

1977

## The office of the Principal Secretary in the Reign of Mary Tudor (1553-1558): Some Aspects of the Conduct of State Business

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<https://dx.doi.org/doi:10.21220/s2-hj1y-mk77>

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THE OFFICE OF THE PRINCIPAL SECRETARY IN THE REIGN OF  
MARY TUDOR (1553-1558): SOME ASPECTS OF  
THE CONDUCT OF STATE BUSINESS

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A Thesis

Presented to

The Faculty of the Department  
of History of the College of William  
and Mary in Virginia

In Partial Fulfillment  
Of the Requirements for the Degree  
of Master of Arts

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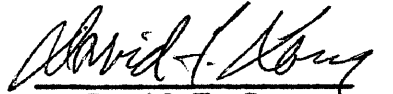
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David F. Long

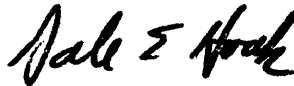
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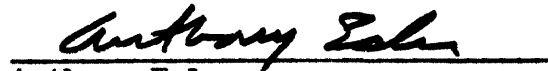
  
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Approved, August 1977



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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
PREFACE. . . . .	iv
ABBREVIATIONS. . . . .	viii
ABSTRACT . . . . .	ix
CHAPTER I. SOURCES. . . . .	1
CHAPTER II. PERSONNEL . . . . .	5
CHAPTER III. PROCEDURE. . . . .	35
CHAPTER IV. PRACTICE. . . . .	65
BIBLIOGRAPHY . . . . .	89

## PREFACE

The reign of Mary Tudor (1553-1558) should occupy a more prominent place in Tudor history, if only because it illustrates in one brief period nearly every problem of Tudor government. Most historians, however, have devoted but little attention to this unattractive reign. Even the greatest Tudor historians have dismissed Mary's reign as being sterile (A.F. Pollard) or an aberration in the development of Tudor government (G.R. Elton). Consequently, the actual operation of Marian government remains unexplored, and yet a detailed understanding of its working is critical to the debate over whether Mary's reign even belongs to a discussion of Tudor methods of government. A study of the operation of the office of the principal secretary will also test the value of G.R. Elton's thesis that Tudor government after the 1530s was essentially bureaucratic and therefore more 'modern' than medieval.

Elton's The Tudor Revolution in Government (1953) argued that Tudor government underwent an administrative revolution in the 1530s. The revolution was the work of Thomas Cromwell, who reformed the government of Henry VIII during the years 1534-1540 along lines more modernly bureaucratic than medieval. Elton defines medieval government as government by the king in person and through his entourage, the royal household. The revolutionary early modern government of Thomas Cromwell was in Elton's view independent of the household; it was bureaucratically organized around 'national' departments, departments nevertheless responsible to the crown (p. 425).

A key part of this story was Cromwell's elevation of the

secretary to the position of a true minister of state. The medieval, pre-Cromwellian secretary gained his importance from being the Keeper of the Signet, the king's personal seal, and from being a diplomat. The medieval secretary was an important official, but clearly one of the second rank, behind the household officers, the lord privy seal, and the chancellor. The medieval secretaryship was a personal, household office. In the Tudor revolution the secretary became supreme in the internal administration of the state. The secretary took on the role of the "all-powerful minister, with his hand over and in every event and detail of government...after Cromwell's tenure it never again was anything less than 'the binding force of the state, holding together all the various units of the administration'" (p. 127). In this view the royal government became increasingly impersonal. Government officials no longer came from the ranks of the Church or the king's household; they were trained in the minister's household and employed in the service of the state (p. 308).

Elton argues that the Cromwellian period, 1534-1540, was not merely a precursor of later developments, a status he ascribes to the similarly efficient administration of Richard II (p. 15), but a permanent change. Cromwell's activities characterized the secretary's actions sixty years later, and although later secretaries could not all be Cromwells, all were true ministers of state and had the means available to dominate the internal administration of government. In the Eltonian view, the leading contribution to a Tudor revolution in government was the elevation of the principal secretary to supreme administrative power (p. 303).

Was Cromwell's work lasting? This question provides a reasonable starting point for evaluating a part of the Eltonian thesis as it applies to the office of the principal secretary in Mary's reign. If the administrative revolution in fact marked the beginning of a permanent change in methods of English government, the procedures of the office of the principal secretary in Mary's reign will show evidence of the bureaucratic methods characteristic of Thomas Cromwell's administration. While it may be impossible to define precisely the nature of an early modern bureaucracy, one can speak confidently of some characteristics of bureaucracy in the period from the 1530s to the end of Mary's reign. Because of the nature of the sources available for this research and the scope of this paper, I have avoided the question of the secretary's role in the formulation of policy and restricted the inquiry to consideration of certain characteristics of bureaucracies.

First, modern administration required professional administrators, men with some professional or university training and an interest in long-term, continuous service within the administrative hierarchy. Here it is useful to compare the careers of the different members of the office for evidence of their training and professional backgrounds. Also, because patronage dominated English politics and, being simply institutionalized favoritism, stood somewhat at odds with the movement toward rationalization of public life, comparisons of the patronage rewards among officials holding comparable offices can measure the extent of professionalization in government. If officials held equal positions, their rewards should have been roughly equal, unless

something other than increasingly well-defined standards of public performance came into play.

Second, if bureaucratization had become a permanent part of government in the 1530s, the office of the principal secretary in Mary's reign would have followed certain standard procedures for its business. Identification of routine procedures in the preparation of papers and records would constitute strong evidence of continued interest in administrative modernization.

Finally, is there evidence that entire administrative processes, not just isolated papers and records, developed along rational, bureaucratic lines? This type of evidence would complete the picture of a professionally staffed, bureaucratic office and suggest strongly that Mary's government does in fact belong to a discussion of Tudor methods of government.

Both the purpose of the inquiry and the incomplete nature of the sources dictate that a topical rather than a chronological approach to this problem be taken. Such an approach is necessary, since the point is not to tell a story with a neat beginning, middle, and end, but to determine whether the administrative methods of the Marian secretaries belong to the larger Tudor story.

I thank D.E. Hoak for his expert guidance, as well as for his patience and good humor. Without his direction and the use of his microfilms of the State Papers, this research would have been impossible.



## ABBREVIATIONS

<u>A.P.C.</u>	<u>Acts of the Privy Council of England</u> , ed. J.R. Dasent
<u>C.P.R. Edward VI</u>	<u>Calendar of the Patent Rolls, Edward VI</u>
<u>C.P.R. Mary</u>	<u>Calendar of the Patent Rolls, Philip and Mary</u>
<u>D.N.B.</u>	<u>Dictionary of National Biography</u>
<u>Dom. Cal.</u>	<u>Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series, of the reigns of Edward VI, Mary, Elizabeth, 1547-1580</u> , ed. R. Lemon
<u>For. Cal.</u>	<u>Calendar of the State Papers, Foreign Series, of the reign of Mary 1553-1558</u> , ed. W. Turnbull
<u>H.M.C.</u>	Historical Manuscripts Commission
<u>Span. Cal.</u>	<u>Calendar of Letters, Despatches, and State Papers relating to the Negotiations between England and Spain</u> , ed. R. Tyler

## ABSTRACT

G.R. Elton has argued that an administrative revolution in Tudor government took place in the 1530s. The revolution was the work of Thomas Cromwell, who reformed the government of Henry VIII during the years 1534-1540 along lines more modernly bureaucratic than medieval. Elton defined medieval government as government by the king in person through his household. The revolutionary early modern government of Thomas Cromwell was independent of the household and bureaucratically organized around national departments, which nevertheless remained responsible to the crown.

A key part of this revolution was Cromwell's elevation of the secretaryship to the position of a true minister of state. In Elton's view the secretary became supreme in the internal administration of the state. Elton argued that Cromwell's ascendancy was not a mere precursor of the future but a permanent change; in this scheme of things the principal element of the Tudor revolution in government was the new position of the secretary.

Without attempting to define precisely the nature of an early modern bureaucracy, it has been possible to identify some characteristics of Cromwell's administrative reforms that survived into the 1550s. First, the secretaries and the clerks of the signet and the Council had careers marked by long-term professional service, limited political ambition, and some education or professional training. Second, the clerks' emoluments suggest that they were considered to be professionally equal, for the clerks received roughly comparable, modest patronage rewards. The rewards of the secretaries differed from each other in both size and kind and suggest that perhaps the position of the secretaries was not yet as well defined as that of the clerks. There is some evidence here and in the records of the office that the secretary's role may have become more limited to administrative detail than it had been in earlier reigns.

Office procedure, demonstrated through both arbitrarily selected papers and complete administrative processes, suggests that the office of the secretary followed routine procedures for a variety of administrative actions and that the secretary standardized procedure wherever possible. The continued refinement of administrative procedure within the office suggests that the administrative revolution continued, but with greater emphasis on procedural points than on overall governmental reform. The administrative revolution apparently went forward at the lower levels of government, among the clerks, despite the political controversies surrounding the Queen and Council. During this period of difficult political and constitutional problems the immediate effect of administrative reform was problematic, but over a longer period the survival of Cromwell's methods in the procedures of Mary's secretaries and clerks argues that the administrative revolution was in fact a continuing and permanent reform.

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## I. Sources

The variety of sources available for the study of the office of the principal secretary can be divided into two classes of documents: papers created by the secretary and his clerks or received by them in the course of their regular duties, and papers prepared elsewhere referring to the office of the secretary. This second class can be further divided into papers of men connected in some way with the government but not the office of the secretary, and the papers of private citizens.

The principal source for the study of the secretary is the manuscript State Papers Domestic, Mary (with the complementary Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series, of the reigns of Edward VI, Mary, Elizabeth 1547-1580). These manuscripts are the domestic correspondence concerning every subject of official interest to the Queen, Council, and Secretary. The State Papers include documents prepared by the secretary's office; these manuscripts illustrate the extent of the involvement of Tudor government in every part of English life. Included in the State Papers are proclamations, instructions to local officials, record books, agendas of Council meetings, personal letters, financial reports, reports on the interrogations of traitors, directions for the deployment of soldiers, and many other types of papers. Each of these documents at one time or another passed through the secretary's office.

Another source originating in the daily operation of the Queen's government is the Acts of the Privy Council of England, edited by J.R. Dasent. These thirty-two volumes are the edited

registers of the Privy Council, the books of Council business maintained by the clerks of the Privy Council. The registers record primarily completed business; no Council debates are included. The Council registers closely resemble a secretary's letter-book in that many entries consist of a brief statement of the content, date, and addressee of letters dispatched by the Council. The books are incomplete where portions were lost or where the clerks were not allowed to attend meetings concerning confidential business. The registers naturally supplement the State Papers.

A third governmental source, the Calendar of the Patent Rolls, Philip and Mary, is particularly useful. The four volumes calendar the letters-patent of Mary's reign. In letters-patent the Queen granted offices, annuities, pardons, lands, licenses, and other favors. This source allows one to determine the dates and conditions of employment of crown officials and to measure the extent of royal patronage.

The Calendar of State Papers, Foreign Series, of the reign of Mary 1553-1558 is the calendar of the Queen's government's correspondence with English ambassadors abroad. The Calendar records requests for instructions, full diplomatic intelligence reports, and other business of the English ambassadors. Unlike the Calendar of State Papers, Domestic, many of the papers here are reprinted in full.

The Calendar of State Papers and Manuscripts, relating to English Affairs existing in the archives and collections of Venice is the calendar of the Venetian ambassadors' correspondence with the Doge and Senate of Venice. The calendar has complete summaries of the ambassadors' letters, but its value is limited because not all the Venetian ambassadors spoke English and therefore did not always understand

much of what occurred in the English government.

The Reports of the Historical Manuscripts Commission are calendars of manuscript collections held by private citizens. Their contents vary widely, from Council letters and royal proclamations to estate records and personal letters. It is especially in these collections that chance references to an official or his office are to be found. This is the principal non-governmental source, although many official papers are in the collections.

These sources present certain problems. By their very nature the calendars are not absolutely reliable. The content of a paper may be incorrectly summarized, and a description of the diplomatic of the paper usually is lacking. In some original documents the most important information is revealed by the cancellations and interlineations tracing the progress of an idea or an action from its beginning to its final form. Without this detail the significance of a paper may be hidden.

This suggests other problems. These sources were the record of an active government and were not created to assist the student. Only in rare instances is there a description of, say, the duties of a clerk. Usually the evidence is scattered throughout the letters, consisting of passing references to offices or men in the context of daily affairs. With the possible exception of the Calendar of the Patent Rolls, the sources' value lies in the reader's ability to collect and associate randomly scattered bits of information from them.

Reliance upon largely official sources creates another hazard. When an office has few clearly defined duties, the character of the officeholder becomes important in understanding the office itself, but, except for the manuscript State Papers, the sources do not

often reveal the personalities of the officeholders. The lack of other materials can lead to a distorted or simply one-sided picture of the officials.

The clerical personnel of the secretary's office have been selected as a starting point because the availability of a relatively wide range of sources allows one to collect fairly specific bits of information. The following sections on procedure and practice are largely attempts to recreate from state papers the processes by which those papers came into being. The available sources are too limited to allow an analysis of the formulation of royal policy, but they are adequate for an analysis of secretarial administrative procedure. The State Papers, Domestic, are but a fraction of the record retained by the secretary; however, there is no good reason to suppose that the methods of the secretary's office differ from one collection of records to another. Still, these sources are incomplete, and the interpretation based upon them must remain suggestive rather than definitive.

## II. Personnel

"On my word of honor, interest is a powerful motive in all countries, but nowhere as it is here, where nothing is well done unless it brings money."

— Ruy Gomez de Silva<sup>1</sup>

In the summer of 1554, few Spaniards had any experience with the workings of English politics, and many of the early reports to Emperor Charles V from the Spanish party with Philip in England marvelled at the virulence of the Tudor patronage system. But patronage was the basis of government and society in Europe:<sup>2</sup>

Everywhere, patronage organized the hierarchic social system. The old relations of master and man, of lord and servant, always dependent as much on the sentiments of duty and respect as on mutual interest, came to be crystallized in an extensive network of gifts and services ranging through the ranks of society.

Patronage was politics, and the key to the system lay in the fact that patronage was an open, deliberate, institutionalized favoritism that rewarded the successful aspirant with offices, titles, or gifts of land, licenses, and money. Failure in patronage politics was to be without a patron, without the connections of the 'families' of officials leading ultimately to the Privy Council and the source of all rewards and positions, the crown. In various forms, patronage governed access to power at every European court. The surprise for the Spanish was less that 'interest' dominated, than that it so blatantly ruled English life.

Though English royal government was becoming more bureaucratic at this time, it was nevertheless a bureaucracy inseparably bound to the patronage system. Without attempting to define precisely



what constituted 'early modern bureaucracy' in England, one can at least speak confidently of certain characteristics of the administrative system developed by Thomas Cromwell in the 1530s. Two are of primary importance. First, in the developing bureaucracy the increasingly standardized procedures of an office came to govern the professional conduct of the officeholder. Routine procedures and known standards of performance reduced the often chaotic informality of inefficient or irresponsible public behavior, so that the mission of a given office could be performed in a prescribed way regardless of whom the particular official might be. Second, the rising bureaucracy emphasized record-keeping, implying the existence of routine formats for documents and a body of literate officials to create and use them. Neither characteristic was absent from English medieval government; bureaucratic invention and methods were evident in the thirteenth century and before. The difference was that the 'revolution' begun in the 1530s produced a class of bureaucratic public officials on a scale without precedent in English government. Although the personality of the new man in Tudor government became subordinate to the demands of his office, the office required a particular type of man for the system to work. The early modern bureaucrat, like his successors, was primarily a secular creature, a man of some formal education, professional training, and political ambition of a type that allowed him to work within the administrative hierarchy. Such men were amenable to the continuous, long-term professional service associated today with civil servants. Without these men, no lasting administrative reform was possible.

The patronage system and the rise of the professional official

were somewhat at odds with each other. If patronage dominated politics, an official's place in the hierarchy can in part be determined by measuring his rewards against those of his contemporaries. If government was becoming more professional, officials performing similar tasks could reasonably be expected to receive similar rewards. If the individual remained more important than his office, his rewards might well be disproportionate to those of his peers. In this way, a comparison of the profits of office tests the extent of both patronage and professionalization in government.

For these purposes the entourage attached to the office of the principal secretary is ideal. Close to the source of official favor, the office provides for comparison three groups of crown servants performing similar administrative duties: the clerks of the signet, the clerks of the Council, and the secretaries themselves. Were these the sort of men to continue an administrative revolution begun twenty years earlier? How did these groups — each comprising several apparently equal officials — fare in the world of Tudor patronage?

Five men served as clerks of the signet during Mary's reign: Gregory Rayleton, William Honnyng, Nicasius Yetswert, John Clyf, and Francis Yaxley. All except Yaxley had served as signet clerks in previous reigns, and all but Rayleton continued their service into Elizabeth's reign. The clerks held important offices, and even if little trace of their personal lives remains, their tenure and mark in the record attest to their significance. Although the clerks' rewards were modest in comparison with those of the highest state officials, the clerks stood socially and economically near the top of Tudor society.

The most experienced signet clerk at Mary's accession was Gregory Rayleton. Rising in government through the patronage of Sir Ralph Sadler, Thomas Cromwell's chief clerk and one of his two immediate successors, Gregory enjoyed a successful but unspectacular career as a royal household messenger, clerk of the Council, and signet clerk.<sup>3</sup> Like Sadler in his relations with his patron Thomas Cromwell, Gregory served as Sadler's chief clerk and also was responsible for his ciphers. On occasion, Gregory served as Sadler's deputy as Master of the Wardrobe and in the Hanaper. Rayleton worked with particular distinction in Sadler's diplomatic missions to Scotland between 1543 and 1547. Sir Ralph wrote Secretary William Paget in 1545 that Rayleton was a man 'who hath in a manar hoolie and doing of all mi thynges these fyve yeres, wherein he showeth me both honestie and diligence.'<sup>4</sup> By then Rayleton had acquired a reputation as a stern and forbidding Calvinist, certainly no liability in Sadler's employ but a potential hazard in Marian politics.<sup>5</sup>

Rayleton became a signet clerk sometime before 1544.<sup>6</sup> His long service was limited only by chronic bad health near the end of his career. For reasons of health, in 1552 Gregory was authorized to eat meat during Lent and any other holy days,<sup>7</sup> and within two years he was forced to take sick leave in Switzerland, probably in the autumn of 1553. The Queen had requested a replacement for him, 'absent for more than a year beyond the sea,' in late 1554.<sup>8</sup> Following the date of his letters in the autumn of 1554 to John Clyf and Secretary William Petre explaining his delay in returning, Rayleton disappeared from the record.<sup>9</sup>

In his letter to Petre requesting an extension of his leave,

Rayleton cited his good record as 'one not a meddler in any way, but applying himself always to do his duty, and using himself according to his vocation.'<sup>10</sup> Secretary Petre must have shared enough of that self-estimate to allow the clerk sufficient time to return to England. Gregory's clerkship was still secure on April 21, 1555, despite Francis Yaxley's petition for it.<sup>11</sup> What became of Rayleton is unclear. Disappearing from the record before March 1557, he may have gone the way of other (exiled) Puritans or, considering his health, simply have died. His license to travel and his relatively secure position — the Queen had requested a replacement for him during his absence — were both due to Secretary Petre's influence. With such a patron, Rayleton should have looked forward to future rewards had he continued in office.

William Honnyng began his career as a clerk of the Privy Council in the reign of Henry VIII and was appointed a signet clerk before 1546.<sup>12</sup> In addition to his £50 salary as a clerk of the Council, Honnyng had received a series of lands and rectories.<sup>13</sup> However, Honnyng lost most of these and his clerkship of the Council when he was implicated in the theft of some Council documents related to Stephen Gardiner's trial in 1550. Losing land that was once part of Sir Thomas More's estate was the least of Honnyng's worries that year,<sup>14</sup> since he was imprisoned and interrogated on April 20, 1550.<sup>15</sup> He was eventually released on a £200 recognizance, and he regained most of his position quickly. In December 1550 he served on a commission to collect a Parliamentary subsidy;<sup>16</sup> the following March, he was granted a prebendary in Salisbury cathedral.<sup>17</sup>

Honnyng proved his loyalty in the remaining years of Edward VI's and Mary's reigns. Retaining his signet clerkship, Honnyng was

appointed a Commissioner of the Peace immediately after the collapse of Wyatt's rebellion in February 1554.<sup>18</sup> In 1553, such appointments would have been routine; after Wyatt they would have carried more political weight.<sup>19</sup>

Honnyng's single grant of land in Mary's reign was substantial. In partnership with one other man, Honnyng was given three manors in Suffolk for an annual rent of over £50 and the relatively large entry fine of £1010 8s 10d.<sup>20</sup> This grant was on a scale much larger than that of the usual favors granted a clerk. The size of the entry fine, the relatively small income from the signet office, and Honnyng's rapid return to favor after a dangerous political misadventure suggest other sources of income and powerful friends, but these remain unknown.

Like Rayleton and Honnyng, the Fleming Nicasius Yetswert had a long-standing connection with the court. Yetswert had served as William Paget's private clerk in the 1540s<sup>21</sup> and became a signet clerk sometime after August 20, 1547.<sup>22</sup> Yetswert was not implicated in any of the conspiracies in the reign of Edward VI, and as a formality Mary pardoned him, with many others, on November 14, 1553.<sup>23</sup> Serving into Elizabeth's reign, he added to his income the salary of the French secretary,<sup>24</sup> an office he may have held under Mary as early as the autumn of 1554.<sup>25</sup>

Despite the likelihood of strong patronage support from William Paget, Yetswert received only one gift during Mary's reign, a twenty-one year lease on a manor in Somerset awarded in June 1558.<sup>26</sup> Nicasius Yetswert's long service may be attributed simply to his clerical and language skills.

A fourth signet clerk, John Clyf, perhaps enjoyed a slightly different kind of career and status among the clerks. Known as a 'gentleman of Ingatestone, Essex,'<sup>27</sup> he may originally have been a

member of William Petre's household there. Clyf began his apprenticeship with the signet on August 20, 1547,<sup>28</sup> but the date he became a signet clerk as a result of a vacancy in the office is unknown.

In any case, by then Clyf had already proven himself 'in matters of secrecy and trust under the secretaries' and was allowed to work as a signet clerk until 'his time comes.' The result was that the junior signet clerk in the summer of 1553 already had six years' experience in his job.

John Clyf seems the most likely candidate for Secretary Petre's favorite clerk, his 'inwarde manne.' In three letters from Sir John Mason, English ambassador to the Emperor Charles V in Brussels and a close friend of the senior secretary, Clyf is mentioned by name in ways suggesting that he was a trusted and well-known servant of the secretary. The letters, written over a span of three years, name the clerk as a good man to deliver important letters, 'write a few lines,' and serve as a confidential messenger.<sup>29</sup> The other clerks went unmentioned.

Clyf was included in the general pardon issued shortly after Mary's accession on October 25, 1553.<sup>30</sup> His possible connection with Petre (himself the recipient of two pardons) and his service in the signet under Northumberland may have dictated the need for a pardon, but, like many others', it was but a formality. Three days earlier, Clyf received the office of Keeper of the King's Library.<sup>31</sup> For his annual stipend of twenty marks Clyf maintained the royal library at Westminster, with duties including keeping the keys to the library and free access to the palace to 'carry there books from other libraries of the Queen for the adornment of the same or the promotion of the Queen's studies.' The incumbent had resigned with the intention

that Clyf should have his office.

In 1554 Clyf was named Havener of the Duchy of Cornwall, or 'keeper of the ports, butterage, and prisage in the counties of Cornwall and Devon.'<sup>32</sup> For his efforts, and an annual account to the royal auditors, Clyf received a ten-mark annuity. Clyf resigned this minor post December 17, 1560.

The fifth signet clerk was Francis Yaxley, a man made less obscure by his love of intrigue and his inability to keep secrets.<sup>33</sup> Yaxley was the eldest son of Richard and Anne Yaxley of Mellis, Suffolk. The family name originally had been Herbert, but they were long established at Yaxley Hall, near Eye, Suffolk. Little is known of Yaxley's private life except that he married Margaret, the third daughter of Sir Henry Hastings, of Bramton, Leicestershire. They had no children.

Yaxley probably was introduced at court by William Cecil. Francis entered government service in 1547, perhaps as a clerk of the Privy Seal.<sup>34</sup> He spoke Italian well enough to take some responsibility in the hiring of Italian mercenaries for England. In 1550 he joined Peter Vannes' embassy in Italy, where he made contacts that served him throughout his career. Returning to England in 1552, he was honored at a banquet. Yaxley was known personally to Northumberland and received ten crowns and the Duke's request to write when Yaxley left to join the embassy in France.

Yaxley was back in England to receive a full diplomatic intelligence report in August 1553.<sup>35</sup> Introduced with a three-page letter, the report itself, in Italian, comprised seventeen pages of information on the movements of troops, fleets, papal legates, and

sums of money. A second letter to Yaxley dated September 25, 1553,<sup>36</sup> from ambassador Vannes, shows something of Yaxley's informal position in the government early in Mary's reign. The letter was primarily a plea for mail, something Vannes had not received from England in five months. Of little diplomatic importance and with a gossipy tone, the letter stood in sharp contrast to the serious but still less informative letter of the same date from Vannes to Secretary Petre.<sup>37</sup> The tone of easy confidence showed itself in other correspondence<sup>38</sup> and continued throughout the reign.

The correspondence from Italy hints at Yaxley's influence in diplomatic circles. Another letter from Italy in July 1557 mentions one 'Hieronimo...who desires to be commended to Yaxley at the first opportunity.'<sup>39</sup> Still another letter, from Rome in October 1558, thanks Yaxley for his help through an unnamed friend, promising to repay his debt to Yaxley and the friend in Italy.<sup>40</sup> Yaxley's official position in all this is uncertain, but he may have been acting as an informal 'Italian' secretary. Because of his ability to speak Italian and his contacts in the embassies, he probably received more of the Italian correspondence than just the letters that he endorsed. An official with foreign language abilities and diplomatic experience would surely have been put to good use.

Yaxley received his signet clerkship by letters-patent of April 21, 1555, effective upon the next vacancy within the office.<sup>41</sup> As was noted above, the exact date he took office is unknown, but it was certainly before March 1557, when he was a party to a formal agreement among the signet clerks.<sup>42</sup>

In a grant of a manor to the junior clerk on June 9, 1557,



Yaxley is referred to as a clerk of the Privy Seal.<sup>43</sup> He probably received no other offices during Mary's reign, but he did sit in several sessions of Parliament. Yaxley first returned to Parliament for Dunwich on February 22, 1553. On October 3, 1555, he was elected from Stamford, and in January 1558 he was returned from Saltash.

Yaxley became involved in conspiratorial politics after Mary's death. In January 1561 he was imprisoned for 'babbling' about Elizabeth's relationship with Robert Dudley. At about the same time, Yaxley joined in some of the conspiracies involving Mary, Queen of Scots, Robert Darnley, the Spanish ambassador, and the Countess of Lennox (Lady Margaret Douglas). These connections ultimately led to Yaxley's death. His familiarity with the countess earned him a summons to Elizabeth's Privy Council, and by February 22, 1562, Yaxley was again a Tower resident. He was released some time before the summer of 1565, when he found new employment with the countess and Darnley in Scotland as the 'special agent of her correspondence' with the continental courts. On one trip in this capacity, returning from Flanders to Scotland, Yaxley narrowly escaped being taken by an English man-of-war. The 'special agent's' final adventure was a secret mission (unfortunately not a well-kept secret) to Spain to pick up a subsidy for Darnley. On the return trip, Yaxley's ship was wrecked off the coast of Northumberland sometime before December 29, 1565,<sup>44</sup> and he was washed up on the English coast with enough Spanish money to precipitate a diplomatic incident with Scotland.

Yaxley's amateurish performance as a conspirator is surprising considering that William Cecil had been Yaxley's patron at court. The two must have been fairly close, for Yaxley was known as 'Cecil's Yaxley'

and said to revere Cecil like a father; the clerk had been grateful for Cecil's frequently given 'godley counsels and fatherly admonitions.' Yaxley may have joined the plots because he had lost his job; perhaps his Catholicism moved him to join.

During Mary's reign, Yaxley did well for himself. In September 1553 he received a new twenty-one year lease on his manor at Calylonde, Cornwall,<sup>45</sup> and in June 1557 he acquired a large estate in Norfolk.<sup>46</sup> He and his father were partners in that estate, sharing the annual rent of £12 and the entry fine of £983 4s. In October of that same year he received a twenty-one year lease on another manor in Suffolk, one once held by Anne of Cleves.<sup>47</sup> How many of these lands Yaxley kept while plotting the overthrow of the English monarch is uncertain; we know only that his holdings were willed to his father.

We had suggested some likely traits of early modern bureaucrats, that is, some traits associated with the administrative reforms of Thomas Cromwell that could reasonably be expected to endure if his reforms had been lasting. Certainly the careers of the five clerks demonstrate a tendency toward long-term professional service and, with one exception, limited political ambition. Only Francis Yaxley showed any interest in the 'practises' associated with such men as William Paget; the other potential conspirator, William Honnyng, not only kept his signet clerkship during his trial but was rehabilitated and within months sent to collect taxes in the shires. The remaining clerks are notable for their long service and particularly for their failure ever to rise to the Council or other truly high offices. The development of careers leading from clerkships to ministries of state, the pattern that had produced the Pagets and the Sadlers, no longer

was possible for these clerks.

The clerks' length of service says much for their professional skills. Although it remains unknown whether these men attended a university or the Inns of Court, certainly careers in one office of as long as ten years imply the development of considerable professional expertness. The clerks of the signet understudied with the leading Tudor administrators. Two men, Gregory Rayleton and William Honnyng, had clerked for the Council as well as the signet; a third, Francis Yaxley, had experience in the office of the Privy Seal. The secretaries emphasized professional training by ensuring that an additional trained clerk stood ready to take office should a vacancy in the Signet occur. Both Nicasius Yetswert and John Clyf were appointed in advance of the actual vacancy in the office and were given a sort of apprenticeship preparing bills and warrants. Francis Yaxley was similarly appointed in advance of the opening in the office, and although his letters-patent do not describe the same apprenticeship period as that of the senior clerks, he must have received some instruction concerning his duties. Those duties were becoming more clearly defined than ever before, and Yaxley's grant mentions an oath of office for the clerks.

Just as the clerks' careers tended toward continuous, long-term service and limited political ambition, so their emoluments were comparable. Setting aside for the moment the profits of office derived from the fees of the signet office, we see that the favors given the clerks were unequal, but that the inequalities among them are smaller than first appearances suggest. The two largest awards, lands with entry fines near £1000, were both held in partnerships. Rents for other holdings varied little from one grant to another, and the £50

rents for the largest holdings were not unique. Certainly no single clerk monopolized the profits of office, which suggests that the clerks were treated with an approximate equality befitting their status as minor officials holding equal positions. As we will see later, the clerks judged themselves to be professional equals.

The careers of the clerks of the Privy Council contrast with those of the signet clerks. Mary's three clerks of the Council, William Smith, Francis Allen, and Bernard Hampton, held office into the 1570s, easily the longest tenures of any of the Council's clerks.<sup>48</sup> These men achieved no real prominence in government despite their long service. Like their colleagues in the signet, the clerks of the Council showed none of the political skill or ambition of earlier clerks who had risen to prominent office in preceding reigns. The absence of such ambition among the clerks probably argues strongly for the bureaucratic tendencies mentioned earlier. In the context of the factional confusion surrounding the Crown and Council, the basic continuity of service at the lower levels of the administration is remarkable.

The details of the lives of the clerks of the Council are almost entirely unknown. William Smith entered the record on July 16, 1553, by swearing his oath of allegiance to the queen.<sup>49</sup> On July 30 he and Francis Allen were sworn as clerks of the Council.<sup>50</sup> Their offices were granted for life on September 26, 1554, for 'service to the Queen...at the time of the rebellion,' at annual salaries of £50.<sup>51</sup>

William Smith received no lands in Mary's reign. His only patronage reward was a grant for life of the office of the clerk of the Treasure House for the Court of the Common Pleas. The grant of

October 4, 1558, left Smith in custody of the rolls of the court, an apparently unenviable job described with office humor in the grant as 'clerk of Hell.'<sup>52</sup>

Francis Allen fared no better. He received the office of Queen's Remembrancer in the Exchequer on October 22, 1558, to be effective upon the next vacancy in the office.<sup>53</sup> Even this small reward failed to materialize. The incumbent, one Thomas Saunders, did not soon die, and Allen vacated the grant on December 1, 1561. Like Smith, Allen had received no estates.

The third clerk of the Council was Bernard Hampton. With experience in his job during the reign of Edward VI, Hampton was appointed clerk of the Council a second time, again for life, on November 12, 1553.<sup>54</sup> Like his contemporaries, Hampton received an annual salary of £50. In October 1553<sup>55</sup> Hampton was reconfirmed in his possession of a manor given him in the previous reign, but he received no other gifts of land. His only other emolument was a 40-mark annuity 'in consideration of his service and sedulous care to the queen in writing her Spanish letters.'<sup>56</sup> Hampton was later selected to use a signature stamp of the Queen's sign manual, which, considering his tenure, probably marked him as the senior clerk. Because the clerks' salaries were equal, however, the distinction may have had little meaning by 1553.

Comparisons among the three clerks of the Council are difficult to make because so little is known of any of them. The three had equal salaries and uniformly small rewards of any other sort. None appears to have gotten rich, nor did any take part in the many conspiracies open to aspiring minds. The only precedence among them was associated with

job responsibilities. As we will see later, Bernard Hampton used the Queen's signature stamp and disbursed small sums of money for the Privy Council, but he too probably lived primarily on his salary. Any fees the clerks may have taken for 'consideration' are impossible to measure.

The number of clerks of the Council may, in a general way, have significance as one sign of the professionalization of Tudor government. In 1540 a single clerk was appointed to serve the Council; in Elizabeth's reign the number of clerks grew to four. At the end of this same period the Council reached its smallest and most efficient size. The important point is not so much that the greatest number of clerks coincides with the most efficient of Tudor councils but that this result seems consistent with the attempts of talented administrators such as Paget and Cecil to restrict active Council membership during this period. Despite the large numbers of men who were officially members of the Council in Mary's reign (about 40), attendance at Council stabilized within a year of Mary's accession at an average of 15 or less.<sup>57</sup> The active membership of Mary's Council may therefore be comparable with Elizabeth's, and in this way Mary's government appears less anomalous. Mary's reign may belong to a trend toward larger clerical staffs created to serve increasingly more compact groups of policy makers.

Three men directed these staffs of clerks in Mary's reign, William Petre, John Bourne, and John Boxall. The varied careers of these ministers of state contrast with one another far more than do the careers of the clerks. The fortunes of the secretaries suggest conclusions unlike anything to be expected from examining the tenures of their subordinates.

Sir William Petre had by far the longest and most financially

rewarding career of Mary's secretaries. At the Queen's accession, Petre already had ten years' experience as Principal Secretary and had long been known as a man of proven ability.<sup>58</sup> Born in 1505 or 1506, William was the second eldest of five brothers and three sisters, the children of a substantial landowner and tanner of Tor Newton, Devon. William entered Exeter College, Oxford, in 1520, and he was elected a Fellow of All Souls' in 1523. Graduating a bachelor of civil and canon law in 1526, Petre tutored Anne Boleyn's brother George; Anne's father, the earl of Wiltshire, made William his travelling companion. William's association with the Boleyns brought him an introduction at court, five years' travel abroad, and an assignment to act as one of Henry VIII's proxies at the legatine court convened in 1529 to settle the royal divorce.

In 1533, William completed his doctorate in canon law at Oxford. At about that time, Thomas Cromwell noticed the new doctor, and Petre subsequently entered government service as a clerk in chancery. William did well, and when Cromwell became the king's Vicar-general, Petre was among his chief lieutenants. By the end of 1536, Petre was serving as Cromwell's proctor in the dissolution of the monasteries, presiding over the June Convocation solely on the strength of his position as the chief assistant to the Vicar-general. By then he had been named a Master in Chancery and had received a prebendary in Lincoln cathedral. The young doctor served on the commission established to receive all briefs and bulls from the Pope.

In the dissolutions of monasteries in Kent and the other southern counties, Cromwell's agent showed great zeal, yet equal tact. Although Petre was sufficiently thorough and efficient to be named to

interrogate Robert Aske and other prisoners taken in the Pilgrimage of Grace, contemporary observers opposed to the closings were unable to fault Petre's conduct. In the second wave of closings, Petre proved still more effective, closing twenty houses in 1538 and another thirteen in the first three months of 1539. Singlehandedly, Petre nearly destroyed the Gilbertine order.

In the following years, Petre broadened his experience. He helped prepare the bills enacting the Six Articles (1539), served on the commission to annul Henry VIII's marriage<sup>r</sup> to Anne of Cleves (1540), and interrogated numerous heretics. Rewarded with a knighthood in 1543, Sir William joined William Paget as one of the two principal secretaries on January 21, 1544. That year Petre was selected to sit on the Regency Council assisting the Queen (Catherine) during Henry's absence in the French wars. Secretary Petre served as sole secretary for three periods in Paget's absence and took senior responsibility for two embassies abroad.<sup>59</sup> During one three-month period, out of contact with both the king and Paget,<sup>60</sup> Petre was in effect the secretary for home and foreign affairs, for war, and for the navy. Secretary Petre had experience in every area of government administration by 1547.

At Henry VIII's death in 1547, Petre was distinguished by being one of the few prominent men omitted from the king's will. The secretary was named only as one of the twelve assistants to the main body of sixteen executors of the king's will.<sup>61</sup> During the brief reign of Edward VI, Petre played the role of survivor, living through the dangerous factional politics of Somerset and Northumberland as a councillor of the second rank. Despite his obvious competence and experience, Petre was completely overshadowed after 1550 by the junior secretary,



the incomparable William Cecil. Somehow Petre's ability to be the proverbial willow saved his career, even after he had accepted such politically risky duties as informing the Princess Mary in 1551 that mass was no longer to be allowed in her private household.<sup>62</sup> Petre escaped serious implication in the Jane Grey affair, and on July 30, 1553, he was again admitted to the Privy Council of the new Queen and assumed his role as secretary.<sup>63</sup> The secretary received pardons in October and November of that year for any offenses he may have committed.<sup>64</sup> His secretaryship was reconfirmed by letters-patent of November 5, 1553, 'for services to Henry VIII, Edward VI, and the Queen.'<sup>65</sup>

Some of Secretary Petre's rewards in Mary's reign were primarily honorific offices. In October 1553 Petre became chief steward, receiver, and bailiff of Wrythe manor in Essex and Keeper of the park there.<sup>66</sup> The secretary was licensed to keep sixty liveried retainers in addition to his usual household.<sup>67</sup> In place of his  $\$$ 120 annuity and other income from his Mastership of the Court of First Fruits and Tenths, a position lost in the long-delayed reorganization of the Exchequer in 1554, Petre received  $\$$ 266 13s 4d annually in compensation.<sup>68</sup> Just days later, in February 1554, he was appointed a Commissioner of the Peace in his home county of Essex.<sup>69</sup> Another sign of his high official favor was his appointment as Chancellor of the Order of the Garter in May 1554, an honor bringing another annuity of  $\$$ 100.<sup>70</sup>

One of the secretary's gifts was for his sporting pleasure, a license issued in 1555 to appoint at his discretion two friends or servants to use and keep at home 'any crossbow or handgun.'<sup>71</sup> For his personal profit, Petre was granted the profits of two fairs and

markets. The first, received perhaps in 1553, gave the secretary a concession at the market and fair in Writtle and in Condon, Essex.<sup>72</sup> At his request, in 1557 Petre was given a similar concession in Brent, Devon. Both grants included the profits derived from all weights and measures, 'tallage and picage,' and tolls. The profits of the Devon fair included the revenues from the courts of piepowder.<sup>73</sup>

From the beginning of Mary's reign, Secretary Petre added to his extensive land holdings. In January 1554 Petre acquired a manor formerly held by the Mildemays at Boynton,<sup>74</sup> and in May 1554 he received another manor in Devon 'in consideration' for £1106 5s 9½d.<sup>75</sup> In March of the following year the secretary vacated part of the annuity he had received in compensation for the loss of his office in the Court of First Fruits for similar 'consideration' for certain lands in Devon, Dorset, and Somerset.<sup>76</sup> In 1556 he received a wardship grant of £100,<sup>77</sup> and in 1557 he received a grant of a 'manor or borough' at Kyngesbridge in Devon, with a long list of associated lands and privileges.<sup>78</sup> The senior secretary's final gift of land in Mary's reign came in January 1558, a group of three manors in Devon.<sup>79</sup>

The secretaries' regular duties often excluded them from membership of the various royal commissions. In the aftermath of Wyatt's rebellion in 1554, Petre apparently did not take part in the interrogation of prisoners, leaving that task to the other secretary, John Bourne.<sup>80</sup> Petre served on commissions only after going into semi-retirement in March 1557, when he left office as secretary but remained on the Privy Council. His first commission was to audit the accounts of William Cavendish, treasurer of the Chamber and of the late Court of the General Surveyor, closed in the reorganization of the exchequer. The commission formed in April 1557 examined Cavendish's

accounts for the reigns of Henry VIII, Edward VI, and Mary.<sup>81</sup> That July, Petre helped audit Thomas Gresham's accounts for his service as 'queen's agent about her secret and especial affairs in Spain, Flanders, (and) other places beyond the sea.'<sup>82</sup> The former secretary's last commission in Mary's reign was to determine which of the royal forests and parks might be most profitably leased.<sup>83</sup>

Much less detail is available about Secretary John Bourne's life and career. Bourne's name is first entered in the Council register in August 1553,<sup>84</sup> and his grant of a secretaryship that November acknowledges that Bourne was by then a knight and a Privy Councillor.<sup>85</sup> The conditions of employment were identical with those of Petre's grant. Bourne held office until April 1558, when for reasons unknown he left office, retaining his £100 annuity.<sup>86</sup>

Except for his secretaryship, Bourne's gifts of office were minor ones. In December 1553 Bourne became Master of the Hunt at Malverne, in his home county of Worcester, and steward of a nearby manor.<sup>87</sup> Bourne also became 'clerk of all liveries' for all lands not held of the crown.<sup>88</sup> Bourne was licensed to retain forty liveried retainers in his household.<sup>89</sup>

Perhaps because he had less seniority, Bourne served on more government commissions than Petre did. Thus the junior secretary served on three commissions to sell crown lands worth 3000 in annual rents, in 1554,<sup>90</sup> on one to convene 'gaol' in Worcester,<sup>91</sup> and in 1557 on another to inquire into heresies, seditious books, and vagabondage.<sup>92</sup>

John Bourne's career provides proof of the profits to be made in government service. Throughout Mary's reign Bourne prospered, receiving

a variety of lands. In May<sup>93</sup> and July<sup>94</sup> of 1554, he acquired a wardship, several leases, and a series of estates. With such prominent contemporaries as Petre, Paget, Cecil, and the earls of Arundel and Pembroke, Bourne invested in the Merchant Adventurers of England in February 1555.<sup>95</sup> The next month Bourne received a license to enclose an additional three hundred acres of parkland to add to his game preserve in Worcester.<sup>96</sup> That April he petitioned the Queen to have Worcester given a new city charter, which excluded his holdings from the municipal jurisdiction.<sup>97</sup> The list of rewards was long. In 1555 Bourne was granted additional woodland,<sup>98</sup> a manor along the Severn,<sup>99</sup> and still another manor in Greenwich.<sup>100</sup> In 1557 he acquired another manor in Gloucester,<sup>101</sup> and he added a collection of small plots and gardens to his already substantial wealth. The man appointed commissioner of the peace in February 1554 became rich in Mary's reign.<sup>102</sup>

Mary's third secretary was John Boxall. His career reflects the religious tone of Marian politics, and his offices and honors contrast with the secular rewards and interests of men like William Petre. John Boxall progressed through a series of lay church offices and became involved in national administration only in 1556. Too young to have any connection with Thomas Cromwell, Boxall derived his politics from his religion, and it seems unlikely that he could have become prominent in national politics after 1540 under any other circumstances than those of Mary's reign.

Born in Bramshoot, Hampshire, Boxall received his preliminary training at Winchester School and earned a degree in education as a Fellow of New College, Oxford, in 1542.<sup>103</sup> He later took orders, but during the reign of Edward VI, Boxall refrained from practice. His first prominence came with his selection to defend Catholicism by

preaching at St. Paul's in late 1553, an event that proved to be the occasion for a celebrated knife-throwing incident. Boxall was something of a religious propagandist, delivering the sermon to the 1555 Convocation and publishing that year an 'Oration in the Praise of the Kinge of Spain.' Joining the Privy Council on September 23, 1556, Boxall became a Master of the Court of Requests that same year. When Secretary Petre gave up his office on March 30, 1557, he became principal secretary.<sup>104</sup> A year later Secretary Bourne retired as well, and Boxall served as the sole secretary until Mary's death in November 1558. After Elizabeth's accession, Boxall's religious convictions brought him hard times. He was imprisoned by Archbishop Parker and the Ecclesiastical Commission in 1560. He was later allowed an easier confinement in the household of the archbishop, but when Boxall died in 1571, he was still under house arrest and by then in complete obscurity.

Boxall derived less wealth from office than did Petre or Bourne, certainly on account of his relatively short tenure as secretary and perhaps also because of the type of reward he preferred. The only commission on which he served, that to assess tithes and taxes for Calais in October 1556, listed the future secretary as a clerk.<sup>105</sup> Despite his subsequent service as the sole secretary, Boxall's official standing apparently remained relatively low, evidenced by his license for but ten retainers.<sup>106</sup> Boxall's only gift of land was a share in some lands left over from a wardship grant to the Queen's personal secretary, James Basset. The secretary shared this gift with other councillors and household officials in May 1557.<sup>107</sup> Nevertheless, the secretary enjoyed a reputation as a man of trust, and in January and July 1558 he was requested to serve on commissions appointed to receive and administer wardships.<sup>108</sup>

The most distinctive feature of Boxall's career is described by the nature of the various offices he received for his service. In 1555 he became prebend of Winchester; in June 1557, dean of Peterborough cathedral; in November 1557, dean of Norwich cathedral; in December 1557, a canon and prebend of St. Paul's; in March 1558, dean of Windsor; and finally, in July 1558, prebend of Salisbury.<sup>109</sup> His only secular office was his appointment in July 1558 as Registrar of the Order of the Garter.<sup>110</sup>

Unlike the careers of the clerks, which showed many revealing similarities, the careers of the secretaries contain striking contrasts. The secretaries differed greatly in their governmental experience and in the profits they derived from office. Neither John Bourne nor John Boxall could compare in experience with William Petre. By 1557, Petre had twenty-one years of service in high-level administration, including thirteen years as a principal secretary. William Paget once described him as the equivalent of a council register; Petre was the direct link to the administration of the 1530s. That the other secretaries had relatively so little experience of course restricts the conclusions that can be drawn from the obvious inequalities of their emoluments. While it is unfair to emphasize that newcomers to the office received much less than did an established and nearly indispensable administrator, it may be significant that by 1558 the value and kind of such emoluments had changed. Petre and Bourne received the conventional secular rewards of government offices and land. Indeed, Bourne exemplifies the official who made great profits from office in a short time, as Petre had done earlier. John Boxall, however, took his rewards in the form of minor church offices and sinecures. If the secretaries could influ-

ence the type of rewards they received, the difference in the type of emoluments may simply reflect personal taste. A religious and perhaps ascetic man such as Boxall would hardly have been interested in the great wealth frequently sought by the non-cleric. It may also be possible that the patronage system no longer produced the great rewards for the secretary that it once did. In Mary's reign, the secretary's office could be held by men who were thought neither to deserve nor to expect lavish payment. The office may simply have lost some of its prestige.

William Petre represents continuity with the 1530s, but were his successors part of that tradition? Bourne and Boxall remained obscure even after their tenures as secretaries, in part because those tenures were so short. However, neither had any connection with the work of the professional clerks before his appointment as secretary, and for the first time since 1540, secretaries had been chosen who had no previous administrative experience. Bourne and Boxall likely were men of 'the grave and catholic sort,' although Boxall was probably a bit more grave and catholic than Bourne. As it happened, Petre's immediate successors possessed the wrong qualifications for office after Mary's death: the next religious revolution destroyed catholic orthodoxy as a qualification for office.

William Petre's semi-retirement in 1557 draws attention to another problem. The Henrician patent of 1540 and subsequent letters-patent creating the secretaries make no distinction between the two secretaries; they were simply appointed 'one of the queen's two principal secretaries.' But to what extent were the Marian secretaries equals? It has been argued that one secretary was a decided inferior,

responsible primarily for routine administrative matters, while the senior secretary played an active role in the formulation of policy.<sup>111</sup> The decision to leave one of the two posts open indefinitely in March 1558 suggests strongly that the senior secretary's role could be filled in other ways. Petre, obviously the senior secretary even after his retirement, remained active in the Privy Council, although his health limited his attendance. With Petre still on the Council, both Bourne and Boxall became in effect junior secretaries, and therefore one was unnecessary. Boxall's service as the sole secretary suggests that the role of the junior secretary, which may have included little voice in the formulation of policy, became institutionalized and therefore limited, more restricted to purely administrative matters. The retention of but one secretary, of relatively lower standing, perhaps only confirmed prevailing practice. In this rationalization of government the status of the secretary was diminished, and no one saw a need to have a man more prominent than Boxall assume responsibilities once shared by two men. Certainly throughout Mary's reign, the two principal secretaries were not the equals implied by their letters-patent.

The evidence for professional, long-term service among the clerks, the decline in the status of the office of the principal secretary, and an increasing emphasis on administrative work at the expense of a role in the formulation of policy suggests that the responsibilities of the office of the secretary were becoming more clearly defined than in previous reign. It may be that the office of the secretary in Mary's reign was becoming more of an administrative specialty than the mainspring of internal government administration. The development of administrative techniques perhaps continued irrespective of the secretary's changing role in politics.



## Notes to Chapter II

1. Span. Cal., vol. xiii, pp. 5-6.
2. G.R. Elton, Reformation Europe (London: 1963), p. 300.
3. A.J. Slavin, Politics and Profit: A Study of Sir Ralph Sadler (Cambridge: 1966), p. 170n. Slavin cites PRO E 179/69/63 m.1a.
4. Slavin, Politics and Profit, pp. 64-5, 64n, 137, 167. The quotation is from a letter to Paget on May 1, 1545, in SP 1/200/129.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 137.
6. C.P.R. Edward VI, vol. i, p. 216.
7. *Ibid.*, vol. iv, p. 312.
8. SP 11/4/38. The letter is unaddressed and undated. The calendar places it tentatively in December 1554, although it might have been written as late as April 1555. The impatient tone of the note seems to preclude its being written much before December 1554. Mary points out that the clerks were there to serve the crown and that the vacancy in the signet office should be filled soon. The paper is filled with crossed-out words and phrases and may never have been intended as anything more than an impatient memo.
9. For. Cal., p. 139.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 139.
11. C.P.R. Mary, vol. ii, pp. 279-80.
12. C.P.R. Edward VI, vol. i, p. 216.
13. *Ibid.*, vol. ii, p. 4, 368; vol. iii, p. 239.
14. C.P.R. Mary, vol. i, p. 49.
15. D.E. Hoak, "The King's Council in the Reign of Edward VI," Cambridge Ph.D. dissertation, 1970, p. 310.
16. C.P.R. Edward VI, vol. v, p. 359.
17. *Ibid.*, vol. iv, p. 174.
18. C.P.R. Mary, vol. i, p. 24.
19. SP 11/1/3 and 5. Both agendas contain an entry mentioning the selection of good JPs.
20. C.P.R. Mary, vol. iv, p. 163.

21. Slavin, Politics and Profit, p. 65n.
22. C.P.R. Edward VI, vol. i, p. 216.
23. C.P.R. Mary, vol. i, p. 412.
24. F.M.G. Evans, The Principal Secretary of State (Manchester: 1923), pp. 169-70. C.P.R. Mary, vol. i, p. 383, gives Roger Ascham's income as the Latin secretary as 40 marks. Ascham claimed his salary was £20, but Evans gives 40 marks as the usual salary for the position.
25. Span. Cal., vol. xiii, p. 71, 235. Yetswert's countersignature appears on two of Mary's letters to Charles V.
26. C.P.R. Mary, vol. iv, p. 255.
27. Ibid., vol. i, p. 453. Ingatestone was also the name of Petre's country home in Essex.
28. C.P.R. Edward VI, vol. i, p. 216.
29. For. Cal., pp. 89, 164, 218.
30. C.P.R. Mary, vol. i, p. 453.
31. Ibid., vol. i, p. 285.
32. Ibid., vol. i, 313.
33. Unless otherwise noted, the information about Yaxley comes from A.F. Pollard's article in the D.N.B.
34. D.N.B. suggests that he was a signet clerk in 1547, but this seems unlikely in view of his appointment in 1555 to the signet. He may have been instead a clerk of the Privy Seal (C.P.R. Mary, vol. iii, p. 432).
35. For. Cal., pp. 2-3.
36. Ibid., p. 15.
37. Ibid., p. 15.
38. Ibid., p. 25.
39. Ibid., pp. 323-24.
40. Ibid., p. 402.
41. C.P.R. Mary, vol. ii, pp. 279-80.
42. SP 11/10/7.

43. C.P.R. Mary, vol. iii, 432.
44. H.M.C. Pepys Manuscripts, p. 72. A letter dated December 29 notes that the money Yaxley brought back from Spain was already in Northumberland's hands, but that Yaxley's fate was still unknown.
45. C.P.R. Mary, vol. i, p. 250.
46. *Ibid.*, vol. iii, pp. 397, 432.
47. *Ibid.*, vol. iv, p. 125.
48. A.F. Pollard, "Council, Star Chamber, and Privy Council under the Tudors," *English Historical Review*, xxxviii (1923), pp. 56-7.
49. A.P.C., vol. iv, p. 431.
50. *Ibid.*, vol. iv, p. 419.
51. C.P.R. Mary, vol. ii, p. 189.
52. *Ibid.*, vol. iv, p. 459.
53. Dom. Cal., p. 106.
54. C.P.R. Mary, vol. i, p. 283.
55. *Ibid.*, vol. i, 81.
56. *Ibid.*, vol. ii, p. 72.
57. A.P.C., *passim*. Privy Council attendance declines within the first year of Mary's reign to an average between eight and fifteen, a number roughly comparable with the number of Elizabeth's councillors.
58. F.G. Emmison, Tudor Secretary: Sir William Petre at Court and Home (London:1961), p. 55. The D.N.B. for Petre summarizes the same materials. Most of the sketch presented here comes from the first two chapters of Emmison.
59. *Ibid.*, pp. 55, 65.
60. *Ibid.*, p. 55.
61. *Ibid.*, p. 65.
62. D.N.B., s.v. Petre.
63. Emmison, Tudor Secretary, p. 160.
64. C.P.R. Mary, vol. i, pp. 163, 433.
65. *Ibid.*, vol. i, p. 278.
66. *Ibid.*, vol. i, p. 285.

67. C.P.R. Mary, vol. i, p. 390. This is undated. By way of contrast, it should be noted that the earl of Arundel was granted a license for 200 liveried retainers on November 20, 1553.
68. Ibid., vol. i, p. 164.
69. Ibid., vol. i, p. 19.
70. Ibid., vol. i, p. 160.
71. Ibid., vol. iii, p. 169; D.N.B., s.v. Petre.
72. Ibid., vol. i, p. 311. Undated.
73. Ibid., vol. iii, p. 505.
74. Ibid., vol. p. 258.
75. Ibid., vol. p. 151.
76. Ibid., vol. ii, p. 91.
77. Ibid., vol. iii, p. 165.
78. Ibid., vol. iv, p. 165.
79. Ibid., vol. iv, p. 294.
80. SP 11/3/34; A.P.C., vol. ii, p. 393. The first reference is a report from Bourne; the second is a commission to interrogate prisoners, omitting Petre's name.
81. C.P.R. Mary, vol. iii, p. 314.
82. Ibid., vol. iv, p. 193.
83. Ibid., vol. iv, p. 73.
84. Emmison, Tudor Secretary, p. 162.
85. C.P.R. Mary, vol. i, p. 321.
86. Ibid., vol. iv, p. 100.
87. Ibid., vol. i, p. 61. This office apparently was lost, for Bourne took his case to Chancery and testified to that effect (vol. iii, p. 230).
88. Ibid., vol. iv, p. 98.
89. Ibid., vol. iii, p. 224.
90. Ibid., vol. i, pp. 265, 301; vol. ii, p. 205.

91. C.P.R. Mary, vol. i, p. 35.
92. *Ibid.*, vol. iii, p. 281.
93. *Ibid.*, vol. i, pp. 81, 290.
94. *Ibid.*, vol. i, p. 487.
95. *Ibid.*, vol. ii, pp. 55-7.
96. *Ibid.*, vol. ii, p. 77.
97. *Ibid.*, vol. ii, p. 81.
98. *Ibid.*, vol. ii, p. 25.
99. *Ibid.*, vol. ii, p. 24.
100. *Ibid.*, vol. ii, p. 25.
101. *Ibid.*, vol. iii, p. 330; vol. iv, p. 160.
102. *Ibid.*, vol. i, p. 25.
103. D.N.B., s.v. Boxall.
104. C.P.R. Mary, vol. iv, p. 312.
105. *Ibid.*, vol. iii, p. 368.
106. *Ibid.*, vol. iv, pp. 422-3.
107. *Ibid.*, vol. iii, p. 404.
108. *Ibid.*, vol. iii, pp. 358, 492.
109. *Ibid.*, vol. iii, pp. 104, 387; vol. iv, pp. 129, 142, 249, 306, 434.
110. *Ibid.*, vol. iv, p. 423.
111. G.A. Lemasters, "The Privy Council in the Reign of Queen Mary I," Cambridge Ph.D. dissertation, 1971. See the chapter on the conduct of business.

### III. Procedures

In front of the desk and close to it are small low tables at which the clerks sit ready to write from dictation. . . There's no express command given by the official, nor is the dictation given in a loud voice, one could hardly tell that it was being given at all, the official just seems to go on reading as before, only whispering as he reads, and the clerk hears the whisper.

—Franz Kafka, The Castle

The principal secretary directed two primary clerical staffs in addition to his personal clerks. As Keeper of the Signet, the Queen's own seal, he supervised the personnel of the Signet Office, the four clerks who prepared all the royal correspondence to be dispatched under the signet. The secretary also supervised the clerks of the Privy Council, who prepared the Council's correspondence and records. In a less direct way, the secretary was also responsible for the foreign-language secretaries, specialists who prepared papers in Latin or French. Although the foreign-language secretaries often helped prepare more routine papers, the signet office and the clerks of the Council were at the center of daily administration.

The signet office was extremely active. The clerks prepared the letters-patent granting pardons, lands, passports, offices, and a variety of letters of instruction concerning every aspect of government activity.<sup>1</sup> Actually, two classes of papers are defined here: those that formed actions solely under the signet and those that were warrants for household expenditure or action under the authority of the Privy Seal or the Great Seal.

The clerks of the Council prepared the Council's correspondence and maintained the registers of Council business. Much like the secretary's

registers of letters, the Council's registers were records of completed business rather than minutes of meetings. The surviving record is incomplete. The clerks never recorded debate and often were absent during the discussions. Parts of the record have been lost. Only during Mary's reign did the clerks begin keeping the registers in a book instead of on unbound quires of paper.<sup>2</sup>

The Privy Council was the very center of the Queen's government, advising her on matters of policy, carrying out her decisions, and sometimes acting as a quasi-judicial body. After 1540 the Council employed one or more clerks to prepare its letters and record its actions.<sup>3</sup> The clerks of the Council were servants of the Council rather than the secretary, but in practice the distinction had little meaning. The secretary was already responsible for all royal correspondence; it was only natural that he should supervise the Council's clerks. The State Papers, Domestic, are filled with examples of secretarial business addressed to the Council and vice versa.<sup>4</sup> In practice there was no substantive difference between secretarial and conciliar business.

In Mary's reign the foreign-language secretaries usually belonged to the secretary's staff. The French secretary was the signet clerk, Nicasiaus Yetswert. Only the Latin secretary, Roger Ascham, Elizabeth's tutor and England's most famous Latin scholar, was outside the secretary's regular staff. We have already seen that a clerk of the Council wrote Mary's Spanish letters and that a signet clerk often received official correspondence in Italian. In Elizabeth's reign, the Latin and the French secretaries' posts would become separate, official positions with their own annuities granted in letters-patent. Before 1558 these positions remained less formally defined,

and the requirements for specialized clerical work only demonstrated the versatility of the secretary's clerks.

Unlike the clerks of the Council or the foreign-language secretaries, the signet clerks' income came from the writing and sealing fees charged for each signet document, rather than from fixed annual salaries. Although the fee registers for Mary's reign are lost, records from earlier reigns may illustrate the accounting procedures in her signet office. Sir Ralph Sadler's registers were the earliest such records that have survived; the accounting procedures of 1540-42 were almost certainly like those of 1553.

Statute required the secretary to maintain a log of all work passing through the signet.<sup>5</sup> The secretaries recorded the documents in the order they were received, but the registers comprised two basic classes of papers: warrants, routine actions usually costing 6s 8d apiece; and perpetuities, larger and more exceptional grants prepared for £3.<sup>6</sup> The two secretaries naturally had free access to each other's registers. At the end of the month they totalled the fees and divided them among themselves and the signet clerks. The secretaries divided the fees from the warrants into five equal shares, each clerk receiving one full share and the secretaries dividing the remaining one. Fees from perpetuities were divided into three shares, one for each secretary and one to be divided among the clerks. The clerks paid their sub-clerks from these fees. In Mary's reign the clerks took equal shares from the writing fees as well as the usual sealing fees, a change in procedure from Cromwell's administration.



The income from the signet was irregular, but after deducting 10s from the total fees of both registers for office supplies, Sir Ralph Sadler received an average of about £200 annually in signet fees. In most months of 1540-42, fewer than sixty warrants and ten perpetuities passed through the office. The number of bills of course varied from month to month, and Sadler's share of the fees ranged from £13 12s (August 1540) to £65 11s 4d (May 1541).<sup>7</sup> The signet clerks' incomes would certainly have been comparable to the £50 salaries received by the clerks of the Council, particularly if signet fees rose with the chronic inflation of the period. However, the details of Marian signet fees remain unknown.

The signet brought the secretaries additional income in simple gratuities for services. A.J. Slavin has estimated that the normal tariff for a favor stood at £5 or £6, rising as high as £20 or £40 in exceptional cases. The secretaries accepted small annuities of £2 or £4, which, for extraordinary amounts of 'consideration,' could also reach £40.<sup>8</sup> Such consideration was likely to be more lasting than that granted for a gratuity. The clerks probably had similar arrangements, but the size of their rewards can only be guessed at.

Gratuities came as a matter of course, and salaries and official payment for government service remained correspondingly below the income an official might actually derive from office. In the middle years of the Tudor century, the income from the secretary's office increased. Exclusive of signet fees and salaries, the office in the 1540s was worth perhaps £500-700 in unofficial income. By 1601 that income more than tripled, to an estimated total of about £3000.<sup>9</sup>

Secretary Petre's official income alone in Mary's reign ranged from £700 to £1000, suggesting that perhaps the value of the office was entering a 'takeoff' period. It remains impossible to determine exactly what the value of the office may have been. Some of the benefits can be assessed easily; for example, the household ordinances specified the value of the board for the secretaries and their clerks at the tables of court. Other benefits are more difficult to measure. Who can say what 'consideration' in the sale and leasing of crown lands may have been worth? Certainly the secretaries enjoyed an insider's advantage in the land market. Also, inflation must have affected the secretaries' incomes dramatically. Sales of the office after 1600 showed that its value increased to £2800-4000 by 1628 and perhaps to £6000 by 1640.<sup>10</sup>

In Mary's reign the signet office had not yet changed from the primary arm of the secretary to a tradition-bound office producing only the most routine papers. Thomas Cromwell's administrative methods, however, diminished the importance of the lesser seals by emphasizing the role of the secretary's household clerks and relying more on authorized signatures than on seals for verification of internal government communications. In the later stages of this process, a process well under way in Elizabeth's reign, the signet came to have ceremonial value only; tradition explains the survival of the signet office in its Elizabethan form into the nineteenth century. Like the secretaries, the signet clerks were household officials, and in Mary's reign they were still important men. The private clerk, the 'inward man' of the Elizabethan secretaries had not yet emerged from the

secretaries' households as the principal clerk. In 1558 the secretary's office still included the signet.

Ideally, the signet office prepared documents in a simple, formal process. After recording the requirement for a paper in his register, the secretary gave his draft of a royal bill or an approved petition to one or more of the clerks. The clerk(s) would copy and countersign it and then return it to the secretary for his approval. If the work was satisfactory, a clerk would take the paper to the Queen for her signature. Then the secretary would seal the paper and dispatch it. In daily business it is likely that the procedures were less formal than this.

The clerks of the Council followed similar procedure. The clerks worked from drafts provided by the secretary and returned finished documents ready for the councillors' signatures. The secretary might have been the last to sign a document,<sup>11</sup> but no documents were to be signed at all without first having been 'subscribed by the secretaries or clerks of the council.'<sup>12</sup> Occasionally, the clerks affixed facsimile signatures to Council letters in place of the councillors' signs manual.<sup>13</sup>

Both staffs of clerks followed the practice of countersigning documents to show who had copied them out. Not all papers were countersigned, but these signatures must have been considered part of correct procedure. Such signatures appear on a variety of papers prepared by clerks of the Council and the foreign-language secretaries, as well as on papers prepared by the signet clerks.<sup>14</sup> Because the clerks were well known within the administration, their signatures could

serve as authentication for papers.

Since the time of Henry VII — long before there were two principal secretaries — there were two individual signet seals.<sup>15</sup> The metal seals were not identical. One measured one inch in diameter; the other, one and three-fourths inches. The precise origin of different-sized seals is uncertain, but the seals may have been made to distinguish between foreign and domestic correspondence. The secretaries put little stock in physical uniformity, and they often affixed their private seals and arms to official documents.<sup>16</sup> The secretaries kept possession of the seals at all times. Only in Mary's reign did the practice of appointing the secretaries by letters-patent replace the old procedure in which the king personally conferred the seals on the secretaries as their sign of office.

In Mary's reign the Privy Council may have developed its own seal.<sup>17</sup> The Council agreed to petition Philip and Mary for a Council seal on May 20, 1555. The seal would bear the 'letters P. and M., with a crowne over the same, with which Seale all lettres passing this board should be sealed, and the same to remayne in the custodie of the eldest Clerc of the Counsaill.'<sup>18</sup> Labaree cites a letter dated May 9, 1556, with a similar seal affixed thereto as proof that the request was granted. He declares that the seal was in common use after 1556, a view challenged by later scholars.<sup>19</sup>

If the seal was in fact commonly used by the Council, its method of application suggests its real purpose. According to Labaree the seal was applied to the folded flaps of a letter in such a way that the letter could not be read without breaking the seal or tearing the letter. A Council letter to one Lord Ever, a captain of Berwick, dated

1558, confirms this use. Ever had written the Council to complain that his mail had been opened before he had received it. The Council replied that he should of course capture the culprit himself, but that 'for the saffer sending of letters unto him from hence, it is signyfyed they shalbe henceforth pacqueted with thred and sealed with the Counsell Seale.'<sup>20</sup> The seal probably served as a security measure for documents until the seventeenth century, when, Labaree argues, it became more usual to treat the seal simply as authentication for a paper.

Securing the Queen's signature on official papers was essential to secretarial procedure. When in good health, the Queen worked long hours and made herself available to sign papers from dawn until late at night.<sup>21</sup> In her final months, however, chronic illness prevented her from signing even routine papers. To solve this problem, Mary granted authority to sign warrants, letters, pardons, and other documents in her name with a stamp of her sign manual to Secretary Boxall, Bernard Hampton, clerk of the Council, John Clyf, signet clerk, and Anthony Kempe, a gentleman of the chamber.<sup>22</sup> Her letters-patent of October 17, 1558, granted such authority until January 1, 1559.

The stamp of the royal signature was to be used in the presence of two of the Queen's councillors, chosen from a list of six.<sup>23</sup> Papers impressed with the stamp then went to Boxall to be sealed with the signet, just as if the Queen had signed the papers herself. All documents prepared with the stamp were to be recorded in a special register; each entry was to be verified and signed by two of the eligible councillors. Unfortunately, the registers have not survived.

The Queen's inability to sign papers must have been a problem as early as August 1558. The Queen's letters-patent made all papers so stamped by Boxall or Hampton since September 1 legally binding. Her pardon for any offences committed touching the procedure from that date could only have been a precaution designed to assure those who might otherwise have questioned the secretary's actions in the Queen's name. The use of signature stamps had been common practice in previous reigns, but in setting up these procedures the secretary had taken the initiative to keep the administration running. It was natural that he should include both staffs of clerks in his plans.

Like the secretary, the signet clerks also showed initiative. To enable them to adjust to an increasing workload and coordinate their activities more closely with the secretaries, the clerks made a formal agreement on office procedure, entitled:<sup>24</sup>

Certain articles conteyning the agremente had moved and concluded by Will<sup>m</sup> Honnyng, Nicasius Yetsweirt, John Clyff, and Frauncis Yaxlee, Clerkes of the Signet, the xvith of March a<sup>o</sup> dni 1556 wch every of them hath promised to other t'observe inviolably.

The agreement describes ideal office procedure in the signet. For the first time, the signet clerks agreed to share equally the signet writing fees. They agreed to give certain classes of perpetuities special handling among the mass of warrants presented to the Queen for her signature. The clerks agreed to share the annual expense of hiring subclerks (x13 6s 8d), 'testablishe hereafter a speciall and careful attendaunce of certain clerkes under them both to wryte the said bills and thother wrytinges and also to serve the subjectes resorting to

thoffice.' They further chose to share from the signet writing fees the cost of office supplies. The clerks promised to divide the incoming work equally among the clerks' subordinates.

Concerning routine matters of work distribution and the sharing of expenses and fees, the agreement stands as a straightforward attempt by the clerks to increase the efficiency of the signet. What, then, is remarkable about the agreement cited here? The answer is that on their own initiative the clerks took steps to define the basic character of their responsibilities. The clerks created the post of 'clerk attendant,' which would allow the signet office to produce the required papers with only one signet clerk in attendance on the secretary at any time. The intent of the agreement seems clear: 'Item they shall doe their endeavours that the Secretarye or Secretaryes for the tyme being may be satysfyed with thonly presence of a clerke of the Signet at oon tyme. . .'. Ideally, a signet clerk would have to attend court only one of every four months when the clerks rotated their duties in this way. The clerk attendant would receive the bills to be written, collect the writing and sealing fees, and distribute the work and fees. The agreement provided that the one clerk at court should be treated by the other clerks' subordinates as 'obediently as if they receyved them (bills, warrants) from the proper handes of their master or masters then happening to be absent.'

On their own initiative the clerks agreed to do what Thomas Cromwell had been unable to bring about in the signet in the 1530s, the rotation of the clerks through the office on regular tours of duty, freeing them for such other tasks as the secretary required.

Cromwell's duty schedule would have had the clerks attend the secretary more frequently than once every four months, but both plans were designed to make the signet less a collection of private staffs working for the individual clerks than one office working for a single supervisor. Cromwell's attempt to develop a duty schedule for rotating the signet clerks failed; whether the clerks' plan succeeded is unknown. The clerks' agreement may have been a step toward transforming the signet into a purely ceremonial office by defining its procedure. Nonetheless, the agreement may have improved the efficiency of the office. This sort of activity does not characterize a moribund office.<sup>25</sup>

The secretary's organization routinely kept file copies of both incoming and outgoing letters and papers. The secretary's draft most often served as the record copy of papers prepared by the clerks. Each paper retained for record received an endorsement noting the paper's date, addressee, a short statement of its content, and in some cases a designation of some general file category such as 'service' or 'marine' affairs. The clerks endorsed papers they received in the same way as they did papers they prepared themselves. Usually, they folded the file copy in three or four parallel folds, as if for a modern legal-size envelope, and they almost always wrote the endorsement across the narrow end of the back of the paper. The clerks endorsed the papers in a compressed and abbreviated style.

Before some specific examples of the secretary's methods are considered, one other general procedural point should be mentioned. Sometimes the clerks were instructed to prepare documents in advance,



the specific date of other essential information being left unspecified until some actual event took place. One example of this practice is the series of letters, passports, and warrants prepared for the ambassadors who would notify foreign princes of the birth of the child Mary eagerly expected to be born in 1555. The Queen was not pregnant, but she and everyone except Philip — who probably knew better than anyone else — believed that she would have her child in May. As she neared her delivery date, the signet office drew up letters announcing the birth to Cardinal Pole and other dignitaries, leaving the date unspecified until the birth of the child.<sup>26</sup> The clerks followed the same procedure when they prepared Sir Henry Sidney's passports to visit the Kings of the Romans and Bohemia to make the announcement.<sup>27</sup> When the clerks drew up the warrants for money for the ambassador's trips, they left blank both the dates and the amounts of money to be taken from the treasury.<sup>28</sup> The three sets of papers received the royal signatures before the specific details of the orders were filled in.

Only rarely did the king and queen sign papers in advance, and then only when the implications of the signatures were foreseeable. However, these papers reveal more than just the exceptional case of an administrative 'blank check.' Even in this unusual example, the routine method we have already seen is evident. The draft of Cardinal Pole's letter served as the model for all the notification letters. When the copies were completed, the clerks endorsed the model letter for filing in a hurried secretary hand with the year and the notation:

'copie of let to cardinall Poole/prepared. advertised him of the/queens delivery.'<sup>29</sup> The finished copies of the letters, like the warrants and passports, no doubt bore the royal signature. The clerks applied standard procedures even in exceptional assignments.

The clerks prepared papers for hundred of specific purposes, but they always prepared them as some form of a letter or list. These may be further divided into four groups: lists, agendas, warrants, and letters. Formal grants are excluded here because they were essentially only elaborate letters, showing more of Tudor ceremony than of daily business. These classifications are somewhat arbitrary, but they should help us better appreciate the different kinds of work done by the clerks and show something of the range of the principal secretary's involvement in government.

One product of the secretary's office was a list of something: men, offices, lands, or perhaps objects. If the secretary knew that certain information would be needed at a coming meeting, he would have the clerks prepare a formal list for his use. For example, after the suppression of Wyatt's rebellion in February 1554, the Queen chose to reward those who fought for her. The first step in the process was to list the men under consideration for their service.

The reward list drawn up in February 1554<sup>30</sup> was created for a specific purpose arising, the Queen hoped, but once. The list was intended for official use at the highest level, and the clerks prepared it in the same way as the Council meeting agendas. The three-and-one-half-page list began with a formal heading in the upper right-hand corner, identifying the paper as 'The names of certaine Lordes and gentlemen

that were with hir mates power against the Rebelles.' The clerk then listed their names in an evenly spaced single column down the left side of the page.

Secretary Petre used the list at a meeting of the Privy Council or perhaps at some more private meeting with Mary. As each name came under consideration, the secretary wrote in the right-hand margin after the name the award that had been chosen. The rewards varied in size and kind, and not all those listed received something. These additions to the list were in Secretary Petre's unique handwriting, and an instance where one man's reward was entered, reconsidered, crossed out, and changed from a gift of £100 to 'consideration of his debtes' suggests that the secretary took an active part in the meeting. Some gentlemen received £100 or 200 marks or some share thereof. Howard of Effingham, the Lord Admiral, became Lord Howard; other received land, consideration on their debts to the crown, or had some lands restored to them.

The list reveals something of the secretary's true position in the government. He attended and took an active part at the meeting, adding two names and the appropriate rewards to the end of the list. These names probably were suggested at the meeting. As the secretary marked up the clerk's neat, formal list, he helped decide the rewards of some of his social superiors. The secretary knew which men would be considered, and he knew far enough in advance to allow his clerks time to prepare a formal list. Afterward, the record was useful when the clerks prepared the papers actually granting the rewards. When this process was complete, the clerks filed the list as a regular part of secretarial business.

Lists used frequently over longer periods of time were kept in books of bound, blank paper. One such register contained the names of the Justices of the Peace in the counties of England and Wales; the register dates from February 1555.<sup>31</sup> Because these men were the principal local representatives of the national government, control and selection of JPs were central to governing England. The secretary's record shows that he played an important part in controlling the Queen's local representatives.

How was the record maintained? Clerks kept the list in a book of bound quires of paper. When beginning the record — and this type of record was so valuable that it goes without saying that this could not have been the first of its kind — a clerk entered the names of the counties along the left margin of the pages in a large, formal hand. Indenting past the county headings, the clerk entered the names of the JPs in an evenly spaced single column down the page. At the end of each county section he left space for the inevitable additions to the list. The right-hand side of the page was reserved for the secretary's notes about each JP. The space allotted the counties varied from a few lines to several pages, but the complete list filled the book.

The JP list served as the government's directory of local agents. Secretary Petre wrote in the men's qualifications, noting whether an individual was a lawyer, doctor, or peer. Some men were identified as sheriffs (vice comites) or knights (miles). The secretary used the list frequently and made many new entries in his own hand at the ends of the county lists. As the secretary ran out of space,

his writing became more compressed but remained legible. The list was a permanent record rather than a hurried memorandum.

The secretary probably used the <sup>list</sup> at any meeting concerning the appointment or instruction of JPs. The master list would also have been essential to the clerks when they prepared series of letters to the Queen's men in the shires. Using the book in this way explains the circles and lines in the margins alongside many of the names. When the secretary eventually filled the book and completely congested its margins with marks and notes, the clerks would begin a new book. As the cycle repeated itself over the years, the secretary and his clerks used and maintained one of the government's indispensable administrative tools.

At Privy Council meetings and other important conferences the secretary played a central role by preparing the meeting agenda and often by opening the meeting with a presentation of the crown position on the issues to be discussed.<sup>32</sup> His advance knowledge of what should take place at the meeting enabled the secretary to have a clerk prepare a formal list of the items of business. The clerk prepared the agenda in a meticulous secretary hand; the list usually began with a short description in the upper right-hand corner of the page of what was to follow, much like the reward list we have already considered. The items of business followed in block paragraphs down the page. The agendas often went unsigned.

Only a handful of papers identifiable as Privy Council agendas survive in the State Papers, Domestic, and even these are not labeled as agendas for that body. However, we know that such documents must

surely have existed in great quantity. The agenda was too important a part of established Council procedure to have disappeared overnight from a council containing so many experienced administrators.

Also, the same format was used in agendas for other meetings attended by the secretary. Surviving agendas from the beginning of the new queen's reign, however, were probably representative of the rest.

When Mary secured her rightful claim to the throne in July 1553, she and her secretaries saw that she would have to attend to many different problems to establish her government. The secretary, probably William Cecil, prepared a list of the most important items in July, in a paper entitled simply 'The State.' The clerks copied out the secretary's list, which began with the most basic concerns:<sup>33</sup>

To establissh a counsell  
 To signifie the present state to foreyn princes and  
 to consider the abode or revocation of thambassadors  
 Theterrement of the kinges ma<sup>te</sup> our late m<sup>r</sup>  
 The coronation of the Quenes Highnes  
 To call a parliament  
 To make good justices of the peace and to restrayne  
 the number of them

Cecil also recommended certain economies in household expenditure, 'considering the great debtes which be owng. . . to take away all superfluous and new charges.' The household could, in this view, be cut back to a 'reasonable and moderate' size of the order of that of Henry VII or the early years of Henry VIII. Expenses could be reduced in Calais or Ireland, pensions and annuities, the financial courts, or a variety of other places.

Mary responded through Cecil that same month.<sup>34</sup> The clerks copied out the formal agenda of 'Certen articles wherein the quenes



Highnes pleasure is to be known for hir highnes affayres, gyven in charge to S<sup>r</sup> William Cecill to be declared.' Some of the obvious necessities, such as appointing a Council, had been resolved already, but her instructions addressed the remaining issues point by point, beginning with finance. These two papers reveal the central position of the secretary in government even when, as in Cecil's case as the retiring secretary, he did not enjoy the full confidence of the Queen. Secretary Petre prepared a similar agenda, dated August 4, 1553, expanding the list to include religious affairs as well as the still unsettled business from the two previous agendas.<sup>35</sup> Secretary Petre's agenda has survived in draft form in his own hand, in the style suggested here as the model format for agendas. These papers together illustrate the process for preparing an agenda, although all the parts of the process are not extant for each paper. Someone's list of concerns became a secretary's draft, which a clerk copied out in a standard format. The final copy served as the secretary's guide for the conduct of a meeting.

Despite reports to the contrary from the Emperor's ambassadors, Privy Council meetings had a definite purpose spelled out by the secretary in his agenda; other meetings with a specific purpose were those convened to interrogate traitors and heretics. Although the reason for these meetings was to secure answers to questions rather than to settle policy, the secretary frequently wrote agendas for the interrogation in exactly the same style as that used for Council meetings. Beginning with the standard statement of contents in the upper right-hand corner of the page, the clerks or secretaries wrote the list of questions to be asked in block paragraphs down the page.

The record of the 'interrogatories' from the Dudley conspiracy of 1556 shows that the agenda stood as the central document of the investigation, generating the associated papers recording the answers to the questions, the formally prepared written confessions, and ultimately the formal letters informing those who needed to know of the progress of the investigations.<sup>36</sup>

In the early stages of the inquiry, for secrecy the secretaries frequently prepared the papers themselves. Sometimes they scribbled only the roughest of lists, but often they prepared the agenda as neatly and formally as the clerks did the agendas for Council meetings. The most important point is that no matter who prepared the list of business — for any type of meeting — the secretaries and clerks used a routine format.

Daily correspondence could occupy much of the secretary's time, but then, as now, the secretary's staff could insulate him from routine suits as much as he chose. An example of the secretary's finesse in this regard is the series of letters exchanged between him and the earl of Devonshire, Edward Courtenay, during the earl's attempt in 1555 to have himself released from his virtual exile in Brussels as a member of the English embassy to the Emperor Charles V.

Courtenay had been the rival candidate for Mary's hand in 1553. Although Stephen Gardiner had been his most vocal supporter, Courtenay represented the hopes of many who believed that Mary should marry an Englishman rather than Philip. By 1555, however, the earl was remembered primarily for his part in Wyatt's unsuccessful rebellion in 1554, an attempt to overthrow Mary and replace her with Princess



Elizabeth and Courtenay. More than this, many remembered that Courtenay had lost his nerve at the critical moment and tipped the conspirators' hand to the Privy Council. The earl's personal failure contributed to the discrediting of the anti-Spanish, Catholic party represented by Gardiner on the Privy Council, but even so, Courtenay and Elizabeth remained symbols of the opposition to Mary throughout England. To keep the earl out of domestic politics, Mary exiled him to Sir John Mason's embassy in Brussels.

One of Courtenay's friends at court was James Bassett, a gentleman of the chamber who sometimes wrote Mary's personal letters. With the help of Bassett and others, in the summer of 1555 Courtenay petitioned for a license to travel to Italy for that autumn. Devonshire hoped to travel with the Emperor's party. In any case, Devonshire and his friends knew that the best procedure for requests was to submit them to the secretary; Mason had so advised Devonshire in May 1555,<sup>37</sup> and Bassett confirmed Mason's advice in another letter a week later.<sup>38</sup>

However, there were other ways of securing royal favors than through the office of the secretary. Devonshire wanted to leave Brussels in May, and he sent his request first to his patron, Chancellor Gardiner. A friend of Courtenay's, Thomas Martyn, took the suit to Gardiner, who suspected Courtenay's probable motives; Martyn's assurance that the sought-after license would keep Courtenay from looking homeward was unconvincing. Martyn reported Gardiner's disbelief, and his own, to Courtenay:<sup>39</sup>

He sayde yf he thought yowr being at Brysselles was but very dull and I thynke no less but yf he maye perceyve by yowr lordshipes lines yowr mynd and will in thys poynt yet ymedyatly after hys retourne (wych will be shortly) he will procure the same.

In the meantime the Emperor postponed his trip to Italy, so in the summer Devonshire began a short trip in the low countries, starting toward Antwerp but returning almost immediately.<sup>40</sup> Still without the passport Gardiner had promised him, Courtenay turned to Secretary Petre for help. The secretary answered the request with a letter prepared by the clerks, adding a few lines in his own hand at the bottom of the page. The letter, dated July 12, assured Devonshire of his friendship and commended the earl's behavior, but no passport was promised.

In September the earl still had no passport, but his continuing requests drew a more personal response from the secretary. On September 17 the secretary answered the latest request for a passport with a letter entirely in his own hand, assuring the earl of his friendship.<sup>41</sup> The brief letter was perhaps only a thinly disguised order to direct all suits to the secretary rather than to other court figures. However, the earl became more impatient daily, for the Emperor now planned to begin his journey in October.<sup>42</sup>

Fortunately for Courtenay, the Emperor postponed his trip once more, this time until November.<sup>43</sup> Before writing to Secretary Petre again, Courtenay got Philip's approval for his request. To guarantee a response and secure the Queen's approval, Courtenay sent the request in four copies, one copy each for the Queen, Cardinal Pole, Gardiner, and Petre.<sup>44</sup> The requests were submitted to Petre for delivery, and Courtenay requested a speedy decision; Charles V would be leaving soon.

During this time, Courtenay had also requested permission to

visit England, but Mary had rejected his request. In November 1555, however, she finally agreed to grant his license to travel to Italy, a suit begun six months earlier. Philip and Charles V immediately equipped him with the necessary letters of instruction for various ambassadors and states, and Devonshire set out at last on November 7.<sup>45</sup> Although the decisive voice in the decision to grant the license may have been Philip's, the principal secretary may have delayed the process until it became profitable to do otherwise. The earl was short of money for the trip, and he agreed to sell to Petre a manor at Whitford,<sup>46</sup> no doubt a bargain for both men. Immediately after the sale, the government produced the license.

The final note in the lengthy exchange was Petre's letter of November 23, 1555. Secretary Petre wrote to the earl in his own hand, offering fatherly advice to his social superior. Pointedly, the secretary instructed Courtenay to live up to the Queen's high estimate of him. In words expressive of Courtenay's tenuous position in English politics, Petre advised him that 'your lordship doth (I doubt not) well consider that this ill world is full of rumors and report.'<sup>47</sup> Certainly the dissolute earl would be well-advised to avoid ill reports.

The exchange showed something of the secretary's real position in the government. As insulated as he chose to be, the secretary might have his clerks prepare virtual form letters for his signature even in politically sensitive suits. The secretary could choose to show more interest and perhaps answer a request in his own hand to put a worried mind at ease with assurances of his friendship. In this example, when Courtenay followed the most correct procedure and made the suit profitable, the secretary could change his attitude of benign inactivity

to one of fatherly concern, rapidly producing the long-delayed passport. The smoothest access to royal favors lay with the secretary.

Letters were used for all kinds of business, and those produced for the Select Council reveal still another aspect of secretarial procedure. When Philip left England in 1555, he set himself the problem of ruling the kingdom from a distance. To maintain his influence and improve governmental efficiency, Philip designated a 'Select Council' of Privy Councillors to assist Mary and advise him on the most important matters of state. Throughout Mary's reign there had been much talk, particularly in Spanish diplomatic circles, about the need to reform Mary's Privy Council. The Select Council may have been only a nominally different version of the established Privy Council, however. The State Papers reveal nothing of the Select Council's composition,<sup>48</sup> and the letters exchanged between Philip and the Select Council show little evidence that the Privy Council had been replaced. The letters also demonstrate one more aspect of secretarial business that followed prescribed procedures.

The king and his new council corresponded in formal letters. Each letter prepared for the Select Council probably was the result of a meeting, or perhaps a week's meetings, and consisted of a report to the absentee king of 'thynges lately agreed upon in Counsell.' These letters have survived in two forms: Secretary Petre's drafts in English and file copies in Latin prepared in an Italic hand. Philip's letters to the Select Council, like the council's replies, were always in Latin. Philip's clerk, G. Perezius, nearly always addressed the the king's letters to the selectis consiliarijs, the Select Council. Secretary

Petre's clerks, on the other hand, rarely paid attention to the title; they endorsed the letters they received from the king as 'The Kinges ma<sup>te</sup> to the counsell.' In the same way, the secretary's clerks addressed and endorsed originals and file copies without any reference to a 'select' council. A typical endorsement on a filed letter reads only: 'M(ynute) to the Kinges ma<sup>te</sup> from the counsell (blank) November 1556.' The Latin address on another council letter to the king said only 'consiliarii ad Reg Ma<sup>tes</sup>.'<sup>49</sup> The secretary's clerks treated this correspondence as they did the rest; as far as they were concerned, there was but one council.

The clerks prepared correspondence for the Select Council in the usual way. After one or more meetings, the secretary drafted the letter to Philip telling him what the Council or the secretary wished him to know. The clerks passed the draft on to the Latin secretary, who made at least two copies of it in an Italic hand. On the back of the copies he added a short statement of the content of the paper. Then he returned the letter to the secretary's clerks; if the secretary approved the work, the clerks endorsed one copy for filing and dispatched the other copy to the king.

Although the secretary's position dictated the tone of the letters he wrote to the king, the secretary had considerable freedom in what he might choose to tell the king and how he might choose to tell it. In most cases, of course, the Council complied immediately with the king's requests; in some minor suits,<sup>50</sup> however, the councillors might reject the king's requests, on the grounds that their positions as councillors demanded such a judgment. The problems of governing for an absentee monarch were difficult and perhaps nowhere more clearly

illustrated than in Secretary Petre's attempt to inform the king in 1556 that a large conspiracy had been discovered yet was under control.

Writing to Philip on May 7, 1556,<sup>51</sup> Petre knew from his participation in the recent investigations that the newly discovered Dudley conspiracy involved even members of the government. Some conspirators were already in the Tower, others fled to France, but likely more were still at large. What should the secretary tell the king? The secretary changed his mind several times as he drafted the letter. His first attempt began, 'Sithens our last letters to your mate. . . those seditious conspirat<sup>rs</sup> fledd into Fraunce might be mynded to procure. . .' Here he stopped. The letter hardly sounded confident, so he crossed out what he had written and began again. Starting again with the phrase 'sithens or last letters,' he disliked it and once more crossed it out. On the next line he tried again: 'Although ther have partly any greatt matters occurred sythens our last letters to your mate. . .' But this still was not right; Petre gave the note more assurance by changing 'partly any' to 'no' and finished the sentence by attributing his obvious concern about the conspiracy to following the Queen's instructions. Even so, the letter had a ring of weakness to it, so the secretary started over. In the final draft the secretary pointed out that they had taken steps to have certain nobles alerted and prepared to provide soldiers. Of course, the latest reports from the counties showed that all was quiet.

This splendidly bureaucratic draft solved Petre's dilemma. At the same time, it discussed a problem important enough to be discussed by a 'select' council. Other letters did not always do so. Sometimes the Select

Council's letters concerned the question of precedence of royal titles, as when Philip inherited his father's lands and titles. Others were requests to prosecute honorific suits for the profit of some of the king's friends. The Select Council also reported the final destruction of the Dudley conspiracy in June 1556, as well as reporting on other defense measures, including the provisioning of the fleet. That the Select Council concerned itself with only the highest matters of state seems doubtful, but it is clear that the matters discussed were all of personal interest to Philip.

Lemasters has argued that the Select Council was developed to treat the most important state business, apart from Mary's oversized, inefficient Privy Council. In this view the two councils shared the same staff of clerks. However, the secretary's clerks made no distinction between the two councils in their daily work and may have unwittingly revealed the true state of affairs. Also, by this time Privy Council attendance averaged between eight and fifteen, a manageable number. The council registers show no evidence of the formation of a new, higher council; although incomplete, the registers record the same types of business throughout Mary's reign. Evidence that the Privy Council performed some of its work in committee does not strengthen the argument that the Privy Council was extensively reorganized in Mary's reign either. The Select Council may never have existed as a separate body.<sup>52</sup>

In these examples we have seen standardized secretarial procedure in many different government activities. These procedures were the result of twenty years' work perfecting the techniques of

administration introduced by Thomas Cromwell. Cromwell's reforms changed a collection of loosely organized clerks attendant on the secretary into an organization following standard, known procedures. Although no guidebooks for secretarial procedure were written in Mary's reign, the clerks and the clerks and the secretaries knew how things were to be done. Allegorically, the clerks heard the official's whisper because they knew what he was going to say.

Government moved slowly in the sixteenth century, but the new methods of the 1530s must have made the secretary's office seem efficient by the standards of the day. But does this evidence of bureaucratic progress hold up when complete administrative processes, rather than isolated papers, are considered?



## Notes to Chapter III

1. Evans, The Principal Secretary of State, p. 199; Elton, Tudor Revolution, p. 279. Clerks of the signet were not restricted to these matters and often prepared other types of correspondence for the secretary. Signet clerks may have prepared the lists of pardons and summonses to the Council given in A.P.C., vol. iv, pp. 429-32, 330.
2. E.R. Adair, 'The Privy Council Registers.' English Historical Review, xxx (1915), pp. 698-704.
3. Evans, The Principal Secretary of State, p. 41.
4. For. Cal., Dom. Cal., passim.
5. Evans, The Principal Secretary of State, p. 196.
6. This description of the signet fees is taken from Evans' chapter on the signet.
7. Slavin, Politics and Profit, pp. 182-3. These are substantially higher estimates than those in Evans' chapter on the signet.
8. Ibid., 183-4.
9. Ibid., p. 185, 185n.
10. Ibid.
11. Emmison, Tudor Secretary, p. 51.
12. Evans, The Principal Secretary of State, p. 41.
13. H.M.C. Finch Manuscripts, vol. i, p. 5.
14. For. Cal., p. 172; H.M.C. Portland Manuscripts, vol. ii, pp. 10-11; H.M.C. Finch Manuscripts, vol. i, p. 3.
15. Evans, The Principal Secretary of State, p. 205.
16. Ibid.
17. L. Labaree, and R. Moody, 'The Seal of the Privy Council,' English Historical Review, xliii (1928), pp. 190-202. This is the only available discussion of the Council seal, and what follows is taken from it.
18. Labaree quotes A.P.C., vol. v, p. 130.
19. Lemaster.

20. Labaree quotes A.P.C., vol. vi, p. 261.
21. Span. Cal., vol. xiii, p. 279.
22. C.P.R. Mary, vol. iv, pp. 453-4. These signature stamps were carvings of a signature applied by pressing the stamp into the paper and then inking in the resulting impression. Good ones were nearly indistinguishable from an autograph.
23. The councillors were: Nicholas, Archbishop of York and Lord Chancellor; Edward Lord Hastings, Lord Chamberlain of the Household; Kenry Jernagen, Master of the Horse; Edward Walgrave, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster; Francis Englefield, Master of the Court of Wards; and William Petre.
24. SP 11/10/7. The agreement is printed in full as an appendix to Evans, The Principal Secretary of State. The new-style date is 1557.
25. Elton, Tudor Revolution, p. 266. Elton perhaps underestimates this. He states, 'By then the work that actually fell to the share of a clerk had dwindled to such an extent that it was thought sufficient for one of them to be on duty to supervise the writing clerks, and consequently every clerk was to confine his attendance on the signet to three months in the year.' But it is a perfectly natural development for the signet to be run by one clerk rather than four, and one in keeping with the other parts of the administrative revolution.
26. SP 11/5/28.
27. SP 11/5/29.
28. SP 11/5/30-32.
29. SP 11/5/28.
30. SP 11/3/36.
31. SP 11/5/6. A similar list (SP 11/6/85) enrolled castles, gardens, parks, chases, orchards, and other crown lands with the titles of the responsible royal officials. Although this list did not match individuals' names to each position, the record complemented the list of JPs by identifying another group of royal officials.
32. See Lemasters' chapter on Council procedure; also D.E. Hoak, The King's Council in the Reign of Edward VI (New York: 1976), pp. 273-5.
33. SP 11/1/3.
34. SP 11/1/4.

35. SP 11/1/5.
36. The administrative work generated by the interrogations of heretics and traitors is well illustrated by the series of papers SP 11/7/23 through SP 11/8/11, but some particularly good examples include the following: SP 11/7/31, the signed confession of Richard Vuedale (Uvedale?) prepared in Bourne's (?) hand, a document particularly disturbing to the Council because Vuedale was a clerk of the Privy Council Chamber (Dom. Cal. Addenda, p. 439); SP 11/7/32, a formal version of Vuedale's confession prepared for his signature, following the same format as an agenda, with all unused spaces on the paper lined out to prevent any unauthorized additions to the paper; SP 11/7/59, a list of 'interrogatories' in Petre's hand; and SP 11/8/10 and 11, a list of questions for a traitor and the same list with the subject's answers. The paperwork for the interrogations had three parts: a list of questions to be answered, notes on the subject's answers, and the formally prepared final copy of the confession for the prisoner's signature.
37. SP 11/5/17.
38. SP 11/5/23.
39. SP 11/5/27.
40. SP 11/6/1.
41. SP 11/5/48.
42. SP 11/6/13.
43. SP 11/6/24.
44. SP 11/6/32.
45. SP 11/6/42 and 45.
46. SP 11/6/39.
47. SP 11/6/65.
48. SP 11/6/16-21.
49. SP 11/9/34, 47, 53; SP 11/8/50.
50. SP 11/9/10.
51. SP 11/8/51.
52. Lemasters, "The Privy Council in the Reign of Queen Mary I," pp. 195-203, 219, 222.

#### IV. Practice

"Is't possible? No sooner got but lost?"

— William Shakespeare, Troilus and Cressida, IV, ii

The first seven months of renewed war with France, from June 1557 to January 1558, provide complete records of two representative administrative processes: the raising of troop levies and the collection of a forced loan. Although the war may have given the secretary's actions an urgency they might otherwise have lacked, these two processes show the details of normal administrative work in the larger context of state business. Raising an army and a loan were somewhat unusual activities in that the administrative processes associated with them were not part of the daily routine of the secretary's office, but for several reasons these processes provide a valid test for our suggested criteria for bureaucracies.

First, if the secretary and his clerks had become administrative specialists, they could be expected to apply their usual methods to the more unusual tasks. Second, if bureaucratization had practical significance, certainly it included efficiently performing administrative work on a large scale. Also, the bureaucracy would have had to account for the many demands on the Queen's subjects made in her name, in the form of complete files. Perhaps most important, these processes provide a measure of the secretary's interest in refining his procedures, his desire to extend rational methods within the government to pro-

cesses that had thus far escaped standardization. Although another period of indecisive war had little significance, the war tested fully the administrative skill of the secretary and the clerks. As a result, a comparison, in general terms, of the administrative efficiency of the secretary's office with that of the rest of the Queen's government may help define the effect of radical improvement in internal government administration.

It is a commonplace that the Tudors had no standing army, but how did they raise an army when they needed one? The lack of a standing army had never prevented a determined prince from going to war. The procedure for raising an army probably was clearly defined by Mary's reign and presented the secretary and the clerks with few problems. Existing procedure in Mary's reign likely was much like what had gone before.

To raise her army, Mary farmed out the conscription to England's landed gentlemen, who conscripted (or impressed) soldiers and then either commanded or appointed commanders for the units. The process began with the decision of the Queen and Council to raise a given number of soldiers, horsemen where possible, and then harquebusiers, pikemen, and footmen. Once this decision was made, however, from the secretary's point of view the process became an enormous accounting problem. After the total numbers of men were set, the secretary issued the instructions to the numerous commissioners who would actually muster the soldiers. Reports from the musters were kept by the secretary to account for the progress of the levy and arrange for the movement of the soldiers after the levy was completed. This process involved many letters and lists, which follow

the formats we have already encountered. Although the procedure was relatively simple in that it consisted of issuing instructions and accounting for the results, the levies provide important evidence because of the scale of the effort. The process described here included two levies, one in the summer of 1557 and one in January 1558, a record-keeping process spanning at least six months.

Gentlemen received their notifications in signet letters. Just as in the examples of signet letters already considered, the secretary provided his clerks with lists of those who would receive the letters and with a draft of the letter to be copied out, filling in the blanks left for the commissioners' names, effective dates, and numbers of soldiers. After the letters were copied, the clerks filed the lists with the original draft of the letter under the heading 'service.'

The draft copy of the notification letter was essential because it included nearly all the information worth retaining. The endorsement of the file copy of the model letter prepared for the levies on July 31, 1557,<sup>1</sup> listed the men who would receive the Queen's letters. This particular letter, the model for those sent to the shires, was completed for Cornwall. It was addressed to Sir John Arundel and Sir Roger Edgecomb. Also designated in the endorsement, but not by name, were the sheriff, the justices of the peace, the knights of the shire, and 'other our commissioners for the musters.' Thus the Queen's orders were dispatched to England's gentlemen in identical form. Although this particular letter demanded a levy of 300 men, the numbers of soldiers of course varied from county to

county. However, the proportions of the numbers of the different types of soldiers remained constant. The letters specified that the men should be commanded by 'mete capitaines' selected from the gentlemen of property or their heirs apparent. The units were to be mobilized by August 25, within four weeks of the filing date of the model letter. After that date the units were to be ready for movement on twenty four hours' notice.

With the model letter the clerks filed a list of the recipients of the letters. The list is missing in this example,<sup>2</sup> but a similar notification letter prepared to levy soldiers for the defense of the royal household has survived with the list of its recipients intact.<sup>3</sup> Again, the clerks had prepared form letters requesting soldiers to 'attend upon us,' against the threat of a French invasion.

Like the form letter we have just considered, this one left names, dates and numbers unspecified, to be filled in by the clerks using the lists that the secretary provided. The draft of the text was followed by the names of twelve counties, each one checked off with a mark in the margin. The letter and the attached list were endorsed as a 'mynute,' standing as the secretary's record of the levy as well as the clerks' model for this and similar business.

From these letters it appears that in Mary's reign the signet office was still an active part of the secretary's office, able to produce important letters in quantity. As products of the signet office, these letters were in no way unique: we have already seen that they were produced in the same way as many other signet letters. Such form letters were used in the requests for levies in

January 1558, when the Queen was still more deperate to raise an army quickly to relieve Calais. Most important, these letters show evidence of the thoroughness and accountability that characterize a professional operation. It is possible to reproduce from these letters the process by which they were produced and to extract from them the information needed by the secretary in his reports to the Privy Council. The files included a record of the recipients' names and instructions and the counties to which the letters had been dispatched. To distinguish this class of papers from the others, in some cases the letters were marked with the broad heading 'service.'

After preparing the letters, the next step was to record the results of the musters held in the counties. The secretary and the clerks began preparing this record at about the same time that they dispatched the letters notifying the levy commissioners. The levies began before the actual outbreak of war in June 1557. by May of that year the Privy Council had answered at least one challenge to a commissioner's authority to raise troops before war began by saying that 'the wordes of the same (the signet letters) were sufficient.'<sup>4</sup> By then a series of letters like those we have seen were already in the shires.

Since these lists were considered to be permanent records, the clerks recorded the master-lists of levies in bound books of paper in much the same way as they recorded the lists of the justices of the peace. One such master-list, certainly not the first of its kind, was begun perhaps in June 1557.<sup>5</sup> The book summarizes the musters of twenty counties, each page containing the name of the county, the type



and number of soldiers conscripted, and whether the men were 'furnished' with weapons and armor. Each page showed its total, and at the end of the book followed the totals from the twenty counties. Except for its contents, this record resembles the form of the book of the justices of the peace, both in its physical dimensions and in the way the information was recorded.

At about the same time that these musters began, the clerks started a record of a different part of the process of raising an army, an account of the names of the nobles who 'went over' to the continent to join Philip and his army fighting the French.<sup>6</sup> Of less long-term significance than the records of the county musters, this record was kept on a sheet of paper, the names of the nobles copied out in a neat, clear secretary hand. Each name had been checked off with marginal notations (small pluses) as if the list had been used by someone at a meeting during which each name had been discussed or, perhaps more likely, as if someone using the list had checked off each name after completing, say, a letter to each one. The list is not unique; a month later, the clerks recorded in the same way the names of the nobles who had been asked to lead the home defense forces in the event of a French invasion.<sup>7</sup> This second list named the men who would provide the Queen with men and horses and established the chain of command among the men so named.

These accounts of the Queen's demands on her subjects show an essential aspect of Tudor administration, but the secretary's men advanced routine administration beyond the production of royal correspondence to include accounting for specific pieces of that

correspondence. Such records could be very informal, nothing more than a scrap of paper, but one carefully prepared list bore the names and destinations of the messengers who delivered the series of notification letters dated January 17, 18, and 19, 1558, to the levy commissioners. This paper, the final part of the notification process for raising the expeditionary force to recover Calais, grouped the letters by date. The first letters, for January 17, went to commissioners raising troops for a proposed landing at Dunkirk. The second group, for January 18, pertained to levies of soldiers to fight the Scots. The last group, for January 19, related to another levy for the Dunkirk expedition.<sup>8</sup>

Were there many such lists? Apparently few have survived, but just as agendas for Privy Council meetings must have existed in quantity, so these informal records must have abounded. From a practical point of view, the important question would have been whether the paper was worth saving after the task it concerned was completed. Although such records would lose their value immediately in many cases (in this instance, after the messages were delivered), before the task was completed the list would protect the work thus far accomplished. The extant lists probably are accidental survivals. This type of record, however, logically completed a well-defined process by accounting for important parts of the previous work. This is particularly significant because it shows a concern for procedural completeness not necessarily implicit in series of carefully prepared letters and records. This list of messengers complements the carefully prepared endorsements on filed papers, but in both the result was to account for the details of an

administrative process as well as the papers the secretary and clerks prepared to carry it out.

Evidence of procedural thoroughness argues strongly for the continuing progress of administrative reform. Secretaries in the medieval past had of course produced the king's letters and papers, but the secretaries' success in developing a system capable of systematically accounting for royal papers standardized procedure in a way that was impossible in less bureaucratic offices. By maintaining detailed records of all business, including lists of other essential papers, the secretary effectively professionalized his office. In this way the Marian secretaries continued Thomas Cromwell's work. With systematic and complete records, a trained administrator could report adequately the progress of state business without necessarily knowing more about that business than what was on file. The administrator might not need extraordinary political influence to perform his job. The secretary could rely on his knowledge of standard procedures, his registers of letters, and his files. Knowing the system, anyone could do the job. Just as records had been the key to Cromwell's work in the 1530s, so records enabled such men as John Boxall to serve successfully as secretary in Mary's reign.

In the examples from the troop levies we have evidence that the secretary and his clerks were highly conscious of procedural points. However, the evidence for this is especially direct in the records pertaining to the collection of the Queen's forced loan, an event taking place at about the same time as the levies. The papers produced in the government's efforts to collect the loan are

particularly significant for demonstrating the secretary's interest in standardizing procedure.

A forced loan was exactly that, a loan the rich were forced to make to the crown upon demand. The process consisted of a few simple steps. The first was to determine who, in the Queen's words, had money 'to spare.' Once these men were identified, commissioners were appointed for each county to notify the gentlemen and collect the money. The last step was to account for the money collected.

For the English counties, the Privy Council selected the gentlemen with money to spare to contribute to the loan, but in Wales, this duty fell to the Council of Wales. The best evidence for the workings of this process is the letter of instruction<sup>9</sup> from the Queen to the Council of Wales telling the councillors how to go about collecting the money. The process described in the letter no doubt was the same as that followed for the rest of the realm by the Privy Council. Also, this process demonstrates that the secretary had access to any records from other government offices necessary to his business.

The details of the process were apparently not well known to the Council of Wales, and to standardize the procedure throughout the realm the secretary prepared a letter in the Queen's name detailing the correct method. First, the council was to identify the men to contribute to the loan from the subsidy books, the records of the collection of the last Parliamentary subsidy. Here the names of those who had contributed to the loan in the past were marked. The Council of Wales did not have these records, so the secretary enclosed them with his letter. The next step was to appoint and notify loan collectors. This had already been accomplished for England; in the

Queen's words, she wished to 'have the like order put in execution by you in all the welshe counties.' To speed the process, the secretary enclosed sample letters to be copied out for each of the designated collectors. While this was in progress, the Council of Wales was to report the names of the gentlemen selected to contribute to the loan to the Privy Council, which would arrange for privy seals 'to be sent down for so many persons as by the certificat shall appear contented to lende vs any money.' The certificate was the report from the Council of Wales that each of the contributors was in fact willing to loan £100. By the time all the collectors were appointed and instructed, the two councils would have the royal orders commanding the loan ready.

The sample letters enclosed with the subsidy books as a guide for the clerks of the Welsh council took the form we have already described; that is, they were drafts of a basic letter with the names of the collector, the county, and the date left unspecified until the preparation of the final copy. Probably, the model letter would have served as the file copy for the Welsh council after the letters to be dispatched were copied out. Again, the clerks used the lists of information provided by the secretary to fill in the blanks in the form letter. Every loan collector received essentially the same letter. The lists the clerks used were part of the permanent record, and the names of the new contributors to the loan were recorded in the subsidy books for future reference.

Despite the simplicity of the process, the collection of the loan was difficult. The Council apparently followed a different procedure for collecting the loan than they did for the subsidies.

For the loan the Privy Council relied on the secretary's letters of instruction to guide the collectors. For subsidies the Lord Treasurer often would brief the collectors in person at the Privy Council and have them bonded for thrice the sum they were directed to collect.<sup>10</sup> By relying on privy seals sent to each contributor to the loan, the Privy Council made the business somewhat more personal, although without lessening the responsibilities of the loan collectors. The need to bond collectors for large sums was effectively replaced with threats against the individual contributors.<sup>11</sup> Also, the sums of money involved were considerably smaller in the loan. In any case, the contributors to the loan could pay their shares or risk an appearance before the Privy Council and possibly a prison sentence.

The loan collectors met each contributor<sup>12</sup> and asked him for the money. Frequently, contributors compounded for the loan. Here the contributors signed a bond<sup>13</sup> for the money rather than pay immediately. If the gentleman refused to pay or sign the bond, the collector could fulfill his responsibility by reporting the gentleman's name and conduct to the Council. Short of appearing before the Council, the gentleman might still make good his debt by coming to court and paying the money to the Master of the Jewel House.

The records of this procedure are much like those of the troop levies. The office of the secretary again followed known procedures. The secretary took the official directives and provided his clerks with the necessary records and model letters. The clerks copied out the papers to be dispatched under the signet. The record

of the collection was kept in some permanent form, in this case in the subsidy record books, where it would be available for later use. Each action was filed together with the relevant papers under some comprehensive heading, such as 'loan,' 'service,' or 'marine,'<sup>14</sup> a heading for naval affairs. These procedures were predictable and rational, sufficiently so that the principal secretary could provide detailed instructions based on his own office practice to other organizations. In the example of the forced loan, the instructions included a basic directive, model letters for issuing the necessary orders, instructions for using the records involved, and the essential record books themselves. In every way, the evidence reviewed here suggests that administrative procedure within the office of the secretary became more professional during Mary's reign.<sup>15</sup>

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The evidence presented here allows some observations about the significance of the office of the principal secretary in Mary's reign in the long-term development of professional government. At the beginning we suggested some characteristics of an early modern bureaucracy. One was that the officeholder should be a man of some professional training whose career was distinguished by long-term service and whose ambition was restricted to the professional hierarchy. In the professional bureaucracy the man of vaulting ambition would be out of place. The careers of the Marian secretaries and clerks apparently fit this pattern.

Among the clerks there is ample evidence of professional training. In nearly every case, it is possible to trace the clerks'

careers back to the households or patronage of the leading administrators of the day. In some instances their careers can be followed back to Thomas Cromwell himself; in others there were long-standing associations with William Paget, William Cecil, or William Petre. The clerks were remarkable for having shown (with one exception) so little political ambition, despite their proximity to greatly influential men. None of the clerks would follow Paget's example and make the transition from administrator to politician.

The secretaries do not all have that same continuous connection with the court, but they too seem part of the same pattern. William Petre of course began his long service with Thomas Cromwell, but John Bourne and John Boxall began their careers outside the government. Bourne and Boxall apparently learned quickly the skills of a secretary. But most important, the secretaries contained their ambitions within the professional hierarchy. The career of the most influential Marian secretary, William Petre, is a study in how caution and professional competence enabled one to survive in a political world that had destroyed incomparable but less flexible contemporaries.

A second comparison was made to test whether men holding apparently equal positions received equal rewards for their work from the patronage system. Although the results here are less clear, there appears to be little difference among the rewards taken by the different types of clerks. The signet clerks received roughly comparable, modest rewards; the rewards of the clerks of the Council, about whom so little is known, were uniformly small. The secretaries' rewards, on the other hand, show some striking contrasts. William



Petre was by far the richest of the three secretaries, and his long career guaranteed him a financial advantage over his successors, who served for a relatively short time. Of the other two secretaries, Bourne took his rewards in the same form as Petre had done, in lands and secular offices, and was a model for the way in which high office brought immediate wealth. Mary's last secretary, John Boxall, took his rewards in the form of religious offices. His tenure was comparable with Bourne's, yet Boxall fell far short of amassing the wealth of his predecessors. Boxall's career and interests seem more in the spirit of Marian politics, perhaps because his interests suggest a stronger religious commitment and possibly an ascetic character.

At the lower levels of the administration, among the clerks, the rewards appear to have been approximately equal. A signet clerk could expect to exceed a certain income, and his career depended on his competence more than his personal favor, although that favor remained important. At the highest level, among the secretaries, this trend is less well developed. Had a succession of men like Boxall held the office, the nature of the office might have become more formalized in the same way as the clerks' positions. In Mary's reign, the secretary's position still depended to a great extent on his relations with the monarch. While it is possible to compare the responsibilities and profits of office among the signet clerks, say, of Henry VIII and Mary, it is more difficult to make a similar comparison among the secretaries. The Marian secretaries had widely differing rewards and responsibilities; the differences become larger

when we compare such men as Thomas Cromwell or William Cecil with John Boxall.

In this vein, G.R. Elton, G. Lemasters, and D.E. Hoak have argued that there is an unbroken chain among the Tudor secretaries, that the Tudor revolution in government was pushed forward without interruption, by Cromwell, Paget, and the Cecils. But if this revolution was the institutionalization of bureaucratic practices in national departments and the elevation of the secretary's position to the very center of internal government administration, what does Paget's role tell us of the importance of the Marian secretaries, since Paget is included at their expense? The secretary should have been the focus of the revolution, yet Paget, who was no longer a secretary in Mary's reign, has been credited with the further destruction of household methods of government during that period. What did Mary's secretaries contribute to this revolution? Does Mary's reign properly belong to a discussion of Tudor methods of government?

The answer lies in the work of the Marian secretaries, work perhaps concerned more with the details of daily administration than with the kinds of governmental reform plans attributed to Paget, who was most effective acting outside the limits of his offices. Mary's tremendous unpopularity strongly affected the role of the Privy Council and the secretary in the formulation of policy, but in matters of routine administration the professionalization continued, particularly among the clerks. The chaos of conciliar politics probably failed to penetrate their increasingly bureaucratic world. For the clerks, business was conducted as it had been done before. For

the secretaries, however, there was much less certainty about what the role of a secretary might be. This in itself was not unusual, but only more extreme in Mary's reign than in others. Decades later, Robert Cecil described the role of the secretary in terms that show clearly how increasingly professional administration did not necessarily define the secretary's responsibilities:<sup>16</sup>

As officers and councillors of princes have a prescribed authority by patent, by custom, or by oath, the secretary only excepted, but to the secretary, out of a confidence and singular affection, there is a liberty to negotiate at discretion at home and abroad, with friends and enemies, in all matters of speech and intelligence. . . (the) prince's assurance must be his confidence in the secretary and the secretary's life his trust in the prince.

Much of the secretary's effectiveness as an administrator depended on his relationship with the prince, a consideration beyond the limits of the professionalization process in the sixteenth century. That the secretary's duties were undefined and his employment tenuous did not diminish his importance, but rather suggests the danger of attributing too much value to regularity in an age whose political character was often indeterminate even at the highest levels of government. Despite the progress of the administrative revolution within the office of the principal secretary, the influence of the secretary remained a reflection of his character.

The achievements of the Marian secretaries seem limited to procedural points. The papers produced by the secretary and the clerks followed standard formats, and it was easy for the clerks to master and use them. In letters, lists, and files the professional

touch is evident. The office was run so that a man of some training could rely on the record books and files to conduct business. The evidence of the secretary's interest in accounting for all the office's work is a strong argument that the administrative revolution continued into the 1550s.

Thomas Cromwell had tried to organize the work of government so that an office and its procedures would dominate the personalities (and potentially unpredictable or irregular methods) of different officials. The Marian secretaries conducted their business along Cromwellian lines, as the thorough records of the loan, the levies, and other actions show. Marian secretaries extended their methods to processes where administrative technique had not yet been perfected. One example of this is the instructions given the Council in Wales for the forced loan; another is the proposal to standardize naval finance. These examples are significant because they demonstrate that the secretary encouraged the use of rational, Cromwellian methods within the government.

How much did bureaucratic improvement contribute to the overall effectiveness of Mary's government? In terms of office practice and internal administration, the development of bureaucracy was immediately productive, but apart from those the effect of radical administrative improvement was problematic. Evidence of administrative excellence in no way should make us doubt A.F. Pollard's judgment that Mary's reign was sterile.

The renewed warfare with France beginning in June 1557 highlighted the tension within Tudor government. On one hand, there

were the increasingly rational methods of the Queen's officials (represented by the office of the secretary) to apply efficiently the resources of the crown; on the other, there was the chaos of politics as the Queen and her advisors set a royal policy whose goals and results were often governed by forces unaffected by the professionalization of government. While it is unfair to compare paperwork with, say, naval operations, the letters and dispatches of the secretary were prepared with a skill and energy that were lacking in other parts of the war effort. As a result, the Queen and her advisors may have believed that the war was going better than it in fact was. The letters and papers may have been reassuring; only the loss of Calais brought the Queen back to reality.

In a rare instance of historiographical unanimity, every historian of Mary's reign has criticized this particular war. The English entered the war with no realistic war aims and few resources, and consequently the results were disastrous. One incident sums up the affair. Shortly after the declaration of war on June 7, 1557, the French captured two English coal ships on their way to Calais. In a daring raid, the Lord Admiral recaptured the two ships and presented them to the treasurer of Calais as prizes. The treasurer of course rejected the claim out of hand and informed the Privy Council of his actions. The Council's answer captures the irrationality of the events:<sup>17</sup>

It is well lyked that he hath stayed the money due for the shipp and cooles solde by the Lord Admyrall, which he is willed to stay still in his handes to the Quenes Majesties use, for

it is thought very strange that the Lorde Admyrall, serving with the Quenes Majesties force and at her charges, shuld clayme that to be his that is merely her Majesties.

Certainly the Queen and the Privy Council knew that war with France was highly probable in 1557, and preparations for war began as early as November 1556. A plan to rebuild the navy was drafted in January 1557, and the first troop levies were ordered that spring.<sup>18</sup>

But here again, the orderly processes one might expect to find from reading the secretary's papers failed to materialize. For example, the two warships Tiger and Bull were to be withdrawn from service early in 1557 for refitting under the proposed naval reform program, yet the same two ships were still unserviceable at the end of the year. And what became of the plan to maintain a reserve of provisions sufficient for a force of 1000 men at sea for one month? Evidently not much, since the fleet in the North Sea experienced mutinies at sea caused by food shortages.

The levies also failed. The first wave called in the spring of 1557 apparently was insufficient, for a second round was ordered for an invasion planned for sometime after the middle of August 1557. The invasion does not appear to have taken place, and the secretary received numerous complaints from troop commanders that the conscripts were too few in number, of low quality, and poorly equipped.

When the French captured Calais by siege in January 1558, the English were in the middle of yet a third attempt to raise an army. On paper, great energy appears to have been expended, although

the army could not be assembled in time; after a storm damaged the English fleet three days after the fall of the city, plans to retake Calais were put aside until the summer. As Philip knew, the recovery of the city would require more men and money than was available that winter.

In Mary's reign, radical improvement was still relatively new and limited. Certain fundamental problems were more constitutional than administrative; the example of state finance will make the point. Given the limited power of the Tudor monarchs to tax and the rising costs of war, it was almost impossible to maintain an army and navy in wartime, with even the best of management. Administrative reform could improve the way in which available resources were used, but could not necessarily increase their number. Even Elizabeth would prove unable to solve the financial problem during the protracted war with Spain late in her reign; for Mary, lacking her sister's charm and political instincts, the financial problem was virtually insoluble. The largest potential source of income, Parliamentary subsidies, remained 'extraordinary' royal income, despite the progress of the administrative revolution.

The personality of the prince set another limit on the effectiveness of the administrative revolution. Little has been said here of policy because of the limits of the sources, but it can be said that Mary made one decision that brought the many problems of Tudor government into sharp focus. Mary's reign was a period of many events but essentially only one issue, centering on the Queen's choice of a Catholic faith and a Spanish husband. This choice gave her reign its peculiar character and affected every aspect of English

political life. In comparison with this, the significance of administrative reform was small. Just as improved administration did not necessarily provide solutions to other constitutional problems, so reform could not immediately reduce the force of the royal personality in the formulation of government policy. The Queen's personality dramatically affected the mood of the population, but in the 1550s the state did not command the resources to govern an apathetic or hostile population effectively. The administrative revolution would have its greatest effect when the powers and responsibilities of the chief of state came to be defined, and therefore limited, as part of the spread of bureaucratic method throughout government, but the individual character of the monarch determined much of the quality of royal government for at least a century after Mary's death.

This development properly belongs to the eighteenth century, but the first steps toward that end must include the work of the Marian secretaries in extending rational methods in their work as Thomas Cromwell had done twenty years earlier. In Mary's reign, politics centered on the controversies created by the Queen's personality; in this sense, the character of her reign seems much more medieval than modern, that is, 'more like what came before than what came after.' Nevertheless, some aspects of the conduct of state business in the office of the principal secretary during this period show strong evidence of the administrative modernization that would eventually spread throughout English government.

Understanding the meaning of the administrative revolution in Mary's reign requires us to do more than catalogue and dismiss the failures of her government. In a reign beset with so many



difficulties, administrative professionalization took a surprising course, continuing as best it could, at the lower levels away from the controversies of high politics. When we consider the progress of Mary's secretaries in perfecting rational methods of government, the strength and permanence of Thomas Cromwell's achievement becomes all the more striking.

## Notes to Chapter IV

1. SP 11/11/33.
2. The list was not photographed with the letter.
3. SP 11/11/34.
4. A.P.C., vol. vi, p. 87.
5. SP 11/11/19.
6. SP 11/11/7.
7. SP 11/11/30.
8. SP 11/12/27. A similar list, of those selected to raise soldiers in several counties, is SP 11/11/13.
9. SP 11/11/46. This discussion perhaps oversimplifies some extensively documented records. See SP 11/11/44-48 for the enclosures to the secretary's basic directive. Other instructions for the loan, for Kent, are given in SP 11/11/49; SP 11/11/50 is a copy of the instructions to one of the chief collectors of the loan and lists the subordinate collectors for various counties. SP 11/11/51 is a list of loan collectors in some of the counties.
10. A.P.C., vol. vi, p. 142.
11. A.P.C., vol. vi, p. 5.
12. A.P.C., vol. vi, p. 59.
13. SP 11/12/21.
14. See the endorsements on SP 11/11/38 and 11/12/12.
15. This concern for developing rational procedure is not restricted to the secretary's office. SP 11/10/1 records an agreement by the Privy Council to reorganize naval finance, set down in a formal hand and countersigned by the clerk of the Council, Francis Aleyn. The agreement empowered the Lord Treasurer William Paulet to control the flow of money to the Treasurer of the Admiralty. Specifically, Paulet was to insure that there was money for the rebuilding and refitting of the ships, that the shipkeepers and workmen in the ports would receive their pay and victuals, that a reserve of victuals for 1000 men at sea for a period of one month was always on hand, and that the ships could be repaired on a regular basis. Paulet agreed to do all this on an annual appropriation of £10,000. An initial advance of £7,000 was authorized in an accompanying warrant (copied out by Aleyn) to the Treasurer of the Admiralty, Benjamin Gonson. Accounts to the

Privy Council were required annually, and any surplus from the year's allotment was to be credited toward the next year's.

The agreement was signed for the Queen by Aleyn, with Chancellor Heath, Paulet, the Bishop of Ely, Petre, Bourne, Boxall, Wharton, and Walgrave signing for the Council. The agreement and the warrant were copied out carefully and filed with the rest of the secretary's papers. The agreement resembled an agenda, which was what it was — an agenda for the renovation of the fleet. The purpose of the paper was not to make things more 'convenient' for the Queen as the preamble to the agreement stated, but rather to make sure that the money spent on the fleet was fully accounted for and, in effect, out of court. Probably the idea for this agreement originated with the councillors who signed the document.

This paper is reprinted in full in A.P.C., vol. vi, pp. 39-41.

16. Evans, The Principal Secretary of State, p. 2.
17. A.P.C., vol. vi, p. 116.
18. E.H. Harbison, Rival Ambassadors at the Court of Queen Mary (Princeton: 1940), his chapter on the first six months of 1557.

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