman Catholic elements. Hence their opponents somewhat derogatorily dubbed them "Puritans."

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[1] Although if one reads Rosenberg, *Leicester: Patron of Letters*, Leicester's patronage of writers rivaled his ecclesiastical interests, but in many cases the two areas overlapped.

To the Puritans, religion consisted of a return to the values of early Christianity. For inspiration, they drew upon scripture and rejected any ceremony or item which had no apparent basis in holy writ, including elaborate vestments. They pursued their beliefs with a zeal that aroused the ire of Elizabeth. Since Elizabeth had a profound dislike for those who refused to conform to her wishes, Leicester's association with the Puritans obviously had potentially difficult consequences for him. When the queen demanded conformity concerning the Book of Common Prayer, Leicester was powerless to assist ministers who declined. In one instance in February 1572, his nominee for a preaching license in Northampton, Percival Wiburn, was refused by the Bishop of Peterborough because he refused to conform in the manner specified by Parliament.[2] In other circumstances, however, Leicester was of much more use in securing religious posts for Puritan preachers, supporting Puritan tracts (which proved useful as anti-Catholic propaganda), or obtaining academic positions for reformers through his activities as Chancellor of Oxford.

Some of the men who owed their positions to the influence of Leicester included William Whitingham, Dean of Durham, James Pilkington, Bishop of Durham, Thomas Cooper, who held various posts and ended his career as Bishop of Winchester,[3] and Thomas Young, who gained the bishopric of St. David's with Leicester's assistance and who only a year later became Archbishop of York.[4] Patrick Collinson also attributed the rise of Sandys

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[2] *DP* II, 60. Edmund Scambler was at that time the Bishop of Peterborough and Norwich.

[3] Rosenberg, *Leicester, Patron of Letters*, 127. Though really a conformist, Cooper began his rise when Leicester had him appointed Vice-Chancellor of Oxford in 1568.

[4] *SP 12*, vol. 11, no 38. The *DNB* indicated that he became Bishop of St. David's in January of 1560 and Archbishop of York in 1561 upon the deprivation of Nicholas Heath. However the greater office was attributed to the assistance of Parker, Archbishop of Canterbury.

and Scambler to the assistance of Dudley.[5] These noted ecclesiastics were not, however, the only men to benefit from or seek Dudley's influence, though they were perhaps the most prominent members of that group.

Many inquiries existed regarding ecclesiastical positions such as the Deanery of Windsor,[6] an appointment for which the Earl of Bedford wrote on 29 January 1560, in favor of Mr. Elmer, who also carried the letter to Dudley.[7] Dudley's brother Ambrose also wrote to him asking for his influence in obtaining for "Mr. Willybe [Willoughby] . . . the Archdeanery of Canterbury or els . . . the Deanery of Lyncolne. Butt yff yt wer possible I wold wisshe hym rather to Lyncolne. . . ."[8] Under normal circumstances, the dean and chapter of a collegiate or cathedral church offered advice to the bishop and likely served occasionally as administrators of the lands of the church. The position probably involved some income from the revenues of the church, which explains why some men sought the office, but Leicester's motives were probably somewhat different. Since one of the functions of the chapter was to advise the bishop on church matters (the bishop was under no obligation to ask it for advice, however), Leicester probably wanted men whose beliefs were comparable to his own in positions where they could use their influence either on his behalf or on behalf of reforming causes. That

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[5] Patrick Collinson, *The Elizabethan Puritan Movement*, 63. Edwin Sandys became Bishop of Worcester, while Edmund Scambler became Bishop of Peterborough and Norwich. Curiously, he was the same man who refused Wiburn a preaching license.

[6] In ecclesiastical terminology a Dean was the head of a chapter of canons at a collegiate or cathedral church (*OED*, vol. 4, 298). The canons themselves were resident ecclesiastical dignitaries who managed the cathedral and formally elected the bishop (more or less a rubber stamp in that regard), but the term canon originally designated a clergyman living under a specific rule, such as the Rule of St. Benedict (*OED*, vol. 2, 839).

[7] *DP* I, 106. It was not uncommon for the bearer of a letter to also be its intended beneficiary.

[8] *DP* I, 170. See Appendix C for appropriate maps.

notion presupposed that Leicester's motives were never pure; it would be a mistake to assert that his motives were constantly selfish. Some men probably gained his support as a reward for faithful service to him or one of his relatives.

In some instances, patrons wrote on behalf of men who had served John Dudley, Duke of Northumberland, during the reign of Edward VI. John Poyntz, for example, entreated Dudley in late August 1559 to reward "my man Freman the which was wonce sarvaunt to my lorde yower father [w]home I thinke yower lordeshipp knowethe well" with a prebend at Gloucester. Poyntz appealed to Dudley "to speake to the quenes maiesty that for my sake he may have it. The prebent was won Munsolows in the Minster of Gloceter which is . . . in the quenes gyfte, and also there ar ij more prebentes in the quenes gifte of won Doctor Williams, Chanseler, ther late departyd,, any of these iij might be an honest livinge for him. . . ."[9] It is clear that in this instance, and probably many others, one factor in writing to Leicester concerned the financial benefits of the specified office. Though the actual amount of money involved probably seemed trivial to Leicester, to his clients it was substantial, so they wrote to him frequently, ordinarily by way of another patron who was known to the earl.

On rare occasions men wrote to Leicester asking for ecclesiastical posts for themselves. Gabriel Harvey, for instance, inquired about a prebend at Lichfield and in the

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[9] *DP* I, 74. A prebend was, according to the *OED*, "the portion of the revenues of a cathedral or collegiate church granted to a canon or member of the chapter as his stipend." (*OED*, vol. XII, 307)

same letter mentioned a Dr. Still for the same bishopric.[10] Using self-flattering language, Harvey addressed himself to Leicester in April 1579 to use his

> favorable and gracious meanes unto her [Majesty] for the procuring of Doctor Byddles prebende at Litchfeylde, the Cauncelour very lately fallen voyde by his sudden discease, for your good Lordshippes poor schollar and servant. . . . I have often shewid openly unto many others, that this little body of myne carriethe a greate mynde towards my good Lord and is evermore to attempt and indure any kynde of travayle . . . that maye anywayes seeme avayleable ether towards the strengthening of his Lordshippes estate or the advauncyng of his most Honorable name.[11]

In the brief passage, Harvey touched upon an important point: spreading good words about the reputation of Leicester. To a patron as conscious of his own image and standing as Leicester, this no doubt constituted a powerful incentive for the appointment of men who would speak his praises.

Eleanor Rosenberg, however, referred to Harvey as a writer "neglected"[12] by Leicester, which casts doubt on the success of this particular request. In fact, Rosenberg discussed an incident in 1578 at Audley End during a visit of the queen, where his conduct "reached heights of absurdity possible only in a man who lacked a sense of propriety. . . . Harvey was a Machiavellian, in the popular sense of the word. . . ."[13] Nevertheless Harvey had by 1580 become Leicester's secretary but after continual "indiscretions" was confined to the Fleet.[14]

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[10] *DP* II, 202.

[11] *DP* II, 202.

[12] Rosenberg, *Leicester: Patron of Letters*, 323.

[13] Ibid., 325.

[14] Ibid., 334.

In the second part of his letter, Harvey made a request on behalf of Doctor John Still, saying that Leicester could be

> so good and bownetyfull Lord unto me as to moove the next Bysshop there for his Cauncelorship which is now likewise vacant by the same mans death. Your Lordeshippe hath a very learnid and wyse chapleyne, Mr Doctor Stylle, a man of very good governemente, and in all respects very mete and sufficientley furnisshed for sutch a place as your Lordeshippe of your syngular wysdom can judge. . . . If your Lordeshippe thought good to prefer him to the Bysshopprick (as is allready greately desired of many, esspecially of us unyversity men. . .), I knowe of all men my oulde Tutor and continuall frende would make choyce of no other Cauncellor. . . .[15]

Dr. John Still was Master of Trinity College, Cambridge, and a delegate to a diet at Schmalkalden in 1579,[16] and his religious views presumably appealed to Leicester. Nevertheless there is no indication of whether he obtained the bishopric of Litchfield, though Still did become Bishop of Bath and Wells in 1592.

This was not Dudley's first experience with Litchfield. Arthur Dudley, a canon at Lichfield, issued a critique against the dean on March 16, 1573. In this letter he charged that

> wheras of late throughe your honorable Lordshyppes goodnes I receyved the Quenes graces honorable letters to be delyveryd unto the Deane and Chapter of Lychfeld, the which letters I delyveryd my selfe unto the Deane there, and the Chapter beynge assembled to gether in the Chapter house. The sayd Deane readynge the letters hym selfe gave but verye smale reputation there unto, nothyng regardynge the same, as he ought to doe accordyng to hys bonden dutie. Butt with great arogancie, he sayd that he woulde answer the letters before the quenes maiestie hym selfe, ffor no cause that he can aleage rightfullye to be proved butt onlye to wythoulde my pore lyvyng ffrome me which the Quene her grace hathe geven me, throughe your honors grete goodnes, besychyng your honor to stande my good Lorde accordyng as your honor hathe byne all wayes hytherto. . . .[17]

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[15] *DP* II, 202.

[16] G. Dyfnallt Owen, ed., *HMC Report on the Manuscripts of the Marquess of Bath, vol. V, Talbot, Dudley and Devereux Papers, 1533-1659* (London: HMSO, 1980), 363.

[17] *DP* II, 146.

Arthur Dudley testified to the character of the dean, but was primarily motivated by his own financial status. There was no reason to assert that he made his criticism for pious motives, and in fact he did not limit himself merely to a reproach of the dean. He continued his letter by requesting in no uncertain terms

> that I may not any ffurther be dayleed or molested by the Deane of Lychfeld, who ys a man ffull unmete to be heade of suche a churche, yf your honor dyd knowe hys condicons throughlye. I woulde desyre of God that we had a more soberer and a quyeter man to be a heade over hus, which woulde be a verye greate comodytie and a quyetnes bothe to the towne and the churche of Lychfeld, ffor hyt may playse your honor to understande that hyt ys nott I onlye that would desyer hytt so to be but the whole towne and the churche woulde gladlye desyer the same.[18]

Arthur Dudley left no doubt as to his designs pertaining to the Dean of Lichfield, Lawrence Nowell.[19] In fact this was not the first time Nowell stood charged with bad dealings. According to the *Dictionary of National Biography*, "he was accused in 1570 by Peter Morwent . . . a prebendary of Lichfield, of having uttered scandal about the queen and the Earl of Leicester, and answered the charge in writing. . . ."[20] At that time Nowell remained in his position, so he must have answered to the satisfaction of the queen and Leicester. There is also no indication that he lost his position following Arthur Dudley's complaint, and he died in 1576, just three years after the accusation against him, still in possession of his office.

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[18] Ibid.

[19] Owen, *HMC Report on the Bath MSS*, 347. The initial reference to the name of the Dean came from a list of several Deans of Lichfield on page 337, from which came the reference to Lawrence Nowell on page 347, which matched the letter from Arthur Dudley discussed and partially transcribed on Page 193.

[20] *DNB*, vol. 14, 696.

Leicester was either unsuccessful in removing Nowell or simply did not consider the task to be worthwhile. Nevertheless petitioners apparently considered him so influential that they felt he could not only secure appointments but also obtain the removal of an offending person. This perception stemmed from his status as the favorite of Elizabeth, a status which assured her attention to his advice on many matters including appointments to offices.

Of the many men who sought advancement to an ecclesiastical appointment through Leicester's influence, some, such as Thomas Wagstaff, desired prebends. Wagstaff especially liked the prebend at Westminster and actually made his request through Leicester's wife Lettice on 21 May 1579, explaining that "I doubt not but if your La. put him [Leicester] in mynde of yt presently, the thinge wilbe obtayned.".[21] His language showed the trust which he placed in Leicester's influence, a confidence certainly shared by numerous others.

In one instance, John Jewell, the Bishop of Salisbury, relied on Leicester for the advancement of a protégé. On 16 March 1567, he sought the vicarage of Helmarten for one George Coryat, a bachelor of arts from New College, Oxford.[22] Certainly Coryat's association with Oxford did not hinder his advancement, since Leicester was the Chancellor of that university and well aware of the caliber and beliefs of its students. On another occasion Leicester's Oxford connection led the Dean and Chapter of Christ Church, Oxford, to attempt to rectify the deprivation of one of their vicars. They petitioned Leicester on 16

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[21] *DP* IV, 31.

[22] *HMC Pepys*, 101 (I, 721). The *OED*, vol. 19, 593, defined a vicar in the Church of England as an officer of the church receiving a stipend from church revenues, but not the ecclesiastical tenths from the parish. The vicar might also have been in charge of a chapel, or acted as a deputy of the bishop.

June 1568 to have the vicar restored to his position.[23] In the case of Oxford, Leicester was quite willing to fill its posts with men whom he knew to be sympathetic to his religious views, men whose counsel and training would influence numerous young minds toward the reform party.

While many supplicants wrote to Leicester strictly to obtain an office, in some cases the petitioner asked not for an appointment but rather for an exchange of offices, such as the case of John Bullingham in June 1572. Bullingham had previously been visited by an agent of Leicester, Mr. Drewell, who informed him that

> yf I were mynded to geve over at any tyme my benefice of Brington in Countie of Huntingdon . . . that then I should signifie the same unto yowre honour. . . . I muste remember howe courteouslie and carefullie yowre honour obteined of the Queenes Majestie for mee, my prebend of Woorceter, my natieve countreye, wheare I am resident. . . . Nowe I am redie [and] wylling to committe to yowre honours disposition my benefice of Brington, lying in a countreye farr of from mee, for a meaner benefice being within seaven myles of Woorceter: the name of itt is Upton upon Syverne. . . . God knoweth I seeke this chieflie for the quieting of my conscience for nerenes, [and] partlie for the maintenaunce of my poore hospitalitie. . . .[24]

Bullingham stood out as one of the few men to request an office based on principle rather than income. As he indicated in the letter, the benefice of Upton upon Severn was not worth as much as that of Brington, and was within seven miles of his residence. It was not uncommon during the Elizabethan period for men to hold offices *in absentia*. Bullingham, however, appeared to have desired a post located close enough to his residence for him to

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[23] *HMC Pepys*, 119 (I, 15).

[24] *DP* II, 111. A benefice was an endowed ecclesiastical office, possibly attached to some lands.

have actually taken an active role in its affairs. His association with Leicester advanced him to a higher post: Bullingham later became Bishop of Gloucester.[25]

In many cases, serving as chaplain to Leicester led to advancement. Professor Simon Adams indicated that Leicester had at least twenty-seven chaplains through the years, of which "nine of them became bishops and at least twelve heads of colleges at Oxford or Cambridge."[26] Adams explained that "four of the nine did not enter the episcopate until after his death,"[27] but the fact remained that five of them did, and that even concerning the other four, their route to advancement went through the Earl of Leicester. For his part, Leicester wished to fill bishoprics with men who either sympathized with the reformers or whose debt to him might affect their judgments. Occasionally Elizabeth ordered her bishops to demand conformity, but those who owed something to Leicester might be lax in enforcing her ultimatums, which would in turn have benefited the reforming preachers who looked to Leicester for support.

Professor Adams also named several of the earl's chaplains. He listed three whom he classified as Cambridge Moderate Puritans – William Fulke, Robert Some and Humphrey Tyndall (who performed the marriage of Leicester and Lætitia (Lettice) Knollys on 21

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[25] Owen, *HMC Report on the Bath MSS*, 302. Bullingham became Bishop of Gloucester in 1581, and according to the *DNB* he was not a reformer, suggesting Leicester did not urge his appointment to that post in spite of his heavy involvement in Gloucester affairs. It would be interesting to find out whether John Bullingham was related to Nicholas Bullingham, the Bishop of Lincoln, who also sent a letter to Leicester (*DP* I, 211) and who was translated to Worcester in 1571 (Owen, *HMC Report on the Bath MSS*, 172).

[26] Simon Adams, "A Godly Peer? Leicester and the Puritans," *History Today* 40 (Jan. 1990): 18. This article also discussed the building of an immense church in Denbigh, undertaken by Leicester but never completed due to his death and lack of funds. While the earl spent considerable energy promoting men to various positions, his building program was quite small, limited to this church and one or two other buildings. These pale in comparison to his efforts at restoring and enlarging Kenilworth Castle, which he received in 1563.

[27] Ibid., 18.

September 1578), as well as three he termed Oxford Calvinists – Tobias Matthew, Thomas Holland and William James (later Bishop of Durham).[28] It should not be surprising that the earl received requests to take on a specific man as his chaplain, such as the request from Edmund Grindal, future Archbishop of Canterbury, who on 27 January 1569 recommended a Mr. Douglas to Leicester.[29]

Rosenberg has argued that one "motive for the nobility's support of religious writings is to be found in the patron's desire to fill clerical positions of varying importance with candidates whose doctrinal views he approved and whose political allegiance he had secured."[30] This argument might well be applied to the chaplains of the Earl of Leicester as well. Each chaplain probably spent about a year with Leicester (judging from the number of 27 chaplains during the 29-year period of 1559-88), during which time the earl probably evaluated their preaching skills as well as their theological viewpoints in order to assess their worthiness for advancement. Adams' figures of nine future bishops and at least twelve future academic figureheads indicate that a healthy percentage (at least 77.8 percent) of Leicester's chaplains passed the test. These figures are astonishing, in that they reveal the enormous prestige associated with Leicester and the benefits it could bring to his servants and political adherents.

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[28] Ibid.

[29] *HMC Pepys*, 148 (II, 211). One should also remember Grindal as the Archbishop of York and later (1575) Archbishop of Canterbury, where he did not distinguish himself. Elizabeth wished him to crack down on the "prophesyings" of Puritan preachers but he took little action and was suspended from his duties. Though supported primarily by Burghley during his career, Grindal's lack of action against Puritan preachers must have pleased Leicester as much as it offended the queen, but his successor Whitgift was far more obliging of the queen's wishes.

[30] Rosenberg, *Leicester: Patron of Letters*, 185.

There was another aspect to Leicester's support of reforming preachers, which might indicate that his motives were not purely pious. Professor Adams stated this possibility while reviewing the case of Dr. Lionel Sharpe, a man who was in his younger years used by Leicester as a messenger, and who in 1629 "advised the secretary of state that good relations between king and parliament in matters of religion might be restored if Charles I adopted what he claimed had been Elizabeth's policy of allowing Leicester to act as the protector of nonconformist clergy."[31] The likelihood of Sharpe having knowledge of such a policy rested on shaky ground – Leicester doubtless did not discuss it with a mere messenger, and his personal relationship with Elizabeth was never fully disclosed to anyone. Nevertheless, Leicester's support of nonconformists was well-known and could not have escaped the ears of the queen. Given her occasional directives to her Archbishops of Canterbury aimed at enforcing conformity, it does not seem reasonable that she would have allowed Leicester to continually subvert her authority in a clandestine fashion. Thus Sharpe's opinion can be construed to conclude that Leicester acted with the approval of Elizabeth and that she enforced conformity only when the Puritans went further in their protests than she would tolerate. Whether the argument was valid cannot be judged from one reference, but it was undoubtedly true that Puritan divines looked to Leicester for support.

The Puritan cause needed as much assistance as Leicester could give it whenever Elizabeth decided to enforce conformity. In fact, he was reminded several times to be a friend to Puritan causes. As early as 1559 (before the first use of the term "Puritan") he received "A

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[31] Adams, "A Godly Peer?," 19.

remembrance to the Lord Robert Dudley concerning the Preachers of the Gospel"[32] which was actually a list of twenty-eight men who during their careers became identified with the Puritans. Among the more notable men on the list were William Whitingham, eventually Dean of Durham; James Pilkington, who became Bishop of Durham in 1560; Thomas Cole, later Dean of Essex; and Laurence Humphrey, the future President of Magdalene College.

The "Remembrance" also reminded Dudley to be a friend to reformist religion, giving him not only "the names of certen godlie lerned preachers which have utterly forsaken Antichriste and al his Romishe rags"[33] but also reminding him that

> Whether these pore men (if they were but two) which for the zeal of God's pure religion, do refuse and reject Antichrist's Livereys, or the Lord Bushops and others, that for wordlie respects, receyve and allowe them, are to be prefard, let those that are godliewise judge: the one following thexample of al Christs faithful ministers in Germany, Fraunce, Scotland and al well reformed Churches, to the abolishing of papistrie and superstition: the other imitating Christs sworne enymies (the papists) to the maintenance of poprie and superstition.[34]

The author of the "Remembrance" anticipated the vestments controversy of the mid 1560s by several years, but his sentiment did not lack support.

In 1564, both Whitingham and Pilkington wrote separately to Leicester on the subject. Whitingham complained that "If our apparel seem not so modest and grave as our vocation requireth, neither sufficient to discern us from men of other callings, we refuse not

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[32] *HMC Pepys*, 2-3 (II, 701).

[33] *HMC Pepys*, 2 (II, 701).

[34] *HMC Pepys*, 3 (II, 701).

to wear such as shall be thought to the godly and prudent magistrates for these uses most decent."[35] Pilkington wrote in no less direct fashion:

> I beseech you be not weary of well doing but continue your favour to such honest professors of God's truth that under your wings they may serve the living God purely, and that God's enemies the Papists have no cause to triumph against His people. . . . What a wound to zealous men shall this be, to see one Protestant punish and persecute another because he will not wear the Pope's livery. . . . Your wisdom can consider all the inconveniences that may follow the displacing of so many good ministers, seeing there is no greater store of them to be had. It is pity that no other apparel can be devised but this. . . . The Lord open your heart to be a mediator for the utter supressing of that punishment intended and give your Grace to find such favour that your words may take place.[36]

Apparently both Whitingham and Pilkington felt that Leicester could soften the queen's attitude toward vestments, thus relieving pressure on non-conformists. Pilkington would also have benefited from a pacification of the queen, since part of his duties as Bishop of Durham involved enforcing conformity. If he failed to do so, his own position could have been jeopardized, as Grindal discovered in 1577 when he refused to act against prophesyings.[37]

Whitingham and Pilkington were not the only ministers to keep in contact with Leicester. Thomas Cole, Archdeacon of Essex, sent Leicester in June 1566 a copy of a sermon he had delivered on the subject of vestments, of which he said that "my Sermon was to hinder nothing the order of apparel, but to hinder the disorderly talk and impudent conceit of the Papists, which by reason of this order rumoured that they should have their Mass again."[38] Cole displayed in his letter not only his zeal for the reforming views on vestments,

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[35] *HMC Pepys*, 33 (I, 227).

[36] *HMC Pepys*, 43 (I, 363).

[37] Prophesyings were essentially regular public gatherings and discussions of scripture among local ministers. See Collinson, *The Elizabethan Puritan Movement*, 168-176, for more information.

[38] *HMC Pepys*, 90 (I, 631).

but also his contempt for Catholicism. In this respect he was no different from the many Puritan writers, supported by Leicester, who involved themselves in anti-Catholic propaganda in the 1580s.

Also on the 1559 list was Percival Wiburn, who ran afoul of the Bishop of Peterborough (Edmund Scambler) in February 1572. Wiburn sought a preaching license in the diocese, for which Leicester had written the bishop in late January 1572,[39] but Scambler responded on 5 February that due to act of Parliament

> I shall licence none to prech in my dioces that doo [not] geve ther assent [and] subscription unto certain articles knowen [well] enough unto Mr. Wyborne wherunto he hath not assented [and subscribed] before me. And the other cause is because he is as it seemeth to me over studious of innovation for although as your Lordship doth like the substance of his doctrine or the most parte therof even so doo I yet knowe yow not peradventure as I doo that the contention [and] con[ference] that is in Northampton betwen townes men themselves [and] him ther is about externe matters ceremonies [and] things endifferent about which he sheweth as mich vehemency as about the prin[cipal] groundes of religion [and] wold remit no parte of his contention as farre as I can gather when he preched.[40]

Leicester answered by criticizing the bishop, saying that Scambler himself was the main reason Wiburn had left his university post to preach in Northampton.[41] Despite Leicester's angry words, Wiburn did not obtain a preaching license from Scambler.

Though unsuccessful in his effort to aid Wiburn,[42] Leicester assisted other men, interceding, according to Rosenberg, "on behalf of non-conforming ministers who had been

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[39] *HMC Pepys*, 177 (II, 647).

[40] *DP* II, 60. The articles to which Scambler referred were the 39 Articles, passed by Parliament in 1571, designed to solidify Anglican beliefs as well as providing a test which would filter out non-conforming ministers.

[41] *HMC Pepys*, 177-8 (II, 389).

[42] Collinson, *The Elizabethan Puritan Movement*, 151. Wiburn was not alone: five men were deprived of their livings in Northamptonshire in late 1573 as the Bishop of Peterborough carried out Archbishop Parker's repression of

deprived of their livings."[43] The best examples of this type of aid were the reforming preachers Field and Wilcox, who claimed authorship of the rather harsh *Admonition to Parliament* in 1572, resulting in prison sentences for them. They remained in prison for about a year before Leicester secured their release.[44] The *Admonition* had attacked the Anglican polity set forth in the Thirty-Nine Articles of 1563 as being excessively Romish. In addition, its authors cried out against poor training of ecclesiastics, ministers who held secular offices, the acceptance of men into ecclesiastical posts simply at the urging of a nobleman (though they were probably most willing to accept aid from Leicester to further their cause), and many facets of the Book of Common Prayer. In so doing they aroused the anger of the queen, who enlarged her Ecclesiastical Commission and ordered Archbishop Parker to suppress the Puritan faction. The *Admonition*, however, had clearly stated the principles of the Puritans and thus served as a rallying point for the various reforming factions.

From 1572 onward, the English Puritan movement suffered from Elizabeth's anger in spite of Leicester's efforts on their behalf. He may have been influential with her, but once she had made up her mind, she was implacable. Archbishop Parker had been moderately effective on her behalf in his persecutions of reformers, depending upon the locality. In Northampton, where Scambler had persecuted Wiburn, five men were deprived of their livings, but in other areas Parker had little support.[45] Some of Parker's problems may have

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pamphlets and prophesyings. This precipitated harsh words from the earl to the bishop, (Collinson, 151-2) though Leicester obtained nothing for his efforts at verbal intimidation.

[43] Rosenberg, *Leicester: Patron of Letters*, 196.

[44] Collinson, *The Elizabethan Puritan Movement*, 120.

[45] Ibid., 151.

been created by Leicester, whose influence in securing ecclesiastical appointments may have placed men in positions from which they could selectively apply the Act of Uniformity.

Leicester probably also delighted in writing a letter to Parker in October 1570, which, although it ran against his personal beliefs, contained a humiliating rebuke of the archbishop. He informed Parker on behalf of the queen

> that your Grace should have due regard to the office she hath called you to, and that above all other things you carefully look to the good observation of the ecclesiastical orders appointed in this Church within her government, whereof she hath placed you as a principal minister, that the true Religion may quietly go forward and not to be impeached disorderly by every man's private or absolute will, that the form of the service in this Church established . . . be not changed . . . in any place contrary to law and order, that the breakers and disobeyers of the same, be by your Lordship and the rest joined to assist you, duly corrected and punished, seeing so many tolerations and so oft mild warnings will not serve. . . .[46]

The letter referred to an incident in Norwich where some overzealous reformers forcibly removed some of the more Roman elements of the religious practice, which the queen feared might inspire similar actions throughout England. Parker was thereby directed to take definitive action against the reformers, which probably displeased Leicester. Nevertheless, Leicester took the opportunity to rebuke the archbishop for what the queen saw as laxity, and hence he acted as her mouthpiece in this affair. No matter what his religious beliefs, it would appear that Leicester saw his loyalty to the queen as more important than his support of the reformers, especially because he owed his rank and privileges to her affections.

The wrath that the queen directed toward the reformers after 1570 increasingly bound Leicester from assisting the reforming Protestants in England. After 1572, however, he

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[46] *HMC Pepys*, 175 (II, 633).

discovered an outlet for the exercise of his beliefs: the cause of International Protestantism. At that time, the Duke of Alençon became a suitor for the hand of Elizabeth, which prompted Leicester to think of the benefits of an alliance between England and France. Though he did not personally support the marriage talks, publicly he made the best of the situation. In addition, as conflicts in the Netherlands surfaced, Leicester became increasingly aware of the religious situation there. He supported the cause of the Dutch rebels against Catholic domination, and saw that an alliance with France could dissuade the Spanish from taking action on England should the English intervene. Furthermore, he realized that the French could also become involved on behalf of the rebels, but that an alliance complete with English funding could assist the situation. In this negotiation he trod a delicate line, since he wished to thwart the marriage plans while still maintaining the hope of an alliance.

Though his focus had shifted from domestic Protestantism to the international variety, Leicester still maintained his contacts with the Puritan faction, assisting them as much as he could in spite of Elizabeth's anger against the reformers. Leicester's assistance in ecclesiastical affairs was not the only area in which his influence became apparent. In various spheres, including obtaining secular offices, remitting fines and assisting suits, he provided assistance to the numerous men who sent letters to him requesting his influence. Those petitions are the focus of the following chapter.

Chapter Four

Influence: Non-ecclesiastical

Many men wrote Leicester soliciting his intercession with the queen in non-ecclesiastical matters. The particular categories which form the basis of this chapter were enumerated in Table 4 (see p. 53) and will be treated in the order in which they appeared in that table, beginning with requests for preferment to secular offices.

In any government, a wide variety of offices exist that deal with administrative and other duties, and the Elizabethan regime was no exception. During the early years of the reign there was an understandable rush to obtain sometimes lucrative posts, made even more acute by the change in official state religion. Those men who had served under Queen Mary were typically Catholic or at least sympathized with that side. When Elizabeth ascended to the throne, she restored the Anglican polity and theology, resulting in the loss of many posts by Catholics and a scramble for them by Protestants.

Men who saw Leicester as a means to an end wrote him requesting offices for themselves or for others. Even his brother Ambrose petitioned on his own behalf on 9 August 1559, asking for the office held by Sir Richard Southwell during the reign of Mary Tudor – Master of the Ordnance.[1] Ambrose did in fact obtain the office, which he held until his death in 1590, though he needed to write his brother twice for it. Ambrose's office was national in

[1] *DP* I, 64. Ambrose also wrote to the same effect later in 1559 (*DP* I, 82).

focus, but other men sought more local offices. In some letters, for example, the petitioners asked Leicester to obtain the office of Sheriff. One such letter came on 8 October 1579 from John Yerworth, an agent of Leicester in Wales, who wished to obtain, in appreciation of his many years of faithful service to the earl, the office for either Carnarvonshire, Merionethshire or Cardiganshire.[2] On 6 January 1565, Edwin Sandys, the Bishop of Worcester, recommended Robert Hunkes for Sheriff of Worcester.[3]

Other letters included requests for regaining offices formerly held under Queen Mary, such as those of Lord Hastings. Both he and Lady Hastings wrote to Dudley in May 1559, asking him to speak with Elizabeth on behalf of Lord Hastings, hoping that by his intercession Lord Hastings might regain his credit and his offices in the West.[4] Another example of this type of plea originated from Sir Robert Chester, who sought Leicester's assistance in his suit to Elizabeth "for the recovery of thoffice of Receyvorship" which he held under Mary[5]

The Earl of Bedford wrote Leicester on 14 February 1566, asking for his assistance in securing the Postmastership for Thomas Randolph.[6] In that letter, Bedford indicated that a suit had been made to allow Sir John Mason to obtain the office jointly with Randolph.

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[2] *DP* II, 206.

[3] *HMC Pepys*, 44. Thomas Fuller, *Worthies of England*, vol. III (London: Thomas Tegg, 1840), 380, lists a William Hunkes, probably a close relation to Robert Hunkes, as Sheriff of Worcestershire in 1565.

[4] *DP* I, 14 and *DP* I, 16. Catherine Lady Hastings wrote the former; Henry Lord Hastings the latter. Neither was specific about what the offices were.

[5] *DP* II, 285.

[6] *HMC Pepys*, 76.

Mason acquired the office but died in April 1566, after which Randolph obtained the Postmastership.[7]

Other instances of requests for various non-ecclesiastical offices included one on 4 December 1559, for Clerk of the Council at Berwick, authored by Sir Ralph Sadler in favor of Thomas Lovell.[8] Lovell was later recommended for another position, the charge of the Ramekens in Zeeland, during Leicester's command in the Netherlands. Henry Killigrew proposed Lovell for that position upon learning that Nicholas Errington would leave the post "to take another more profitable" one.[9] It appeared that money was a factor in this and doubtless many other appointments.

Another instance of a request for an appointment involving a yearly fee came from Sir Thomas Gresham in August 1560. In his letter he asked Leicester to favor his "ffrende Mr. Applyard for the pourchasing of the Lordeshipe of Wynddame for . . . his lyving. . . ."[10] Other requests for appointments included the Captaincy of Portsmouth Castle. In that letter, the Earl of Sussex informed Leicester that "Captaine Highfeld died this morning" (24 August 1588) and that he wished his "cosen Edward Radclyffs preferment to the same. . . ."[11] A similar request came from Henry Baron Hunsdon in mid-January 1569, when he asked for the Captaincy of Norham for himself.[12]

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[7] *DNB*, vol. 16, 722.

[8] *DP* I, 92. According to Fuller, *Worthies*, vol. 2, 529, Lovell became Sheriff of Northamptonshire in 1560, perhaps due to Dudley's influence.

[9] *DP* II, 253.

[10] *DP* I, 155.

[11] *DP* II, 255.

[12] *HMC Pepys*, 145 (II, 187).

Offices like these carried with them a salary, referred to as a "fee" in letters of the day, a prime motivation for those who wished to benefit from Leicester's influence. His prestige in many areas of the country[13] could benefit his servants, or servants of his friends, who sought to profit by their associations with him. This must not be considered unusual among Elizabethan nobility and in fact should be viewed as a precursor of modern political appointments. For more evidence one need look no further than the previously discussed letter from Henry Goodere to Leicester on 14 March 1571.

On that occasion Goodere asked Leicester to bestow a burgesship on his kinsman (whom he did not specifically name), a request that one might assume occurred frequently. In fact, in each parliament from 1559-86, a fair number of seats, somewhere between ten and twenty, went to men associated with the Dudley brothers, but whether this occurred due to their influence or to the local prominence of the individual burgesses is debatable.[14] Certainly Leicester successfully secured appointments as evidenced by his involvement in the borough of Andover from 1584-86. In 1584 he wrote the bailiffs of the borough that as its Steward he wished to have the nominations of its burgesses, which he hoped to obtain by the borough sending in a blank ballot and Leicester subsequently filling in the names. Andover, however, was not then a parliamentary borough, a fact of which Leicester was ignorant but which quickly changed, probably through his influence, in 1586 when it was incorporated by the queen.[15]

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[13] See Appendix C for appropriate maps.

[14] See Simon Adams, "The Dudley Clientele and the House of Commons, 1559-1586," *Parliamentary History*, vol. 8, pt. 2 (1989), 216-39.

[15] J. E. Neale, *The Elizabethan House of Commons* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1950), 144.

Leicester proved quite vicious, however, when a borough refused him. This was the case in Denbigh in 1572, when the borough returned a representative other than Leicester's nominee, prompting a threatening letter from the earl to the town. In it, he wrote that "if you do not upon receipt hereof presently revoke the same [Thomas Salusbury had been chosen] and appoint such one as I shall nominate, namely, Henry Dynne, be ye well assured never to look for any friendship or favour at my hands in your affairs hereafter."[16] Apparently this reflected an effort by Leicester to remove the influence of the Salusbury family of Lleweni from the counties of North Wales. On 22 July 1572, Ellis Price wrote the earl that he had moved and obtained the choice of the Owen brothers, Hugh and John, in successive sessions (1571 and 1572).[17] Later that year, on 2 October, John Yerworth informed the earl that he had procured the appointment of several local officials in Denbigh, to the detriment of the Salusbury faction.[18]

In the Denbigh affairs, Leicester appeared to be motivated by the solidification of his personal hold on the county, which could then supply him with parliamentary burgesses suitable to his tastes. In this way he could have hoped to stock parliament with a loyal voting contingent. Leicester's associates, however, do not seem to have taken a major role in debates or to have sponsored any dramatic pieces of legislation, suggesting that Leicester's motives

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[16] Quoted in Neale, *The Elizabethan House of Commons*, 153. According to Adams, "Clientele," 228-30, Richard Cavendish obtained the burgesship after Leicester's intervention, not Dynne. Cavendish appeared again in 1584 with the earl's blessing, while Dynne sat for Cornwall in that session.

[17] *DP* II, 307. Dr. Price had been an MP for Merioneth in 1563; sheriff of that county in 1564, 68, 74, 79 and 85; sheriff of Anglesey in 1578 and 86; and sheriff of Denbighshire in 1569 and 73 (*DNB*, vol. XVI, 327).

[18] *DP* II, 117. Hugh Lloyd and one Mr. Latham became aldermen; John Ireland and Thomas Walter burgesses; and William Clough and Thomas Lloyd coroners.

for securing their elections lay outside of promoting specific bills.[19] His goal could have been either to reward men for their service to him or to provide a voting bloc in matters important to him. Such matters might have touched religion, the succession (in the 1560s), or in 1584 support for the Netherlands campaign. There were examples, however, of instances when Leicester did use his protégés to vote in favor of particular bills, as in 1581 when Yarmouth, a town for which Leicester was High Steward, asked him to help restrict the importation of herrings. A statute passed parliament in spite of the protests of the Fishmonger's Company, which also failed to procure its repeal during the parliament of 1586-7, due to the voting strength of Leicester's bloc.[20]

In addition to his involvement in parliamentary elections and to the many requests that he received for help in obtaining an office, Leicester was burdened with petitions asking for his assistance in obtaining or leasing out lands. In one instance, William Alley, the Bishop of Exeter, requested that Leicester speak with the queen in favor of allowing Alley to lease out some of his lands so that someone else might take over the yearly charges associated with their upkeep.[21] Edward Earl of Derby wrote on 9 January 1560 that his servant Robert Dalton might be allowed to purchase Cokerham Manor.[22] Twenty-one days later Dudley's cousin Edward Lord Dudley expressed a desire to have Robert's assistance in

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[19] Adams, "Clientele," 231.

[20] D. M. Dean, "Parliament and Locality," in D. M. Dean and N. L. Jones, eds., *The Parliaments of Elizabethan England* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1990) 157-58.

[21] *HMC Pepys*, 50 (I, 361).

[22] *DP* I, 98.

purchasing some lands for himself.[23] On 4 April 1560, Sir Thomas Newenham hoped that Dudley would ask the queen to grant him a lease for twenty-one years of the "tyethes of the parsonage of Tewkysburye" in Gloucester.[24]

These were but a few of the many examples of requests preserved in the Dudley Papers concerning assistance in procuring lands. The collection also included numerous instances of legal and personal requests in suits great and small. Many individuals and companies petitioned Leicester to support their goals, though some instances were quite minor. The Earl of Bedford, for instance, on 1 December 1565 wrote about the Lady Cecilia, Marchioness of Baden, who with her entourage had occupied one of his houses. Bedford asked that "order may be given for the removing of her train which as I hear be but a homely company and in as homely manner do use my house, breaking and spoiling windows and everything."[25] In this instance, Bedford was away from his house on official duties and therefore turned to his friend Leicester for assistance.

On 25 June 1567, Lady Mary Grey, sister of Jane and Catherine, pleaded with Leicester to intercede on her behalf with the queen, who was greatly upset that she had secretly married Thomas Keys, the queen's sergeant-porter. She asked him for his continued help "to further this my lamentable suit unto her Majesty, that it may please her Highness of

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[23] *DP* I, 108.

[24] *DP* I, 131.

[25] *HMC Pepys*, 70 (I, 469).

her princely mercifulness to pardon me this offence, trusting hereafter . . . to behave myself towards her Majesty according to my duty as I will never offend her Majesty more."[26]

On other occasions men asked Leicester to obtain passports so that they might travel abroad. James Stewart, the Earl of Moray, for instance, informed Leicester on 31 January 1564 that James Hepburn, the Lord Bothwell, wished to leave England, presumably to enter Scotland.[27] This was the same Bothwell who later murdered Darnley and thereafter married the Queen of Scots. Bothwell, however, was not the only man who wished to leave England. In fact on 19 October 1568, the Earl of Northumberland addressed a letter to Leicester in hopes that he might depart the realm.[28] Interestingly, the same earl took part in the Northern Rebellion of 1569 and eventually fled England. One wonders whether he would have participated in the rebellion if he had obtained a passport and gone over to the continent in late 1568 or early 1569.

Individuals like Northumberland often made minor requests, but when Leicester received letters from towns or corporations, the particulars usually involved considerably more effort on his part. In 1566 the Vintners' Company petitioned Leicester (they also wrote separately to the queen) for assistance in a legal difficulty. The trading license of the company had expired and consequently had been superseded by a statute passed in 1551, prompting the Vintners' Company to request a repeal of the statute.[29] In fact the repeal

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[26] *HMC Pepys*, 95 (I, 585).

[27] *HMC Pepys*, 14 (I, 91).

[28] *HMC Pepys*, 135 (II, 85).

[29] *HMC Pepys*, 95 (II, 761).

occurred on 30 November 1566, and the company received a new charter a year later.[30] The result precipitated many complaints, including one from John Marsh, who wrote Leicester on 25 July 1571 that

> I was bould in the Parliament tyme to move your Lordshippe in a sewte preferred by my Lord Mayor and Aldermen, as for libertie of the cittie, which I confessed shoold also be some commoditie to me. . . . Theffecte of it is that wheare the Commpany of the Vinteners have of late helpen them selves and their posteritie by the Q[ueene's] Majesties graunt to be owte of the danger of the statute of [1551] . . . other honest cittizens that ar not free of ther commpany, have used to retayle wynes, and wear never brought upp in other sciences or trad, and thear apprentizes and posteritie ar unprovided for and by meanes of that statute shalbe precluded from occupieinge. This bill exhibited by my Lord and Aldermen, dothe most humbly require the Q[ueene's] Majestie to restore them to their anncienntliberties . . . and that suche as be not free of the vyntiners and their posteritie maye occupie that they wear brought upp in . . . .[31]

Apparently the Vintners treated their charter as a monopoly, preventing other wine merchants in London from practicing their trade, a situation which drove the mayor and aldermen to demand restitution through the mediation of Leicester. Perhaps they also felt that making their request through John Marsh, a business acquaintance of Leicester, would help expedite matters.

Legal assistance often had financial benefits for the parties involved, but on several occasions Leicester received requests for his assistance solely in obtaining financial relief. Numerous petitions contained in the Dudley Papers attested to that fact, but did not constitute the sole source of requests. Letters arrived from many parts of England but some originated overseas. For example, Anna D'Oldenburg and Delmenhorst, Countess Dowager of East

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[30] *HMC Pepys*, 93n.

[31] *DP* II, 36. This was the same John Marsh who, along with several others, purchased part of Dudley's license to export undressed woolen cloths for £6666 13s. 4d. on 27 March 1563.

Friesland, wrote on 29 March 1565 that Leicester should remind the queen of her promise to pay 2,000 "escus au soleil" to Anna's son John, the Count of East Friesland.[32] Nearly three months later she again wrote Leicester, thanking him for his assistance, by which one may infer that he successfully used his influence in this matter.[33]

While Leicester enjoyed success in the Friesland affair, in another he deferred to wiser counsel. On 16 May 1569, Henry Killigrew informed Leicester that the Palsgrave (Friedrich III, Elector Palatine) desired 100,000 crowns to assist his relative Johann Casimir, who stood ready to invade France with 6,000 horsemen on behalf of French Protestants.[34] Casimir was of the Calvinist persuasion,[35] and the direction of this request to Leicester showed a growing association between the earl and the cause of international Protestantism.

In another cause with profound international implications, John Hawkins considered Leicester instrumental in his plan to capture Spanish treasure ships, loaded with 20,000,000 ducats (about £6,000,000, close to ten times the annual budget of the Elizabethan government) from the West Indies. On 4 June 1570, Hawkins declared his intent: "This whole fleet (with God's grace) shall be intercepted and taken . . . for the extreme injuries offered unto this Realm: which wrongs being satisfied with the costs, the great mass shall be at the courtesye of the Queen's Highness to restore or keep."[36] To that end, he expressed his desire "that the Right Honorable the Earl of Leicester . . . obtain and borrow of her Highness

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[32] *HMC Pepys*, 53-54.

[33] *HMC Pepys*, 62.

[34] *HMC Pepys*, 156.

[35] Euan Cameron, *The European Reformation*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), 371.

[36] *HMC Pepys*, 73 (II, 371).

two ships furnished with ordnance, powder and munition, to say, the *Bonadventure* and the *Bull*."[37] Though the scheme promised immense profits, it also entailed open warfare with Spain, something the crown and Leicester did not wish to risk in 1570. Thus Hawkins never realized his goal of raiding Spanish treasure ships in the name of England.

Closer to home, Leicester received a request on 10 December 1566 from Thomas Godwin, the Dean of Christchurch, Oxford, and seven others, who advised the earl that the cost of Elizabeth's visit to Oxford exceeded their ability to pay. Further, they claimed that the entire university had agreed to share the cost, but the lack of payment from other Oxford colleges left Christchurch in a dire financial situation.[38] Godwin and his associates naturally looked to Leicester, the Chancellor of Oxford, for relief.

Petitions for financial relief extended beyond Oxford. Numerous letter writers asked Leicester to help dismiss fines or reduce sentences on prisoners. In one case, Thomas Viscount Howard of Bindon wrote Leicester on 22 October 1565, hoping to obtain the elimination of a £50 fine levied against him for slander.[39] On another occasion in 1568 Christopher Hoddesdon informed Leicester and Cecil of a £100 penalty from the Muscovy Company, for which he had worked and which had charged him with profiteering.[40]

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[37] *HMC Pepys*, 74 (II, 371). Hawkins personal motivation for his anti-Spanish campaign probably came directly out of the destruction of his third slaving voyage to the Indies in 1568. Leicester had invested in his second voyage (1564-65), a trip which angered the Spanish and probably precipitated their action during the third.

[38] *HMC Pepys*, 92-3 (I, 651).

[39] *HMC Pepys*, 68.

[40] *HMC Pepys*, 143.

Two years earlier Sir James Croft had written Leicester from the Minories, detailing a much more serious case. On 28 February 1566, he requested the earl's intercession with Cecil and Elizabeth because he had been banished for a year from court and lost an office that he claimed brought him £1,000 per year.[41] This incident was but one of the numerous letters asking Leicester to show mercy toward persons held in the Tower or other prisons.

On more than one occasion Croft wrote to Leicester for assistance. Near the end of Leicester's life Croft (by that time Comptroller) and several intercessors implored Leicester to counsel leniency in an even more serious matter than that of 1566. On 28 August 1588, Sir Francis Walsingham wrote to Leicester, saying that "I have been earnestly requested by Mr Comptroller and his frendes to be a suter to your L. that it wold please you in your absence to recommend his case unto hir Majestie in consideration of his yeares, long service and poverty that at the least he may obtain so much favor as to be prisoner in his own howse. . . ."[42] Leicester's brother Ambrose, the Earl of Warwick, wrote to him in similar terms the following day:

> My very good Brother I cannot choose but even in very pitie among the rest be a meane to your Lo[rdship] in the behalfe of Mr. Comptroller for your good favoure and helpe towarde his enlargement, or att the leaste that he may be removed to some sweeter place. His age is greate and his case lamentable considering the course he hath rune from his youthe who without some speedie good order for his reliefe, is like to perish in prison. Whearin I doe very earnestlye intreate your Lo[rdship] to have an honorable consideracion of his weake yeares, and assure yourselfe theare can be noe greater honour then to forgive and helpe to raise uppe againe such as are fallen so deepelye as of themselfe they are in noo hope to rise uppe againe.[43]

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[41] *HMC Pepys*, 79-80 (I, 533).

[42] *DP* II, 263.

[43] *DP* II, 269.

Croft's situation was brought about by secret meetings he had with the Duke of Parma while negotiating for peace in the Netherlands in 1587.[44] Fearing that his death was imminent, Croft himself wrote to Leicester in these words:

> My honorable good Lorde. I am humbly to beseche your Lordships favorable assystance . . . recommendynge unto your Lordships good consideracion, the ruyne of my poore house . . . together with the mysery of my sealfe, forced to lye in this lothesome prison, wherby will ensue my presente deathe, excepte it please your L[ordship] to forget your former displeasures conceaved agaynst me, and to become a meane to her majestie, for my enlargemente; for the which I shall acknowlege the remayn[der] of my yeares, . . . and I and myne shall have cawse to yealde your L[ordship] any service that may lye in our powers, which I earnestly beseche your L[ordship] to comannde. . . .[45]

Leicester died only a few days later and thus was not able to personally assist Croft, who was released in 1589. According to the *DNB*,

> Croft and Croft's son Edward insisted that these proceedings [to imprison the Comptroller] were instigated by Leicester, with whom he had fallen out of favour. To avenge his father's wrongs Edward Croft is said to have applied to a London conjuror, John Smith, to work by magic Leicester's death . . . and the younger Croft was charged with contriving his death before the council.[46]

Croft died, ironically, two years to the day after Leicester.

Croft's case exceeded most. Requests to assist prisoners usually involved less egregious mistakes and centered upon men less noteworthy than Croft. One of these was Guillaume Dembize, a seaman who was arrested in London and had his ship confiscated in the process. Writing on his behalf in March 1571 was Count Louis of Nassau, brother of the

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[44] *DNB* vol. 5, 111.

[45] *DP* II, 267.

[46] *DNB*, vol. 5, 111.

Prince of Orange, Dembize's sovereign.[47] Another case involving foreign nationals touched Jehan Combes of the French Ambassador's household. Mauvissière de Castelnau wrote to Dudley in July 1564 requesting Combes' release on bail prior to any trial.[48] With Englishmen the requests came more often, and as early as 1559 Dudley received petitions for assistance in specific cases. On one occasion the Earl of Westmoreland wrote to Dudley on 4 August 1559, hoping that Dudley could secure a pardon for one Captain Brode, accused of killing James Babington.[49]

Prisoners felt they could benefit from contact with Leicester, as did the many men who hoped to serve the queen or Leicester in more honorable pursuits. Though most letters to Leicester requested important posts, others focused on more menial tasks, such as the recommendation of a servant: The Marquess of Winchester, for example, suggested a footman to serve Elizabeth, but made the request through Dudley in August 1559.[50] Five years later Thomas Barnaby proposed Hercules Trinchetta to serve as a horse-tamer with a salary of 600 crowns, a position relating to Leicester's official responsibilities as Master of the Horse.[51] An example of a different sort came in the form of a request from Leicester's Men (his theatrical players) in response to a statute governing the number of retainers that might be kept by a lord. The petition lacked a date, but was addressed to Leicester, so it must be dated beyond 29 September 1564. Further evidence for dating this request came in the

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[47] *DP* I, 218.

[48] *HMC Pepys*, 29 (I, 189).

[49] *DP* I, 59.

[50] *DP* I, 62.

[51] *HMC Pepys*, 18 (I, 117).

form of a pardon issued on 3 August 1565, probably precipitated by the petition of the players, which absolved Leicester of the crime of keeping illegal retainers and licensed him to keep 100 retainers in addition to the many household officials and servants in his employ.[52] Most likely the petition from his players fell between these two dates, and it asked him to

> vouchsaffe to reteyne us at this present as your houshold Servaunts and daylie wayters not that we mean to crave any further stipend or benefite at your Lordeshippes handes but our Lyveries as we have had and also your honors License to certifye that we are your houshold Servauntes when we shall have occasion to travayle amongst our ffrendes as we do usuallye once a yere and as other noble mens Players do and have done in tyme past wherebie we enioye our facultie in your Lordshippes name as we have done heretofore.[53]

This unusual request differs from most because it responds to a law and the request came from the intended beneficiaries. Other letters which recommended servants came from people other than the intended recipient, but still referred to minor positions such as footmen or musicians. For example, Sir Thomas Chaloner, Ambassador to Spain, proposed the lutist Fabricio Denti, a native of Naples, as a servant for Dudley (on 27 September 1564, two days before he was created Earl of Leicester).[54] Considering that Leicester was a leading promoter of artistic performances like those of his players, it is reasonable to assume that he received numerous requests like the one from Chaloner.

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[52] *Longleat Dudley MSS*, Box 2, no. 15.

[53] *DP* III, 125.

[54] *HMC Pepys*, 30-31 (I, 207). Chaloner indicated that Denti's father had served Henry VIII in a similar fashion for 1,000 crowns. For Fabricio, however, Chaloner recommended only 400 crowns yearly, though he felt the man to be a superior musician when compared to the elder Denti.

In the same letter, Chaloner made a plea for his recall from Spain, on the grounds of poor health, saying that he would die during the winter if left in office.[55] This was the second of three requests made by Chaloner for his recall, the others dispatched on 7 June and 30 November 1564.[56] In spite of his belief (exaggerated though it was) in his impending death, Chaloner survived the winter and by 12 February 1565 informed Leicester that he was "packing to make home."[57]

Chaloner was not alone in his desire to return to England. In October 1565, Sir Thomas Smith, Ambassador to France, also told Leicester that he wanted to be recalled, and achieved his goal in 1566.[58] A similar, though more exaggerated request came from Sir Henry Sidney, who on 5 September 1566 declared to Leicester that he wished to retire from his position as Lord Deputy in Ireland: "my dearest lord that you could find in your heart to lose one of your fingers to have me at home; God defend that you should lose any one joint for me, but I would that I had lost a hand that I were delivered of this cursed charge."[59] By 21 July 1571 Sir William Fitzwilliam reported to Leicester "that the L[ord] Deputye aplieth himself to receive dischardge of his Ireland service. . . ."[60] Perhaps his continued service as Lord Deputy in Ireland was a form of punishment, since the office hardly placed Sidney in a

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[55] *HMC Pepys*, 30 (I, 207).

[56] *HMC Pepys*, 27 (I, 157); *HMC Pepys*, 35 (I, 255). In the latter, Chaloner lamented a lack of suitable trained successors.

[57] *HMC Pepys*, 49 (I, 357).

[58] *HMC Pepys*, 67 (I, 443). He still wrote dispatches from France as late as 8 May 1572 (*DP* II, 104), as he had returned to that country on a special diplomatic mission. At that time Sir Francis Walsingham was Ambassador to France.

[59] *HMC Pepys*, 90 (I, 639).

[60] *DP* II, 30.

position to influence court affairs. In that sense he had to live vicariously through Leicester, offering what advice he could by letter.

Leicester received not only political advice, overt recommendations, and requests, but also more subtle forms of address. Nearly one hundred writers dedicated their works to him, most likely with the intent of securing his patronage or expressing their gratitude for his assistance. In *Leicester, Patron of Letters* (1955), Eleanor Rosenberg made perhaps the definitive study of this side of Leicester's patronage. She argued that Leicester was the best example of Elizabethan literary patronage and attempted to use his support of writers to reveal the breadth of contemporary literature.[61] In fact, she said that patrons like Leicester had a significant impact on literature of the time by the conscious "influence [they] exerted upon the forms, genres, content and purpose of Elizabethan literature. . . ."[62]

Included among the particulars which Leicester supported were various histories, the establishment of printing presses, the works of university men, translations, Puritan treatises, and theatrical efforts. In many cases, these categories overlapped, but followed what Rosenberg referred to as a four-fold program of literary patronage which she described thus:

> First, as a wealthy and cultivated gentleman, he had to assume the traditional obligation of nobility to foster learning and letters. . . . Secondly, as a magistrate, a counselor of the Prince and an important agent of the government, he had an even greater responsibility, the sponsorship of works which conduced directly to the benefit of the nation. Thirdly, as a leader of the progressive party, he willingly cooperated with the propagandists who supported the policies of his group. . . . Finally, as the Queen's personal favorite . . . he was royalty's proxy in bestowing patronage as in other matters.[63]

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[61] Rosenberg, *Leicester: Patron of Letters*, xviii.

[62] Ibid., xv.

[63] Ibid., 25-26.

Leicester was in a strong position to accomplish these goals, a fact recognized by many potential protégés as evidenced by the sheer number of works dedicated to him. Perhaps his most easily remembered contributions came on the Puritan side, but these did not comprise the entirety of his assistance to writers.

During the earliest years of the reign of Elizabeth, Dudley attracted men concerned with decidedly non-religious themes. Among these were William Cunningham, who in 1559 dedicated his *The Cosmographical Glasse*, a text on geography and, according to Rosenberg, "one of the first works in English to include a description of America. . . ."[64] In addition, in 1563 Thomas Gale authored *Certaine Workes of Chirurgerie* [Surgery], a medical textbook, which he dedicated to Dudley.[65]

Leicester's interest in the sciences did not end with the numerous works dedicated to him. He in fact took an active interest in mining activities and was a shareholder of three companies involved with some form of metallurgy or mineralogy – the Mines Royal, the Society of the Mineral and Battery Works, and the Society of the New Art.[66] These were not exclusive interests held by Leicester in the area of mining, and in truth he became involved in a dispute from 1566-67 between one of his companies and the Earl of Northumberland over control of certain lands in Cumberland. His agent in Cumberland, one Daniel Hochstetter, whose expertise lay in extracting water from mines, seemed misguided in believing that he

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[64] Ibid., 31.

[65] Ibid., 32.

[66] Cecil T. Carr, ed., *Select Charters of Trading Companies A. D. 1530-1707*, Publication of the Selden Society, XXVIII (London: Bernard Quartich, 1913), 5, 18, 21. The last of the three proposed a way of making copper from iron as well as changing antimony and lead into quicksilver (mercury). Needless to say it was unsuccessful.

could produce copper and silver from lesser metals, though his contemporaries took the concept seriously.[67] The same potential for profit which had lured Leicester into this venture also attracted Northumberland, who claimed that the lands in which the mines laid did in fact belong to him. Therefore he argued that any profit should also belong to him, and he initiated legal proceedings to claim the land.[68] In the intervening months the venture fell apart while legal proceedings continued, although the resulting decision went against Northumberland.[69]

While mining activities represented a financial investment to Leicester, his patronage of writers constituted a more intangible investment. One aspect of his patronage, that of historical writing, was an investment in the stability of the reign, for the writers "served a double purpose, reminding the prince and his counselors of the necessity for reigning wisely and beneficently, and admonishing the populace against subversive action; each group was to remember its duty to the other and to the commonwealth."[70] Two chroniclers, Richard Grafton and John Stow, dedicated works to Robert Dudley: The former penned his *Abridgement of the Chronicles of England* in 1563 [71] and the latter issued his *Summarie of Englyshe Chronicles* in 1565.[72] The two men unfortunately engaged in bickering over their

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[67] *SP 12*, vol. 39, f. 57.

[68] *SP 12*, vol. 42, f. 32, 40.

[69] *HMC Pepys*, 135 (II, 85). Northumberland still maintained his innocence, stating that the appropriate records on the subject were not seen by his legal counsel, leading him to think his own title was valid.

[70] Rosenberg, *Leicester: Patron of Letters*, 60.

[71] Ibid., 66.

[72] Ibid., 69.

methods, which only ceased with Grafton's death in 1573.[73] Thereafter, Stow continued to write histories, and in 1580 dedicated to Leicester *The Chronicles of England*.[74]

Grafton and Stow were not the only talents to dedicate historical works to Leicester. Edmund Campion, an Oxford man, merited Leicester's attention with his *Historie of Ireland* in 1571.[75] Campion's evident talent had a shortcoming, in that he was staunchly Catholic. Though considered among the best and brightest of the Oxford men, and a man whose advancement would have proceeded to unknown lengths had he been Protestant, his Catholicism led Campion to flee England and become a Jesuit. He was eventually captured in 1581 but Leicester still made efforts to assist him. Campion steadfastly refused to recant his beliefs and was eventually sent to the Tower and executed.[76]

Campion had begun his career at Oxford, where Leicester's influence had been pervasive since his becoming its Chancellor in 1564. He immediately set about filling university posts with men like Thomas Cooper, who later became the vice-chancellor of Oxford. In 1565 Cooper dedicated to Leicester his *Thesaurus Linguae Romanae et Britannicae*, which became a standard Latin dictionary.[77] Cooper's advancement continued after this dedication, as he obtained the Deanery of Gloucester in 1569, became Bishop of Lincoln in 1571 and was translated to the see of Winchester in 1584.[78] Certainly his

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[73] Ibid., 73.

[74] Ibid., 77.

[75] Ibid., 82.

[76] Ibid., 89-90.

[77] Ibid., 124.

[78] *DNB* vol. 4, 1074-75.

association with Leicester helped him in this course, and he earned the admiration of subject and queen alike.

After Cooper left Oxford upon becoming Bishop of Lincoln, Leicester secured the appointment of Dr. Laurence Humphrey as vice-chancellor.[79] Humphrey was considered to be a nonconformist, as were many others who obtained their positions at Oxford through Leicester's intervention. Furthermore, Leicester was responsible for reform at the university, as indicated by a letter he received from Roger Marbeck, Provost of Oriel, dated 23 January 1565. Marbeck explained that a survey of statutes had been undertaken, most of which were retained "excepting some which in part touched popery and superstition and be now by common consent utterly abolished."[80] The effect was dramatic, since according to Rosenberg the number of students matriculating to Oxford doubled by 1570.[81] Moreover his efforts to purge Catholics from Oxford, replacing them with moderate Puritans, created a climate in which the movement affected young scholars who could bring Puritan ideas to a wider segment of Elizabethan society.[82] In other instances the earl was able to circumvent the normal order of things and obtain the conferral of degrees for his protégés, such as for the Spanish exile Antonio Corrano (alias de Corro, 1576) as well as Fabian Niphus (1581) and Thomas Munford (1584).[83]

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[79] Rosenberg, *Leicester: Patron of Letters*, 130.

[80] *HMC Pepys*, 47 (I, 339).

[81] Rosenberg, *Leicester: Patron of Letters*, 132.

[82] Stone, *Crisis*, 740. Stone also indicated that Burghley had a similar effect at Cambridge.

[83] Rosenberg, *Leicester: Patron of Letters*, 135-7.

More importantly than the abnormal conferral of degrees, Leicester established Joseph Barnes as the first printer to the university in 1585, which instituted an important outlet for writers seeking his patronage.[84] Another printer, John Day, published many of the works dedicated to Leicester, works often of a Swiss Protestant bent.[85] With the assistance of these men, Leicester was able to secure the printing of tracts which fell firmly onto the Puritan side of the religious spectrum.

Many of the works printed with dedications to Leicester consisted of translations of classical literature and commentaries on biblical books. In considering the first subject, one is struck by the way in which this interest in classical works coincides with the "Renaissance" period. Combined with his interest in theatrical pursuits and his extensive collection of art, much of it with classical themes, the printing of translations of the classics places Leicester as one of the more prominent "Renaissance men" in England. His enormous influence could only have accelerated the speed with which that phenomenon spread across the realm.

Some of the dedications to Leicester of this type included Sir Thomas North's translation of *The Morall Philosophie of Doni* (1570), Thomas Nuce's version of *Octavia* and Arthur Golding's adaptation of *The xv Bookes of P. Ouidius Naso, entytuled Metamorphosis* (1567).[86] Curiously, the works of Ovid were not exactly fitting for a Puritan mind to consume, so one wonders why Golding chose that particular work, which seemed to reflect contemporary gossip about Leicester more than it did his Puritan sympathies. Other

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[84] Ibid., 138.

[85] Ibid., 207.

[86] Ibid., 158-160.

dedications were decidedly more religious in nature, such as James Sanforde's *The Reuelation of S. Iohn reueled* (1582).[87] The printer Day dedicated an anonymous translation of *Commentaries on Judges* (1564), a work originally by Peter Martyr,[88] and he also printed *Sermons on Job*, a 1574 translation by Golding, dedicated to the earl, of several sermons given by John Calvin.[89] Another connection with Calvin surfaced in 1579 when John Harmar translated Calvin's *Sermons upon the x. Commandements*.[90]

The Calvinistic content of these works indicated that reformers believed that Leicester held their cause dear and was willing to support them against their detractors. In fact, in 1584 he requested a conference, convened at Lambeth, after many Puritans had refused to conform to the Book of Common Prayer. Archbishop Whitgift's attempted suppression of nonconformists precipitated the necessity of this meeting, which was presided over by Leicester and several others, including Burghley and Walsingham. The conference consisted of a two-day disputation involving Whitgift and his allies on one side and several Puritans on the other, all arguing over the content of the Prayer Book, but resulted in a virtual stalemate and subsequent turmoil in Parliament.[91] Though the Lambeth Conference settled nothing, English involvement in the Dutch revolt, urged by Leicester for its merits in assisting the cause of international Protestantism, forestalled the conclusion of internal religious turmoil by forcing the English to commit time and resources elsewhere. When Leicester died, the

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[87] Ibid., 165.

[88] Ibid., 207.

[89] Ibid., 217.

[90] Ibid., 218.

[91] Collinson, *The Elizabethan Puritan Movement*, 269.

Puritans lacked a powerful ally at court and in council, and were therefore at the mercy of Whitgift's persecutions, but the details of that do not concern us here. Instead, it is time to arrive at some conclusions about the influence of Robert Dudley.

Conclusion

During the reign of Elizabeth, Robert Dudley achieved a unique position among his contemporaries. He became one of the most powerful men in England yet he owed all to the affections of an often inscrutable queen. His personal views of religion sometimes clashed with those of the queen, and while he lent as much support as he could to Puritan ministers, preachers, and writers, he could never go beyond what Elizabeth allowed. When the Puritans pushed too hard, she fought back by ordering her archbishops to enforce conformity to the Church of England. The Puritans found Leicester sympathetic but, in spite of his enormous prestige, incapable of transforming their status from radical reformers to mainstream religious practitioners. Nevertheless, they came to him in great numbers asking for his assistance in ecclesiastical affairs.

Certainly many of the men who wrote Leicester were reforming preachers, but many others who addressed appeals to him can be described as Puritan. In his surviving correspondence, there were letters from men both noble and common, but most shared the reforming viewpoint held by Leicester. Among the nobility, the Earls of Bedford, Warwick, and Huntingdon stand out, all of whom have been described by Lawrence Stone as indispensable to the early Elizabethan Puritan movement.[1] With these men Leicester maintained a regular correspondence, but one is hard-pressed to find a similar

[1] Stone, *Crisis*, 734.

communication with the more mainstream nobility. There were, to be sure, occasional letters from Burghley but most of these can be described as official state business, relating to Leicester's activities as a Privy Councilor.

As a councilor, Leicester received hundreds of dispatches from abroad, giving him an insight into foreign affairs that was exceeded only by Burghley. He used this information to argue in council for intervention in the Netherlands in the mid-1580s, on behalf of the Dutch Protestant rebels. This association with international Protestantism succeeded his earlier relationship with the domestic variety by the mid-1570s, as Elizabeth began to demand conformity at home, leaving Leicester in a precarious position regarding the Puritans. If he lent full support to them, he risked the displeasure of the queen, and since he relied on her goodwill for his influence, he could not defy her in so blatant a manner.

While he discovered that placing Puritans in influential ecclesiastical positions was increasingly difficult after 1572, Leicester realized that his position as Chancellor of Oxford allowed him considerable flexibility in locating alternative occupations for his protégés. Moreover, he established a printer at the university, a move that enabled him to support dozens of writers whose tracts attacked Catholicism and promoted the Puritan viewpoint.

Leicester did not concentrate solely on religion, however, as he exerted considerable influence over local elections in North Wales and the Midlands Counties. On many occasions his prestige allowed him to influence the selection of local aldermen and parliamentary burgesses, as shown in the affairs of Denbigh from 1570-72. The many lands which he owned, almost all of them gifts from the queen, enabled him to spread his influence far and

wide. Furthermore, he held numerous major local offices, whether they were High Stewardships or, in the case of Chester, Chamberlain of the County Palatine.[2] In addition he was a justice of the peace in eleven counties by 1573, and a Lord Lieutenant in twelve.[3] These county associations resulted in his command of upwards of ten parliamentary seats in each session.

Whether he used these seats to influence the outcome of particular debates, or simply as rewards for his more loyal servants, remains open to debate. Further study of this issue would yield important answers pertaining to Leicester's political strategy in parliament. The possibility exists that he wished to further religious aims, or perhaps in the earlier portion of his career he hoped to press the issues of the queen's marriage plans and the succession. On the other hand, he may not have actively pursued either of these goals, instead filling seats in order to support or oppose legislation as the need arose. To a great degree, Leicester's motives continue to elude historians of this field.

Only in recent scholarship has Leicester been studied with a somewhat objective eye. For many years, even centuries, he came to be seen as a man driven by ambition, interested only in securing a lasting place of prominence for himself. Personal ambition was a decided component of his personality, but such an analysis ignored the implications of his religious associations. Some of the men he supported, such as Field, campaigned for a further reform of the English Church, in direct opposition to the wishes of their sovereign. Surely Leicester

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[2] *CPR*, vol. 3, 320. Dated 2 July 1565.

[3] Pulman, *The Elizabethan Privy Council*, 22.

could not have expected boundless rewards for these relationships. His patronage, however, was not confined to radicals; he often supported conformists like William Chaderton, at one time a chaplain to Leicester and later Bishop of Chester.[4]

Leicester did not limit his influence to ecclesiastics, and it would be a glaring mistake to assume that he did. As indicated in Chapter Five, numerous letters sent to him requested his assistance in securing posts which were decidedly non-ecclesiastic. In addition, his business interests brought him letters from corporations and individual merchants who sought financial support or legal aid. Whether the authors of these requests could be described as Puritan is, in most cases, unknown to posterity. That they were Puritan is a strong possibility, since men of that outlook might have consciously chosen to address their letters to Leicester, the man seen by many as the great protector of Puritans. Family and local connections also inspired extensive numbers of letters, as Leicester could effectively use the prestige attached to his local stewardships in order to secure appointments. Some men, in fact, wrote on behalf of persons who had served his father, the Duke of Northumberland, hoping that Leicester could provide whatever they desired. Certainly his business activities attracted men concerned not with religion or public office, but with profit, and other councilors often joined him in these interests, as evidenced by the charters of incorporation of several societies, each indicating names such as Burghley or Pembroke as shareholders alongside that of Leicester.

The varied interests to which Leicester lent his support cannot, as has been indicated numerous times in histories before the twentieth century, be wholly classified as selfish. His

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[4] Rosenberg, *Leicester: Patron of Letters*, 200.

business activities undoubtedly were encouraged by profit more than altruistic motives, but as the champion of Puritan causes, his incentives were somewhat more difficult to discern. He could have aimed at promoting himself through kind words spoken by preachers who had benefited from his patronage. Conversely, he might have supported reforming preachers in order to advance a theology that he valued, in which case his motives would have been those of conscience rather than personal glorification. Another possibility exists, however. Leicester, as we have seen, seemed uncertain in his convictions during the early 1560s, pursuing an alliance with Spain in order to marry the queen, while at the same time assisting men of a Puritan bent. His inducement to investigate a Spanish link may have come from his desire to wed the queen, or it could have been an effort to uncover Spanish designs on England. Indeed a combination of the two may have been the case, but one does not have a difficult time observing the complexity of Leicester's motives.

Perhaps owing to this complexity historians have sought answers that were too easy, attempting to narrowly define a man whose interests lay in such widely varied areas. Furthermore, before the 1950s, historians found themselves succumbing to the temptation to classify Leicester as an inferior councilor simply because the whole basis for his career lay with the affections of the queen. Since that decade, historians have increasingly studied his role in political affairs because they realized that though his influence originated with Elizabeth, he nevertheless employed it as he chose, in some cases assisting men whose views sharply contrasted with those of the monarch. His influence extended into a wide spectrum of Elizabethan life, was immediately recognized by his contemporaries, as demonstrated by the

great numbers of requests he received during his lifetime, and made Leicester one of the most powerful patrons and statesmen of his generation.

Appendix A

Portraits and Illustrations

1. Miniature Portrait of Robert Dudley. Painted by Nicholas Hilliard. The designation Anno Domini 1576 on the left, and Aetatis Sue 44 on the right, indicate Dudley was 44 at the time of the portrait and hence born in 1532. Of course this is only speculation.

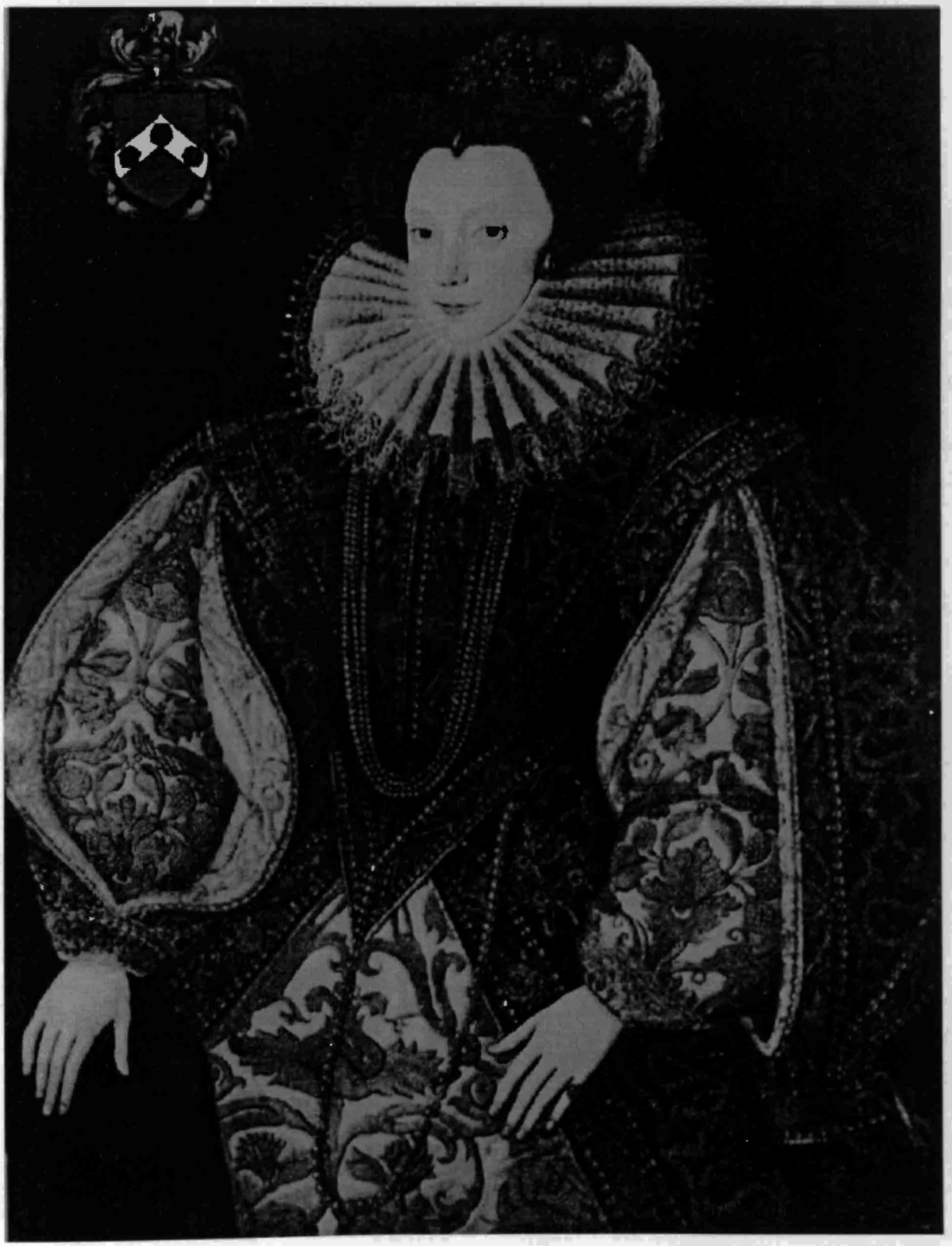
2. Coronation Procession of Elizabeth I

From the College of Arms MS M6, fol. 41v.

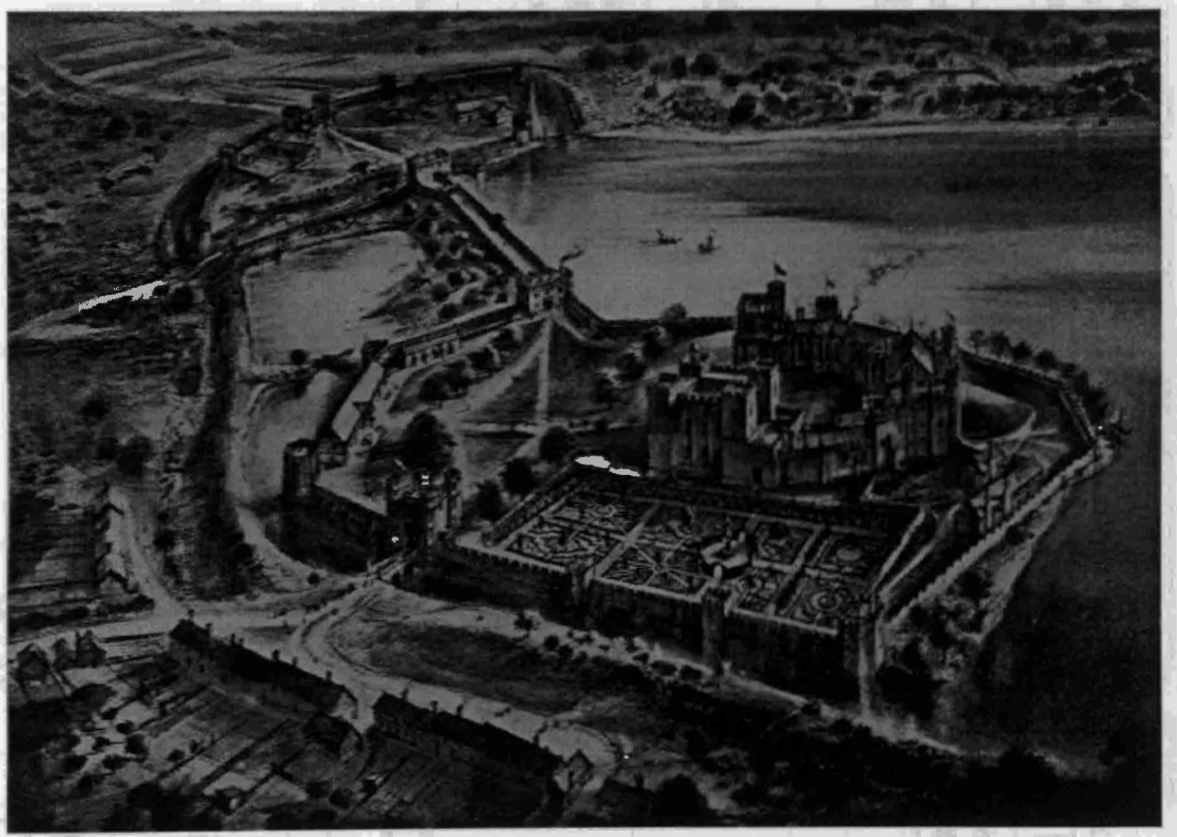
3. Portrait of Robert Dudley, c. 1560-65, by Steven van der Muelen

4. "Rainbow" Portrait of Elizabeth I, by Isaac Oliver

5. Portrait of Lettice Knollys, Second Wife of Robert Dudley

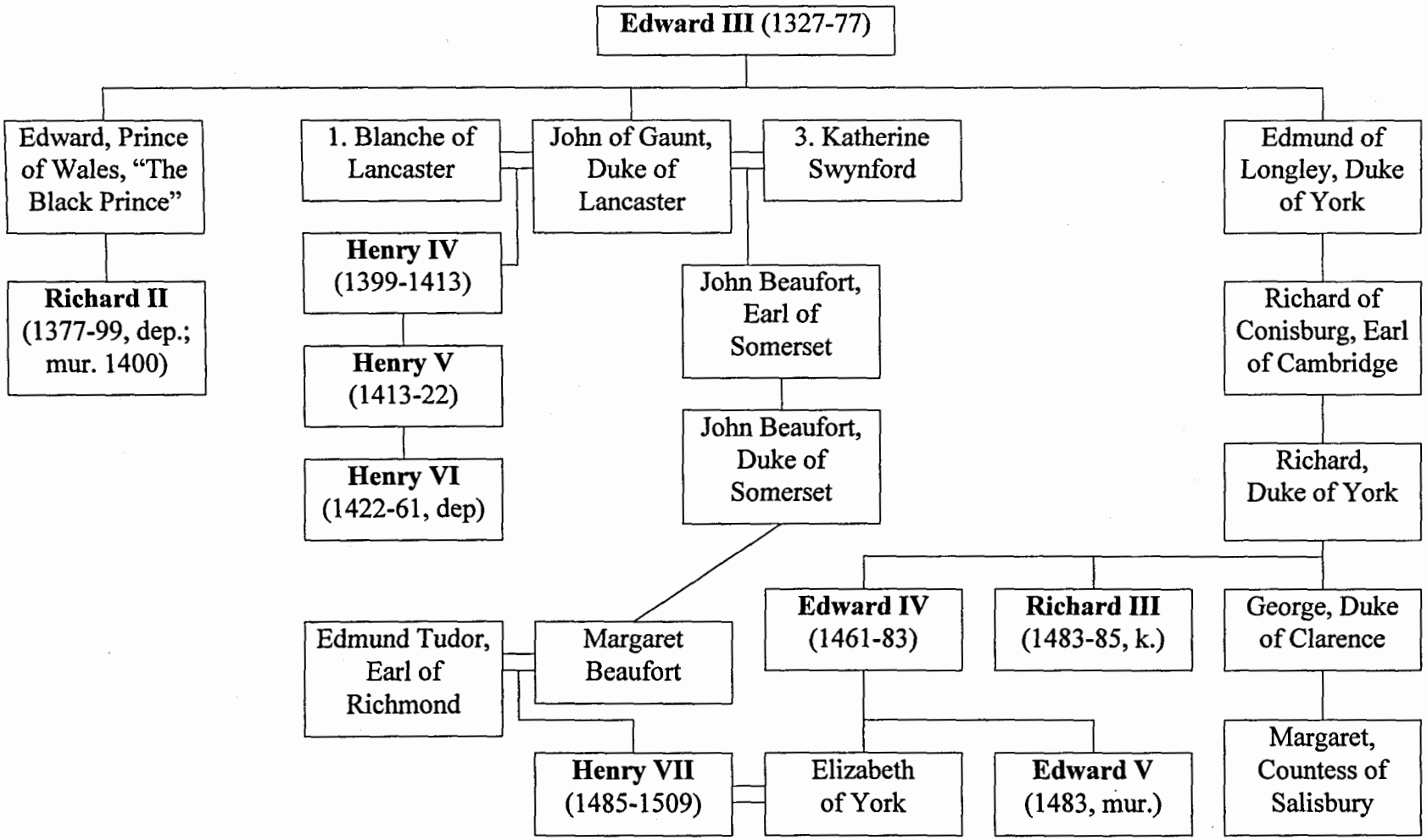


6. Artist's Conception of Kenilworth, c. 1575

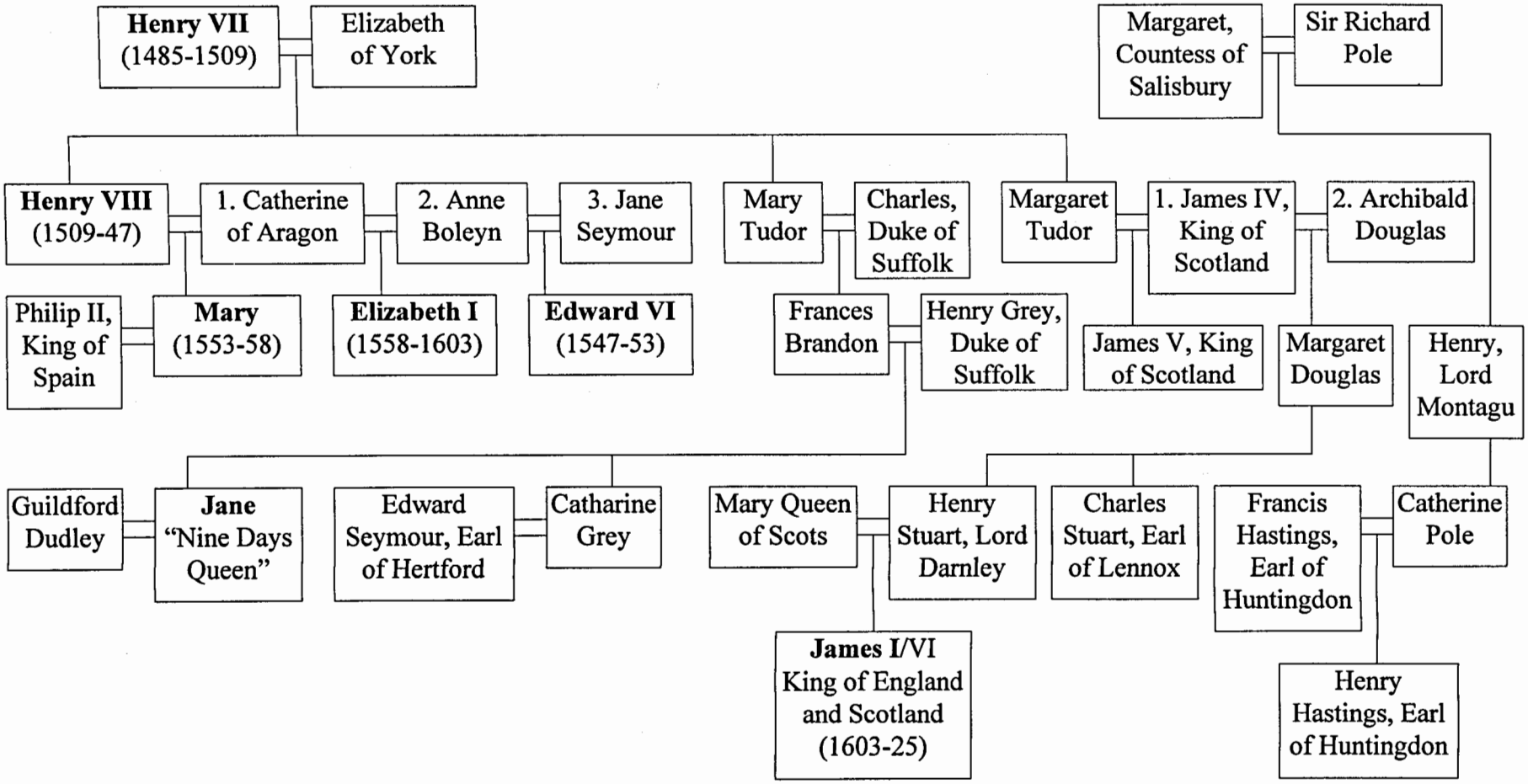


Appendix B

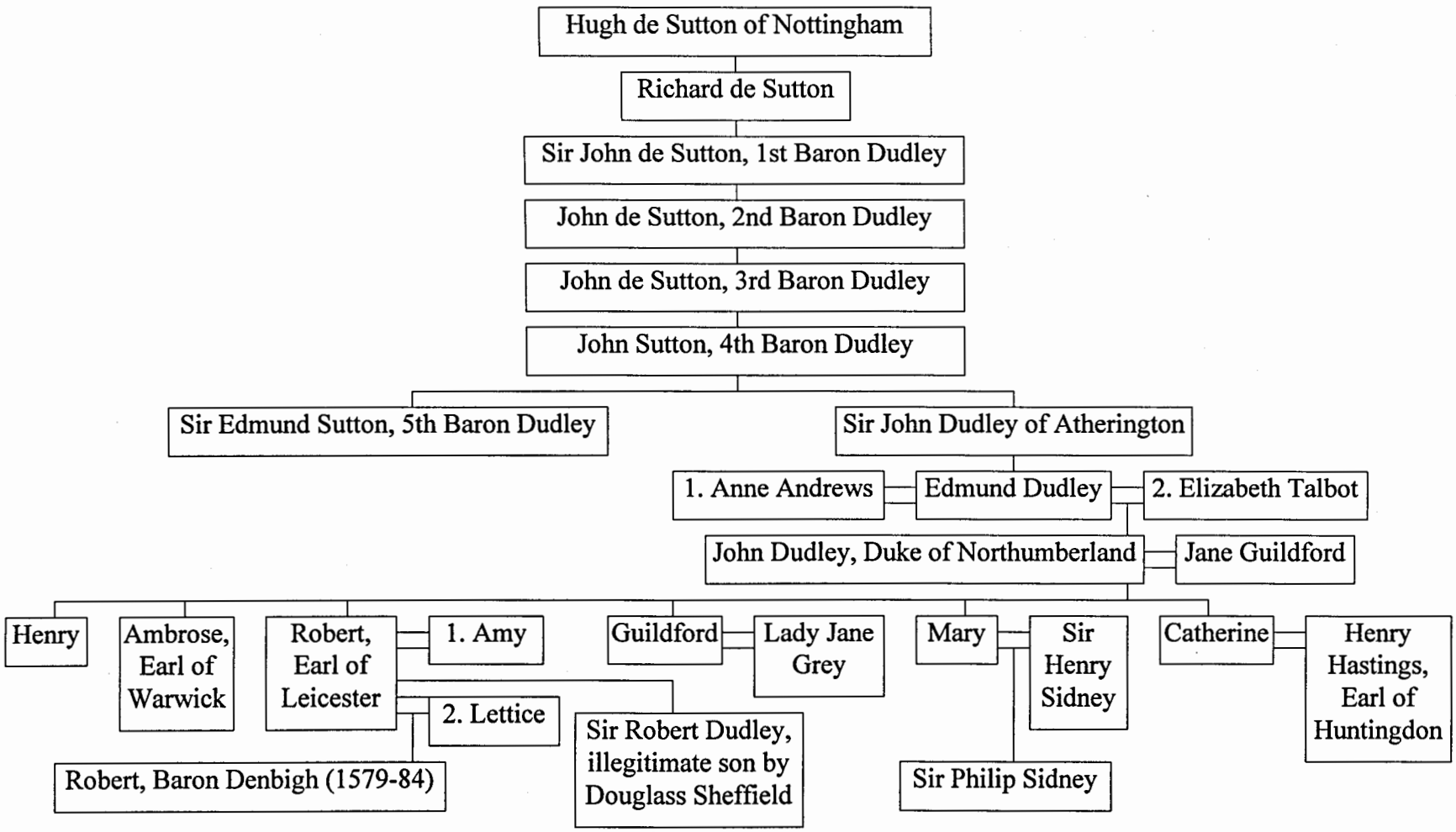
The English Succession, Part One



The English Succession, Part Two



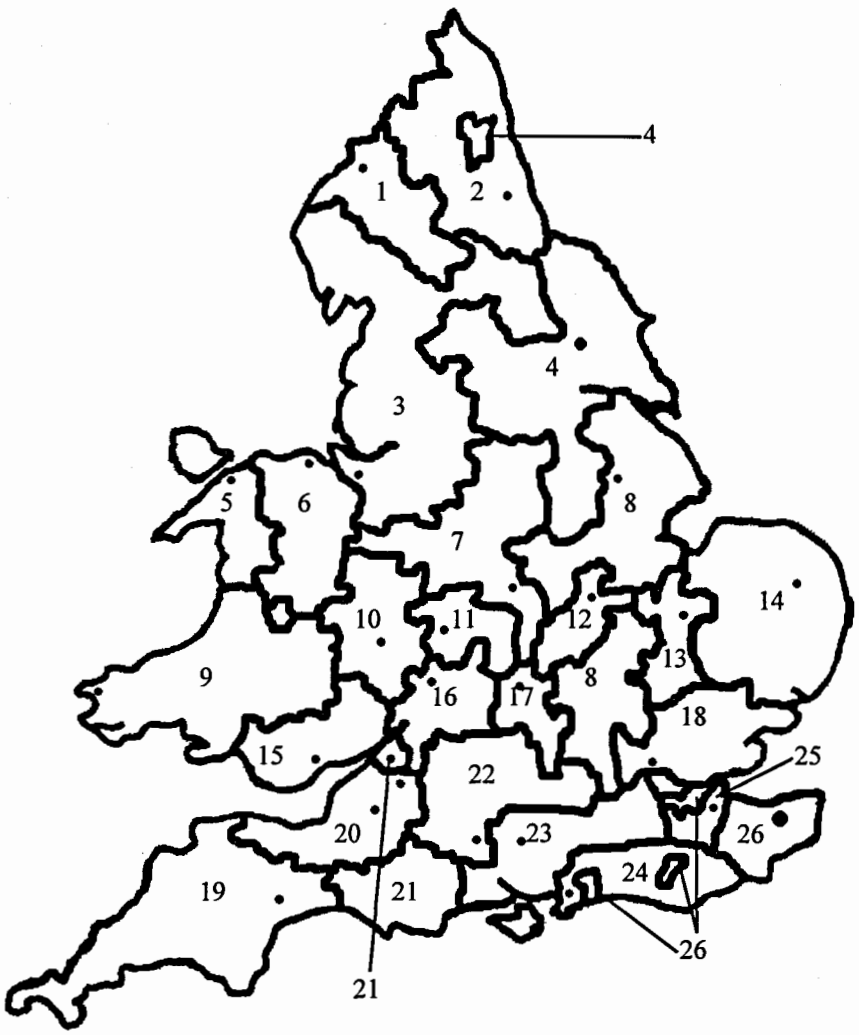
Sutton/Dudley Genealogy



Appendix C

Maps

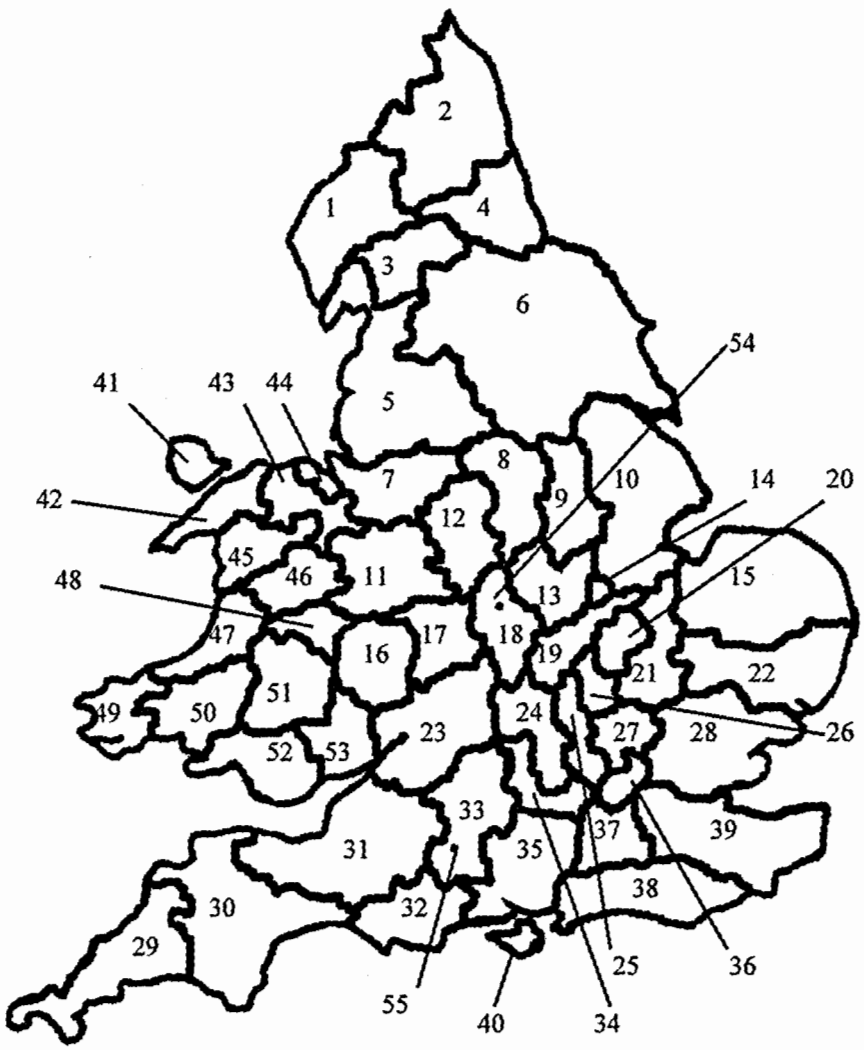
1. Ecclesiastical Dioceses, c. 1560



1. Carlisle
2. Durham
3. Chester
4. York
5. Bangor
6. St. Asaph
7. Coventry and Litchfield
8. Lincoln
9. St. David's
10. Hereford
11. Worcester
12. Peterborough
13. Ely
14. Norwich
15. Llandaff
16. Gloucester
17. Oxford
18. London
19. Exeter
20. Bath and Wells
21. Bristol
22. Salisbury
23. Winchester
24. Chichester
25. Rochester
26. Canterbury

Note: Large dots represent Arch-sees, while smaller dots indicate the location of diocesan sees.

2. Counties of England and Wales, c. 1560



English Counties

1. Cumberland
2. Northumberland
3. Westmoreland
4. Durham
5. Lancashire
6. Yorkshire
7. Cheshire
8. Derbyshire
9. Nottinghamshire
10. Lincolnshire
11. Shropshire
12. Staffordshire
13. Leicestershire
14. Rutland
15. Norfolk
16. Herefordshire
17. Worcestershire
18. Warwickshire
19. Northampton-shire
20. Huntingdon-shire
21. Cambridge-shire
22. Suffolk
23. Gloucestershire
24. Oxfordshire
25. Buckingham-shire
26. Bedfordshire
27. Hertfordshire
28. Essex
29. Cornwall
30. Devonshire
31. Somerset
32. Dorset
33. Wiltshire
34. Berkshire
35. Hampshire
36. Middlesex
37. Surrey
38. Sussex
39. Kent
40. Isle of Wight

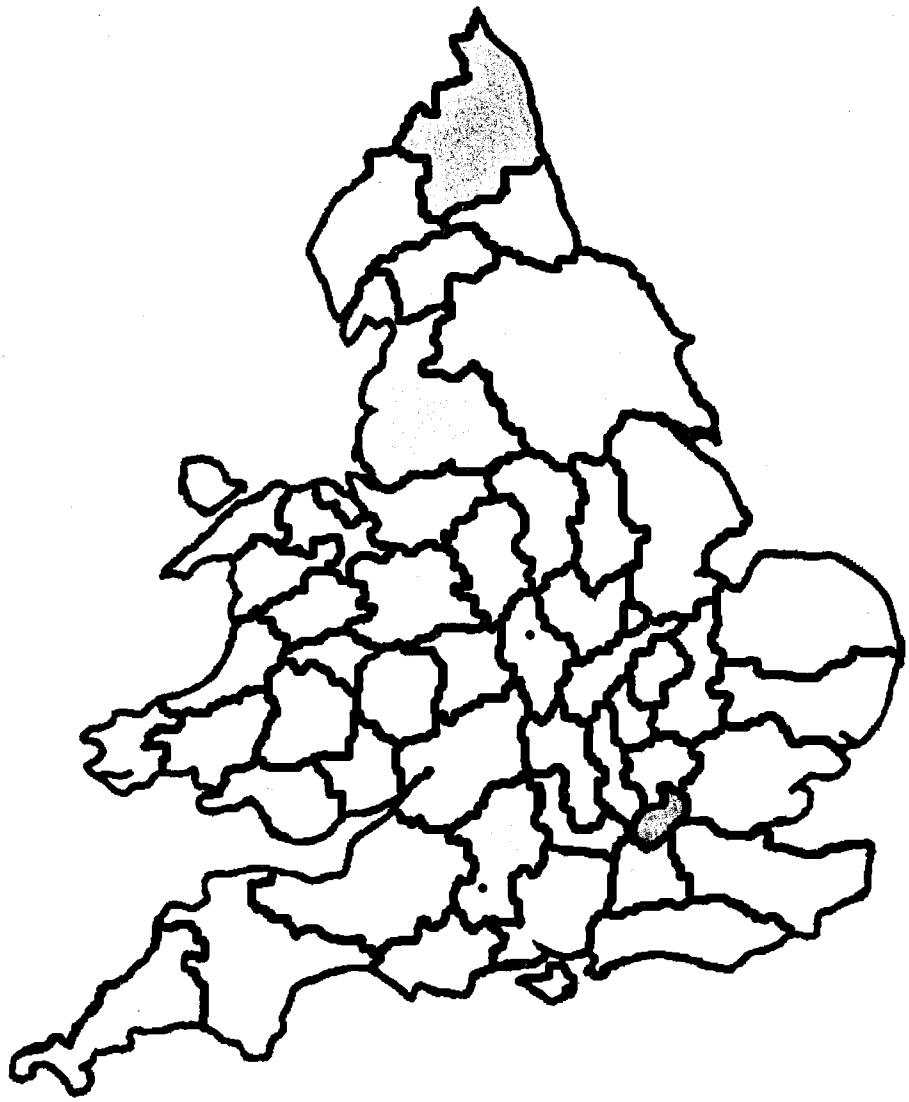
Welsh Counties

41. Anglesey
42. Caernarvonshire
43. Denbighshire
44. Flintshire
45. Merionethshire
46. Montgomeryshire
47. Cardiganshire
48. Radnorshire
49. Pembrokeshire
50. Carmarthenshire
51. Brecknockshire
52. Glamorganshire
53. Monmouthshire

Other

54. Kenilworth Castle
55. Longleat House

3. Origin of Requests for Influence



Key:

0

1-3

4-7

10

23

Note: There are no counties showing 8-9, 11-22, or more than 23 requests. The total for Middlesex reflects the presence of the court in London.

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In the reference notes, the papers found at Longleat have been classified in two ways, since they are organized in that fashion in the archives of the Marquess of Bath. There are twenty bound volumes containing letters, inventories, surveys, etc., as well as loose papers organized into boxes, containing many large (in some cases six feet long by three feet wide) vellum sheets on which can be found official land grants and Robert Dudley's creation as Baron of Denbigh and Earl of Leicester, among other things. In the text, the bound volumes have been referred to, for example, as DP I, 100, indicating document 100 in volume one. The boxed items, however, have been classified as, for instance, *Longleat Dudley MSS*, Box I, A, referring to item A in Box One. In some boxes the items are designated with letters, while in others they are numbered.

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The State Papers have been noted, for example, as SP12, Vol. 42, no. 35. This indicates Series 12 (the reign of Elizabeth I), Volume 42 (there are well over 200 volumes for this reign), number 35 (giving the original document number). Of late the Public Record Office has begun renumbering its pages so as to index its microfilm collection of the same. The new numbers run 1LH, 1RH, 2LH, 2RH, and so forth, with 1LH being equivalent to page 1, 1RH page 2, 2LH page 3, 2RH page 4, and so forth. The reasons behind this numbering system are a mystery, but this is the format one uses when ordering a photocopy from microfilm. The *Calendar of State Papers*, however, uses the old system of numbering individual documents, which I have maintained in this work.

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_____. "The Dudley Clientele and the House of Commons, 1559-1586." *Parliamentary History*, 8, pt. 2 (1989): 216-39.

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_____. "The Papers of Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester: I. The Browne-Evelyn Collection." *Archives* 20, no. 87 (1992): 63-85.

_____. "The Papers of Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester: II. The Atye-Cotton Collection." *Archives* 20, no. 90 (1993): 131-44.

These two articles (to be followed by two more as yet unpublished) inquire into the locations of papers that belonged to Robert Dudley but were dispersed at his death. Apparently many documents survived in the hands of former secretaries or servants such as Arthur Atye and Richard Browne. In the case of Atye, the documents have passed to the Cottonian collection in the British Library, while Browne's cache passed to John Evelyn and then into the hands of Samuel Pepys, and now form the Pepys Manuscripts at Magdalen College, Cambridge. These collections, along with the Dudley Papers at Longleat and several smaller accumulations of documents, hold a great number of Dudley's papers, though not all.

Adlard, George. *Amye Robsart and the Earl of Leicester*. London: John Russell Smith, 1870.

Adlard investigates the death of Amy Robsart, first wife of Robert Dudley. He concludes that her death was not due to foul play and exonerates Dudley. In addition, he includes Philip Sidney's defense of Leicester (1585) and describes the Kenilworth festivities of 1575, when Elizabeth visited that castle and was lavishly entertained by Dudley's collection of players and musicians.

Aird, Ian. "The Death of Amy Robsart: Accident, Suicide, or Murder or Disease?." *English Historical Review* 71 (January 1956): 69-79.

Aird discussed the death of Amy Robsart and was the first man to propose the argument that she died due to complications from cancer rather than any other cause. Since he indicated that her grave had been spoiled, there can be no confirmation of his theory.

Bartlett, Kenneth. "Papal Policy and the English Crown, 1563-1565: The Bertano Correspondence." *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 23 (Winter 1992): 643-59.

Bayne, C.G. *Anglo-Roman Relations, 1558-1565.* Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968; reprint, Oxford: n.p., 1913.

Both Bartlett and Bayne describe the correspondence between Gurone Bertano and William Cecil. As to Dudley's role, they are eager to exaggerate it, to the point of accusing him of cynically seeking to further his own designs to marry the queen. In reality his role was much smaller and probably peripheral. Bayne's subject is much larger than Bartlett's, however, and focuses on relations between England and the Vatican. Though no exchange of envoys occurred, the papal party sought ways to return England to Roman Catholicism, often surreptitious.

Camden, William. *The History of the Most Renowned and Victorious Princess Elizabeth Late Queen of England,* ed., with an introduction by Wallace T. MacCaffrey. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970.

Camden was the first man to write a history of the reign of Elizabeth, though his viewpoint owed a great deal to Burghley and was thus biased in his favor. Generally negative when discussing Leicester.

Cameron, Euan. *The European Reformation.* Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991.

A recent work describing the progress of the Reformation in Europe. Useful as background, since the theology of the Marian exiles was formed partially owing to their associations with Genevan and German reformers from 1553-58.

Chamberlin, Frederick. *Elizabeth and Leycester.* New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1939.

A book completely biased in favor of Leicester. Attempts to uplift Leicester's reputation by diminishing that of Burghley. Often ignores critical facts and misreads documents and thus should be ignored as a serious study. At the time, however, it represented a change from the traditional view of Leicester as a shallow, self-serving

and otherwise secondary councilor. Though he anticipated the view that Leicester took an often decisive and highly important role in English affairs, his study cannot be considered worthwhile because of its other arguments.

Clifford, Esther. "Marriage of True Minds." *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 15, no. 1 (Spring 1984): 36-46.

Echoes the sentiments of Carolly Erickson, who felt that Elizabeth avoided marriage due to the negative psychological impact of her childhood. Certainly the young queen witnessed a violent end to several of her father's marriages, but whether one accepts the connection between that and her own aversion to marital life depends on whether one believes psychoanalytic theories in general.

Collinson, Patrick. *The Elizabethan Puritan Movement.* Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967.

A definitive work on nonconformist religious ideas and practices. Indispensable as reference material in a study of Leicester because it explores the values of the men supported by the earl.

Coward, Barry. *The Stanleys Lords Stanley and Earls of Derby 1385-1672: The Origins, Wealth and Power of a Landowning Family.* Vol. 30, *Remains Historical and literary Connected with the Palatine Counties of Lancester and Chester*, 3d series. Publication of the Chetham Society. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1983.

Though it mentions Leicester only briefly, it does indicate that his selection as Chamberlain of Chester came in spite of the great influence of the Stanley family in that county. However I did not find anything in the Dudley Papers to suggest that Edward Earl of Derby resented the choice.

Dean, D.M., and N. L. Jones, eds., *The Parliaments of Elizabethan England.* Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1990.

A collection of articles by G. R. Elton, M. A. R. Graves, Wallace T. MacCaffrey, J. D. Alsop, T. E. Hartley, Conrad Russell and the editors, focusing on various aspects of Elizabethan parliaments. These included foreign policy, taxation, religion, and local elections. Dean's article "Parliament and Locality" was the most useful here, discussing several instances of Leicester's involvement on behalf of localities.

Dunham, William Huse Jr., and Stanley Pargellis, eds. *Complaint and Reform in England 1436-1714: Fifty Writings of the Time on Politics, Religion, Society, Economics, Architecture, Science, and Education.* New York: Octagon Books, 1968.

The useful sections of this book were "An Admonition to the Nobility" from William Allen in 1588 (pp. 351-81), and "An Admonition to the Parliament" of 1572 (pp. 232-57), claimed by John Field and Thomas Wilcox. Allen was an ardent Catholic who fled England in 1565 and helped establish in 1568 a seminary at Douai. He wanted nothing less than the deposition of Elizabeth and the restoration of Catholicism in England, and as for Leicester he asserted that the queen became involved with him "only to serve her filthy lust..." (p. 361). In the latter document, the authors hoped to unify the various factions of Puritans, urging a departure from Anglican polity and theology.

Eldrington, C. R., ed. *A History of the County of Gloucester*, Vol. 8. The Victoria History of the Counties of England. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1968.

The Victoria History of the Counties of England provides local histories, some of which are relevant to a study of Robert Dudley, owing to his land holdings in these regions and his occasional involvement in their affairs. His role, however, is only briefly discussed and not in any sort of depth. Indeed this should be the case, since these are histories of localities and not national politics, Puritanism, or court affairs.

Fritze, Ronald H., ed.-in-chief and Sir Geoffrey Elton, adv. ed., *Historical Dictionary of Tudor England, 1485-1603.* New York: Greenwood Press, 1991.

Reference material. Gives brief articles on a wide range of topics, from short biographies of important statesmen and ecclesiastics to discussions of movements such as Puritanism. Not essential but at times useful for minor facts.

Froude, James Anthony. *History of England from the Fall of Wolsey to the Defeat of the Spanish Armada*, Vol. 5-12. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1881.

A classic example of histories written in the nineteenth century, the usefulness of which has been surpassed by more modern treatments. Highly detailed but also biased toward the mainstream Protestant cause in England. In that respect, portrayed Leicester in negative terms when discussing his support of domestic reformers but approved of his role in the Dutch revolt because of its implications for England.

Fuller, Thomas. *The History of the Worthies of England.* A new edition with notes by P. Austin Nuthall, 3 Vols. London: Thomas Tegg, 1840.

First published in 1662, includes the names of sheriffs for every English county, but excludes those in Wales. Also lists the prominent citizens of each county, along with those who became Lord Mayor of London or were elected to a bishopric.

Harris, B. E., ed. *A History of the County of Chester*, Vol. 2. The Victoria History of the Counties of England. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979.

Haynes, Alan. *Invisible Power: The Elizabethan State Services 1570-1603.* New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992.

Explores the use of overseas informants by the great councilors of state, including Burghley, Walsingham, and Leicester. Suggests these private secret services were actually designed to gather information which would be of use to the statesmen in pursuing a foreign policy in council. Interesting though quite brief.

_____. *The White Bear: Robert Dudley, The Elizabethan Earl of Leicester.* London: Peter Owen, 1987.

The latest biography of Robert Dudley. Its quality is neither superior nor inferior to other works, but it is a bit short. There is no definitive biography of Leicester.

Herbert, N. M., ed. *A History of the County of Gloucester*, Vol. 4, *The City of Gloucester.* The Victoria History of the Counties of England. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988.

Hoffman, Ann. *Lives of the Tudor Age 1485-1603.* New York: Harper & Row, 1977.

Reference material. Vastly inferior to the DNB but does reflect more modern views of the persons included. Does not include the minor personages in English affairs, focusing instead on the better-known individuals.

Jenkins, Elizabeth. *Elizabeth and Leicester.* New York: Coward-McCann, 1961.

Focuses mainly on the relationship between the queen and her favorite but is more properly described as a biography of Robert Dudley. The quality is slightly better than most but it has become a bit dated.

Jordan, Wilbur Kitchener. *Edward VI, The Young King: The Protectorship of the Duke of Somerset*. Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press, 1968.

_____. *Edward VI, The Threshold of Power: The Dominance of the Duke of Northumberland*. Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press, 1970.

Jordan's investigation of the "reign" of Edward VI is very useful to students of that period. With regard to Robert Dudley, its value is limited, indicating only that the two were friends and that this friendship likely developed because John Dudley placed his son close to the young king in order to advance his own cause.

Kendall, Alan. *Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester*. London: Cassell, 1980.

The first of three books on Dudley to be issued in the 1980s but in quality not the best of these. In general it relies heavily on primary source quotes but seems disjointed, more like a jumbled collection of facts than a coherent analysis.

Levine, Mortimer. *The Early Elizabethan Succession Question, 1558-1568*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1966.

A useful exploration of the succession question, especially relevant here as background reading. Briefly and accurately discusses Dudley's role but in general does not explore it in quite enough detail.

MacCaffrey, Wallace T. *Queen Elizabeth and the Making of Policy, 1572-1588*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981.

_____. *The Shaping of the Elizabethan Regime*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968.

These two works, along with *War and Politics, 1588-1603*, constitute MacCaffrey's modern study of the reign of Elizabeth. More useful than Froude though not as detailed, but its narrative is quite effective. Leicester's role in Elizabethan politics and religion is given due consideration and treated objectively.

McCoy, Richard C. "From the Tower to the Tiltyard: Robert Dudley's Return to Glory." *The Historical Journal* 27, no. 2 (1984): 425-35.

_____. *The Rites of Knighthood: The Literature and Politics of Elizabethan Chivalry*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989.

In the article, McCoy inquired into Dudley's life during the reign of Mary, suggesting that his military prowess enabled him to gain at least a partial restoration

of status, though he remained excluded from court affairs. In the book, he discussed the conceptual ties associated with knighthood, but the focus was not Dudley, who was seen instead as a nearly perfect embodiment of courtly ways.

Neale, J.E. *The Elizabethan House of Commons.* New Haven: Yale University Press, 1950.

Often considered the authoritative work on the subject though some consider it based too heavily on preconceived notions of Elizabethan politics (Adams, for example). Did not explore Leicester's role in great detail, but this is to be expected since he was but one of many who used their influence to secure seats. For a more complete discussion of Leicester's role in Elizabethan parliaments see Adams, "The Dudley Clientele."

Parmiter, Geoffrey de C. *Edmund Plowden, An Elizabethan Recusant Lawyer.* Southampton: Catholic Record Society, 1987.

Plowden is of interest because he used his legal skills on Leicester's behalf on several occasions. This originated with Leicester's assistance to the Inner Temple in a 1561 dispute with the Middle temple over control of Lyon's Inn, which proceeded in favor of the Inner Temple. As a gesture of gratitude, the Inner Temple prohibited its lawyers from participating in any suits against Leicester. Plowden was associated with the Inner Temple and gained an appreciation for Leicester's influence in this matter.

Peck, D.C. " 'The Letter of Estate': An Elizabethan Libel." *Notes and Queries* 28 (February 1981): 21-35.

_____. "The Earl of Leicester and the Riot at Drayton Basset, 1578." *Notes and Queries* 27 (April 1980): 131-35.

_____, ed. *Leicester's Commonwealth: The Copy of a Letter Written by a Master of Art of Cambridge (1584) and Related Documents.* Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1985.

Peck is possibly the sole authority on libels against Robert Dudley, especially *Leicester's Commonwealth.* His effort to fix the authorship of that work and his discussion of "The Letter of Estate" have shown the great contempt held for Leicester by his enemies. This level of hatred could only have been inspired by an extremely effective courtier. The other article, concerning Drayton Bassett, shows Leicester's efforts to gain possession of a Staffordshire manor in the wake of a local dispute over control of the same, thus expanding his control of that region.

Powell, Ken, and Chris Cook. *English Historical Facts 1485-1603*. Totowa, NJ: Rowman and Littlefield, 1977.

Reference material, giving names of major office-holders and key dates but in general one feels as though it omits a wealth of information.

Pulman, Michael Barraclough. *The Elizabethan Privy Council in the Fifteen-Seventies*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971.

This discussion of the Privy Council focused on its role in Elizabethan affairs and showed it to be a body which took on many daily functions of government in addition to being a body of advisors to the queen. Leicester was of course an important part of the council, but the depth of his role can only be discovered by a full reading of the Acts of the Privy Council.

Rosenberg, Eleanor. *Leicester, Patron of Letters*. New York: Octagon Books, 1976; reprint, New York: Columbia University Press, 1955.

So far as I am aware, the only work that discusses Robert Dudley's patronage of writers. This book was highly informative and very useful in this study. However his role in the development of theatrical companies could have been enlarged somewhat even if it was adequate to the subject.

Simpson, John Andrew, and Edmund S. C. Weiner, preparers. *The Oxford English Dictionary*. 2d ed. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989.

Useful in defining such words as canon, dean, and prebend, in relation to the Church of England.

Stephen, Sir Leslie, and Sir Sidney Lee, eds. *The Dictionary of National Biography*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1921-22; reprint.

An absolute must as a reference tool. Many of the men mentioned in this thesis can be found in the DNB, which allowed me to confirm the success of Leicester's influence in many instances.

Stephens, W. B., ed. *A History of the County of Warwick*, Vol. 8. *The Victoria History of the Counties of England*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1969.

Stone, Lawrence. *Family and Fortune: Studies in Aristocratic Finance in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973.

_____. *The Crisis of the Aristocracy*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965.

These immense studies of the aristocracy in England provide excellent background reading for the period, and include enough specifics on Leicester to be pertinent to this thesis. The latter work is particularly helpful in its discussion of the nobility and its income, power, land-owning, business interests, social constraints, and influence. Leicester fits into almost every discussion, and the references to his career are many and relevant to this study.

Waldman, Milton. *Elizabeth and Leicester*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1945.

A brief and competent, though uninspiring, biography of Robert Dudley.

Wilson, Derek. *Sweet Robin: A Biography of Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester 1533-1588*. London: Hamish Hamilton, 1981.

Includes more analysis than either Kendall or Haynes but like those fails to explore Dudley's role in Elizabethan politics in great detail. Not exceptional in any way, especially the title, though more coherent than Kendall and more detailed than Haynes. Once again it appears that no authoritative work on Leicester has been published.

Maps

Falkus, Malcolm and John Gillingham. *Historical Atlas of Great Britain*. New York: Continuum, 1981.

Shepherd, William R. *Shepherd's Historical Atlas*. 9th ed. New York: Barnes & Noble, 1976.

Speed, John. *The Counties of Britain: A Tudor Atlas by John Speed*. New York: Thames and Hudson, 1989.

These collections of maps allowed me to produce the three maps in Appendix C. The first two gave an indication of the borders of ecclesiastical dioceses around 1560, with the locations of sees. An unlabeled political map from the same period was fleshed out by the third source, which consists of reproduced sixteenth-century maps of each county.

About the Author

Jonathan Perry Weston was born in Holyoke, Massachusetts, on 3 September 1969, and is the son of George and Charlotte Weston. He received his A.B. degree in History in 1991 from Duke University in Durham, North Carolina. Currently, Mr. Weston resides in Richmond, Virginia where he is an avid volleyball player and coach. He hopes one day to earn a Ph.D. in history, teach that subject at the university level, and coach college volleyball.