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The Political and Cultural Career of Philip Sidney, Lord Viscount Lisle, Third Earl of Leicester, 1619-1698: Nobility and Identity in the Seventeenth Century

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The work presented in this thesis is my own

Abstract

The Political and Cultural Career of Philip Sidney, Lord Viscount Lisle, Third Earl of Leicester, 1619-1698: Nobility and Identity in the Seventeenth Century

This thesis provides for the first time a detailed examination of the political and cultural career of the Philip Sidney, generally known by his courtesy title of Lord Lisle. Lord Lisle was one of the members of the court nobility who joined the parliamentarian opposition to Charles I in the 1640s and whose most eminent figures have not recently been the subject of individual biographies. Unlike the rest of his class, however, Lisle, appointed a councillor of state, supported the new governments of both the Commonwealth and Protectorate; he even returned to opposition to the crown in the Exclusion Crisis. It is suggested that such a stance was surprising, given Lisle's descent from a family elevated to the peerage through service at court and financially dependent on court patronage. In addition, it is shown that Lisle was conscious of the requirements of noble status and sought to maintain the style of life expected of one of his class. To explain this paradox, it is argued that Lisle constructed his identity on the perceived image of his celebrated namesake and great-uncle, Sir Philip Sidney. Above all he was influenced in his move to political opposition by the reputation of Sir Philip as defender of Protestantism against the perils of popery and arbitrary government. Offering more than an account of one man's political career and his cultural interests in art collecting and literary patronage, this thesis also provides new insights into the nature of religious affiliation in the Civil Wars and beyond, the factional politics of the mid 1640s, the inner workings of the Protectorate and the emergence of changed values after the Restoration.

Preface

As with all academic productions, the thesis would have been impossible to write without the help of friends, family and experts in the subject. I would like to take the opportunity of expressing my gratitude to them all. Firstly, I would like to thank Jeremy Wood and Claire Tilbury, then of the Brookes University, Oxford, for recommending the topic of Lord Lisle's art collection as a subject for a Master's dissertation in the History of Art which I was then studying. Without their suggestion I would probably never have come across Lisle nor have been tempted to investigate his career further. They, in turn would probably be happy to acknowledge the role of the late Francis Haskell in rediscovering the importance of Lisle as an art collector in his lectures of 1994. Later Haskell himself encouraged me in the publication of an article on Lisle's art collection of the 1650s, for which I have always been immensely grateful.

Research on Lisle's wider career has been possible only with the unfailing help of his descendant, Philip Sidney, Viscount De L'Isle. Not only has he readily given permission to consult the Sidney papers, but he proved an exemplary host at the 2003 Penshurst conference on the 'Textures of Life at Penshurst Place, 1552-1743', where I had the chance to meet other scholars involved in Sidney studies. I am very grateful to him for his support over many years. My thanks also go to Robert Lindsay, earl of Crawford and Balcarres, who, on my inquiry as to the whereabouts of a catalogue of the 1701 sale of Leicester's pictures sent – by return of post and unasked – a photocopy of the complete catalogue. I owe much to his kindness in providing what has proved to be an invaluable research tool.

Of the scholars who have provided information and encouragement over the years, I would like to single out Ian Green, Patrick Little, Germaine Warkentin and Blair Worden, for especial thanks. I am also indebted to John Cloake, the historian of Richmond, for material on the history of Lisle's estate at Sheen and, not least, for a memorable expedition to explore the site of Lisle's estate there, now the Royal Mid-Surrey Golf club. Drs Faramerz Dabhoiwala and Johanneke Sytsema helped me with the translations of seventeenth-century diplomatic Dutch. Of the many librarians and archivists who have provided documents with unfailing efficiency and helpfulness, I am particularly indebted to Robin Harcourt Williams, archivist at Hatfield House, for finding sources I would never have discovered for myself on my visit there and to Robin Darwall-Smith, archivist at University College, Oxford, for sending me Sidney

references during the closure of the college archives. My family has also provided vital assistance without which the thesis could never have been completed: John in having an eye to proof-reading the text, not to mention the buying or borrowing of key books for my initial research, and (inevitably), the grandchildren, Thea and Alex Hewett, in producing the IT graphics needed for the genealogical tables.

My greatest debt, however, is owed to my two supervisors, the late Barry Coward and Laura Stewart. Barry's calm but always acute judgment was a never-failing source of inspiration; I am very sorry that he did not live to see the completion of this thesis. Laura's challenging and detailed criticisms have always provided a standard of excellence in writing which I have tried to emulate. It is largely thanks to her energy and enthusiasm that have I got as far as completion. Having finished the substance of the thesis, I requested and was allowed by Stephen Roberts to read the unpublished draft of the History of Parliament's biography of Lord Lisle. As I guessed it might, it introduced me to yet another piece of information on Lisle, a reference in John Moore's Parliamentary diary. This, with thanks and due acknowledgment, I was able to incorporate into the thesis. For the rest, I have made no attempt to check my text against the impeccable scholarship of the History of Parliament's biography. All the mistakes in this thesis – and they are probably all too apparent – are my own, as authors customarily and ruefully admit. My heartfelt thanks, nevertheless, to all those who have so generously helped me over the years to complete this thesis.

Contents

Abbreviations

A&O	C.H. Firth and R.S. Rait, eds, *Acts and Ordinances of the Interregnum,* 1642-1660 , 3 vols (1911)
Add. MSS	Additional Manuscripts
BL	British Library, London
Bodl.	Bodleian Library, Oxford
CJ	*Journals of the House of Commons*
CSPD	*Calendar of State Papers, Domestic*
CSPI	*Calendar of State Papers, Ireland*
CPSV	*Calendar of State Papers, Venetian*
EHR	*English Historical Review*
HJ	*Historical Journal*
HMC	Historical Manuscripts Commission
HMC De L'Isle	*Historical Manuscripts Commission: Reports (77): The De L'Isle and Dudley Manuscripts,* 6 vols (1925-1966)
KHLC	Kent History & Library Centre, Maidstone
LJ	*Journals of the House of Lords*
LMA	London Metropolitan Archives
ODNB	*Oxford Dictionary of National Biography online*
Somers Tracts	*A Collection of Scarce and Valuable Tracts…from the late Lord Somers,* ed. W. Scott, 2nd ed. 13 vols (1809-1815)
TNA	The National Archives (Public Record Office), Kew
TT	Thomason Tracts
TSP	*A Collection of the State Papers of John Thurloe, Esq.*, ed., T. Birch, 7 vols (1742)

N.B: The place of publication of works cited is London, unless otherwise specified.

Spellings in quotations have been modernised; original spellings retained for the titles of seventeenth-century publications
All dates are old style, but with the year beginning in January.
Where an accurate printed version of a reference exists, I have cited the printed reference for the convenience of readers; where the printed version is inaccurate, or lacking, I have cited the manuscript.

Introduction

The career of Philip Sidney, who became third earl of Leicester in 1677 but who was known for most of his life by his courtesy title of Lord Viscount Lisle, has never been the subject of investigation in its own right. Great-nephew of the famous Sir Philip, courtier, writer, and defender of Protestantism, Lisle was also closely related to the earls of Warwick, Essex, Manchester, Holland, Northumberland and Salisbury, the peers leading the opposition to Charles I in the early 1640s.[1] Elected to the Short Parliament in April 1640, he was a member of the Long Parliament until its expulsion by Cromwell in April 1653. A supporter of the political Independents in the Commons, he was appointed Lord Lieutenant of Ireland for a year from 1646 to 1647. For nine years, from 1649 until the collapse of Richard Cromwell's Protectorate, he was elected or nominated a councillor of state. He was also appointed ambassador for Sweden in 1652 and created a lord in Cromwell's Other House in 1657. Returning to the lower House in the summer of 1659, he perhaps attended until the final sessions of the Rump in early 1660. Although Lisle distanced himself from the Restoration, his political career did not end at that point. Having inherited the Sidney earldom in 1677, he was one of the peers opposing the crown during the Exclusion Crisis of 1678-81. He attended the Lords for the last time in 1689, only then retiring from politics.

Lisle's political career was an exceptional one. As this summary indicates, he was among those nobles who supported the parliamentary opposition during the Civil Wars, but unlike the overwhelming majority of the nobility, he continued to play a public role in politics throughout the Interregnum and later resumed political activity in the Exclusion Crisis. No other member of the nobility could claim such continuity of political activity. Perhaps even more surprisingly, by the late 1640s he was established as a patron of religious Independency. He continued to be identified with Independency for some ten years after the Restoration and the collapse of republican government. In addition to his long political career, Lisle was also a major collector of works of art and from the 1670s, a notable patron and host to the London literary world. Heir to an under-funded noble family, he amassed considerable wealth by his own efforts. Although unsuccessful in contesting a deeply unfavourable inheritance settlement, he nevertheless managed to leave the family estates undiminished to his son and heir.

[1] Appendices A-C.

Yet the almost unique nature of his career – that of a nobleman who supported radical religion and the governments of the Interregnum, but who also upheld aristocratic traditions of military valour, elite culture and concern for his lineage – has largely escaped notice. His entry in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography,* though providing an outline sketch of his political career, makes no mention of his religious patronage or his art collecting and wrongly places his literary hospitality at his country estate at Sheen, rather than in London. Elsewhere, misled by his difficult relationship with an overcritical father and his later unconventional private life, historians have dismissed his political career in passing. David Underdown has referred to a 'disturbed' Lisle quarrelling with his father 'almost incessantly … obviously jealous of parental preference for his younger brother Algernon'. Blair Worden included Lisle as member of a group of Rump politicians with 'pronounced conservative views, extensive landed wealth and limited political stature'. For Gerard Aylmer, Lisle was 'proud, touchy, quarrelsome, with an irregular private life, one wonders how he was tolerated on the council of state', a verdict repeated almost verbatim by Austin Woolrych, 'arrogant, quarrelsome and loose in his morals', Lisle, 'scarcely rated highly for godliness and 'good conversation'. [2]

Only Lisle's short-lived Lord Lieutenancy of Ireland in 1646-7 has received detailed examination from historians. For Karl Bottigheimer, Lisle's Lieutenancy was merely the 'curtain-raising farce to the uncomic Cromwellian conquest of two years later'. On the other hand, John Adamson has suggested the Lieutenancy represented a highly significant 'imperial design' by political Independents to reassert English hegemony over the three kingdoms. Patrick Little has seen the influence of the group he identifies as 'Irish Independents' as all-important in Lisle's Irish expedition. Robert Armstrong has offered a damning critique of the Lieutenancy with, in his view, an 'inept' and 'self-destructive' Lisle wreaking havoc on the Protestant cause in Munster. Such studies have only tended to entrench Lisle's poor rating among historians. [3]

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[2] C.H. Firth, rev. by S. Kelsey, 'Philip Sidney, 3rd Earl of Leicester', *ODNB*, 2008; D. Underdown, *Pride's Purge* (1971), 221; B. Worden, *The Rump Parliament* (1974), 179; G. Aylmer, *The State's Servants : the Civil Service of the English Republic, 1649-1660* (1973), 210, 399; A. Woolrych, *Commonwealth to Protectorate* (1982), 167, 382.

[3] K. S. Bottigheimer, *English Money and Irish Land: the 'Adventurers' in the Cromwellian Settlement of Ireland* (Oxford, 1971), 97-108; J. S. A. Adamson, 'Strafford's Ghost: the British Context of Viscount Lisle's Lieutenancy in Ireland', in J. H. Ohlmeyer (ed.), *Ireland from Independence to Occupation, 1641-1660* (Cambridge, 1995), 128-159; P. Little, 'The Irish 'Independents' and Viscount's Lisle's Lieutenancy of Ireland', *Historical Journal,* xliv (2001), 941-961; R. Armstrong, 'Ireland at Westminster: the Long Parliament's Irish Committees, 1641-1647', in C. R. Kyle, J. Peacey (eds.),

In part, the lack of attention to Lisle's career reflects a gap in historical studies on the noble opposition in the Civil War. In spite of, but perhaps because of, Adamson's work on the nobility in the 1640s, there have been no biographical studies of leading oppositionist nobles such as Northumberland or Warwick, since the publication of G.F Trevallyn Jones's *Saw-pit Wharton* and Vernon Snow's *Essex the Rebel* over forty years ago. Interest in the Civil War notables has more recently focused on the leaders of the New Model Army, such as David Farr's *John Lambert*; Oliver Cromwell continues to dominate the scene for biographies of the Interregnum. [4]

But in the main, Lisle has been unlucky in that the reputation of his English political career has been eclipsed by the subsequent fame of his younger brother, Algernon, the republican and 'Whig martyr'. Algernon's legacy, selected and transmitted by Whig and radical supporters for their own purposes from the late seventeenth century onwards, has proved of greater interest to later generations – and to Lisle's disadvantage.[5] The first biographer of the Sidney brothers, R.W. Blencowe, in his introduction to the *Sydney Papers* was critical of Lisle's acceptance of office under Cromwell so allowing him to stress Algernon's high-minded rejection. Blencowe also pronounced (on the basis of a single violent row in 1652 between Lisle and his father), Lisle's temper to be 'ungovernable'.[6] Such prejudice, as has been suggested above, has been too readily adopted by later historians.

But Jonathan Scott in the most recent detailed biography of Algernon is more dismissive of Lisle than most. He claims that Algernon was the only 'intellectual heir to his father and the Sidney heritage', and that the 'burden of that Sidney inheritance was to fall squarely in his own generation onto Algernon's shoulders'; the 'precociously able' Algernon from an early age was able to shoulder his 'dull and lazy' elder brother out of the limelight and form his own personality and intellect … [in] the gap'. The impression given is that Algernon excluded Lisle from public life as well as family affairs. But Algernon's celebrity is almost entirely posthumous: the consequence of his

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Parliament at Work: Parliamentary Committees, Political Power and Public Access in Early Modern England (Woodbridge, 2002), 79-99.

[4] G.F. T. Jones, *Saw-pit Wharton: the Political Career of Philip, Fourth Lord Wharton from 1640 to 1691* (Sydney, 1967), V. F. Snow, *Essex the Rebel: the Life of Robert Devereux, Third Earl of Essex, 1591-1646* (Lincoln, 1970); D. Farr, *John Lambert: Parliamentary Soldier and Cromwellian Major-General* (Woodbridge, 2003); for instance, I. J. Gentles, *Oliver Cromwell: God's Warrior and the English Revolution* (Basingstoke, 2011).

[5] B. Worden, *Roundhead Reputations: the English Civil Wars and the Passions of Posterity* (2001), 13, 172-5.

[6] *Sydney Papers: Consisting of a Journal of the Earl of Leicester and Original Letters of Algernon Sydney*, ed. R.W. Blencowe (1825), xxxii, xxxvi.

'Whig martyrdom', or execution, in 1683, and the publication almost twenty years later of an edited version of his *Discourses on Government.* During their lifetimes it was Lisle – a councillor of state for nine years as opposed to Algernon's eight months – who held by far the higher contemporary profile and took responsibility for the family's fortunes. Like Blencowe earlier, Scott marginalizes Lisle to enhance the limited contemporary importance of Algernon. [7]

'Disturbed', 'arrogant, quarrelsome', 'self-destructive', but also 'dull and lazy'? On the other hand, an earlier account by Vivian de Sola Pinto, has depicted Lisle as a 'kindly and cultured patron'. In the most recent history of the Sidney family, Michael Brennan suggests that the 'overlooked but pragmatic' Lisle was a useful figure in ensuring the continuity of the family through troubled times, but he fails to examine his career in detail.[8] Verdicts on Lisle from historians thus lack consistency and detailed examination. It can be argued that they have seen his career largely refracted through the posthumous fame of his younger brother Algernon, and dismissed it accordingly. Never studied in its own right, historians have taken their assessment of Lisle the politician at second hand and from others; his role as an art collector and patron of literary figures has been almost entirely ignored.

This thesis therefore aims to provide for the first time a full account of both his political and cultural career, not least because, as Malcolm Smuts has observed, no distinction was made between culture and politics in the early modern period; art, literature and politics were deeply enmeshed.[9] This first full appraisal of Lisle's career should help to fill the *lacunae* in the biographies of the mid seventeenth-century opposition nobility, providing new insights into the formation of noble identity and political and religious allegiances during the seventeenth century. It will also illuminate a number of particular issues debated in the historiography of the period: the role of religion in Civil Wars and beyond, the importance of Irish affairs in English politics, the growth of factional politics during the wars, the stability of the Commonwealth polity and the reality of power under the Protectorate. Lastly, given Lisle's long life spanning much of the seventeenth century, it will attempt to suggest the ways in which his career indicates the differences between the world of the early Stuarts and that of the later.

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[7] J. Scott, *Algernon Sidney and the English Republic, 1623-1677* (Cambridge, 1988), 59, 49, 60.
[8] V. de Sola Pinto, *Peter Sterry: Platonist and Puritan, 1613-1672* (Cambridge, 1934), 40; M. G. Brennan, *The Sidneys of Penshurst and the Monarchy, 1500-1700* (Aldershot, 2006), 160.
[9] R. M. Smuts, *Culture and Power in England, 1585-1685* (Basingstoke, 1999), 1-2.

Four themes in the historiography of the period are key to an understanding of Lisle's career: the constituents of noble hegemony in society; religious affiliation; the impact of political ideology; and the legacy of Sir Philip Sidney.

The first of these, the nature of noble pre-eminence, has been much debated. The decline in the political and economic power, the confidence, authority and prestige of the nobility on the eve of the Civil War, charted so convincingly by Lawrence Stone as the 'crisis of the aristocracy' nearly fifty years ago, has given way to a more positive view of the fortunes of the nobility in seventeenth-century.[10] In more recent decades historians, such as Jonathan Dewald, Hamish Scott, Hillay Zmora and Ronald Asch, working on the longer time-scale of the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries and incorporating specialist studies on a wide range of European nobilities in addition to the English, have not only challenged Stone's notion of a 'crisis of the aristocracy' in the early seventeenth century, but have suggested the means by which the nobility across Europe – and including the English – survived and flourished up until the nineteenth century.[11] There is now some consensus that state formation and the growth of princely absolutism in continental Europe during the seventeenth century, so far from casting the nobility as victims, offered them new opportunities for employment and status. With their place at court and privileged access to royal patronage, the aristocracy were the beneficiaries and willing partners of the *ancien régime*. If in England the political influence of the nobility saw a temporary eclipse during the Interregnum, following the Restoration the nobility recovered their privileged position and demonstrated a similar process of survival and success. The most recent challenge to Stone's thesis has come from the extensive writings of John Adamson who has presented a case for the crucial role of aristocratic self-confidence and widely-accepted leadership in the events leading up to the Civil War and beyond.[12]

Both Stone and later historians have suggested that adaptation to change was the key to the survival of the English nobility. To fit themselves to rule in an increasingly professionalised modern state, and from their desire to maintain their rightful place at the head of the social and political hierarchy, from 1550 onwards

[10] L. Stone, *The Crisis of the Aristocracy, 1558-1641* (Oxford, 1965), 13, 15, 748-50.
[11] J. Dewald, *European Nobility, 1400-1800 (Cambridge*, 1996), 4; H.M Scott, *The European Nobilities in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries*, 2 vols (1995), i, 8; H. Zmora, *Monarchy, Aristocracy and the State in Europe, 1300 –1800* (2001), 79; R.G. Asch, *Nobilities in Transition, 1550-1700: Courtiers and Rebels in Britain and Europe* (2003), 125.
[12] J. S. A. Adamson, *The Noble Revolt: the Overthrow of Charles I* (2007).

members of the landed elite began to provide their children with an academic education in humanist classical studies. Stone has shown that by the 1630s, matriculations at Oxford of members of the combined gentry and peerage classes reached a level of 500 undergraduates a year, a total not exceeded again until 1870. Similarly John Stoye has examined the increased popularity of foreign travel, the fashionable completion of an upper-class education from the early seventeenth century onwards. This education too was part driven by utilitarian motives – in this case the acquisition of language skills – but also prompted by the wish of would-be courtiers and diplomats to acquire on their travels the elite social skills of horsemanship, swordsmanship and courtly manners taught only in the academies of France.[13]

Further studies since the publication of Stone's *Crisis,* have examined other ways by which the nobility modified their values and codes of conduct in order to adapt to new influences in society and maintain their pre-eminence. Of greatest influence has been the noble code of honour examined by Mervyn James in what has become a classic study. He has argued for the predominance of individual assertiveness and violence in a concept of honour which had developed out of the medieval military and chivalric tradition, but he has also claimed that, by the seventeenth century the nobility had come to accept the prior claims of internalized self-control. Decisive in this shift, according to James, was the influence of Erasmian humanist scholars and their Protestant successors who denigrated the traditional cult of honour based on deeds of valour, as well as 'lineage, ceremony and magnificence'. Instead, the reformers stressed the priority of virtue over valour and ancestry; they also insisted on obedience to authority, above all that of a 'godly prince'. Thanks to the teaching of the humanists, together with the efforts of the Tudor monarchy, the community of honour by the 1600s had become centred on the crown; dignities were the reward for service to the state. [14]

James's thesis has since come under attack on a number of fronts. For some historians it overstated the violence of the late medieval period; for others, such as Barbara Donegan, it underestimated the continuance of aristocratic violence even into the period of the Civil Wars. On the other hand, Linda Pollock has argued that honour should be seen predominately as a peace-keeping strategy for discord resolution in

[13] For instance, Stone, *Crisis,* 7, 17, Asch, *Nobilities,* 132; Stone, *Crisis,* 672-3, 687-8; J. Stoye, *English Travellers Abroad: their Influence in English Society and Politics,* rev.edn. (New Haven, 1989), 11-2, 38-9.

[14] M. James, 'English Politics and the Concept of Honour' in *Society, Politics and Culture: Studies in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 1986), 308-9, 320-1, 376, 358, 373, 338.

which violence played only an occasional part. James's own evidence shows that even in the early seventeenth century, honour was understood as external recognition of rank and status or reputation, rather than an internalised moral directive, as he claims. In addition, with its focus on noble violence, James's account ignores other equally important components of noble status, such as wealth and display. A final problem with James's study is that it ends in 1642; he offers no clue to the evolution of the honour culture after the start of the Civil Wars. Nevertheless, James's thesis has proved enormously persuasive. Ian Atherton, for instance, has stressed the all-encompassing nature of the honour culture for the elite. The English gentry, he writes, 'were born, lived and died in an honour community'. The study of honour continues to be an important theme in the most recent work on the nobility. [15]

But, as James points out, there was some tension between honour as conferred by blood, and honour as acquired through humanist-lauded virtue. Richard Cust in an essay on the 'public man' of late Tudor and early Stuart England has more recently stressed the alternative ideal: that of virtue and the contention that 'true nobility' was derived from virtue alone. Humanist teaching, in his account, revived the moral precepts of classical authors, most notably the Stoics and above all Cicero, that man's highest duty was the active life, the *vita activa*, in the service of the state, or commonwealth. Such service had to be disinterested; it had to be in the 'public interest' rather than for 'private profit'. Honour, in the sense of title and recognition, might follow such a career but was only a consequence of virtue and a secondary consideration; virtue was the all-important moral and civil force. Though pagan in origin, such a philosophy was readily incorporated into the Christian tradition. Cust notes that Calvinist ministers promoted the importance of 'godliness' and the role of the 'godly magistrate' as a vital component of the 'public man'.[16]

But as Cust has indicated elsewhere, during the early seventeenth century the earlier aristocratic tradition of honour co-existed with, rather than replaced, the new

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[15] B. Donegan, 'Varieties of Royalism' in J. McElligott and D. L. Smith (eds.), *Royalists and Royalism During the English Civil Wars* (Cambridge, 2007), 84; L. A. Pollock, 'Honor, Gender and Reconciliation in Elite Culture, 1570-1700', *Journal of British Studies*, xlvi (2007), 29; James, 'English Politics', 312; Sir Keith Thomas, *The Ends of Life: Roads to Fulfilment in Early Modern England* (Oxford, 2009), 180-1; I. Atherton, *Ambition and Failure in Stuart England: the Career of John, Lord Scudamore* (Manchester, 1999), 11; most recently, B. Kane, *The Politics and Culture of Honour in Britain and Ireland, 1541-1641* (Cambridge, 2010), K. M. Brown 'Honour, Honours and Nobility between the Reformation and the National Covenant', *Scottish Historical Review*, xci (2012), 42-75.

[16] James, 'English Politics', 332, 379-80; R. Cust, 'The "Public Man" in late Tudor and early Stuart England', in P. Lake, S. Pincus (eds.), *The Politics of the Public Sphere in Early Modern England* (Manchester, 2007), 116-126).

stress on public service. In a feud between Sir Thomas Beaumont and Sir Henry Hastings, for instance, Cust shows that the one took his stand on godliness, public service and learning, the other on lineage and loyalty to the crown. Andrew Hopper has revealed that at the start of the Civil War, the Fairfax family based their allegiance to Parliament on a view of honour based on 'godliness, service and humility'; their opponents in Yorkshire, the Hothams, on one based on 'blood, pedigree and lineage'. Indeed, seventeenth-century writers such as Henry Peacham, saw little contradiction between the two concepts. For Peacham, honour, in the sense of reputation and status, was the reward for virtue and glorious actions, thus the non-noble could acquire nobility by virtue. Nevertheless, he insisted, 'genuine' nobility was 'the honour of blood in a race or a lineage'. In a restatement of the military and chivalric tradition he claimed that children of noble parents inherited the virtues and noble disposition of the ancestors towards 'industry and glorious action'. They needed, according to the book's dedication, no other pattern for their lives than the images of their forefathers, although Peacham did offer them double honour if they acquired learning as well.[17]

Some historians have noted evolution in other components of traditional noble culture over the seventeenth century. Linda Levy Peck has argued for the growth in the consumption of material goods as a new feature of the 'magnificence', or display, mentioned in passing by James but nevertheless an essential requirement of aristocratic status. In defining the status of the elite during this period, the acquisition of luxury goods replaced the medieval and Tudor employment of hosts of retainers. She points in particular to the collecting of Italianate art – inspired by the Caroline court – as a new aspect of aristocratic identity. Felicity Heal has written of the decline of open-house hospitality – aristocratic magnificence in the sense of sumptuous entertaining – and its replacement by a new perception of civility encouraging social separation over the Tudor and Stuart period. David Farr has instanced the continuing ties of lineage and kinship as overriding the political divide of the civil war. [18]

Anna Bryson has traced in more detail the codes of civility, or polite society derived from humanist writers, above all, the courtier, Castiglione; these she considers

[17] R. Cust, 'Honour and Politics in Early Stuart England: the Case of Beaumont v. Hastings', *Past and Present,* cxlix (1995), 70-3, 91; A. Hopper, *'Black Tom': Sir Thomas Fairfax and the English Revolution* (Manchester, 2007), 162-3. H. Peacham, *The Compleat Gentleman* (1634), 3, 9, 2, 14, introduction, 18.
[18] L. L. Peck, *Consuming Splendour*: *Society and Culture in Seventeenth-century England* (Cambridge, 2005), 7-8, 25-31; F. Heal, *Hospitality in Early Modern England* (Oxford, 1990), 390-2; D. Farr 'Kin, Cash, Catholics and Cavaliers: the Role of Kinship in the Financial Management of Major-General Lambert', *Historical Research,* lxxiv (2001), 57-62.

transformed noble culture over the seventeenth century. She argues for the importance of London, the growing centre of upper class life, in transmitting new 'modes of urbanity', or civility, from the court to the nobility. London provided the elite with a 'sense of shared identity' and the 'possession of a shared culture', in contrast to the 'modes of lordship', or courtesy, the hierarchical relationships of the medieval nobility. In Bryson's view, cultural cohesion and distancing from lower social groups helped underpin the power and authority of the elite: a strategy for noble adaptation and survival. James Rosenheim has suggested a not dissimilar thesis for the years 1650-1750. The experience of mid-seventeenth century upheaval, he argues, led to the concern of the landed elite to secure their social position by the establishment of their cultural claims to superiority. Remodelled great country houses, collections of fine art and artefacts, the continued influence of a classical education (though no longer so closely orientated towards civic duty), and foreign travel for the young, all served to identify the landed classes with high culture and to separate elite from popular culture. Longer stays in London, Rosenheim also claims, helped weld the elite into a more 'self-aware social group' both cosmopolitan and metropolitan, resulting in an increasingly homogeneous and hegemonic landed class. If Ian Warren has recently effectively contested the role of London in creating an exclusive elite culture, Asch has offered a less location-specific origin for the high culture of the later seventeenth century by which the aristocracy separated themselves from the non-elite and 'reasserted their cultural hegemony': taste and elegance, urbanity and literary culture.[19]

But the social basis of noble pre-eminence was, Warren concludes, not cultural but economic wealth, principally that of land ownership. In spite of the expansion of the gentry class, it has been calculated that the nobility still held 20 per cent of the land of England at the end of the seventeenth century, the same proportion as at the start of the century. Heal points out the insistence of landowners in advice to their sons, on the protection of the material interests of their family: inherited land must never be sold, estates must be soundly managed. John Habakkuk has examined in detail the legal strategies – primogeniture and the use of the strict settlement – by which the landed classes conserved and enhanced their estates from the mid seventeenth century

[19] A. Bryson, *From Courtesy to Civility: Changing Codes of Conduct in Early Modern England* (Oxford, 1998), 29, 37, 113, 132, 262, 23; J. M. Rosenheim, *The Emergence of a Ruling Order: English Landed Society, 1650-1750* (Harlow, 1998), 2, 91-4, 216; I. Warren, 'The English Landed Elite and the Social Environment of London c,1580-1700: the Cradle of an Aristocratic Culture?', *EHR*, cxxvi (2011), 152-3; Asch, *Nobilities*, 152-3.

onwards. As in Europe, with the expansion of the state, the nobility profited from their access to court and royal patronage, but kinship ties through descent or marriage, with their creation of network relationships, continued as before to provide a further strengthening of mutual noble support and opportunity. For writers throughout the period, wealth was a pre-requisite for honour and the magnificence or the 'port', the lifestyle of a nobleman. A study of Lisle's career demonstrates all these elements of noble predominance in society: honour, virtue, display, cultural patronage and the acquisition of wealth. [20]

Secondly, given Lisle's own patronage of religious Independency, some consideration of the complexities of religious affiliation in the seventeenth century is needed, not least because the sphere of religion, like that of culture, cannot be isolated from that of politics in this period. Following John Morrill's definition of the Civil War as the last of the 'wars of religion', in which he stressed the role of religion as a motivating – though not the sole or separable – factor in the coming of conflict, there has been a revival of interest in English puritanism. For Christopher Durston and Jacqueline Eales, the puritans, or 'the godly' (as they called themselves), were indistinguishable from the mainstream Calvinist orthodoxy of the 'Jacobethan' church, but were forced into opposition by the rise of Laudian Arminianism during the 1630s. They were marked out by their sabbatarianism, days of fasting and humiliation, bible study and searching of conscience for assurance of election; over the 1640s they tended to support a Presbyterian framework for the English Church. Other opponents of Laudianism also included under the umbrella term of puritan, turned to Independency. Yule has defined Independency as a form of 'decentralized Calvinism'; its adherents differed from Presbyterianism, not so much in doctrine, but in their wish for self-governing congregations. Independency has been less studied than other radical alternatives to Anglicanism, and its differences from Presbyterianism (and its internal diversities) less examined. If, during the Interregnum it was possible for 'puritan' religious values to coexist with elite cultural tastes in music, art and even drama, as

[20] Asch, *Nobilities*, 49; F. Heal and C. Holmes, *The Gentry in England and Wales, 1500-1700* (Basingstoke, 1994), 22, 80, 137; J. Habakkuk, *Marriage, Debt and the Estates System: English Landownership, 1650-1950* (Oxford, 1994).

Bernard Capp has suggested, this was due to the dominance of Independents rather than Presbyterians in the governments in that period. [21]

Puritan 'godliness' had appealed to many gentry families in the early seventeenth century, but opposition to Laudian church reforms in the 1630s – seen as heralding a return to popery – involved a much wider section of the population, as John Walter has shown.[22] Indeed, anti-popery has been defined as a staple of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Protestantism generally and especially of puritanism. Anti-popery, formulated by Foxe's *Acts and Monuments* was assessed by William Haller in positive terms as providing an English national identity, but more recent historians, in particular Peter Lake, have viewed it as the product of stress – the very real threat to the survival of Protestant England for much of Elizabeth's reign (and beyond). Lake suggests that it was also the means to cope with that stress by emphasising the 'otherness' the foreignness of the papacy, as well as its cruelty and tyranny. [23] Some, such as Jonathan Scott, have argued that the fear of Catholicism remained the motive force of political conflict until the very end of the seventeenth-century; others, such as Steven Pincus, have argued for some separation between religious belief and political action by that time. [24] A study of Lisle's religious commitment highlights distinctions between the 'godly' puritans and Independents, the importance of Protestantism and anti-popery in forming identity, and also changes in attitudes to religion over the later seventeenth century.

The third component of Lisle's career to be considered, is political ideology. Since its publication in 1978, Patrick Collinson's *The Monarchical Republic of Queen Elizabeth I,* with its analysis of the late sixteenth-century state as a monarchy with republican features, has stimulated much debate on the existence of quasi-republican institutions and republican political thought in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth

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[21] J. Morrill, *The Nature of the English Revolution* (1993), 47; C. Durston and J. Eales, *The Culture of English Puritanism 1560-1700* (Basingstoke, 1996), 4-5, 7, 21-3; G. Yule, *The Independents in the English Civil War* (Cambridge, 1958), 11-3; B. Capp, *England's Cultural Wars: Puritan Reformation and its Enemies in the Interregnum, 1649-60* (Oxford, 2012), 179, 192, 196.

[22] J. Walter, *Understanding Popular Violence in the English Revolution: the Colchester Plunderers* (Cambridge, 1999), 200.

[23] J. Coffey, Paul C. Lim (eds.), *Cambridge Companion to Puritanism* (Cambridge, 2008), 1; W. Haller, *Foxe's Book of Martyrs and the Elect Nation* (1963), 154, 224-5, 241; P. Lake, 'Anti-popery: the Structure of a Prejudice', in R. Cust and A. Hughes (eds.), *Conflict in Early Stuart England: Studies in Religion and Politics, 1603-1642* (1989), 80, 83.

[24] J. Scott, *England's Troubles: Seventeenth-century English Political Instability in European Context* (Cambridge, 2000), 29; S. Pincus, *Protestantism and Patriotism : Ideologies and the Making of English Foreign Policies, 1650-1658* (Cambridge, 1996), 447.

centuries. Peltonen has claimed a republican civic consciousness even without 'fully fledged republican theory', due to the influence of the classical humanist vocabulary.[25] For David Norbrook, the education of the time, exposing the young to texts such as Lucan's *Pharsalia*, more directly encouraged anti-monarchical and republican attitudes. Algernon himself has been placed by Blair Worden amongst the group of commonwealth 'classical republicans', whose idealism was 'fuelled' by their interest in classical antiquity. Worden detected a 'classicism of the household', a transmission of politically subversive ideas, derived principally from Tacitus, Livy and Machiavelli, handed down the Sidney generations to Algernon. Jonathan Scott has also situated the origins of Algernon's thought within the family's classical intellectual inheritance; this included the sixteenth-century contacts of the Sidney with resistance-theory monarchomachs in combination with the sceptical and relativist studies of his father as well.[26]

Such an influence is particularly relevant to Lisle's political allegiance. In a revealing comment, Thomas Bruce, earl of Ailesbury, observed of his friend, the then earl of Leicester in the late seventeenth century, that 'as to principles of government they were suitable to those of his brother deceased, Mr Algernon Sidney'. Algernon, he assessed as: 'an implacable spirit … and towards kingly government most of all', adding that his return to England after the Restoration was to 'lay the foundations for a second commonwealth'.[27] But the appearance of republican ideology in general and amongst the Sidneys themselves should not be dated earlier than the Interregnum. In an earlier study John Pocock claimed that republicanism (according to his definition of 'civic consciousness') only appeared in England after the establishment of the Commonwealth. More recently again, Johann Sommerville has concluded that the claim that there was any developed tradition of republican or neo-Roman thought before the Civil War cannot be sustained. [28] Republican writings, such as the work of

[25] P. Collinson, 'The Monarchical Republic of Queen Elizabeth I', *Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester*, lxix (1987), 394-424; M. Peltonen, *Classical Humanism and Republicanism in English Political Thought, 1570-1640* (Cambridge, 1995), 7-10.
[26] D. Norbrook, *Writing the English Republic: Poetry, Rhetoric and Politics* (Cambridge, 1999), 34-7; B. Worden, 'Classical Republicans and the Puritan Revolution', in H. Lloyd-Jones, V. Pearl and B. Worden (eds.) *History and Imagination: Essays in Honour of H.R. Trevor-Roper* (1981), 185-8, 200, 183; Scott, *English Republic*, 55-8.
[27] Ailesbury, Thomas, Earl of, *Memoirs of Thomas, Earl of Ailesbury, Written by Himself*, ed. W.E. Buckley, 2 vols. (1890), i, 342, 136.
[28] J.G.A. Pocock, *Florentine Political Thought and the Atlantic Tradition* (Princeton, 1975), 348; J. P. Sommerville, 'English and Roman Liberty in the Monarchical Republic of Early Stuart England', in J. F.

Marchamont Nedham and John Milton, appear only after the establishment of the Commonwealth and then, patently, to justify it. Algernon's writings, the *Court Maxims* of 1665 and the *Discourses* of 1681-3, belong to a later generation and were never published in his lifetime. For Alan Houston, these writings reveal that Algernon's republicanism was 'originally and essentially anti-monarchical', but this was an anti-monarchism based on a 'concept of liberty and an ideal of self-government'. Algernon prescribed no particular formula for government, but the basis of government had to be the separation of powers and the sovereignty of the people. [29] Such writings cannot safely be used as evidence for his views in the much earlier period of the Civil War. In an article of 1985, Worden has pointed to the discrepancy between Algernon's advocacy of regicide in his *Discourses* and his scruples thirty years earlier over the execution of Charles in 1649.

As Worden himself points out, republicanism was not the only conclusion to be reached from studies of classical political literature; neither Algernon's grandfather nor his father was a republican. Scott too admits that his reading did not make the second earl a rebel in the Civil War. Loyal servants of the crown from Lord Burghley to Clarendon, as well as republicans, such as Henry Neville, were also the product of classical studies. Anthony Grafton, Lisa Jardine and Ian Green, challenge Norbrook's claim of the subversive impact of classical studies, and stress that humanist-derived methods of instruction fostered above all obedience and docility, while texts, especially *De Officiis*, inculcated conformity to established authority. [30] Nevertheless it can be argued that Peltonen's classical humanist 'vocabulary' – the language of 'vita activa' and service in the 'public interest' did open up an area of potential political conflict. What if the public good is threatened by the private will of the ruler? What should be the response of the virtuous public servant? Such a distinction between the interests of the ruler and the public could legitimise opposition to the crown. But on its own it would not provoke it. The language of civic humanism might have been a necessary, but it was not a sufficient cause of Civil War.

McDiarmid (ed.), *The Monarchical Republic of Early Modern England: Essays in Response to Patrick Collinson* (Aldershot, 2007), 216.

[29] A.C. Houston, *Algernon Sidney and the Republican Heritage in England and America* (Princeton, NJ, 1991), 4, 191.

[30] B. Worden, 'The Commonwealth Kidney of Algernon Sidney', *Journal of British Studies*, xxiv (1985), 6; Scott, *English Republic*, 58; A. Grafton and L. Jardine, *From Humanism to the Humanities* (1986), 24; I. Green, *Humanism and Protestantism in Early Modern Education* (Farnham, 2009), 308.

Any explanation for the opposition of Lisle and his brother Algernon to the crown, at least up until the execution of the king, should therefore be sought elsewhere than in the legacy of classical republicanism. A possible clue can rather be located in accounts of the Sidney family itself. In the most recent history of the Sidney family, Michael Brennan has documented the family's rise over the sixteenth century from relatively obscure gentry status to wealth and fame through service at court and the cultivation of networks of family relationships. Brennan suggests that the family took inspiration from the 'carefully promulgated identity' of Sir William Sidney, who established the family fortunes at court in the early sixteenth century, as a 'warrior-courtier' demonstrating 'military prowess in the royal service'. For his services Sir William was granted Penshurst Place and estate in 1552. The marriage of his son, Sir Henry, to Lady Mary Dudley, daughter of the duke of Northumberland and sister of Robert Dudley, later Elizabethan favourite and earl of Leicester, not only related the family to the noble ancestors of the Dudleys, but placed them amongst the leading families of the court elite. Brennan's stress on the identification of family fortunes and loyalties with court service, of course, makes the political opposition from a younger generation even more surprising.[31]

But, as Jonathan Scott rightly indicates, by the end of the century, the family had a new role model, that of their most famous member, Sir Philip Sidney; his was to be the image in which subsequent generations of Sidneys were to be raised. Philip's younger brother, Robert, was his companion in the Netherlands and witness to his premature death there. Robert, later first earl of Leicester in the Sidney creation, had been urged by his father from his youth to regard Philip as his pattern in 'virtues, exercises, studies and actions'. As Sir Henry insisted, 'he hath the most rare virtues that ever I found in any man… Once again, I say, imitate him'. Philip's letters to Robert guided his education for his role in active public life along humanist lines: study history to 'note the examples of virtue and vice with their good or evil successes'; 'travel abroad to 'furnish yourself with the knowledge of such things as may be serviceable to your country'. Above all 'hold up your heart in courage and virtue'. Robert lived long enough to hand on the essence of this legacy, not just to his son, Robert, the second earl, but to his eldest grandson Philip, aged seven at the time of his death. This thesis

[31] Brennan, *Sidneys*, 2, 23, 21, 8.

will argue that it was the role model provided by Sir Philip that determined the political and religious dissidence of the younger generation.[32]

The image of that Sir Philip was still under construction during the childhood and youth of the Sidney brothers. Fulke Greville's *A Life of Sir Philip Sidney* with its defining legend of Sir Philip as chivalric knight and loyal courtier was published only in 1652. Henry Woudhuysen has pointed out that the selection of Sir Philip's works in print by 1598 – which excluded his political and religious compositions – tended to give the impression of a merely literary and secular writer. Peter Herman has also suggested that during the earlier seventeenth-century the fame of Sir Philip's writings – particularly the *Arcadia* and *Astrophel and Stella* – eclipsed the earlier reputation of his political and military career. Blair Worden, however, has argued that much of Sir Philip's political and moral thought survived in his writings, above all in *Arcadia,* Philip's most successful and widely admired work. He suggests that Sidney's purpose in writing was essentially didactic. He aimed firstly to teach 'what virtue is' and to inspire 'virtuous action'. The heroes of *Arcadia*, Pyrocles and Musidorus, have inherited the disposition to virtue and honourable actions through their blood, but also their education. On the other hand, Basilius, the ruler of *Arcadia*, untrained in virtue, is held up to criticism for his abdication of responsibilities and his retreat into retirement and solitariness. Sidney's 'virtue' according to Worden, represents not only conformity to moral principles, it is also a military gift, necessitating action in the service of the country when the ruler can no longer ensure the public good. It often conveys the sense of Machiavelli's *virtú*, valour or strength. *Arcadia* thus combines the earlier aristocratic emphasis on lineage and great deeds with the humanist concept of virtue and public service (a synthesis earlier noted by James). [33]

But, according to Worden, Sidney's second aim in the writing of *Arcadia* was to offer a veiled warning on current political and religious events. The first version (the 'Old' *Arcadia*), was his response to Elizabeth's dangerous flirtation with the possibility of marriage to the Catholic Duke of Anjou. A second version (the 'new' *Arcadia)* introduces a scheming female ruler, Cecropia (the Catholic Mary Queen of Scots) and

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[32] Scott, *English Republic*, 48-51; *Letters and Memorials of State*, ed. A. Collins, 2 vols (1746), i, 246; *The Complete Works of Sir Philip Sidney*, ed. A. Feuillerat, 4 vols (Cambridge, 1912-1926), iii, 125, 13.
[33] H.R. Woudhuysen, *Sir Philip Sidney and the Circulation of Manuscripts, 1558-1640* (Oxford, 1996), 235; P. C. Herman, ' "Bastard Children of Tyranny": the Ancient Constitution and Fulke Greville's 'A Dedication to Sir Philip Sidney', *Renaissance Quarterly*, lv (2002), 970; B. Worden, *The Sound of Virtue: Philip Sidney's Arcadia and Elizabethan Politics* (New Haven, 1996), 24, 3, 30; also James, *Society*, 387-391.

chronicles the near downfall of the heroes as they surrender to the passions of love and abandon their careers of virtuous action. Only inner fortitude and detachment from the vagaries of fortune, echoing the neo-Stoicism of Sidney's friend Justus Lipsius, provide salvation. Worden's detailed relating of *Arcadia* to the political and religious crisis of 1579-81, reveals the importance of religious allegiance for the Sidneys. Mentioned by Brennan, though not examined by him, is the identification of the Sidneys, as well as the Dudleys, with the 'true reformed religion' of Protestantism from the 1540s onwards. Though the family conformed under Mary I, Sir Philip, for many years the sole male heir to the Dudleys (as well as life-long heir to the Sidneys), was educated as a potential leader of a pan-European Protestant alliance. The palpable ambition of the two families, including that of the talented Philip himself, proved counter-productive; royal distrust withheld significant favour from the young Sidney. Only in 1585, as a member of Leicester's expedition to the Low Countries on behalf of the Dutch revolt against the forces of Catholic Spain, did Sir Philip receive a significant appointment: that of the governorship of Flushing. But within a year, he was dead of wounds received at Zutphen. His death was commemorated by national mourning and a great funeral at St Paul's. Even if the memory of his heroic end faded over the following decades from the popular imagination, for the family at least, as Scott notes, he retained an iconic status as an exemplar of intellectual and literary endeavour, valour, virtue, and, above all, the defence of international Protestantism.[34]

Sir Philip's 'defence of international Protestantism' has also been termed 'forward Protestantism', a military enterprise of the Sidney-Dudley circle to secure the advancement of the reformed religion, an activist strategy that was to be consciously upheld after Sidney's death by the second earl of Essex (who married Sidney's widow), and, according to Timothy Wilkes, recreated in the household of the young Henry, Prince of Wales, in the early seventeenth century.[35] The phrase suggests a confident taking of the initiative by the protestant leadership against catholic powers abroad. But the reality was rather an embattled defensiveness against the reviving and threatening power of counter-reformation Catholicism. Sidney's circle, Leicester, Sir Henry Sidney and Francis Walsingham (Sir Philip's father-in-law), were noted patrons of puritan writers, but there is no evidence that the Sidneys themselves demonstrated the

[34] Worden, *Sound*, 84, 173, 299, 337; Brennan, *Sidneys*, 20; Scott, *English Republic*, 48, 50-1.
[35] Worden, *Sound*, 93; T. Wilkes, *The Court Culture of Prince Henry and his Circle, 1603-1613*, unpublished D.Phil thesis (Oxford, 1988), 59.

concern for the 'godly behaviour and search for assurance of salvation' which have been seen as markers of puritan commitment. Indeed, Katherine Duncan-Jones suggests that at least for a time Sir Philip had crypto-Catholic sympathies, although under the influence of Walsingham, he developed a commitment to the intellectual French brand of Protestantism. Worden surmises convincingly that doctrinal codes of Protestantism mattered less for Sir Philip than anti-Catholicism. Given Sir Philip's own experience – he himself had been a witness and near victim of the St Bartholomew's Day Massacre in France in 1572 – and his public opposition to the Anjou match, there can be little doubt that he shared contemporary fears of popery and a corresponding anxiety for the survival of Protestantism. To rephrase Worden: there was not so much a classicism, but a Protestantism, of the Sidney household. [36]

It can be suggested that Sir Philip's religious connections offer clues to the political choices of a future generation. As noted above, the Sidney-Dudley circle in the 1570s and 1580s were patrons of puritan writers. James Phillips has described the circle's contacts with even the most forthright exponent of the citizens' right of resistance to tyrants, the Scottish George Buchanan, though he admits he was a member of the Sidney circle only 'in absentia'. According to Worden, Sir Philip himself was ready enough to advocate the legitimacy of resistance to tyrannical Catholic rulers abroad, though insistent on the need for obedience to the Protestant government at home. Faced with the threat of the Anjou marriage, however, Sir Philip seems to have conceded in *Arcadia*, if in deliberately obscure language, the right of resistance to a ruler who has become a tyrant. Glenn Burgess has downplayed the subsequent influence of puritan resistance theory into the seventeenth century as being only 'intermittent', but argues that in the ideas of Protestants generally, a 'subversive potential' remained. Such a 'subversive potential', it has been suggested, was also contained in the classical humanist language of active service for the public good. Nicholas Tyacke has recently attempted to trace the continuity of a puritan political vision hostile to Catholic tyranny from the days of the Marian exiles to the regicide. If his account fails to prove such continuity, nevertheless his linkage of religion and politics in the years preceding the outbreak of the Civil War – above all the mantra of 'popery and tyranny' (or 'arbitrary government') in the rhetoric of puritan opposition to

[36] H.R. Woudhuysen, 'Sir Philip Sidney', *ODNB* (2005); J. Spurr, 'From Puritanism to Dissent , 1660-1700' in C. Durston and J. Eales (eds.), *The Culture of English Puritanism* (Basingstoke, 1996), 255, 258; K. Duncan-Jones, *Sir Philip Sidney, Courtier Poet* (New Haven, 1991), 124-7, 251; Worden, *Sound*, 60.

the government – connects the world of Sir Philip and the defence of embattled Protestantism with that of Lord Lisle's career of parliamentary resistance to the Crown.[37]

Unfortunately no diary, commonplace book or private account written by Lisle to document his political and religious opinions survives – if they had ever existed. All the information in this thesis examining his career and its motivation has been drawn from a wide variety of other sources. The State Papers in the National Archives record Lisle's activities – his attendances and committee nominations – as a councillor of state under the Commonwealth and the Protectorate; they also record his preparations in England for his Irish Lieutenancy. None, however, records debates or lists votes taken and thus indicates his political attitudes to key issues of the Interregnum. The printed *Journals* of the House of Commons and the House of Lords list Lisle's involvement in parliamentary business, both as a member of parliament and later as a peer. From the State Papers and parliamentary *Journals* a narrative outline for much of Lisle's political career covering the period 1640 to 1660 has been constructed for the first time. This has been supplemented by the use of manuscript material in the Bodleian Library from the Carte collection on his first expedition to Ireland in 1642-3 and from the Rawlinson collection on his proposed ambassadorship to Sweden in 1653; the Clarendon collection also contains information on Lisle's activities during the Interregnum. Manuscript accounts in the British Library, such as those of Bulstrode Whitelocke, have also provided information. A range of printed material has been examined and included to complement the official records for the period 1640-1653: newsletters and journals, parliamentary diaries, private diaries, ambassadors' reports and family papers, many of which have been published by the Historical Manuscripts Commissions. All have to be treated with care; Lisle's contemporaries were not dispassionate commentators, nor necessarily well-informed. Most seriously, the period 1654-58 is notoriously lacking in private sources of inside information when Lisle, councillor of state under the Protectorate was at the height of his career. There are few clues to the inner workings of the Protectorate, and Lisle's role in it.

[37] J. E. Phillips, 'George Buchanan and the Sidney Circle', *Huntington Library Quarterly*, xii (1948), 23-55; Worden, *Sidney*, 281-2, 286-93; G. Burgess, *British Political Thought, 1500-1660* (Basingstoke, 2009), 114, 116; N. Tyacke, 'The Puritan Paradigm of English Politics, 1558-1642', *Historical Journal*, liii (2010), 529, 540.

The Sidney family papers, the 'Penshurst papers' now housed at the Kent History and Library Centre in Maidstone, have provided much material hitherto unused. The majority of the seventy surviving letters written by Lisle between 1642 and 1668 and now at Maidstone, have been printed in the sixth volume of the Historical Manuscripts Commission *Report on the Manuscripts of the Right Honourable Viscount De L'Isle*. Others have been found in the Bodleian and the British Library. Most of Lisle's letters housed at Maidstone were written between 1649 and 1651 to his father – largely to win his father's approval – and are chiefly concerned with his father's interests. They do contain much political news, but avoid private information or comment, as was to be expected of a councillor of state sworn to confidentiality. Lisle's attitude to public events, however, is occasionally conveyed and from this some impression can be formed of his attitude to the Commonwealth. Information on Lisle's personal life has been derived from the family's extensive household and personal accounts, never systematically studied. These have provided evidence for the first time of Lisle's childhood and education in the 1620s and his life in retirement in the 1670s and 1680s. They reveal in particular his enthusiastic art collecting in the latter years of his life. His art collection is also documented by an inventory of 1660 and the records of the dispersal of his art collection after his death in 1698, These latter records have never previously been examined. Other sources also used for the first time add to the picture of his cultural interests. A manuscript sonnet by Sir Charles Sedley, discovered in the Beinecke collection in Yale, indicates Lisle's literary circle in the 1670s. Two funeral eulogies – one a manuscript in the Bodleian Library – throw new light on his hospitality and patronage of poets in the years following his inheritance of the earldom. Evidence for Lisle's own acquisition of property and the bitter litigation that followed his inheritance of the earldom and family estates in 1677, however, have to be reconstructed from Exchequer papers in the National Archives and the Egerton manuscripts in the British Library. His legacies to his family are amply documented in his will.

An outline of Lisle's political and cultural career is revealed in these documents, demonstrating the values and codes of conduct of the nobility by which historians have sought to explain their successful adaptation and survival in the seventeenth century. Even if, given the limitations of the sources, Lisle's motivation will never be known for certain, the evidence suggests that, as heir to an earldom and

then holder of the title and the family estates, Lisle was concerned to act in accordance with the required roles of a nobleman, upholding traditional aristocratic values of magnificence, hospitality and kinship ties, as well as securing the financial well-being of the family. But to explain why Lisle broke with the family tradition of court service, this thesis will argue that Lisle constructed his identity primarily on that of his namesake and most famous relative, Sir Philip Sidney. In particular he identified with Sir Philip's commitment to the defence of Protestantism, which by 1641 was again reputedly under threat from 'popery and tyranny'. With the establishment of a republic, he attempted to uphold Sir Philip's advocacy of the virtuous life in active public service. If, after 1660 and the defeat of his political career, Lisle very largely retired from politics, it will be suggested that he nevertheless continued to model his identity on that of Sir Philip, protecting Protestant non-conformity in the 1660s and cultivating the cultural legacy of Sir Philip as patron of the arts and literature.

In their lifetimes, it was very largely Lisle, not Algernon, who upheld the Sidney heritage of the defence of Protestantism, political aspiration, cultural patronage and family advancement. His career, of greater interest than previously thought, has some claim to the narrative account which this study provides for the first time. This thesis aims to offer an interpretation of how a member of the seventeenth-century nobility constructed his identity; it also hopes to offer new insights into some of the historiographical issues of the period.

Chapter One

Background to the career of Philip Sidney, Lord Viscount Lisle

1. The Sidney family in the early seventeenth century

The future Lord Lisle was to inherit the values and ambitions of his great-uncle Sir Philip Sidney. They were passed on to him as a living tradition by succeeding Sidneys of the early seventeenth century who tried to follow in the footsteps of their most celebrated relative. After the death of Sir Philip at Zutphen in 1586, his younger brother, Robert Sidney (1563-1626), grandfather to the Philip Sidney, the subject of this thesis, attempted to emulate Sir Philip's career and to observe the humanist-enshrined ideal of the *vita activa.* He continued to see active service in the wars of the Netherlands fighting in defence of Protestantism, was appointed Governor of Flushing in 1589 and won renown for his part in the siege at Turnhout, 1597. He undertook diplomatic missions for the queen (one in 1589 to James VI), while following Sir Philip's instructions to continue his studies and record his findings in commonplace books. Denied advancement at court during Elizabeth's reign he found his position transformed on the accession of James I in 1603. Remembering their earlier meeting and also honouring the memory of Sir Philip, James readily dispensed favours to Robert. On his arrival in England he appointed Robert Lord Chamberlain of Queen Anne's household and raised him to the peerage as Baron Sidney of Penshurst. Two years later he created him Viscount Lisle; in 1616 a Knight of the Garter; and in 1618, earl of Leicester (the title in abeyance since the death of his uncle, Robert Dudley in 1588).

As Lord Chamberlain, Robert organised the masques that were a central feature of court entertainment and sociability. In close collaboration with the sons of his sister Mary (William Herbert, third earl of Pembroke, and Philip, later fourth earl of Pembroke), Robert and his daughter Lady Mary Wroth quickly established themselves on terms of 'friendly intimacy' with the new king and queen. Both families were prominent at important court occasions such as the creation of Henry as Prince of Wales; Robert was one of four royal commissioners who escorted Henry's sister Elizabeth to Heidelberg on her marriage to the Elector of the Palatinate. Robert's much-disliked residence at Flushing was no longer insisted upon. In any case in 1616

Flushing was handed back to the Dutch and Robert offered compensation for his loss of the position. For Brennan, by 1618 the Sidneys and Herberts had 'triumphantly reasserted their influence with the monarch of England'.[1]

Brennan, however, overstates the scale of Robert's importance and success. In spite of his high status at court, Robert never became a member of the Privy Council. James's closest attachments were to a series of favourites, including James Hay (later earl of Carlisle) and most spectacularly, James Villiers (later duke of Buckingham). Queen Anne was known to have almost no political influence over her husband and was little regarded by courtiers and supplicants for favours. The profits of office – gifts for access to the king – therefore rarely came the way of her Chamberlain. The costs of living at court worsened the already precarious finances of the family. It was estimated in 1625 that Robert's income during 1603-16 had been some £3,390 a year, but £1,600 of this had come from his governorship of Flushing which ended in 1616; the pension promised for the loss of this employment seems not to have been paid after 1618. The running costs of his family and household were estimated at £3,400 a year. But the daily expenses of court life amounted to at least another £1,100 a year, and there were expensive extras: a single suit for a masque cost Robert as much as £220. His annual fee as Lord Chamberlain amounted to a mere £100. Over the period of James's reign, Robert also faced additional expenses, chiefly for litigation and family marriages and funerals, amounting to some £40,000 in all.[2]

Rather than lose his position at court and the hopes for a lucrative position to recoup his losses, Robert chose to sell land: in all he sold £28,000 worth of land, representing an annual income of £1,480, thus diminishing his family's income and their status as landowners.[3] In spite of the idyll of country innocence as opposed to court corruption, depicted by his friend Ben Jonson in *To Penshurst* (ironically, as Ann Hughes observes, itself a production of court culture), Robert gave priority to court life, reducing his estates in the hope of royal patronage. Though he was sceptical of monarchy as a political institution, his commonplace book entries were most probably designed to instruct his sons in the ways of courts and the secrets of power, as Robert

[1] Brennan, *The Sidneys*, 114-30.
[2] BL, Add. MS 12066, Robert's finances in 'Nevitt's Memorial', fols 3r-v, 6r, 7r, 4r, 7v.
[3] BL, 'Nevitt's', fols 7r-v, Robert's marriage to the Welsh heiress Barbara Gamage, however, brought him land worth £600 a year; from 1612 onwards, he received £800 p.a. from land at Robertsbridge bequeathed him by the countess of Rutland (Sir Philip's only child and heiress). He was also promised the inheritance of the Walsingham lands of Sir Henry Sidney, a cousin, 'Nevitt's' 3r, 8r.

Shephard has indicated.[4] Rarely staying for any length of time at Penshurst, he showed little interest in building up his influence in the Kent county community. Everitt's picture of a self-contained and inward-looking Kentish gentry has long been discounted, but his assessment that the Sidneys (of whom Philip and Robert were the first generation of the family born at Penshurst), were concerned with national not county affairs – and were essentially outsiders in the community – is clearly correct.[5]

Robert Sidney (1595-1677), the only surviving son and heir of the first earl, was brought up to fulfil Sidney family aspirations unrealized in the event by his father. The younger Robert was also educated at Christ Church, Oxford, introduced at court and created a Knight of the Bath in 1610; by 1613 he was captain of a company at Flushing. He too followed Sir Philip's advice to record his reading in commonplace books. On the return of Flushing to the Dutch in 1616 he was made colonel of a regiment of English soldiers in the Netherlands. That year he made a prestigious marriage to Dorothy Percy, elder daughter of the ninth earl of Northumberland. Not only were the Percies, 'the lions of the North', among the oldest and most illustrious of the nobility, they were also related to a number of currently prominent families: James Hay (subsequently earl of Carlisle), Robert Devereux, third earl of Essex (whose mother was Sir Philip's widow), as well as the second earl of Warwick, his brother the earl of Holland and his half-brother Lord Newport. On the Sidney side cousins included the earls of Manchester and Pembroke. Robert's Percy connection, firstly with Dorothy's father, and then with her brother Algernon, was to be the closest bond of his life, paralleling that of his father with his Pembroke relatives.[6]

Though the marriage seems to have been an affectionate one at least in the early years, Dorothy and the younger Robert were an ill-matched pair. Brought up in wealth and society, the strong-willed Dorothy was, in the words of Clarendon, 'scarcely less active and tempestuous' than her sister Lucy, a great political intriguer, and had no liking for her Arcadian retreat in Kent. She was, according to her husband, 'apt enough to be melancholic' at Penshurst, missing the social life of London and the court. Surrounded by a large household and a growing family of children she tended to

[4] R. Shephard, 'The Political Commonplace Books of Sir Robert Sidney', *Sidney Journal*, xxi (2003).
[5] A. Everitt, *The Community of Kent and the Great Rebellion, 1640-60* (Leicester, 1973), 35-44.
[6] Appendices A-C.

complain of solitariness.[7] Robert, on the hand, was by temperament a retiring scholar, absorbed by his studies. Clarendon famously assessed him as 'of very great parts, very conversant in books and much addicted to the mathematics …rather a speculative rather than a practical man', noting that the disasters in his life proceeded from the 'staggering and irresolution' in his nature.[8] Robert's surviving commonplace books do not include his mathematical interests; but as Germaine Warkentin suggests, they show an attempt through the humanist method of collation and comparison of a vast range of historical, legal and biblical material to come to an understanding of 'the divine plan for human history', a rather different aim from that of his father's commonplace books. He was a man of intense Protestant piety. Although no puritan, Clarendon commented that Irish Catholics reckoned him as 'more than ordinarily averse' to their religion.[9]

Clarendon did not mention Robert's irascibility. Loathing his military career, Robert resigned from his regiment in 1623 but was no more immediately successful in forging a public one, not least perhaps because of a violent quarrel with James Hay. He then seems to have allied himself with the anti-Buckingham opposition. Only after the assassination of Buckingham in 1628 and a rapprochement with Hay was Robert, by then second earl of Leicester, again *persona grata* at court. Over the 1630s he became identified as one of the Protestant courtiers who looked to Henrietta Maria for the promotion of an active anti-Spanish foreign policy. As an indication of his renewed hopes of a court career, in 1630 he bought land in St Martin in the Fields and began to build Leicester House, the first London property to be owned by the family. Within walking distance of Whitehall, it was the largest house to be built by a nobleman in London in the early seventeenth century. Designed in the new Italianate style introduced to the court by Inigo Jones, it dramatically demonstrated the family's revived political ambitions.[10]

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[7] Edward, earl of Clarendon, *The History of the Rebellion and Civil Wars in England begun in the Year 1641,* ed. W. D. Mackray, 6 vols (Oxford, 1888), i, 434 (note); Collins, *Letters,* ii, 372; *HMC De L'Isle,* vi, 64.

[8] Clarendon, *History,* ii, 531.

[9] G. Warkentin, 'Humanism in Hard Times: the Second Earl of Leicester (1595-1677) and his Commonplace Books, 1630-60', in T. Hoenselaars and A. F. Kinney (eds), *Challenging Humanism: Essays in Honour of Dominic Baker-Smith* (Newark, Delaware, 2005), 238-246; Clarendon, *History,* i, 411.

[10] Collins, *Letters,* i, 121-7; M. F. Keeler (ed.), *Proceedings in Parliament, 1628* (New Haven, 1983), vi, 123; *CSPD, 1628-9,* 395; R. M. Smuts, 'The Puritan Followers of Henrietta Maria in the 1630s', *EHR,* xciii (1978), 27, 44-5; Greater London Council, *Survey of London, The Parish of St Anne Soho,* 2 vols (1966), ii, 441, does not, however, recognize the building's architectural distinction.

In the early years of the seventeenth century the leading Sidneys, Robert, first earl of Leicester, and Robert, the second earl, had attempted to continue the family traditions encapsulated by Sir Philip: those of military endeavour, the cause of international Protestantism and the pursuit of virtue in a career of public service. Both maintained intellectual interests: like Sir Philip, the elder Robert was also a poet and patron of writers. If both displayed a critical attitude to the defects of monarchy in their writings both, however, continued to look to the court for advancement and promotion. Clarendon noted the second earl in particular, as a man 'of honour and fidelity to the king'.[11]

2. The education of Philip Sidney, Lord Lisle

The birth of a first son in Baynard's Castle London, in 1619 to the younger Robert, sole male heir to the newly created earldom of Leicester, was an occasion for great family celebration and demonstration of pride in the Sidney name.[12] Significantly the boy was named not Robert, after his father or grandfather, but Philip, after his great-uncle, Sir Philip. The choice represented part commemoration of the family's most famous member, part aspiration that the child would live up to the legacy of his namesake. For the young Philip, there was to be little escape from his famous name: the most significant element in the construction of his noble identity was to be the perceived image of his great-uncle.

Philip's parents, as was to be expected of those of their class, were not to be directly involved in his upbringing. Within two months of his birth his father, then holding the courtesy title of Lord Lisle, travelled to Germany with his brother-in-law, Lord Hay. Lisle was to be abroad for much of the following two years.[13] At birth Philip would have been handed over to a wet-nurse and from the age of about a year he would have been cared for by nursemaids in a steadily growing nursery managed by a Nurse Friday. Already in the nursery was his older sister, Dorothy, born 1618. Two brothers, Robert and Henry, joined them in 1620 and 1621. Though both had died by the end of 1622 they were replaced in 1623 by a Lucy. She died in 1624, but a brother, Algernon

[11] Clarendon, *History*, ii, 531.
[12] Bodl., MS Tanner 74, fol. 237, Gerarde Herbert to Dr Ward, printed in G. Goodman, *The Court of King James I*, 2 vols (1839), ii, 18.
[13] KHLC, De L'Isle MS 'Philip Maret's accounts', U1475 A41/1, U1475 A41/2.

born that year, another Lucy born in 1625 and a fourth brother, Robert born in 1626, all survived till adulthood as did six more sisters. In 1641 a final brother, Henry, was born.[14]

For most of the time the nursery was based at Penshurst Place (the house had been handed over to the parents as their home by the first earl, who remained in London), but a pattern of visiting was established over the 1620s.[15] In January or February the whole family would go to London to stay for a month or so in their lodgings at Baynard's Castle, home of their Herbert cousins, the earls of Pembroke, and the family's London base until the building of Leicester House. The children would then return to Penshurst, while their parents would move on for weeks at a time to the Percy houses at Syon or Petworth. During the summer months the parents would be at home for the visits of relatives, in particular those of Lucy Hay, countess of Carlisle, and the elder Robert Sidney. In the autumn the parents might return to the Percy houses, but throughout the year they also made frequent visits to London. Unlike his father, Lisle never seems to have resided at court for any length of time; with the saving of this expense, the family finances seem to have recovered, at least partially and temporarily, over the 1620s.

All Dorothy's affection was reserved for her eldest child, also Dorothy, at least until the birth of Henry, the youngest and most handsome of her children. For Philip, she seems to have shown ambition, but little warmth. Her husband on the other hand seems to have acquired a positive dislike of his son from an early age. Possibly shy and hesitant, apparently pale and often sickly, Philip may well have represented too close a mirror-image of his father for comfort.[16] It was left to his grandfather, Robert, to provide the affection for which his parents had little time. The old earl met up with the family in London, and visited Penshurst in the summer months. Staying at Penshurst from July 1625 to the following January (to conceal his poverty-stricken state from the court), he is unlikely to have failed to have impress the young Philip - by then six and old enough to remember the gist of earnest admonition – with the need to take Sir

[14] KHLC, De L'Isle MS U1475 A41/2, 21 June, 1621 first payments to Nurse Friday; U1475 A41/3, burial of Robert, 26 July 1622, U1475 A41/4, burial of Henry, 27 December; U1475 A41/6, 16 May 1623, payments for Algernon; U1475 A41/10 reference to more children, 13 February 1625 and 30 June; U1475 A27/9, 19 September, Robert christened.

[15] KHLC, De L'Isle MSS U1475 A27/7, A27/8, A27/9, A28/1.

[16] TT, E.433 [15], M. Nedham, *Mercurius Pragmaticus, 13-20 June, 1648* 'Of the same complexion with Ananias'; BL, Add. MS 53727, fol. 54, Algernon Sidney to Bulstrode Whitelock, 'Oftimes very sickly'.

Philip, his elder brother, as his pattern in 'virtues, exercises, studies and actions' as his own father had urged.[17] Even without such advice, there was at least one other contact to remind Philip of his famous namesake: Sir Philip's widow, Frances, then countess of Clanricarde, lived until 1632 and during the younger Philip's childhood was living near Penshurst at Somerhill, Tonbridge.

In spite of their lack of warmth, the parents nevertheless took great care over the education of their eldest son, educating him to fulfil family expectations as Sir Philip Sidney's heir. On 4 July 1622, aged three, he and Dorothy, were bought primers, the first books of instruction, to learn their letters and the elements of the Christian faith. In 1624 a Mr Vale, graduate of the notably puritan Emmanuel College, Cambridge, was appointed to teach the pair reading and writing. Philip's birthday present for his seventh birthday was a bible. Aged eight, in the spring of 1627 he was sent away to boarding school, as his great-uncle Philip had been.[18] The younger Philip's school, however, was not in provincial Shrewsbury, but housed in elegant premises in Cripplegate parish, London. There the gifted Thomas Farnaby, 'the chief grammarian, rhetorician, poet, Latinist and Grecian of his day', had created the most celebrated school of the 1620s and 1630s, educating some hundreds of the sons of the nobility, gentry and London elite.[19] During the five years he was there, Philip, who acquired in 1626 the courtesy title of Lord Viscount Lisle on his father's inheritance of the earldom, would have received the education shared by all members of the upper classes. It was almost entirely based on Latin studies: first grammar and language, and then literature, the works of Cicero above all (and particularly *De Officiis),* but also Terence, Ovid and Virgil. An important text deployed in Norbrook's argument that such studies helped incite the young to rebellion is Lucan's *Pharsalia,* an edition of which was published by Farnaby himself.[20] But Farnaby was to prove staunchly royalist in the Civil War and, as Wood observed of his school, 'more churchmen and statesmen issued thence than from any other school taught by one man in England'.[21] It can be suggested that

[17] KHLC, De L'Isle MS U1475 A27/8, Leicester arrived at Penshurst 26 July and left 4 January; Collins, *Letters*, i, 246.
[18] KHLC, De L'Isle MSS U1475 A41/3; U1475 A27/7, 24 April 1624, the first reference to Mr Vale; U1475 A41/14, 11 January 1626; U1475 A41/11; U1475 A42/1, undated, 'for carrying my Lord Lisle's furniture for his chambers to Mr Farnaby's and 7 August 1627, payment of £11 5s to Farnaby for Lisle's diet, etc.
[19] A. Wood, *Athenae Oxoniensis,* new ed., 4 vols (1813-20), iii, 214.
[20] Norbrook, *Writing*, 23, 34-7.
[21] Wood, *Athenae,* iii, 214.

rather than rebellion, school would have inculcated Lisle with the importance of obedience to authority as well as a thorough grounding in the Latin language.

Lisle probably stayed at Farnaby's until his first experience of 'matters of embassies and legatine affairs'.[22] Aged thirteen, in September 1632 he and Algernon, then aged nine, were taken by their father on his first public appointment, a diplomatic mission to Christian IV, king of Denmark. The ostensible aim of the mission was to offer condolences to the king on the death of his mother, Charles I's grandmother. The reality was to investigate the possibilities of Charles obtaining legacies from his grandmother for his sister, Elizabeth, 'the Winter Queen', but more importantly securing the help of the Danish king in forming an anti-Habsburg alliance to help restore Elizabeth's family to the Palatinate. Leicester's entourage was an impressive fifty-five strong and the cost for the embassy, which lasted till the end of November, over £4,000, but other than a concession for English merchants based at Hamburg, nothing was achieved.[23] The earl privately registered his critical attitude to the Danish court in his journal. He thoroughly disapproved of Christian's pattern of life, 'to drink all day and lie with a whore at night' (noting piously, 'blessed be God that hath given England so virtuous a king'). He was irritated with delays in securing his audience, and his 'ill lodgings', and he loathed the heavy drinking at court entertainments. He pronounced Hamburg, *en route* home, as 'the dirtiest and stinkingest town that ever I came in' and disapproved of the 'papist' appearance of its Lutheran churches. Nevertheless he was well-received by the king's cousin, Duke Frederick III of Holstein-Gottorp, and honoured by the councillors of Hamburg for his '*illustre maison*'. Philip perhaps noted the latter compliment and may have been more favourably inclined; presented at court, he received a jewel from the king.[24] He possibly also welcomed the opportunity to spend time with Algernon; all the evidence suggests a close and supportive relationship between the two for at least the next twenty years.[25]

Back in England in January 1633, at the relatively young age of fourteen, but having apparently acquired sufficient competence in Latin, Lisle entered Christ Church,

[22] J. Howell, *Finetti Philoxenis* (1656), dedication to Lisle; Howell was Leicester's secretary on the embassy.
[23] R. Cant, 'The Embassy of the Earl of Leicester to Denmark in 1632', *EHR*, liv (1939), 252-262.
[24] *HMC De L'Isle*, vi, 14, 15, 26, 33, 34, 25, 30, 19, 26.
[25] There is evidence that he wrote to Algernon from Oxford in 1634, KHLC, De L'Isle MS U1500 A14/13; perhaps he viewed himself as elder brother-mentor to Algernon as Sir Philip was to Robert.

Oxford, the second Philip Sidney and the third generation of his family to study there.[26] Lisle's university education would have consisted almost entirely of reading directed by a tutor, since upper-class students were no longer required to take part in public disputations as they had been in Sir Philip's day, nor did they generally take degrees. In spite of this, Mordecai Feingold asserts that the undergraduate curriculum was shared by all students. It included logic, rhetoric, moral philosophy, civil law and mathematical science, with much emphasis on the study of history and the lessons to be learnt from it, in addition to literature and poetry. Latin, taught as a living language, was the core of instruction, but for English style, the works of Sir Philip were studied. At Christ Church, if not earlier, Lisle would have become acquainted with his namesake's *Arcadia* and its exaltation of virtuous action. Essentially humanistic in content, Feingold argues that as a whole 'the curriculum was dominated by the doctrines of Cicero and Quintilian on the formation of the wise and virtuous man who would strive for the common good', with moral philosophy in particular based on the 'Platonizing Stoic ethics of Cicero …blended with traditional Aristotelian ethics'.[27]

Almost certainly the Dean of Christ Church, Brian Duppa, would have taken particular responsibility for Lisle's progress and would have lodged Lisle in his own house (just as the Dean of Christ Church had entertained the earlier Philip), possibly tutoring him himself. Duppa, a lover of literature and poetry, acclaimed by a contemporary for 'the comeliness of his presence, the gentleness of his carriage and the variety and smoothness of his learning', was soon to be appointed tutor to the royal children.[28] But the Christ Church of the 1630s was no longer the bastion of Calvinist orthodoxy that it had been in the days of Lisle's great-uncle and grandfather. Duppa was a leading light in the Laudian reform programme at Oxford inaugurated by Laud's election as Chancellor in 1629 which prioritized the drive for order and decorum in the university and the introduction of 'the beauty of holiness' into college worship. This latter signified a shift in the dominant theology of the university from Calvinism to Arminianism, in politics parallel to, and enhancing the growth of, royal power in the years of Charles's 'personal rule'.

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[26] University of Oxford, Christ Church Archives, CCA, xiii.b.1,Caution Money Book, 1625-41:caution money of £20, was received from Lord Viscount Lisle on 12 February 1632/3, 36; Dean's Admission Book, 1546-1635, CCA, D.P.i.a.1, 'Philip Sidney, Viscount Lisle, matriculated 26 July', 1634, 191.
[27] M. Feingold, 'The Humanities', in N. Tyacke (ed.), *The History of the University of Oxford, vol. 4: Seventeenth-century Oxford* (Oxford, 1997), 217, 249, 213. 306.
[28] BL, MS Lansdowne 986, fol. 11.

For Lisle, the influence of the new royalism was inescapable, however much the church reforms challenged the 'Jacobethan' Protestantism regarded as the 'true reformed Protestantism' by the Sidneys. In the year of his arrival at Christ Church he contributed two poems in Latin to Oxford-produced volumes compiled by Duppa and commemorating royal events. The first, *Solis Britannici Perigaeum*, celebrated Charles I's return from Scotland in July 1633, the second, *Vitis Carolinæ Gemma Altera*, the birth of James, Duke of York, in October that year. Three years later, another poem of Lisle's, this time celebrating the birth of Princess Elizabeth was published in *Coronae Carolinæ Quadratura.* [29] Such volumes, demonstrating the loyalty of the academic community, served to strengthen the mutually-supportive relationship between Crown and University, 'reinforcing the royalist vision of the Caroline decade'.[30] As a mark of his social status, Lisle's contribution to the first of these, under his name of Philippus Sydney, was the fifth item out of 126 such verses and took precedence over the contributions of ten heads of Houses. His contribution to the second volume was an equally conspicuous sixth, and to the third, a still-visible twelfth. If the King failed to appreciate Lisle's Latin style and sentiments: 'Non castra Regnum, sed Thorus ampliat' (not military camps but the bridal bed fills the kingdom), he would at least have recognized the name of the author, and also assured himself of the effectiveness of the head of his college, Duppa, as an educator of the elite.[31]

On his first summer vacation from Oxford, Lisle attended the country's 'third university'. On 12 August 1633 he was admitted, as Sir Philip had been, to Gray's Inn, the most socially exclusive of the Inns, along with his brother Algernon, John Egerton, Viscount Brackley, son of the earl of Bridgewater, President of the Council of Wales, Thomas Egerton, John's younger brother, George Carey, son of the Earl of Dover, and Richard Lennard, son of the late Lord Dacre. The arrival on the same day of such a group suggests pre-arrangement with a tutor to provide them with an introduction into the legal system, a popular short course for members of the landowning classes.[32] It could also have been that a request from Lisle for the appropriate company he found

[29] *Solis Britannici Perigaeum, sive, Itineratis Caroli auspicatissima Periodus* (Oxford, 1633); *Vitis Carolinæ Gemma Altera* (Oxford, 1633); *Coronae Carolinæ Quadratura* (Oxford, 1636).
[30] R.A. Anselment, 'The Oxford University Poets and Caroline Panegyric', *John Donne Journal,* iii, (1984), 187.
[31] *Coronae Carolinæ;* Christ Church, was prominent for the size of its contributions in the first volume, which was compiled by Duppa; there were some twenty-seven in all, in addition to Lisle's.
[32] J. Foster (ed.), *The Register of Admissions to Gray's Inn, 1521-1887* (1889), 201; Lisle was presumably back again in Oxford by October when the first volume of celebratory verses was prepared.

lacking in Christ Church, and a chance to see Algernon again, prompted the arrangement. [33]

In May 1636 Lisle's education at Christ Church finished when he and Algernon joined their father on a second diplomatic mission. This time the earl was appointed ambassador extraordinary to Louis XIII, king of France. The aim of the embassy was much the same as the first: to secure by diplomatic means the restitution of Charles' nephew to the Palatinate. The end result, after five years of negotiation, was similarly fruitless. At the same time, Leicester unwisely undermined his position at home by his instant rivalry with, and contempt for, his colleague, the resident ambassador, John, Lord Scudamore, a loyal protégé of Laud. Leicester also conspicuously absented himself from the English chapel in Paris, attending instead the Huguenot church at Charenton. In spite of the friction, the lavishly funded earl – Leicester was promised £7,700 for his first year in Paris – and his sons must have enjoyed their lodgings in the sumptuous residence of the Hotel des Ambassadors and the splendours of the French court. In Paris they became acquainted not only with the royal family, but also the leading members of the French nobility, particularly the Huguenot aristocracy. Lisle's mother's hopes were raised when she heard in March 1637 that Madam de Rohan, the greatest Protestant heiress in France, had looked much at Lisle 'as if she liked him well'. 'I pray let Philip take courage and try his fortune', she urged, though nothing more came of this.[34]

It seems, however, that Lisle spent the greater part of his years in France not in Paris but in Saumur, where he arrived probably in August 1636. Saumur, with its privileged Huguenot fortifications, was a symbol of Protestant resistance to an encroaching Catholic absolutist monarchy. The town was also in a sense, Sidney territory, since at the end of the sixteenth century Philippe du Plessis Mornay, the great friend of the earlier Philip, had founded there a celebrated Protestant Academy for the training of pastors. If Lisle attended the theological academy, he would probably have also spent time at the riding academy, similarly founded by du Plessis Mornay in 1613 to provide the courtly and military skills required by the young nobility. Such fashionable academies taught the 'exercises' of riding the great horse, fencing and dancing, to inculcate the 'natural grace', the bodily control introduced by Italian courtly

[33] According to the Dean's Admission Book, only one other member of the nobility (who would have been considered a suitable friend for Lisle), Lord Lovelace, was admitted to Christ Church in 1633.
[34] Atherton, *Ambition*, 188-9, 192; Collins, *Letters*, ii, 472.

ethics as the mark of the true aristocrat. Lisle should have become fluent in French during his stay in the town, and would certainly have made the acquaintance of the English upper-class young as they passed through Saumur on the first stage of their 'grand tour'. [35]

But for Lisle there is no evidence that a grand tour was planned for him. In December 1638 his mother, who remained at Penshurst, wrote complainingly to her husband that

> It troubles me that he [Lisle] lives so long in a country town where nothing can be learnt. If you will neither suffer him at Paris nor send him into England, I wish he might go to Italy that his time may not be so lost as I fear it is in that obscure place.[36]

There is no clue at all to Lisle's whereabouts the following year and by early 1640 he was back in Paris. The *Giro d'Italia* was customarily undertaken from early summer one year to summer the following year, leaving Lisle little time for such a journey, though James Howell later indicated the possibility of a tour within a single calendar year. All three of Lisle's younger brothers are recorded as visiting Rome and it would seem unlikely that Lisle was deprived of the experience, given the care taken of his earlier education, but there is no record of such a tour.[37]

Whatever his travels during the previous year, by 1640, aged 21, Lisle was back in Paris, preparing to return to England. His formal education and preparation for his role in life had come to an end. All his training had been designed to fit him for the humanist goal of the virtuous life in the service of his prince. He had received the education of a Sidney: an intensive academic education in humanist studies, an introduction to courts and public service, an experience of foreign travel and instruction in the social graces expected of a courtier. Apart from his years at Oxford when he had been exposed to the Laudianism favoured by the crown, he had been brought up in the traditional Protestantism of the Sidneys: non-doctrinaire 'Jacobethan' Calvinism, by no means puritanical, but resolutely anti-Catholic. In France he had encountered a growing threat to Protestantism, with the defence of which his famous namesake was identified.

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[35] M. Motley, *Becoming a French Aristocrat: the Education of the Court Nobility, 1580-1717* (Princeton, 1990), 127, note 9, 123; J. Stoye, *English Travellers Abroad, 1604-1667*, rev. ed. (New Haven, 1989), 290, 292.
[36] *HMC De L'Isle*, vi, 154.
[37] Stoye, *English Travellers*, 123-133; H. Maddicott 'A Collection of the Interregnum Period', *Journal of the History of Collections*, xi (1999), 19, note 17.

Throughout his early life his famous name must have been universally recognized and the expectations of his family reinforced by the reception he encountered from others.

3. First steps in a career, 1640-2

Within two years of Lisle's return to England in 1640, preparations for a civil war were under way. Assessment of the situation in the country in 1640 has been the subject of major historiographical controversy for generations. One of the most influential works of recent decades on the coming of the English Civil War has been that of Conrad Russell's *The Fall of the British Monarchies, 1637-1642*. Following the approach of 'revisionist' historians such as John Morrill and Kevin Sharpe, Russell challenged the determinist view of an earlier generation of Whig or Marxist historians that the Civil War was inevitable. He denied that discontent in England in 1640, or even eighteen months later, was at critical levels. The crisis, when it came, evolved from the structural defects of the Stuart monarchy: the instability inherent in a 'multiple-monarchy' comprising three nations, England, Scotland and Ireland, each with a different religious settlement. David Smith, however, has more convincingly placed the origins of the collapse of royal authority primarily on Charles's choices of policies – in particular his religious reforms and decision to crush the Covenanters by force – and his authoritarian style of government, rather than the institutional stresses inherent in a multiple-monarchy.[38] Morrill, explaining his earlier claim that the Civil Wars were the 'last of the wars of religion', has stressed the passionate and widespread belief in a Popish plot to overthrow church and state from within, and claimed that it was the force of religion rather than political considerations that drove minorities to fight. Ian Gentles has also argued emphatically for the motivating force of religion. Jonathan Scott has seen the concerns of Parliament in 1640-2 as 'fundamentally religious', claiming that the legitimating power of religion made rebellion possible. But he notes that the civil war was caused by an intertwined fear that Protestantism and parliament were under threat from popery and arbitrary government. Michael Braddick similarly notes the connections made at the time between popish religion and tyranny.[39]

[38] C. Russell, *The Fall of the British Monarchies, 1637-1642* (Oxford, 1991), 27-8; D.L. Smith, *A History of the Modern British Isles, 1603-1707: the Double Crown* (Oxford 1998), 103-4.
[39] J. Morrill, *The Nature of the English Revolution: Essays* (1993), 62-3, 47; C. W.A. Prior, G. Burgess (eds), *England's Wars of Religion Revisited* (Farnham, 2011); I. Gentles, *English Revolution and the*

For John Adamson in *The Noble Revolt* the inner-core of opposition peers – Bedford, Warwick, Essex, Hertford, Mandeville and Saye – were determined on redefining the powers of the monarchy to ensure the 'liberties' of the subject. Religion was of central concern, but their primary goal was political, the destruction of the prerogative powers of the monarchy, and the creation of an 'aristocratic monarchy' in order to advance the cause of reformed Protestantism. Adamson undoubtedly reveals the importance of puritan (in the sense of the 'godly' minority) noble leadership in organizing political opposition to the crown. But, as noted above, John Walter has also revealed the extent of resistance to Laudian innovation and fear of popery at a popular level. Earlier studies have established the profound influence of anti-popery and very real fears of a Popish plot in the early seventeenth century.[40] Religious motivation can thus been taken to be a major factor in the coming of Civil War, and anti-popery a powerful component of that factor, but religious and political concerns should be seen as intertwined and inseparable.

Even before his twenty-first birthday and while still in France (or even Italy), Lisle was to be drawn into the growing political crisis. In December 1639 Sir Thomas Wentworth, Lord Deputy for Ireland and Laud's closest colleague in the development of the 'Personal Rule', suggested to Lucy, Countess of Carlisle, that her nephew Lisle should be colonel of a regiment of 500 horse in the army being formed for the second 'Bishop's war' against the Scots. The suggestion was perhaps made to win favour with Lucy, or her brother, Algernon, earl of Northumberland, the Lord Admiral – and no friend of Laud – in order to secure the co-operation of the Percy-Sidney family connection. Algernon, however, was cool in his reaction, perhaps aware of the political implications of the proposal. He warned Leicester in Paris that this would cost probably £600-£800 above the allowance offered, and suggested instead that Lisle could have the command of a troop of horse in the Dutch service. As a third option, Northumberland proposed that Lisle could have the command of the two troops of his own horse guards. Given the worsening state of his finances with the allowance for his embassy in arrears, Leicester agreed to the third and by the end of February Northumberland, newly appointed general of the army for the north, was urging Lisle's rapid return to England

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Wars in the Three Kingdoms, 1638-1652 (Harlow, 2007), 135-140; J. Scott, *England's Troubles: Seventeenth-century English Political Instability in European Context* (Cambridge, 2000), 89-94; M. Braddick, *God's Fury, England's Fire: a New History of the Civil War* (2008), 35, 47, 79.

[40] Adamson, *The Noble Revolt*, 70-2, 505, 508, 510; Walter, *Understanding*, 199-200, above, 20, Lake, 'Anti-popery'; and C. Hibbard, *Charles I and the Popish Plot* (Chapel Hill, 1983).

to take up his command.[41] At the same time it seems that Northumberland launched Lisle's political career. In the elections for the parliament that met on 13 April to provide money for the northern campaign, Lisle was returned as member for Yarmouth, Isle of Wight. This was a tiny borough with which the Sidneys had no connection, and which Lisle apparently never visited, but one whose electors were under the direction of Northumberland in his capacity as Lord Admiral.[42]

Not until 10 May, however, did Lisle return to England, by which time the Short Parliament had been acrimoniously dissolved without voting supplies. With most of his family – his parents, two younger brothers, three eldest sisters and his new brother-in-law, Lord Spencer – by this stage in Paris, it was left to the Percies to look after Lisle on his homecoming. His welcome was assured enough from all three of his mother's siblings, not least because none had a son of their own. For Northumberland, his eldest nephew was of particular importance. Northumberland wrote to his parents promising 'we shall be as little asunder as my occupations will permit'. His younger brother Henry, wrote of the 'inclinations and reasons I have both to counsel and love him' while Lucy declared to her sister that 'we shall see my Lord Lisle shortly which I joy me, not only as being yours, but from a particular inclination to his person'.[43] Early impressions were highly complimentary. Northumberland informed his father that, 'though he have little employment in this town, yet am I confident there is no danger of his misspending his time in any place for I never saw a young man freer from indiscretion or vice than I believe him to be'. For Lucy, 'I am every day more pleased with him …I never heard word of him since his coming hither but extremely to his advantage'. For their part the Percies kept their word: Northumberland was described as being 'very careful' of his nephew, providing Lisle with lodgings in Lord Conway's house in Queen Street next to his own town house. Lady Carlisle and Henry Percy also looked after Lisle, taking him in late May to the court then at Greenwich.[44]

Given that he had been abroad for the last four years, and arrived home to be chaperoned by his mother's family, Lisle had probably little exposure to the political tensions in the country at large. As Northumberland put it, 'his long absence hath made him a stranger here'. How much Lisle would have learnt from his uncle of what

[41] Collins, *Letters*, ii, 623-4, 628, 635, 637-8.
[42] M. A. Kishlansky, *Parliamentary Selection: Social and Political Choice in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 1986), 110.
[43] Collins, *Letters*, ii, 654; *HMC De L'Isle*, vi, 265, 234.
[44] *HMC De L'Isle*, vi, 270, 271, 320, 256-7, 275.

Northumberland described as 'broken times when the kingdom in general is infinitely discontented' is unknown. Adamson suggests that, even apart from the general grievances of the political nation, militant Protestants such as Northumberland and Leicester would have regarded a war with Scottish fellow Protestants as 'profoundly frustrating'.[45] However, Leicester's letters to Northumberland suggest uncompromising support for the war. The Scottish rebels, he wrote, were 'so presumptuous in their wickedness' that, 'they lift up their hands against his Anointed'. They were also 'stark mad … or that they think it a fine thing to live in a republic'. In September 1640 Leicester was proudly proclaiming that 'he had one son in the King's army and would have more if they could bear arms'.[46] The chance of 'great deeds' and 'virtuous action' in military service for the crown – in the Sidney family tradition – as advocated by his father, must have been a powerful influence on Lisle. Leicester's disapproval of the Scots was also echoed by Northumberland's hereditary contempt for that 'beggarly nation' 'whose insolences and disorders … are now greater than ever'. All the same, increasingly detached from the court, Northumberland was fearful that leading the army against them would 'utterly ruin' his reputation in England – at least among the 'godly'. He made clear in the Privy Council his objection to any attempt to wage war without resources: 'what will the world judge of us abroad to see us enter into such an action as this is not knowing how to maintain it for one month?' Disapproving of Charles's policy, his letters over the summer became ever gloomier; the mutinous soldiers being sent north were readier to draw their swords against their own officers than fight the Scots, he told Leicester.[47]

It was perhaps out of a desire to protect Lisle from such an unstable situation that Northumberland insisted that Lisle remain with him in London in mid-June when the order was issued for officers to join their companies. Nevertheless, Lisle seems to have been eager to start out. According to the family's man-of-affairs in London, William Hawkins, he 'hastened to be gone', but had to obey his uncle who claimed to be doubtful of any action that year. But the situation changed drastically in early August as news came in of the Scots crossing the border into England on the suspected encouragement of their English friends, Warwick, Bedford, Saye and Brooke. Northumberland was preparing for his rapid departure when on 10 August he fell ill.

[45] Collins, *Letters*, ii, 654; Adamson, *Noble Revolt*, 38 (note).
[46] Collins, *Letters*, ii, 659, 646; *CSPD, 1640-1*, 97-8.
[47] Collins, *Letters*, ii, 614; *HMC 8th Report*, ii, 56; Collins, *Letters*, ii, 652; *HMC De L'Isle*, vi, 285.

Lisle therefore had to journey north to collect his troops without his uncle, attaching himself to the party travelling with the secretary, Sir Henry Vane, senior. As a special favour Charles agreed to Northumberland's request that he would use Lisle's two troops of horse as his own horse guards, and allow Lisle to command them – a signal honour for a young man of twenty-one with no military experience. [48]

What happened to Lisle in the north is sketchily recorded. On 28 August the Scottish army forded the Tyne at Newburn and there routed an out-numbered and ill-provisioned English force. The following day the Scots took Newcastle. The battle of Newburn was a major humiliation for the army and a catastrophe for the King whose political opponents in England now had allies entrenched in the north of the kingdom. According to Hawkins, writing a few days later, Lisle had possibly reached Newcastle before the battle, but, he wrote to Leicester, he was assured Lisle was not at 'the skirmish'. It seems likely that he was misinformed. Three weeks later Northumberland wrote to Leicester that Lisle had arrived in the north ahead of his troop (presumably left behind at York in Lisle's concern to reach the scene of action), and he '*pour chercher l'occasion* put himself into Sir Richard Grenville's troop where he acquitted himself very handsomely'. Since Sir Richard Grenville was praised for his bravery at Newburn, this strongly suggests that Lisle, eager for action, had in fact taken part as a volunteer in the battle under Sir Richard, a distant relative. Northumberland perhaps preferred not to mention the name of this 'infamous, irreparable rout', in connection with his nephew.[49] But, even if he had failed, it seems that Lisle had at least attempted to acquire honour through Sir Philip's style of 'great deeds' and 'virtuous action'.

A week or so later, however, Lisle was safely based at York and in high-profile service of the king. On 25 September William Hawkins reported that Lisle attended the king with his troops of guards in the field in the early morning and waited on him at council meetings. On 1 October Hawkins wrote that at the council Lisle 'with his majesty sitting, his lordship waited on his chair where he missed not any one meeting of the council'. But the opportunity of honour through proximity to the king did not go uncontested. Henry Percy brought to York a company of a hundred cuirassiers formed at his own expense, to rival that under Lisle's command; the earl of Crawford formed another. On 24 September Northumberland warned Leicester that there was likely to be some dispute over the competing claims of the forces. A month later Hawkins reported

[48] *HMC De L'Isle*, vi, 286, 314-5, 329.
[49] *HMC De L'Isle*, vi, 323, 329; *HMC Various Collections*, ii, 256-7.

rumours of a duel fought between Lisle and Percy over the precedence of their regiments; if true, this is the one recorded example of self-assertive violence in defence of his honour displayed by Lisle. But in spite of such friction, as Adamson points out, many of the officers of the army were unsympathetic to the opposition to Charles and particularly the petition of twelve peers for the recall of parliament. At least half the army, including possibly Lisle himself, were keen to resume the war to avenge the humiliation at Newburn. With his attendance at council meetings Lisle would have heard of the King's view of those peers and their clients who had committed treason by inviting the Scots to invade. [50] Given his privileged position, it would seem likely that at this point his sympathies were with the king's cause.

Possibly not until his return to London for the recall of parliament on 3 November, did Lisle encounter a wider section of public opinion. Lisle, perhaps significantly, had been returned for two boroughs at the election, presumably as a safeguard against the unpopularity of perceived court-party candidates. When Parliament met, he opted to keep his former seat of Yarmouth, but renounced that for St Ives, a small borough secured him by the Godolphin family (distant cousins of the Sidneys); this seat was reallocated to the poet friend of the Sidneys, Edmund Waller. Lisle was to be as assiduous in his attendance at the debates as he had been at the Council in York. Hawkins reported to Paris two days after the opening of parliament that Lisle was at the back of the king's chair, a privilege reserved for heirs of the nobility, when the speaker was presented. A week later he wrote that Lisle was 'a constant man in the house and a just observer of all passages', and later again that Lisle attended the Lower House with 'great diligence where his Lordship heareth as high speeches as hath been made in many years past'.[51]

What was Lisle's response to these 'high speeches' – amongst which Hawkins had in mind the impeachment of Wentworth (now earl of Strafford), criticism of recently issued canons of the Church, and the attack on Ship Money? Given his absence abroad from 1636-40, Lisle hardly shared the grievances of the majority against Ship Money and the other prerogative impositions of the 'Personal rule'. Hawkins's comment as Strafford was sent to the Tower, that 'his integrity will be his best defence', expressed a cautiously sympathetic view of the Lord Deputy and one

[50] *HMC De L'Isle*, vi, 330, 330-1, 329, 335; Adamson, *Noble*, 86-7.
[51] *CJ*, ii, 25; M. F. Keeler, *The Long Parliament, 1640-1: a Biographical Study of its Members* (Philadelphia, 1954), 250; *HMC De L'Isle*, vi, 339, 341, 344.

apparently shared by the whole family. Early the following year Sir John Temple, a devoted Sidney client (his father had been Sir Philip's secretary), wrote of 'the great hopes we are now in', that Strafford would clear himself of the treason charges. Temple also complained of the 'animosities and distractions in the Lower House', again perhaps reflecting Lisle's own opinion. According to Adamson, the opposition leadership of Warwick and Bedford were attempting by the end of 1640 to force their way to office and power, but it is clear that from early November Lisle's Percy relatives – by no means identified with the opposition at this point – had been angling for his father's promotion to one of the vacant offices of state from within the court and through their friendship with the Queen.

At this time Lisle must have seen his best interests as more closely linked to favour from the court than to the opposition in parliament. Indeed he had cause for unease on occasion with the mood of the Commons. On 28 January, 1641, in perhaps his first speech in the House, Lisle had to defend his father against the accusation of treachery to parliament for his reception in Paris of the disgraced Secretary Windebank. It was a speech which, the ever-supportive Hawkins wrote, 'gave good satisfaction'. But it cannot have been a comfortable occasion for Lisle. An equal cause for concern was revealed on 4 March when Sir John Temple warned Leicester that Sir John Clotworthy (brother-in-law of Pym and leading member of the 'godly' faction in the Commons), had indicated to him that Leicester was not puritan enough. In the same letter, Temple 'extremely' commended Lisle to his father for his discretion in removing pictures from Penshurst, following the order of the Commons on 23 January 1641 for the removal of all images from places of worship. 'As the times are now … if those pictures had remained where they were …it would have been in any one['s] power to have done [Leicester] an affront'. Temple added pointedly, 'so your Lordship must, in this, needs acknowledge that he hath carried himself with great wisdom… as he doth in all things …I find him not to be paralleled by any of his age and quality in this court'.[52]

Lisle was not one of the fifty-nine members who voted against Strafford's Attainder Bill on 21 April, but as Russell concludes, 'this was more than a party vote', given that many of the pro-Attainder voters included future stalwart royalists. On 3 May following the discovery of the Army Plot to seize the Tower and rescue Strafford, Philip Sidney, Lord Lisle, was listed as taking the oath of Protestation to defend the

[52] *HMC De L'Isle*, vi, 371, 388-9; Adamson, *Noble Revolt*, 149-50.

'true, reformed Protestant religion' together with the privileges of parliament and the rights and liberties of subjects. Even more than the attainder vote, the Protestation oath was not especially indicative of loyalties; it was one taken by all attending members of the House. The names listed in conjunction with Lisle's suggest the company he was keeping at the time: Edmund Waller, Sydney Godolphin, Sir John Alford (Northumberland client and Sussex landowner) and Sir Charles Williams. With the exception of Sir John Alford, all were future royalists, but for the moment prepared to see the dismantling of the prerogative powers of the monarchy. The network of family connections was perhaps the strongest link between the five; this was certainly a group which did not represent the 'Godly' opposition interest. [53]

Other evidence suggests Lisle's continued ties to the court. On 5 May, three days after the failure of the plot to seize the Tower, a royal warrant named Lisle, together with Sir John Alford and Hugh Potter, Northumberland's solicitor and agent, as feoffees in a trust to receive a crown annuity recently granted to Henry Percy (clearly a reward for his clandestine activities). Russell suggests plausibly that the trust was a device set up by the King to protect Percy's income in the event of a subsequent treason trial. Perhaps all three feoffees were chosen for their close connection with the Percies, but it is also possible that Lisle was selected by the king for his perceived loyalty. Indeed, although, according to Adamson, the Army Plot and the warning it gave of the King's determination to destroy opposition resulted in growing bitterness and polarization of opinion, Lisle himself still had reason to regard the court with some favour. Following the execution of Strafford in May, Leicester was appointed to the Lord Lieutenantship of Ireland, an appointment finalized in June. Although Adamson implies that this appointment was one of a number imposed on the King between May and September by the opposition peers – in this case by Northumberland, now publicly in the opposition camp – the evidence suggests rather that it was granted by the King at the request of the Queen on the solicitation of her favourite Henry Jermyn, himself importuned (and possibly bribed) by Temple. According to Clarendon, the appointment had been agreed willingly enough even before Strafford's execution, the king being 'assured' of Leicester's loyalty. Parliament accordingly was more critical, distrusting Leicester for his Strafford connections. The Sidneys, for their part, were delighted; the appointment was reckoned to be worth £8,000 a year, in addition to the profits of

[53] Russell, *Fall*, 291; *CJ*, ii, 133;

office. Dorothy Sidney congratulated her husband, 'You are now in a fair way of doing much good both in publick affairs and in your private fortune, if you will serve him [the king] with all your heart who has blessed you in so great proportion'.[54]

Lisle himself had every reason to continue to identify with the court. In July he sent his servant Robert Turbridge to Ireland to pay £300 for the letters patent recognizing his father's new position.[55] On 3 August, as Charles prepared to journey to Scotland to attempt – as was generally feared – to form a royalist party there to use against the opposition at home, Lisle was given leave of the House to go to the army 'on the motion of E[dmund] Waller'. Was this journey just a formality to arrange the disbandment of his troop, or was Lisle preparing to help the king in a feared counter-revolution? Though the latter never materialised, Waller by then was moving from opposition to prerogative monarchy to opposition to 'innovation'. At the very least, Waller's nomination of Lisle suggests some common bond of dislike of the anti-court party between them. [56]

Meanwhile Leicester had delayed taking up his position in Ireland, only returning to London from France with his family on 5 October. But on 31 October, shattering news arrived in England of what was described as a general rebellion and intent to massacre all the Protestants in Ireland. Robert Armstrong has argued that the imperative to crush the Catholic Irish rising was integral to parliament's 'self-perception as guardian of the national interest', but there can be little doubt that the response to the Irish crisis always took second place to the struggle for power in London.[57] Both crown and parliament were determined to ensure control of any army formed to crush the rising. On 2 November a joint Lords-Commons standing Committee for the affairs of Ireland was set up, consisting of twenty-six Lords and twice that number of Commons (to ensure that the opposition-dominated Commons could always out-vote the royalist majority of the Lords), which was to meet on a daily

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[54] C. Russell, 'The First Army Plot of 1641', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, fifth series, xxxviii (1988), 98; *CSPD*, 1640-1, 588; Adamson, *Noble*, 341; *HMC De L'Isle* vi, 394, 397, 400-401, 403; Clarendon, *History*, ii, 489.

[55] BL, Add. MS 46925, fol. 94; Robert Turbridge 'gentleman' was to serve Lisle for the next ten years or so. Why Lisle chose him is unknown, but Turbridge had links to the Sidney-Dudley connection; his grandfather, or other near relative, was Robert Turbridge, a Denbighshire J.P. in the time of Sir Henry Sidney's Presidency of the Council of Wales and a leading agent in Wales of Robert Dudley, earl of Leicester.

[56] BL, Harley MS 479 fol. 120, the diary of John More, reference taken from the History of Parliament Trust, unpublished article on 'Sidney, Philip, Viscount Lisle'. I am very grateful to the History of Parliament Trust for allowing me to see this article in draft; W. Chernaik, 'Edmund Waller', *ODNB.*

[57] R.M. Armstrong, *Protestant Ireland and the English Parliament, 1641-7*, unpublished Ph.D thesis, Dublin University (1995), 301.

basis to direct policy towards Ireland. Other Commons' measures – for instance a bill to recruit troops by impressment (to avoid the need for disbanded royalist 'reformadoes') – were blocked by the Lords throughout November and early December, while the Commons, in spite of initial eagerness for action, failed as usual to provide anything like adequate funding for the proposed force.

To add to the political impasse, Leicester himself showed little enthusiasm for the venture. With the king still absent in Scotland, he was unwilling to act without royal authority. Required on 1 and 4 November and on a number of occasions over the following months to go to Ireland immediately, he made no attempt to do so. On 13 November he 'made doubt' as to the feasibility of a winter expedition; found £3,000 on 16 December to raise his regiment of 1,500 foot, by the following day he had refused to do so. However, in spite of all the difficulties, including the breakdown of relations between king and parliament after Charles's abortive attempt on 4 January to arrest five leading opposition members of the Commons, troops were raised and the first regiment of foot, Sir Simon Harcourt's, arrived in Ireland on the last day of 1641. Writing on 4 April to Ormond (Lieutenant-General of the Army in Ireland), Leicester assured him of the greater availability of money for supplies, thanks to the passing of the Act of Adventurers for Ireland in February, but said nothing about his own arrival in the country.[58]

From the start of the crisis and for the first time, Lisle began to play an active role in the Commons, largely as intermediary between the House and his father. He was nominated to the 2 November committee for the affairs of Ireland, his first committee nomination; on 28 December he promised the House that his father would go to Ireland once provided with 'necessaries' for the journey. On 31 December he replied to Sir John Hotham and Oliver Cromwell that his father would obey the command of the House in offering commissions to their nominees; 26 January and 2 February, 1642, he conveyed to his father further instructions from the Commons for the nomination of officers. On 24 January he fiercely responded to Thomas Tomkins' accusation that delays in relieving Ireland were the fault of the Lord Lieutenant and that he should be dismissed. During this period Lisle was also reactivating his military career. On 11 November, his name was reportedly one of the first to be considered for command in

[58] *CJ*, ii, 301; *LJ*, iv, 476,481; *CJ*, ii, 301,305, *CSPD, 1641-3*, 164, *The Journal of Sir Simonds D'Ewes from the First Recess of the Long Parliament to the King's Withdrawal from London*, ed. W.H. Coates (Hamden, 1970), 132, 301, 307; Bodl., MS Carte 2, 382, 3, 42.

the army for Ireland by the Houses determined to appoint their own officers for the service – an indication of his acceptability to the opposition leadership. The following month commissions were issued for his regiment, one of the two horse regiments of the army, the other under his former commander at Newburn, Sir Richard Grenville. Given the rank of Lieutenant-General of the Horse on the recommendation of the Commons, 'though very young', according to Edmund Borlase, Lisle finally left London on 5 April and helped to organise the transportation of some 700 horse troops from Chester to Dublin by 19 April.[59]

At some date in perhaps April 1642, a pamphlet was published, calling enthusiastically for 'An Armie for Ireland conducted by the Lord Lithe [*sic*], son to the right Honourable the Lord Licester [*sic*]', but also warning of the dangers of treachery at home, 'as we have a serpent abroad, so we have a snake at home'. By early that year it seems that Lisle was identified with the opposition. The day after Charles's attempt to arrest the Five Members, Lisle proposed in a defiant House reassembled in the Guildhall that the Commons should be allowed to issue money for the Irish army; two days later, acting as a select committee, the Commons voted £2,000 for troops already at Chester. On 14 February Lisle took a message from the Commons to the Lords thanking the King for assenting to two bills: the one for impressment for the Irish army, the other for the disabling of the bishops in the Lords – the latter a vital opposition demand to destroy the royalist majority in the Lords. As a mark of favour, just before Lisle's departure for Ireland, Pym requested Lisle be allowed to keep his seat in the House during his absence and in May when news of Lisle's first success arrived, Pym proposed that a formal letter of congratulations be sent him.[60]

When and why had Lisle joined the parliamentary opposition? It is possible that he was following the lead of his Percy relatives. Clarendon reckoned that Northumberland had publically defected from the crown by June 1641, while the countess of Carlisle had reputedly become an enthusiastic supporter of Pym's by the late summer. Certainly by late 1641 Lisle's mother was entertaining opposition leaders, a remarkable reversal of her court allegiance earlier that year. According to Clarendon,

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[59] *CJ*, ii, 302, D'Ewes, *Journal*, 353; *CJ*, ii, 365, 398, 411; *The Private Journals of the Long Parliament* ed. W.H. Coates, A.S. Young, V.F. Snow, 3 vols (New Haven, 1982-92), i, 156; *CSPD, 1641-3*, 164; *HMC De L'Isle*, vi, 419, E. Borlase, *The History of the Irish Rebellion* (Dublin, 1743), 102, TT, E.145[12], *True Intelligence from Ireland, 25 April* [1642], 5.

[60] TT, E.131[11], *An Armie for Ireland conducted by the Lord Lithe, Son to the Right Honourable the Lord Licester* [1642], 3; D'Ewes, *Journal*, 386, 392; *CJ*, ii, 430; *CJ*, ii, 507, *Private Journals*, Coates, ii, 118, 317.

during that winter she 'drew the principal persons who were most obnoxious to the court and to whom the court was most obnoxious, to a constant conversation at Leicester House, where all freedom of discourse was used of all things and all persons'. Her guests included her cousins, Essex and Holland, perhaps Warwick, and possibly her sister's new friend Pym, as well.

Clarendon also notes, however, and no doubt accurately, that the Leicester House 'freedom of discourse' was 'not agreeable to the earl's nature or his prudence'. Lisle may well have shared his father's instinctive response – at least for a time. If by early 1642 Lisle was nevertheless working with the opposition, it can be suggested that events over the winter were decisive in his shift away from the court: perhaps the suspicion of Charles's attempt in the 'Incident' in Scotland to seize and reputedly murder the leading Scottish opposition nobles, Hamilton and Argyll; perhaps the drawing up of the Grand Remonstrance on 8 November with its accusation of a popish plot to subvert religion and liberty; and finally Charles's attempt to seize five members from the Commons with an armed force. A story of an improbable plot to poison four earls at their dinner – Leicester, Northumberland, Essex and Holland 'with some other great personages' – by a Frenchman 'of the Popish faction' at Leicester House on 11 January 1642, gives some indication of the paranoid mood of the Sidneys and their circle, not to mention much of the country, at the time.[61]

But of the developments of the time, it can be argued that the Irish rebellion must have had the greatest impact on Lisle; only after its outbreak did his parliamentary activities, hitherto negligible, become conspicuous in the record. The news of the Irish rebellion and the accounts of atrocities reputedly perpetrated in Ireland by Catholics in the rising there horrified the English. Apparently corroborated by Phelim O'Neill's claims on 4 November to have a commission from the king, Pym's warnings of the threat from popery seemed by many to have been confirmed beyond doubt. These were intensified by outpourings from a press skilfully manipulated by the opposition, as Jason Peacey has pointed out.[62] For the Sidneys, the Irish rebellion held a particular

[61] Clarendon, *History*, i, 354, 480 (note); Sir P. Warwick, *Memoires of the Reign of King Charles I* (1703), 204; Clarendon *History*, i, 434, TT, E.132 [16-17], *A happy Deliverance, or a wonderful Preservation of foure worthy and honourable Peeres of this kingdom, with some others* (1642), 2-3.
[62] K. M. Noonan, ' "The Cruell Pressure of an Enraged, Barbarous People": Irish and English Identity in Seventeenth-century Policy and Propaganda', *Historical Journal*, xli (1998), has argued for the reception of Sir John Temple's view that ethnic incompatibility rather than religion was the chief cause of the rebellion, 152, 158, 160, 163; on the other hand E. H. Shagan, 'Constructing Discord: Ideology, Propaganda and English Responses to the Irish Rebellion of 1641', *Journal of British Studies*, xxxvi (1997), 7, 9, has made a more convincing case for the portrayal and reception of news of the Irish

significance: Lisle's father was the Lord Lieutenant, as his great-grandfather Sir Henry Sidney had been. Sir Philip himself had spent some months in the country putting down a local rising. Reports of Catholic massacres in Ireland revived the stories of Sir Philip's experience of the St Bartholomew's Day massacre in France and his later heroic defence of Protestantism in the Low Countries. For Lisle, it can be suggested that the Irish rebellion corroborated the warnings of Pym of a new and deadly threat to religion and state, but also provided him with a chance to follow the example of his great uncle in 'virtuous action' – the defence of Protestantism and the nation.

This chapter has sought firstly to indicate the dependence of the Sidney family on the favour of the court. Ambitious and talented, its members were under-funded and lacked a territorial power base. It has also assessed the education of the second Philip Sidney as one designed to enable him to realize family aspirations in achieving a court career and emulating the virtues of his famous namesake. Although Underdown has portrayed Lisle as 'disturbed' and constantly quarrelling with his father, the record indicates rather by 1640-2 a dutiful young man concerned to support his father's interests and fulfil the expectations created by his name and status. In spite of the link suggested by Norbrook between humanist studies and resistance to monarchy, there is no evidence that Lisle was identified with the parliamentary opposition before 1642. If he then broke with family tradition to oppose the crown, it can be suggested that he made his choice on one important element in the reputation of Sir Philip on which he modelled his identity: that of the defence of Protestantism. While Lisle's name created perhaps burdensome expectations, the Sidney connection with prominent courtiers such as Northumberland also provided opportunity. With little or no effort on his part and still only twenty-one, he had been elected into parliament twice and advanced into high-ranking military command.

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rebellion as warning of the aim of Catholicism for the total annihilation of Protestantism, a view echoed by J. Cope, *England and the 1641 Irish Rebellion* (Woodbridge, 2009), 90-102. J. Peacey, *Politicians and Pamphleteers: Propaganda during the English Civil War and Interregnum* (Aldershot, 2004) 240.

Chapter Two

Lisle's career 1642-45: Irish Rebellion and English politics

1. Ireland , 1642-3

Lisle arrived in Ireland in April 1642, no doubt convinced as were many in England, that the Irish rising was a religious war of exceptional atrocity for the advancement of popery. It has been argued in the previous chapter that he was keen to fulfil his role as heir to Sir Philip in the defence of Protestantism. The part played by religion in the outbreak of the Irish rebellion of 1641 has been much contested by recent historians. For Maxwell-Perceval, in an argument developed further by Nicholas Canny, political contingency and the legal concerns of the Irish gentry, rather than religious fears, were the main causes of the rebellion. But Brian MacCuarta has more convincingly made the case for the rising as a primarily religious pre-emptive strike against the power of the Protestant church in Ulster.[1] Lisle's experience in Ireland, it will be suggested in this chapter, merely confirmed and intensified his belief that the rising was essentially a religious war against Protestantism. This belief drew him into active co-operation with the parliamentary opposition in England. His attitude to the rising after fourteen months in Ireland was to be summed up with his admission in June 1643 of his inability to 'make peace with those that have murdered so many thousand English Protestants, nor converse with those that have the unchristian title of Mac'.[2]

From the time of his arrival in Ireland on 19 April 1642, he would have found little to challenge any earlier preconception of the rising as a popish plot. His chief civilian mentor and friend in Dublin was to be Sir John Temple, Sidney family client, appointed Master of the Rolls there the previous year, and future author of *The Irish Rebellion,* the most influential and damaging chronicle of catholic atrocities.[3] Temple's New English colleagues on the Irish Council, Sir Adam Loftus, and the Lords Justices, Sir John Borlase, and above all, Sir William Parsons, were equally committed to Protestant rule in Ireland and deeply involved in plantation policies; they looked to the

[1] M. Perceval-Maxwell, *The Outbreak of the Irish Rebellion of 1641* (Dublin, 1994), 285-6, 93, 290, N. Canny, 'What really happened in Ireland in 1641?', in J. H. Ohlmeyer (ed.), *Ireland from Independence to Occupation, 1641-1669* (Cambridge, 1995), 28, 30, 31, 33, 40, B. MacCuarta, 'Religious Violence against Settlers in Ulster, 1641-2', in D. Edwards, P. Lenihan and C. Tait (eds), *Age of Atrocity: Violence and Political Conflict in Early Modern Ireland* (Dublin, 2007), 155-6, 167, 169, 159, 175.
[2] Bodl., MS Carte 3, fol. 263.
[3] *HMC De L'Isle,* vi, 417.

English parliament rather than the king for the defence of their interests. Lisle arrived in Ireland with an introduction to James Butler, earl of Ormond, Lieutenant-general of the army there and the leading member of the Old English, the long-established Anglo-Irish nobility. A Protestant by upbringing, though from an overwhelmingly Catholic extended family, Ormond could have offered Lisle a more nuanced assessment of the origins of the rebellion. Whether he ever attempted to do so is unrecorded, but, as a Protestant convert and Charles's leading supporter in Ireland following the death of Strafford, Ormond was increasingly distrusted by the New English interest, Lisle's political allies in Dublin. Lisle's main army friends in Ireland (their acquaintance dating to the second Bishop's War) were to be the professional soldiers George Monck and Sir Richard Grenville; though these two, as far as possible ignored political issues and confined themselves to military matters.[4]

Though Grenville has earned a well-documented reputation for corruption and brutality, he has also been described as 'arousing a surprising degree of loyalty and enthusiasm' with his sense of 'honour and comradeship'. It was Grenville who had the closest and most immediate contact with Lisle. Within days of his arrival in Ireland and in the company of Grenville, Lisle showed himself impetuously eager to take the initiative and win 'honour' by stirring deeds. On 25 April it was reported that in company with Grenville, Monck and a troop of horse, he had set out to seize the nearest rebel-held house to Dublin, that of Sir Nicholas White at Leixlip, four miles from the city. The small group were surprised by superior numbers, nearly surrounded and forced into hasty retreat. Monck was shot through his coat; Grenville nearly shot. 'My Lord Lisle was like to have an ill welcome to Ireland', as the report drily observed. Two days later a better-prepared expedition of some 600 troops set out under Lisle's command. The object was to rescue Lettice, Lady Offaly (mother of Lisle's fellow officer, Robert, Lord Digby), besieged in her castle at Geashill. This seems to have been intended as a chivalrous exploit, worthy of the virtuous heroes of *Arcadia.* Joining up with the forces of Sir Charles Coote (governor of Dublin), within six days Lisle's contingent had relieved not only Geashill castle, but also Castlejordan, home of Sir John Giffard and Lady Jephson. In addition they had captured and burnt a rebel fort at Philipstown and, quite beyond the original plan, captured the thriving town of Trim, twenty-five miles from Dublin, with the hope of establishing an English plantation

[4] Maxwell-Perceval, *Outbreak ,* 15-17; Bodl., MS Carte 3, fol. 42; T. Barnard and J. Fenlon (eds), *The Dukes of Ormonde, 1610-1745* (Woodbridge, 2000), 13, 99.

there. Nevertheless, homes, lands and crops had been burnt and prisoners summarily executed. The laws of war, generally observed in England, were not seen to apply to Catholic rebels in Ireland, the 'rogues' responsible for the wholesale murder of Protestants. The expedition, however, could claim some chivalric credentials. Dr Arnold Boate, the distinguished Dutch physician then at Dublin, reported favourably that no women had been harmed on the journey. [5]

Ormond tactfully congratulated Leicester on his son's success, 'No man can observe his gallant inclinations attended with suitable events with greater delight than I do'. But the achievements of Lisle's 'gallant inclinations' were limited. In the event, Lady Offaly, once rescued, decided to stay in her castle. Trim, surrounded by low, ruined walls was largely indefensible; Colonel Richard Gibson, inspecting the place, recommended that a better site would have been Kells, twelve miles away. On 7 May with Lisle in Dublin demanding a troop of horse and 1,200 foot to be sent immediately to garrison the town, the Catholic leader Gormanston launched a surprise counter-attack. Though this was beaten off, Coote was killed. His death, and that of several other officers, lowered morale and later was seen to mark a turning point in the fortunes of the English campaign, which, in the early months of 1642 had been confidently regaining the initiative in Ireland.[6] Though Trim was allowed a garrison, the Lords Justices, principally concerned to ensure their own safety in Dublin, had apparently written to Coote shortly before his death forbidding expeditions from the town, a letter Lisle was suspecting of withholding in the interests of a more 'forward' policy. The same restrictions were placed on Grenville, who replaced Coote as commander at Trim.

Four weeks later a major expedition was undertaken. Led by Ormond, 4,500 foot under Monck and 600 horse under Lisle and Grenville set out to relieve the besieged castle of Athlone, held by Viscount Ranelagh, the Lord President of Connaught. Lisle led the forces for the last stage of the journey and as the besiegers hurriedly raised the siege, successfully installed in the castle a relieving force of 2,000. But, according to one report, the return of the remainder to Dublin was near-disastrous.

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[5] M.J. Stoyle, 'The Last Refuge of a Scoundrel: Sir Richard Grenville and Cornish Particularism 1644-6', *Historical Research,* lxxi (1998), 31-2: A. C. Miller, *Sir Richard Grenville of the Civil War* (1979), 43, 49; TT, E.145[12], *True Intelligence from Ireland, 2 May, 1642*, 6-7; TT, E.147[6], *A True Relation of the Chiefe Passages in Ireland, 25 April to this Present*, (1642), 3-4; B. Donagan, *War in England, 1642-1649* (Oxford, 2008), 149, 160-1; TT, E.148[8], *A Remonstrance of Divers Remarkable Passages*, 1-3; For Lisle's financial interests in Ireland generally, see chapter eight; for map illustrating Lisle's campaigns in Ireland, Appendix D.

[6] Bodl., MS Carte 3, fols 116, 173v, 231; J. S. Wheeler, *The Irish and British Wars, 1637-1654* (2002), 48-49; Borlase, *History*, 104.

A number of soldiers, forced to sleep in the open in driving rain and extreme cold, died or fell sick on their return to Dublin. At Maynooth, 'Lord Lisle's wagons and his laundress [a likely euphemism for a bedfellow], coming before, were there surprised by the rebels and she hanged and his carriage taken away'.

The same report lamented, 'the summer stealing away and nothing to any purpose done'. [7] Over the next few months, though raiding parties were sent out, no more major campaigns against the Irish were launched by the English forces and the momentum for recovery faltered. With Leicester still in England, the lack of overall military direction was clearly a factor in the hiatus. Ormond failed to organize an offensive operation, claiming an unwillingness to infringe the prerogative of the Lord Lieutenant in his absence. But far more crippling to the English and Scottish armies (the latter fighting in Ulster), was the lack of resources. It has been estimated that by June 1643 there were some 42,000 soldiers nominally in the pay of parliament in Ireland, costing an estimated £930,000 p.a. By the summer of 1642 no more than £142,781 had been raised by the Adventurers Company, which had been given the task of funding the war in exchange for land to be confiscated from the rebels. With civil war approaching in England, £100,000 of this sum had probably been diverted to the English parliament for its own army. Thereafter contributions to the Irish forces were minuscule. As the Lords Justices bitterly complained to London on 20 July, not only were wages in arrears, but there was also a dire shortage of all military equipment. Troops, including Lisle's, were diverted to farming the lands of dispossessed rebels around Dublin to ensure food for the coming winter, as well as profits for their officers. Even more seriously, over the summer, following the establishment of the Confederation of Kilkenny in May, a national structure for the co-ordination of Catholic resistance had been created with access to supplies and soldiers from Catholic Europe. The advantage accordingly began to shift towards the Catholics.[8]

On 5 September the Lord Justices and council yet again vetoed an offensive campaign. But with Ormond sick, Lisle seized his chance and demanded resources for a campaign, which the Justices conceded, 'with extreme difficulty considering our wants'. On 23 September he set out with 1,500 men to Meath and Cavan. The troops,

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[7] Bodl., MS Carte 3, fol. 128; TT, E.154[33], *A Briefe Relation of the Proceedings of our Army in Ireland,* 2-5; TT, E.116[24], *Exceeding Happy News from Ireland,* 3, 5.

[8] K. S. Bottigheimer, *English Money and Irish Land: the 'Adventurers' in the Cromwellian Settlement of Ireland* (Oxford, 1971), 83-4; *HMC, Calendar of the Manuscripts of the Marquess of Ormonde,* new series, ii, 170-1.

burning and wasting the harvest as they went, defeated resistance at Clonmellon, occupied Kells, disrupted the market there (in contravention of the rules that prevailed even in Ireland), destroyed the houses of the Confederate leaders Fingal and Gormanston, reached as far as Carrickmacross (an estate of the earl of Essex), and installed a garrison there, returning to Dublin in mid October. The achievements of this campaign were as short-lived as those of the Geashill expedition, though its conduct had been even more brutal, a reflection perhaps of Lisle's experience at Maynooth. Carrickmacross was soon abandoned and other isolated strongholds, such as Geashill, evacuated as Confederate forces steadily expanded their control over the hinterland. Nevertheless Lisle remained committed to 'forward' actions. On 14 January 1643, on news of his father's recall from Chester, where the earl was awaiting ship for Ireland to the court at Oxford, he wrote despondently, 'The news of your Lordship's return is very sad to us and pray God it be not the loss of this next year's service … your Lordship knows how those that are earnest in the business strive against the stream. Our chief [Ormond] joins not with us, and indeed, I know no means to advance our business but the continuance of his Lordship's indisposition'. [9]

By then differences between Lisle and Ormond, reflecting the political divisions in England, had come into the open. At first, in the spring of 1642, the formal courtesies had been observed. Leicester thanked Ormond for the favourable reception he had offered his son. As noted above, Ormond congratulated Leicester on Lisle's achievements in his Geashill expedition and he also agreed that Lisle from his 'first coming over' could attend meetings of the Council of Ireland, a 'civility' offered to Lisle by the Lords Justices. There, without having taken the councillors' oath of confidentiality, Lisle was allowed to be present at even the most 'weighty and private debates' of the council. Ormond accepted this, he later claimed, as part of Lisle's concern to familiarize himself with the situation in Ireland. Though unenthusiastic for risky military action – and frequently at loggerheads with him over this issue – the Justices had nevertheless extended Lisle an unprecedented privilege. Lisle also acquired other important positions. He was, *ex officio*, a member of the council of war. On 1 August he took the oath of Supremacy to sit in the Irish House of Commons as newly elected member for the county of Louth. During its brief session from 1 to 16 August, he was nominated to the committee to prepare a bill to authorize statutes for

[9] Bodl., MS Carte 3, fols, 532v, 533r,v; *HMC De L'Isle,* vi, 415.

the attainting of rebels, a continuance of the war against popery by legal means. Presumably he was also present at the later session of the Irish parliament, held 10 November to 14 December that year.[10]

For a time there was no apparent conflict between Lisle and Ormond, though relations between Leicester and Ormond quickly soured with disputes over the appointment of officers to the army. Ormond recorded Leicester's observation that 'he had heard that it was given to the Irish nation to malign and oppose their governors but he thought that was when they were amongst them, not when they were only designed them'. In part to end the friction, on 20 August Charles sent Ormond a new commission to hold his authority as Lieutenant-General of the army in Ireland directly from the crown, thereby removing Leicester's ability to challenge Ormond's authority over the army. As a mark of favour, Ormond was created a marquess. But Charles's motive was also political. Leicester was suspected of nominating parliamentarian officers to the Irish army. Charles, now about to fight the first battles of the Civil War in England, was aware that the loyalty of the Irish army (and its support if need be) could only be guaranteed if it was in the safe hands of the trusted Ormond. At the English court Ormond was seen as the heir to Strafford. As the courtier Endymion Porter assured Ormond, 'I am sure (if his Majesty will give your Lordship power), that you will quickly make him an absolute Prince in his three dominions'.[11]

In the autumn of 1642 parliament, aware of its neglect of Ireland, woke up to the danger of losing control of the forces in Ireland. Two leading members of the Commons' committee for Irish affairs set up on 3 September, Robert Goodwin and Robert Reynolds, together with an agent for the Adventurers for Ireland, Captain William Tucker, were sent as a committee to Dublin in late October. Their declared aim was to try to settle the grievances of the near-mutinous troops over lack of pay by offering them confiscated rebel land instead. They also brought over £20,000 in cash, as well as ammunition and powder. Their unavowed aim, however – and one in which Lisle and the Justices were apparently ready to co-operate – was to secure the army for Parliament. On 3 November, when Goodwin and Reynolds first appeared at the Council, Ormond recorded in a scrawled note that 'Lord Lisle spoke to my Lord

[10] Bodl., MS Carte 3, fols, 111, 204; Bodl., MS Carte 4, fol. 356r,v; Bodl., MS Carte 66, Tucker's Journal, fols 42v, 43v; *Journals of the House of Commons of the Kingdom of Ireland, from the Eighteenth Day of May 1613… to the Seventh Day of August 1660*, 19 vols (Dublin, 1796-1800), i, 300-1. Lisle was expelled from the House on 9 April, 1644, for absence without leave, *Journals*, 320.

[11] For instance, Bodl., MS Carte 3, fol. 363; Bodl., MS Carte 4, fol. 156v.; Bodl., MS Carte 4, fol. 358.

Parsons in his [h]ear, [Parsons] commanded [the committee, i.e., Goodwin and Reynolds] to sit down before instructions was seen'. For the next few months, without consultation by Parsons of his fellow councillors, they freely attended the council. On 15 November the Justices ordered the puritan preacher Stephen Jerome to continue the inflammatory lectures he had started two days earlier in St Patrick's cathedral 'to instruct the soldiers in these times'. By 22 November Jerome was in the custody of the Serjeant-at-arms, accused by the Irish House of Lords of having 'traduced both their majesties, his majesty's council and his army' as well as uttering 'seditious words'. Although Jerome was silenced, the Lords were again complaining in December that others (presumably also under the sponsorship of the Justices) were continuing to 'prosecute the same arguments'.[12]

The attempt to subvert the army by radical preaching failed and if anything was counter-productive. Finding that the committee from parliament had brought only a fraction of the sum owing to the troops, on 19 December senior officers of the army presented a remonstrance to the Justices with a copy to the King. Avowing their loyalty to the king, they not only set out their grievances over arrears of pay but also complained of corruption within the Dublin administration, thus handing Ormond a political weapon to use against Parsons and his New English fellow councillors. Writing to his father on 19 January, Lisle dismissed the grievances of the officers as merely the product of 'some ill spirits'. He could not, however, ignore the worsening military situation. In January, among other forts ceded to the Confederates, the garrison at Athlone, placed there by Lisle himself the previous summer, had to be evacuated, though Lisle admitted that the troops could be better used elsewhere. In fact, only 'private interest', he claimed, had continued to keep it there. Even more alarmingly for Lisle, on 11 January the king issued a commission to Ormond to begin talks for a cessation of arms with the Confederates in order to enable the English army to be brought back to England and fight for the king.[13]

In the middle of January, with Ormond again sick, Lisle seized the chance to wrest the loyalty of the army from Ormond and the king while plausibly offering a solution to the problem of the failure of supplies. In mid January he suggested taking nearly 2,000 troops out of Dublin – under his command – to live off the land over the

[12] T.W. Moody, F.X. Martin, F.J. Byrne (eds), A *New History of Ireland,* vol. 3, *Early Modern Ireland, 1534-1691* (Oxford, 1976), 303; Bodl., MS Carte 4, fol. 6v.;Bodl., MS Carte 4, fol. 37; Bodl., MS Carte 4, fols 40, 50; Bodl., MS Carte 4, fol. 85.
[13] Bodl., MS Carte 4, fol. 318r,v; *HMC De L'Isle,* vi, 417, 415.

summer and attack a major Confederate port, such as Wexford or New Ross. The Justices, also anxious to wreck the prospect of a truce, supported his proposal and the parliamentary committee borrowed money to finance the expedition. Ormond however planned his counter-attack. On 8 February he sent Charles a frank warning: not only was Lisle using his privileged attendance at the Council to 'interrupt your majesty's designs and further those of parliament' but that 'the greatest credit that party have here is derived from the countenance that is given to it by the Lord Lisle who hath more publically avowed his inclinations than others now dare to do'.[14] On 3 February Charles had already ordered the Justices to bar the parliamentary commissioners from the council. Soon after, Lisle himself was apparently excluded and several weeks later, with the king's warrant out for their arrest, Goodwin and Reynolds left Dublin. But, in the meantime, with Lisle's preparations nearly complete, on 18 February Ormond appeared before the Council to announce his full recovery and his intention of leading the expedition himself. That night Tucker recorded in his diary a bitter argument with his fellow commissioners, Goodwin and Reynolds. The latter two insisted that such was the affront to Lisle (in reality, the failure to win control of the army for parliament) that Ormond should not be given any of the money they had 'taken up'. Tucker, the agent for the Adventurers and less politically committed than the other two, admitted the affront, but argued that the 'service of the state' claimed priority and that they had a duty to make the funds promised to Lisle available to Ormond.[15]

Whatever the decision of the committee meeting, Lisle had little option but to obey the Lieutenant-general of the army. On 1 March, with Ormond as commander-in-chief, some 3,000 foot with 500 horse left Dublin under the demoted Lisle. Grenville was appointed his second-in-command and his brother, Algernon, as a captain of a troop. Though kept secret till the last stage of the march, their objective was the town of New Ross. Failing to take the town, hindered by bad weather and fearful of attack from a nearby Confederate army under Preston, Ormond ordered his army's return to Dublin. On 18 March, a few miles outside Ross, the English forces found Preston's waiting for them. The result was an overwhelming victory for the English, thanks to the

[14] *HMC De L'Isle,* vi, 417; TT. E.89[31], *The Newest Intelligence from the Army in Ireland,* 2-3; Bodl., MS Carte, 4, fol. 356v.
[15] Bodl., MS Carte 66, fols 68v-69v.

superior artillery and discipline of the English foot, but the start of bitter recriminations between the rival leaders.[16]

Lisle's part in the battle had handed Ormond a propaganda victory. Commanding the right wing of the horse, Lisle led a charge which was apparently broken by a ditch too wide for the weaker horses to jump. With the line disrupted, a detachment of enemy horse attacked and 'intermingled', with Lisle's horse, slashing with swords as they went. Lisle's troops were forced back in confusion and panic, beyond the line of the foot to the wagons at the rear. With Ormond back in Dublin by the end of the month, care was taken to publicize Lisle's inglorious role at Ross. On 12 April a letter was published in London declaring that in the battle the right wing of the horse 'was routed and the day given to be lost in which some of our commanders were very much to blame'. There was also a more specific allegation, not printed at the time, but widely circulated by Creichtoun, Ormond's chaplain at the battle, that Lisle and Grenville had attempted to flee the battle with Lisle calling out 'ten pound for a guide to Duncannon, twenty pound for a guide to Duncannon' (the nearest safe haven and port).[17]

On 3 April an investigating committee under Monck and Sir Francis Willoughby, an Ormond supporter, was set up in Dublin by order of the Council of War to investigate the truth. Ormond was no doubt intending to find sufficient evidence to court-martial Lisle and destroy his reputation. Lisle was equally hopeful of disproving the accusation of attempted flight. Of the eleven witnesses who gave evidence under oath and who had been present at the scene of confusion at the wagons, none recorded hearing an appeal for a guide to Duncannon. The consensus was that, after a 'bold and resolute' charge by Lisle, the counter-attack of the enemy had caused panic and flight – one witness even heard the cry 'we are betrayed' – but that Lisle *following* his fleeing troops managed to rally them at the wagons. Perhaps *esprit de corps* caused Lisle's officers to close ranks in his defence, but others were equally convinced that Lisle had been traduced. An unidentified Dublin correspondent writing to a relative in London on 15 June warned her 'for my Lord Lisle and Mr Sidney, you must be wary of what you believe… for believe it (and many will make it good with their bloods), that the greatest honour of that day's service was due to the two brothers'. Another letter from

[16] A. C. Miller, 'The Battle of Ross: a Controversial Military Event', *The Irish Sword,* x (1971), 141-156.
[17] TT, E.96[6], *A Full and True Relation of the Late Great Victory, 12 April, 1643,* 2; BL, MS Sloane 1008, G. Creichtoun, *A Faithfull Account,* fol. 94v.

an ‘English officer of quality’ published in London on 29 July, also challenged the ‘false blur’ of aspersion cast on Lisle, including him among those ‘well-affected’ to religion and thus likely to be disgraced by the current government for his ‘forwardness’.[18]

Lisle’s party attempted to counter the public relations disaster. On 4 April a report from the Lords Justices was presented to Lenthall, speaker of the House of Commons in London, which indicated obliquely that there had been a problem with the 500 horse, referred to as ‘not well armed and weakly horsed … and much weakened by … cold and rain and by want of man’s meat and horsemeat’, but nevertheless the outcome was a ‘happy and glorious deliverance and victory’. Another letter published in London on 12 April, and written apparently by an eyewitness, insisted that ‘truly he [Lisle] and Sir Richard Grenville behaved themselves so that a great many of them [Preston’s soldiers] fell in the skirmish … they [Lisle and Grenville] fought gallantly for an hour and a half’. The letter also attempted to shift the blame on to Ormond: he had failed to bring up the foot in time to join the horse already outside Ross in order to take the town before its gate shut, ‘this opportunity missed made the Lord Lisle and Sir Richard Grenville chafe inwardly’. Ormond had also failed to bring scaling ladders to avoid the need for a long siege, a ‘foul fault’. Years later *Ormond’s Curtain Drawn*, published in 1646 to promote Lisle’s own Lord Lieutenancy, provided other examples of Ormond’s thwarting of Lisle’s intended campaign and claimed that his real agenda was to protect his fellow countrymen. Among other examples it mentioned his failure to take the corn acquired after the capture of the first rebel-held fort on the expedition, an indication that he had no intention of living off the land for the whole of the summer, as had been Lisle’s original aim.[19]

But even if unfairly, the damage was done; as late as 1648 Lisle was still being accused of flight and a call for ‘a guide to Duncannon’ by his political opponents. For the present in Dublin, Ormond, now secure in power, could remodel the administration in the king’s interest. Parsons was dismissed and replaced as Justice by the royalist Sir Henry Tichbourne. On 16 May Lisle wrote bitterly to his mother that ‘the government …grows insufferable, especially since the late change of the Lords Justices. They afflict by all possible means those that have been in earnest in this war’. The army, he

[18] *HMC De L’Isle*, vi, 419-428; Bodl., MS Carte, 5 fol. 452; *A Letter from the Earl of Warwick …together with an Apologie made by an English Officer of Quality…, 29 July, 1643*, 7.
[19] *HMC Ormonde*, new series, ii, 262-3; TT, E.96[8], *The Late Prosperous Proceedings of the Protestant Army, 12 April, 1643*; *Ormond’s Curtain Drawn* (1646), 24-28.

complained, was increasingly composed of Ormond's dependents and the New English of the council, in particular Temple, were under investigation for profiteering. By June even Lisle's own servants were under investigation.[20] But most seriously of all for Lisle, Ormond who had begun talks with the Confederation at Trim on 17 March, was given full authority by the king on 23 April to arrange a one-year truce. Lisle regarded the cessation as a forgone conclusion and a betrayal of the English interest in Ireland. As he observed to his mother on 21 June, in a letter intercepted by chance by Ormond, 'it is like to meet with few rubs for the king's favour shining so fully on this person has brought this place to a great adoration of him' but 'the poor English left here … will be in the power of the Irish, so upon the whole matter I think the treaty be concluded a civil way of cutting their throats'. He also added, for the benefit of his mother's contacts with Pym, 'I hope parliament will consider of [it] and it is in their power to get better courses afoot'.[21]

Faced with 'powerful persons malice', Lisle responded with a lofty detachment, claiming to his father on 23 June in another letter that also fell into Ormond's hands that 'it gives me few unquiet hours'. His stoical response was also remarked on by Temple on 22 June, in yet another intercepted letter: 'he hath a mind so far above all they can do to him as he goes on his course without any perturbations and lives very handsomely and hath a good store of company with him'. Somewhat contradictorily Temple also referred in the same letter, to 'the affronts that are offered to my Lord Lisle, whose high spirit is so impatient of them as he hath much to do to contain himself in temper'.[22] In company with Grenville and Monck, Lisle told his father on 23 June, that he had refused Ormond's command to attend the first public meeting with representatives of the Confederation. In secret he might even have been continuing his efforts to win over the army: an undated record in the Ormond collection from around this time notes, 'My Lord Lisle says Ormond is not to be trusted but we must make use of him. We must say we are for the king and not for parliament else we are undone… if we get moneys we care not for breaking our bonds for not observing the cessation'.

In reality however, Lisle was acknowledging defeat and preparing to leave Ireland. But returning to England meant taking sides in a divided family as well as in a

[20] TT, E.448 [17], *Mercurius Pragmaticus, 13-20 June, 1648*, 2; *HMC De L'Isle*, vi, 431; Sir John Gilbert, *History of the Irish Confederation and the War in Ireland*, 7 vols (Dublin, 1882-1891), ii, Richard Bellings, *A Narrative of Affairs of Ireland, 1641 to 1643*, lvii.
[21] Bodl., MS Carte 5, fols 514v, 515.
[22] Bodl., MS Carte 5, fol. 550v; Bodl., MS Carte 5, fol. 537.

divided kingdom. Lisle's father was still nominally Lord Lieutenant of Ireland and with the court in Oxford. Lisle's mother, a parliamentarian supporter, was in London till late July when she left for Penshurst; subsequently she was in correspondence with Pym. Lisle's brother-in-law, Robert Spencer, now the earl of Sunderland, husband of his sister Dorothy, was fighting with the royal armies, though with the greatest distrust of the ultra-royalist party.[23] In his letter of 16 May, Lisle had mentioned to his mother the possibility of his going to Holland that summer, since in the 'publick service… my Lord Ormond will not suffer me the least means of getting honour or profit'. This plan was referred to by Algernon on 18 June, and recommended by Temple on 22 June as a way of Lisle avoiding the 'most unhappy embroilments in England'. How seriously Lisle intended this is unclear. But, on 23 June, the possibility of an oath of loyalty to the king to be imposed by Ormond, persuaded Lisle into asking his father for an immediate recall to England. 'I am of the opinion that I shall not like it, and the refusers (it is thought) will be imprisoned' He stressed: 'Indeed my Lord it is a fit time. No good is to be done in this place. We must come once more to see the conquest of this kingdom. Now it is otherwise designed'. [24]

It might have been deliberate disinformation rather than indecision that prompted Lisle to write on 28 June to Dorothy, still in London, that 'I can not satisfy you what course I will take when I come into England. It is a matter of too great difficulty to resolve upon alone. All that I know is that I shall take in Oxfor[d] on my way to come to you'. However, he made clear his hostility to the king. 'It is too late for the king to show his willingness to send supplies into Ireland. His own act is cause that … all money that is sent hither is cast away'. But more revealingly, the previous week Lisle had written to an unidentified correspondent in London (presumably a parliamentarian in some position of authority, perhaps Goodwin or Reynolds) that 'now our treaty is beginning and all hopes of doing good in this place ending, in some other part better things may be done, of which I intend to speak more with you when I come to London'. The strong expectation that Lisle in fact intended to go to London and Parliament explains both the king's later order in August that Lisle should attend him 'on his allegiance' and his mother's otherwise enigmatic remark on 31 August, 'I cannot imagine what my son means to do for certainly he cannot avoid going to the

[23] Bodl., MS Carte 5, fol. 550r; Bodl., MS Carte 4, fol. 227; *HMC De L'Isle,* vi, 412 (misdated to 1642), Collins, *Letters,* ii, 667.
[24] *HMC De L'Isle*, vi, 431; Bodl., MS Carte 5, fol. 483; Bodl., MS Carte 5, fol. 538r.; Bodl., MS Carte 5, fol. 550.

king'.[25] By then, however, having left Ireland on or by 10 August, Lisle was making arrangements for his return to London.[26]

Lisle's career in Ireland had not been long – from April 1642 to July 1643 – and cannot be regarded as a success. Militarily, he had achieved nothing lasting towards the defeat of the Irish rebellion, while acquiring, however unfairly, a reputation for cowardice. Politically he had been outmanoeuvred in the struggle for control of Protestant Ireland by Ormond. But he had revealed the essential constructs of his identity as a second Sir Philip Sidney: 'gallant inclinations' and chivalric deeds (at least in the early months of his stay), coupled with a humanist-inspired discourse of 'public service' versus 'private advantage', tempered (in the latter months of his stay), with a stoical disregard for the vagaries of fortune. He had also revealed that he considered 'profit' as an acceptable alternative to 'honour', an indication that for him honour was not an all-embracing code of conduct. But the chief preoccupation of his involvement in Ireland was to be 'earnest in these wars', in Sir Philip's tradition of militant Protestantism. He was identified as one of those 'well-affected' to religion; phrases in his letters, such as 'pray God', may indicate, not merely conventional expressions, but also religious convictions otherwise undocumented. During this period it had become apparent that Lisle saw his role as defending Protestantism not merely against Catholic rebels in Ireland, but also against the government of a reputedly papist-dominated monarchy in England.

2. English Politics, 1643-5

In early August Lisle and his party, which included Algernon and Grenville, returned to England. On 28 September Lisle was welcomed back to the House of Commons and, on the report of Goodwin and Reynolds's committee, given public thanks by the House for his 'true and faithful service'. For the next year he was to be conspicuous in the parliamentary record and identified with the opposition to the crown.

[25] Bodl., MS Carte 3, fol. 263v; Bodl., MS Carte 5, fol. 527r; *HMC De L'Isle*, vi, 412.
[26] The date is derived from his later claim for arrears for his service in Ireland, *CSPD, 1645-5*, 353.

But the circumstances of Lisle's return to London and Westminster are obscure. According to Leicester, the king had ordered Lisle's attendance when he was at Gloucester, that is, sometime between 10 and 16 August. On 29 August order was sent from parliament that Lisle, his horses having been detained in parliamentarian-held Liverpool (where the party had chosen to land), 'should come away freely with his horses, retinue, servants and baggage'. Two days later, however, the order was countermanded with the instruction that the whole party should be sent to London 'in safe custody … guarded with a strong convoy'; this was apparently on the grounds that Algernon had written to the royalist Orlando Bridgeman at Chester of his intention to go to the king. Jonathan Scott has taken the second order from parliament at face value: 'taken into custody … and sent under guard to London … from this uncertain beginning Lisle and Sidney were to emerge as parliamentarians'. It seems more likely that Algernon's letter, reputedly intercepted, was a ruse to ensure the party a pre-arranged, face-saving arrest (given that their father was at Oxford) and safe passage to London. The only uncertainty in the proceedings was the order of 29 August, some unfortunate bungle or misunderstanding, made presumably by parliamentarians not privy to a secret arrangement. It was hastily rescinded. Certainly at the time the king was recorded as suspecting 'management' of the affair and took great offence. Once in London, Lisle made no attempt to leave. Indeed, some months later when Grenville defected to the king, Lisle, forgetting the original scenario, claimed to the House that Grenville had only come to London on his persuasion. It seems therefore that the journey to London was not under duress, but voluntary. Indeed, on 5 September, Lenthall, the speaker of the Commons, referred to the 'safe convoy' rather than the 'safe custody' of the party from Liverpool. Since Goodwin was involved in the arrangements for Lisle's convoy, there seems every probability that he had been acting for Lisle in London, arranging the safe passage to appear as 'custody'. Lisle's career as a parliamentarian supporter, it can be concluded, had not emerged from any 'uncertain beginning', but rather careful management in the interests of discretion.[27]

If as suggested, Lisle's return from Ireland to London and parliament was a deliberate decision, it indicates his ready defiance of royal orders and the extent of his commitment to the opposition; in August 1643, few can have had guessed that

[27] *HMC De L'Isle*, vi, 432; *CJ*, iii, 221; *CJ*, iii, 223; *HMC De L'Isle*, vi, 433; Scott, *Algernon Sidney and the English Republic*, 84; Collins, *Letters*, i, 148; BL, MS Harley 166, The Diary of Sir Symond D'Ewes, fol. 21v; *HMC De L'Isle*, vi, 433; *CJ*, iii, 256, 247.

parliament would prove the winning side. Although the previous autumn Charles had failed to retake London after the inconclusive battle of Edgehill, from early 1643 his armies had taken the initiative and their morale was high. By July, the earl of Newcastle had won control of most of the north, much of the south-west had been gained by the royalists, and Bristol had been forced to surrender to Prince Rupert. If there were bitter rivalries in the royalist camp, there was also infighting in London. Austin Woolrych has followed Jack Hexter's view that from late 1642 to 1643 there were three groups at Westminster: an uncompromising 'war party', a 'peace party' anxious for settlement on any terms and a third, a 'middle group', led by Pym, determined to achieve a settlement from a position of strength. For David Scott, following John Adamson's analysis, whose interpretation is adopted here, there were only two main groups at Westminster: a Saye-Pym 'war party' (allied to the Lord General Essex), compromised by earlier dealings with the Scots and unable to contemplate any settlement short of outright control of the government, and a 'Northumberland-Holles' group, prepared to negotiate with the king. By the middle of August the 'peace peers', led by Northumberland, had left London and were looking for reconciliation with the king. Parliament was saved for the moment by Essex's raising of the siege of Gloucester in early September, and in the longer term by the treaty with the Scottish Covenanters which promised Scottish intervention, but even then, the outcome of the war was uncertain. Given this prospect, and with his father still at Oxford, his uncle Northumberland hoping to be welcomed there, his earlier friend, Sidney Godolphin fighting in the royal army and another friend Edmund Waller, imprisoned in London for his part in a royalist plot, Lisle's decision in August to opt for the parliamentary cause looks an even bolder demonstration of political commitment. [28]

His immediate concerns, however, were with his family, not with politics. On his arrival on 28 September he asked leave of the House to go into the country for three weeks. Just eight days earlier, his brother-in-law the earl of Sunderland, for whose estate he was a trustee, had been killed at the battle of Newbury, and his sister, Dorothy, left a widow with young children. Compounding this family tragedy, the

[28] A. Woolrych, *Britain in Revolution* (2002), 257, 275, 263-5, J.H. Hexter, *The Reign of King Pym* (Cambridge, Mass., 1941), D. Scott, *Politics and War in the Three Stuart Kingdoms, 1637-49* (Basingstoke, 2004), 40-2, 63-5, J. S. A. Adamson, 'Parliamentary Management, Men-of-business and the House of Lords, 1640-49, in C. Jones (ed.), *A Pillar of the Constitution: The House of Lords in British Politics, 1640-1784* (1989), 21-51.

Spencer estates were faced with sequestration, since Sunderland had died fighting for the king. But with the earl of Leicester still at the court at Oxford, the Sidney properties were also under threat. Early in July an attempt had been made to seize the movables at Leicester House. Although the House of Lords had placed a protection order on the house, in September the sequestration committee of Kent were preparing an order for the confiscation of movable goods at Penshurst as well as the Sidney rental income. Lisle returned to London within the three weeks' leave he had been allowed. On 9 October he told the Commons of a second order from the king to attend him at Oxford; this was duly forbidden by the House – useful documentation for Lisle against future royal retribution. But the royal command was also a demonstration to the Commons of Lisle's commitment to them; at the same time he presented to the joint committee of Lords and Commons for the sequestration of delinquents' estates, a written refutation by his mother of the charge of delinquency against his father. Two days later, persuaded perhaps by the demonstration of Lisle's loyalty, or behind-the-scenes lobbying, the committee quashed the order from the Kent committee. The following day Lisle again asked permission to return to the country, no doubt to take the good news with him. Although he had not prevented the sequestration of the Spencer estates, in January 1644 a committee of the Lords, including Northumberland (who had returned to London by 17 October, but not apparently in time to help with the Sidney sequestration), ruled that the Spencer sequestration be lifted. A committee of the Commons, including Lisle, was set up to review the Lords' decision, and by 8 March agreed with the Lords that sequestration of the Spencer lands covered by the marriage settlement, be lifted. [29] Lisle's initiative must have been critical in preserving the Sidney estates from sequestration; he also helped preserve the Spencer inheritance for his sister's family – an example of family loyalty transcending the political divide.

Returning to London, Lisle's chief concern was to continue the war in Ireland. On 19 October he was nominated for a Commons committee, including Reynolds, Goodwin and the leading Ulster planter, Sir John Clotworthy, to consider papal involvement in Ireland and the Cessation. On 30 October the committee reported (unsurprisingly) that 'the Cessation is dishonourable to the English nation' and that the war in Ireland 'should be vigorously prosecuted'. However, the English forces under Ormond were bound by the Cessation which had been concluded on 15 September;

[29] *HMC De L'Isle,* vi, 434-5; *LJ,* vi, 119,121, 177; *HMC De L'Isle,* vi, 436; *CJ,* iii, 268; Collins, *Letters,* 130,131; *CJ,* iii, 275; *LJ,* vi, 377; *CJ,* iii, 366, 421.

only the Scottish troops under Monro in Ulster were prepared to continue resistance. According to George, Lord Digby, writing to Ormond on 10 November, the great controversy in London was whether Monro or Lisle should be commander-in-chief there. Lisle was attempting to persuade the Commons committee for Ireland that, if he were made overall commander of the Ulster forces, he would draw the English forces still in Dublin to continue the war there under his command. Lisle claimed that Monck, Gibbs and Tillier were commanders who would be willing to join him, bringing with them their regiments. Digby dismissed the idea: 'I believe it a vanity of his whereby he hopes to persuade them, for I hear gallantly enough of those men'. But Clotworthy, hostile to a Scottish takeover of Ulster which might expropriate his estates, backed Lisle's plan, insisting to both members of parliament and London citizens that it was 'a thing very unfit' that a Scot should have supreme command in Ulster. 'He laboured both by himself and by others that the Lord Lisle, the earl of Leicester's son, might be the very man and very fit'. Clotworthy and his associates carried their campaign, even to the Royal Exchange, proclaiming there that Lisle was the 'fittest' man to have command in Ulster. However, Sir Henry Vane, junior and Oliver St John, architects of the Scottish alliance and anxious not to offend their new allies, were able by 22 December to persuade the Commons to accept the overall command of Monro in Ulster. [30]

Lisle, hoping to continue the struggle against popery in Ireland – perhaps also to recover his reputation as well as gaining 'honour or profit' – was therefore disappointed in his ambitions of a new Irish command. A command in an English army of sufficient seniority for one of his status was either not considered, or perhaps not available. Instead Lisle maintained his involvement in the Irish wars by committee work in the Commons. He became a member of a new and joint committee for Irish affairs set up on 27 November: that of the Adventurers of London and of Irish Adventurers who were also members of parliament. It was dominated by Clotworthy, Reynolds and Goodwin. Lisle, though not an Adventurer himself, attended eight of the committee's fifteen meetings between January and July, 1644. From March to August he was also nominated for a number of Commons' committees on Ireland. He was involved in

[30] *CJ*, iii, 282, 294-5; Bodl., MS Carte 7, fol. 410, mostly in cipher (now deciphered), but also printed in T. Carte, *An History of the Life of James, Duke of Ormonde*, 3 vols (1735-6), iii, 197; National Library of Scotland, Wodrow MS, Folio 65, no. 85, Scots' Commissioners in London, 'Paper alleging proof of Sir John Clotworthy's disaffection to the Scots', fol. 200v, (article 14), fol.199, (articles 9, 13). After his failure with Lisle, Clotworthy tried equally unsuccessfully to get Lord Robartes and then the earl of Manchester appointed : 'anyone to be sent rather than a Scottish man'; *CJ*, iii, 350.

preparing proofs of 'miscarriages in Ireland' against officers captured at Nantwich, investigating information on Confederate negotiations at Oxford, and considering the appeal of the Protestants of Munster for supplies. On 12 August he was added to the committee of the House for the Adventurers for Ireland, and a week later nominated to the committee considering a remonstrance from them. [31]

Lisle's partnership with Clotworthy was based on their shared dislike of the Scots and their wish to exclude them from command in Ulster. But over more general political issues they increasingly differed. Between late 1643 and early 1644 the factions were realigned into a Holles-Essex peace group and a Saye-St John 'war party' supporting the Scots. Clotworthy, who was now giving priority to a settlement with the king to free forces for crushing the Irish rebellion, was a prominent member of the 'peace party'. The evidence suggests that Lisle's sympathies were with the rival 'war party' faction, 'the fiery spirits', now committed to all-out war on the crown. He was in close contact with Northumberland, who, since his return to London, had become a leading member of the war faction. Lisle, by his own account, had private discussions with his uncle, for instance, over the appointment of Grenville as governor of Plymouth. On 20 April Lisle was nominated to the committee to add to the ordinance enabling the Committee of Both Kingdoms (the executive body set up, and controlled by the war party in February) to prepare proposals for a safe peace, that is, on the most stringent terms. Lisle was nominated for some eleven other committees between December 1643 and September 1644 concerned with military matters and measures to prosecute the war more vigorously. Among the most important were those of 8 April, to consider recruitment to Essex's army, and 13 September to discuss the availability of forces from the City.

One of Lisle's most significant committee nominations was that to the committee set up on 28 June to recruit an army of 7,000 for Sir William Waller. This was part of the ongoing effort by the Committee of Both Kingdoms to marginalise Essex's command, and prevent his attempts at peace. A spat in the Commons just eleven days earlier had indicated Lisle's attitude to the issue. According to Sir Symond D'Ewes, when John Glynn, the recorder of London, asked that some encouragement might be given to the earl of Essex, 'the Lord Lisle stood up and said that he wondered that any man should offer to make such a motion, seeing that the earl of Essex refused

[31] *CJ*, iii, 321; BL, Add. MS 4771, fols 8v – 48v, *passim*; *CJ*, iii, 416, 514, 580, 587, 599.

to obey the Committee of Both Kingdoms'. Glynn shot back that he wondered that Lisle 'should make a wonder at it'. Most significantly, on 15 July Lisle was one of eighteen permanent commissioners appointed to a newly created court martial tribunal; all, with the exception of Essex himself, were military hardliners. [32]

Not only was Lisle involved in committees concerned with Irish and military affairs; during this period, he was also named for several of those handling diplomatic issues. On 19 June he was nominated for the committee considering the reception of the ambassador from the United Provinces and on 7 August the same committee was asked to consider the reception of the French resident. On 6 September Lisle was added to another committee to treat with the Dutch ambassadors. In all, from October 1643 to September 1644 Lisle had been nominated to take part in the work of some twenty Commons committees out of the total of nearly 200 that had been set up during that period. He was clearly not one of the driving forces in the Commons at the time, still less a member of the all-important Committee of Both Kingdoms; all the same, he was the only one of the several representatives of the great noble families still in the House (others being the Cecil and Herbert brothers) who was conspicuous for committee activity. Attendance at the Commons, however, was not however without its problems. not only could Lisle be worsted on occasion by older politicians such as Glynn, but when Grenville defected to the king in early March, 1644 – a defection which caused public outrage – Lisle faced criticism in the House and had to defend himself against serious accusations of complicity with Grenville and links with Oxford. As in his defence of his father in December 1640, he reportedly answered to the satisfaction of the House, but it must have been another difficult occasion.[33]

Nevertheless, nominated to eight committees from 1 August to 16 September, Lisle was as busy during those weeks in the work of the House as at any time in the previous nine months. But, most surprisingly, after his addition on 16 September to a committee to treat with the committee for the militia, he was nominated for just two committees over the next fifteen months until December 1645. What might explain this withdrawal from parliamentary activity? It is possible he was absent from the Commons through illness for several months – but he was still able to attend a meeting of the Irish affairs committee on 7 December 1644. From January 1644 he was

[32] Scott, *Politics*, 69-71; for Lisle's contact with Northumberland, BL, MS Harley 166, fol. 21v; *CJ*, iii, 466, 321, 349, 388, 400, 454, 457, 544, 562-3, 579, 626, 629; BL, MS Harley 166, fol. 74; *CJ*, iii, 562-3.
[33] *CJ*, iii, 535, 583, 618; *CSPV*, 1643-7, 86; BL, MS Harley 166, fol. 25.

involved in arrangements for his marriage in May to Lady Catherine Cecil, a daughter of the parliamentarian second earl of Salisbury – but this would not have taken up all his time.[34] In the autumn of 1644, and despite the great victory at Marston Moor in July, he was probably as despondent as any parliamentarian with the subsequent run of military defeats, particularly the loss of Essex's army in Cornwall. As a consequence of the declining military situation, over the autumn the war party began a campaign to remove both Essex and Manchester from their commands, and new model the armies into a single, effective fighting force. Earlier in the summer Lisle had shown himself keen to marginalize Essex's command, and was unlikely to have objected to this policy in the autumn. But that Lisle enthusiastically supported this new modelling and the appointment of Sir Thomas Fairfax as general, was demonstrated on 31 March 1645. As the Lords were hesitating over the commission to Fairfax to command the New Model Army, Lisle led the members of House of Commons as a body to the Lords 'to acquaint them with the necessity of speedy passing the commission to Sir Thomas if they desire to concur in saving the whole kingdom'. By this time the stumbling block was the omission of the obligation to preserve the king's person on the battlefield. As Ian Gentles points out, the omission was of the highest political significance, abandoning the pretence that parliament was fighting the king's evil counsellors and not the king himself. Lisle must have been aware of such an implication but was still prepared to urge the commission on the Lords. On 8 April he was nominated for the joint committee on the replacement of army commanders who were members of parliament and displaced by the Self-Denying Ordinance, passed six days earlier.[35]

Lisle, however, had not taken part in the earlier Commons' committees which had created the New Model Army. Nor, over this period, had he been nominated to the committees on ambassadors from the United Provinces to which he had previously been nominated. His lack of parliamentary activity is puzzling. David Scott has portrayed 'war party' members as increasingly unsympathetic to the Scottish insistence on the imposition of a Presbyterian settlement, which they disliked for its apparently coercive power over the laity. They began to favour toleration for the religious radicals, the Independents, the backbone of Cromwell's forces, a group who were deeply

[34] For the marriage settlements, see chapter eight. Leicester was replaced as Lord Lieutenant by Ormond in November 1643, and in July 1644 left Oxford for neutralism at Penshurst. In January 1645 the Sidney family moved back, at least for the winter season, to Leicester House; Hatfield House archives, Private accounts, Box K/2, 11 January 1645, 'to a chairman for waiting on my Lady Katherine at Leicester House'.

[35] *CJ*, iv, 94, *LJ*, vii, 293; Gentles, *English Revolution*, 253; *CJ*, iv, 104.

distrusted by the Scottish Presbyterians. As a result, in October, the Scots, now seeing a negotiated peace with the king as their only chance of introducing some form of Presbyterianism in England, moved from alliance with the war party group into alliance with Essex's peace party allies.[36] Lisle was not likely to be upset by such a reversal of alliances. He was no friend of the Scots, and was probably himself becoming attracted to the religious Independency he later supported. George Yule records that Independent ministers, although few, made special efforts to gain influential converts and those of 'eminent condition'. Perhaps Lisle was already in contact with one of these ministers in particular. Among those attending the Westminster Assembly set up in 1643 to draft a religious settlement for England, was Peter Sterry, formerly chaplain to the parliamentarian Lord Brooke, the adopted son and heir of Fulke Greville, Sir Philip Sidney's secretary; Sterry was later to become Lisle's own chaplain. It is possible that they had met by this stage and that Lisle had already become attracted to Sterry's deeply spiritual religiosity as well as his connection with Sir Philip. The 'lame Erastian' Presbyterian religious settlement adopted by parliament in the summer of 1645 seems unlikely to have alienated Lisle from his possible new religious allegiance. Indeed, on 25 July he was nominated for a committee (only his second nomination between October 1644 to December 1645) to set up a further committee to direct the selection of elders for the presbyteries to be created in London, the first evidence of his involvement in church matters. [37]

One possible explanation for Lisle's absence from the parliamentary record is that he was busy outside the House, playing some unrecorded role in the formation of the new army. A suggestion of this is contained in *Theophania*, an anonymous *roman à clef*, written by a royalist member of the inner Sidney circle in late 1644 or early 1645. This refers to the two sons of the earl of Leicester, 'Philemon and Gernolanus [Philip and Algernon] … no less esteemed by Corastus [Cromwell] than dangerous enemies to the king', visiting Penshurst, 'either to raise new forces or for some other pernicious design'. That Lisle had some standing in the army is suggested by a rumour, 'and very strong', reported on 7 May from London, that Fairfax was about to be recalled and replaced by Lisle as general. Or it is just possible that Lisle was one of those who, according to Jason Peacey, was critical of the appearance of corruption and private

[36] *CJ*, iv, 51, 52, 72; *CJ*, iii, 713, *CJ*, iv, 23; Scott, *Politics*, 84-6.
[37] Yule, *Independents*, 26-7; See chapter six; *CJ*, iv, 218.

interest in the running of the war, and had retired to the backbenches of the Commons in disapproval. [38]

If Lisle's stay in Ireland 1642-3 had given him the chance to demonstrate his identity as heir to Sir Philip Sidney in the defence of Protestantism, his career from 1643 to 1645 was less rewarding. It has been argued that Lisle chose to return to parliament at the time when the parliamentary resistance to the king looked at its most vulnerable, suggesting his principled identification with the parliamentary cause. Disappointed in his initial hope of returning to Ireland as commander of the Ulster forces, and either unable or unwilling to find a command in the English armies, he opted instead for a role in the public service as a parliamentarian. His opposition to the king was evident in his activities in the House in 1644 and 1645. However, though personally in contact with Northumberland and perhaps with links to Cromwell, he was not one of the inner core, the 'grandees' of the war party, the members of the Committee of Both Kingdoms. For some reason now unascertainable, he played almost no role in the work of parliament from October 1644 to December 1645. Nevertheless, he supported the formation of the New Model Army, and it is possible that he was already linked to religious Independency. If Lisle had an inconspicuous public profile during the period September 1643 to December 1645 – in contrast to the prominent political and military role he had enjoyed in Dublin the previous fifteen months – he had at least ensured the preservation of the Sidney estates from sequestration and provided for their future by his marriage.

[38] Anon, *Theophania: or, Several Modern Histories*, ed. R. Pigeon (Ottawa, 1999), 299; *CSPD, 1644-5*, 461; J. Peacey, 'Perceptions of Parliament: Factions and 'the Public' ', in J.S.A. Adamson, *The English Civil War: Conflict and Contexts, 1640-1649* (Basingstoke, 2009), 97-8.

Chapter Three

Lisle and the Lord Lieutenancy of Ireland, 1645-7

1. The Lord Lieutenancy of Ireland, 1645-September 1646

On 26 January 1646, Lisle was voted Chief Governor of Ireland by parliament; on 16 March he was formally commissioned as Lord Lieutenant-General of that country with a term of office to last for one year from 9 April 1646. It will be argued in this chapter that Lisle, then aged only twenty-seven, readily seized the opportunity provided by his appointment to one of the great offices of state. Held by Lisle's great-grandfather, Sir Henry Sidney, and his father, the second earl, the office of deputy to the crown in Ireland had particular associations with the Sidney family and was especially significant to Lisle. Given the continuing resistance of the Catholic Confederates, it provided Lisle with a second chance to uphold Sir Philip Sidney's legacy of military service in the defence of Protestantism. He was perhaps keen to redeem the military reputation damaged by his earlier expedition and concerned to succeed in an office in which his father had been unsuccessful. The opportunity to acquire reputation and profit may equally have attracted him. It will be suggested in this chapter that his Lieutenancy demonstrates Lisle's ties to the New Model Army and its religious Independency as well as to his ties to the parliamentarian faction of the political Independents. It thus provides new insights into the factional struggles for power in the politics of the period.

Indisputably, however, and as will be shown, his Lord Lieutenancy ended in failure. The origins and aims of his Lieutenancy have nevertheless been the subject of more historiographical debate than any other aspect of his career. For Karl Bottigheimer, Lisle's appointment as Lord Lieutenant in January 1646 revealed the contempt of parliamentary circles for effective action in Ireland. Lisle was chosen, he claims, merely as a cipher, the 'do-nothing figurehead of a do-nothing policy', and his Lieutenancy was but the farcical prelude to the subsequent tragedy of the Cromwellian conquest. In complete contrast, John Adamson has made a case for its major political importance. He argues that Lisle was chosen as the emissary of a single faction at Westminster, one composed of an anti-Scottish interest, the political Independents and 'Northumberland's party'; a faction set on reviving the 'imperial and Anglocentric'

schemes of Strafford as a preliminary to the domination of the three kingdoms. Patrick Little, on the other hand, has challenged this view, denying any such 'dynamic Irish policy' among the Independents. He interprets the Lieutenancy (at least by December 1646) in terms of the activities of a determined and close-knit group of Irish Independents who succeeded in imposing on a largely indifferent English Independent faction their own ambitions for the establishment of a Protestant, planted Ireland. Robert Armstrong has attacked the 'brutally divisive and incompetent' Irish campaign of a 'self-destructive' Lisle. More recently, he has denied the need to look for a 'new ideological framework' for Lisle's Lieutenancy; it should rather be situated in the context of a 'new vigour' in Parliament to press forward the Irish war. [1]

Here it will be argued that parliament's appointment of Lisle as Lord Lieutenant can be ascribed not to any Imperial vision or to Irish Independency, and still less to 'new vigour' for victory in Ireland, but to factional rivalry at Westminster. This rivalry created Lisle's Lieutenancy, influenced it, and ultimately caused its demise. From early 1645 contemporaries were referring to the two leading factions in parliament by the names of their friends in the Westminster Assembly: the 'war party', now entitled Independents, and the 'peace party', in alliance with the Scots and now labelled as Presbyterians. These 'parties', consisted of small groups managing the uncommitted majority of members rather than parties in the modern sense; Jason Peacey distinguishes the 'Grandees', the power brokers of both chambers, from their parliamentary managers, the 'politicks', who sought to direct and manipulate the majority of back-benchers, the 'mechanics'. As Baillie noted, the Independent party, though its numbers were very small, was composed of 'prime men, active and diligent', well able to halt the policies of the Presbyterians. As Sir William Parsons also observed, 'under these [two main] denominations… do all other lesser divisions and partialities rank themselves, as occasion serves'. [2]

Michael Mahoney has examined the bitter in-fighting and counter-accusations of treachery between the two leading factions over the summer of 1645 in the 'Savile affair': the accusations by Saye, one of the leaders of the Independents in the Lords,

[1] Bottigheimer, *English Money*, 97; Adamson ' Strafford's Ghost', 135-6, 156; Little, 'The Irish 'Independents'', 941-61; Armstrong, 'Ireland at Westminster', 96; R. Armstrong, *Protestant War: the 'British' of Ireland and the Wars of the Three Kingdoms* (Manchester, 2005), 203,163.
[2] J. Peacey, 'Perceptions of Parliament: Factions and 'the Public' in J.S.A. Adamson, (ed.), *The English Civil War: Conflict and Contexts* (Basingstoke, 2009), 87; R. Baillie, *Letters and Journals of Robert Baillie*, ed. D. Laing, 3 vols (Edinburgh, 1841), ii, 336; Bodl. MS Carte 19, fol. 402v.

that Holles, one of the Presbyterian leaders in the Commons, had had intelligence from court the previous winter provided by Lord Savile. [3] On 1 July a new joint committee of Lords and Commons, composed largely of Presbyterians and including Holles, was created for the sending of supplies to Ireland and particularly Munster.[4] There its beleaguered President, Murrough O'Brien, Lord Inchiquin, had been in revolt against the Cessation since the previous year. Never previously noted, it is suggested here that the timing of the creation of this new committee with the attack on Holles was no coincidence. Inchiquin had close links with the Presbyterians in England, and like them wished for a negotiated settlement with the king, though in his case to prioritize the war in Ireland. For Holles, exonerated from the charges of treachery only by the end of July, taking up the cause of neglected Ireland provided him and his faction with an invaluable opportunity. It provided both a short-term distraction from the Saye allegations and propaganda initiative – needed in the light of the recent success of the Independent's New Model Army at the battle of Naseby – and a committee base to counter the reviving influence of the Independents at Westminster.

The new and largely Presbyterian bi-cameral Committee for Irish Affairs meeting at the Star Chamber, quickly moved ahead to demand resources and troops. On 7 July it asked parliament to fund a force of 1,600 to be sent immediately to Munster and on 29 July William Jephson, an ally of Inchiquin, was designated commander of a regiment of horse for the province. Its demands for a loan from the Adventurers' committee in London, however, eventually provoked a bitter complaint from the Adventurers about the waste of the money previously raised; on 11 November the London merchant and Adventurer, William Hawkins, urged the appointment of an English Commander-in-Chief, or Lord Lieutenant, to revitalize the war effort. Such a suggestion, although ignored for the moment, happened to fit in with current policies of leading Independents. With the end of the war in England in sight, Cromwell was apparently considering the possibility of taking the New Model Army to Ireland, to keep it in being as well as to crush the Irish. In December one of the army's captains, Sir Hardress Waller, urged Inchiquin's contact in London, Sir Philip Percival, to press for Cromwell's appointment as Lord Deputy to ensure effective action in Ireland. But as David Scott has shown, from October onwards the Independents had also begun

[3] M. Mahoney, 'The Savile Affair and the Politics of the Long Parliament', *Parliamentary History*, vii (1988), 212-7; *CJ,* iv, 191.
[4] *LJ,* vii, 470.

unilaterally to redraw the peace proposals offered to the king at Uxbridge in 1645. The intention of the new proposals, later known as the Newcastle Propositions, was to exclude the Scots from all influence over English affairs – the 'confederal union' – created by the English acceptance of the Covenant in 1643. For Scott, the proposals reflected the anti-Scottish prejudices of the Independent leadership and a wish to reassert the 'superiority' of England in its relationship with Ireland and Scotland. Here, however, it is argued, in agreement with Little, that factional strife was the prime motive behind the new proposals. The Independents aimed to break up the Presbyterian alliance, by excluding the Scots, the powerful ally of the Presbyterians, from English politics and preventing their plans for any joint peace deal with the king. [5]

A first step towards such exclusion came on 1 December with the passing of a Commons resolution (among many others), to place the Irish war and the chief Governorship for Ireland under the sole control of the English parliament. This offered the opportunity of appointing an English Chief Governor or Lord Lieutenant to override the authority of the Scottish earl of Leven, Commander-in-Chief of the British and Irish forces in Ulster. Over the following weeks the Independents considered the options for Ireland, though, as Little convincingly states, they had no 'dynamic' Irish policy of their own. Sir Philip Percival told Waller that Cromwell had been privately suggested for the governorship, though the suggestion had failed. According to Sir Edward Nicholas in January, Cromwell had turned down an Irish generalship, being more concerned to secure the power of the Independents in England. But on 12 December, the political Independent Sir John Evelyn of Wiltshire named Lisle for the Lord Lieutenancy and eleven days later the ever-loyal Sidney client, Sir John Temple (now back in England and member of parliament for Chichester), moved that a governor for Ireland be created; no doubt with Lisle in mind. Neither proposal was acted upon. However, as Percival also informed Waller, there was then a proposal in the Presbyterian interest that affairs in Ireland be managed by commissioners. In the early days of 1646, this was given powerful backing by the Adventurers now arguing against the cost of a Lord Lieutenant in Ireland. It can be argued that it was only this unwelcome response that goaded the Independents into action. On 5 January, after a long debate, the Independents defeated a Presbyterian motion sponsored by Clotworthy

[5] *CSPI, 1633-47*, 405-6, 408-10; *CPSI, 1633-47*, 418; TNA SP 63/261, fol. 45r; *HMC Egmont,* i, 265; D. Scott, 'The 'Northern Gentlemen', the Parliamentary Independents and Anglo-Scottish Relations in the Long Parliament', *Historical Journal,* xlii (1999), 357-8, 370, 375; Little, ' 'Irish Independents' ', 951.

and Holles that a commission should run Irish affairs. The House agreed instead to the rule of a single person, but as a concession to the Presbyterians, the Independents conceded that the term of office 'continue but for a year'. Whether they ever intended to be bound by the time limitation is an open question. On 26 January Lisle was voted 'Chief Governor' of Ireland, a neutral term compatible with the crown-appointed Ormond's continuing Lieutenancy, his office to run from 9 April. On 16 March however, Lisle was formally commissioned as 'Lord Lieutenant-General' of Ireland with the power of Commander-in-Chief, a title which clearly challenged Ormond's authority while overriding that of Leven: an indication of the success of the Independents' strategy. [6]

Why was Lisle chosen by parliament as their 'Chief Governor' of Ireland? It was not for his activity in the Commons. After his nomination on 25 July 1645 for the committee for the choice of elders in London, he was nominated to a third committee only on 8 December. This was to raise money for Ireland, by which time his selection for the governorship was probably already under discussion. On 15 December, three days after he was first named for the governorship, he was selected for the sub-committee set up to consider the powers of the Chief Governor of Ireland. The possibility of his appointment would seem to have revived his Commons activity; his efforts in the Commons were not a factor in his appointment. Nor was he the focus of an important political circle as detected by Adamson. According to Adamson, one of the two chief figures in that circle was the leading Adventurer and City merchant William Hawkins, who, he claims, had been the Sidney man of affairs since the 1630s. Unfortunately this is a conflation: the records make clear the distinction between the Adventurer Hawkins and his namesake, Mr William Hawkins, 'of Westminster, gent.', who had been the Sidney agent in London. Lisle undoubtedly had a circle of supporters; but it was small and limited to family, family clients, the Westminster William Hawkins, Sir John Temple, and a handful of Independent MPs, including Sir John Evelyn of Wiltshire. But as Little points out, there is no evidence these

[6] *CJ*, iv, 359; *HMC Egmont*, i, 268; Bodl., MS Carte 16, fol. 489; *HMC Egmont,* i, 268; TT, E.314[7], *Committee of Adventurers in London for Lands in Ireland* (2 January, 1645/6), 21-22; *CJ*, iv, 397; *HMC Portland,* i, 326; *CJ*, iv, 418, 475-6.

Independents favoured an 'imperial policy' as suggested by Adamson – 'or indeed any coherent policy at all'.[7]

Contemporaries were unimpressed by Lisle's appointment. The following year, Cheney Culpeper wrote, 'Truly I never apprehended how my Lord Lisle was designed for Ireland … I never conceived the man of that raised spirit as to be eminently either good or ill'. Adamson, claiming that Lisle was 'the emissary of a particular interest at Westminster', refers to a comment by Juxon, the well-informed London Independent, but he fails to quote it. The text in fact offers a very different view of Lisle's appointment. Juxon wrote in early 1647, 'Tis a sad story that the Independents to support their own party do not only court and do favours to the Lord Northumberland's party – whom they know are not godly – but send upon that account such men for the conduct of the Irish business as they do pre-intend and know shall come to nothing, but consume men and money; and all this for the support of the faction and it may be to the intent Cromwell may hereafter go and have his own conditions'. The sentence indicates little confidence in Lisle personally; it also reveals the perceived importance of factional politics in the Independent interest behind his appointment. Significantly, Juxon distinguished between the Independents and Northumberland's 'party', a 'lesser division' as defined by Parsons. If Adamson writes of a 'single faction', Juxon indicates there were (at least) two distinct parties or factions. Juxon also suggests that the wish to please the powerful Northumberland – by then in charge of the King's younger children and talked of as a possible lord protector of the kingdom – was the main motive for the Independents' choice of Lisle. Or, as Edmund Ludlow put it, with no great trust in Inchiquin, parliament (i.e. the Independents) appointed Lisle as 'the most considerable person of integrity they could think upon'. Social status and political reliability, as well as connection to Northumberland, were evidently Lisle's main qualifications for the job.[8]

There is some contemporary evidence, therefore, for Bottigheimer's verdict that Lisle was appointed as the 'do-nothing figurehead of a do-nothing policy'. Certainly,

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[7] *CJ*, iv, 218, 220, 365, 368, 376; Bodl., MS Nalson 21, fol. 49; Adamson, 'Strafford's Ghost', 138; Little, ''Irish Independents' ', 950, 949. For the essential conservatism of the Independents' constitutional ideas on Ireland, P. Little, 'The English Parliament and the Irish Constitution' in M. Ó Siochrú (ed.), *Kingdoms in Crisis: Ireland in the 1640s: Essays in Honour of Dónal Cregan* (Dublin, 2001), 120-1.

[8] 'The Letters of Sir Cheney Culpeper', ed. M.J. Braddick and M. Greengrass, in D.R. Ransome (ed.), *Seventeenth-century Political and Financial Papers* (Cambridge, 1996), 291; Adamson, 'Strafford's Ghost', 135; *The Journal of Thomas Juxon, 1644-47*, ed. K. Lindley, D. Scott, Camden fifth series, xiii (Cambridge, 1999), 147; *The Memoirs of Edmund Ludlow*, ed. C. H. Firth, 2 vols (1894), i, 134.

having established a chief Governorship, the Independents soon lost interest in 'carrying on the war in Ireland', while the Presbyterians were uncooperative. On 16 February the Commons, on the recommendation of the Committee of Both Kingdoms, voted Lisle £35,000 'forthwith' to raise 5,000 foot and 1840 horse for the war, £30,000 for his own expenses in Ireland, and £10,000 for provisions. But no arrangements were made to raise such sums immediately. Since 1644 the costs of the army in Ireland had been met by a weekly assessment on the English counties, but such revenue had regularly been anticipated by borrowings. The assessment for Lisle's forces, promised to begin on 1 April, was thus accounted for even before it had begun. As Jason Peacey has shown, on his nomination in January, Lisle immediately faced opposition from the Presbyterian-dominated Committee of Accounts. Not until 4 August was oversight of the Irish finances handed over to Gabriel Beck, client of the Independent Lord Saye.

Little also reveals that the Star Chamber Committee for Irish Affairs continued to be dominated by Presbyterians for some months. Only on 4 May, after the flight of the king from Oxford, was Lisle elected a member of the committee by the Commons and only then with the co-option onto the committee of his Independent allies, Temple, Nathaniel Fiennes, Sir John Evelyn of Wiltshire and Thomas Chaloner, was he assured of a working majority there. But Little fails to point out that this was only achieved by Holles, Stapleton and their allies absenting themselves for a time; they remained members, free to return whenever they chose. The Presbyterian Clotworthy, however, continued active on the committee, his revived but temporary support for Lisle perhaps secured by Lisle's appointment of his business associate, John Davies, 'wholly to furnish him'. Not until 16 June, and then only after increasingly irate messages from the Commons, did the predominantly Presbyterian House of Lords authorize Lisle's right to issue commissions for his forces.[9]

Once in control of the Committee for Irish Affairs, however, Lisle showed himself to be anything but a 'do-nothing figurehead'. If over the ten months from July 1645-April 1646 the Presbyterian-run committee had held fifty-six meetings, for the five months from May to September 1646, Lisle's committee held sixty-seven meetings; of these, Lisle himself attended sixty-one, Temple sixty-two and Clotworthy sixty. Not only did the Independent-run committee meet over twice as many times as

[9] *CJ*, iv, 443; C.R. Kyle, J. Peacey (eds), *Parliament at Work: Parliamentary Committees, Political Power and Public Access in early Modern England* (Woodbridge, 2002), 75; *CSPI, 1633-47*, 486, Little, ' 'Irish Independents', 951; *HMC Egmont*, i, 286; *CJ*, iv, 532, 570, 578, 580, 582; *LJ*, viii, 321, 325, 341, 358, 367, 377.

the Presbyterian over a much shorter period, its agendas were consistently longer and more wide-ranging. Particularly during the months of May and June, the records of the committee under the direction of Lisle, Temple and Clotworthy suggest a hugely energetic and resourceful attempt to create and equip a fighting force for Ireland. By way of contrast, the Presbyterian-run committee had still not completed the two regiments they had planned to send to Munster the previous year. From the middle of May onwards, letters were sent to the larger county and association committees of the west, south and east of England, asking for troops 'on reducement' at the end of the Civil War and offering service in Ireland as an alternative to disbandment. By the end of July some twenty individual officers had also been approached to provide troops by contract. Lisle himself persuaded George Monck (then in the Tower having been captured fighting for the king in 1644) to volunteer for Ireland. By the end of June it can be estimated that 3,500 foot had been contracted for, many hundreds more promised, and offers made amounting to over 2,000 horse. But at the same time, following a major defeat of the Scottish-British army at Benburb in Ulster, the committee was charged by the Commons with raising a second army. Similar arrangements were set up to secure some 5,000 more foot and 1,500 horse on reducement from the counties and by contract with officers, this time from the counties of the North Midlands.[10]

Much effort was also made to secure the range of supplies needed by an expeditionary force: cavalry equipment, horses, 10,000 pikes, artillery trains, a mortar piece, 'granado shells', powder, shot, muskets, food, clothing, spades, shovels, and even a surgeon's chest and drugs.[11] Reflecting Lisle's own experience in Ireland, 100 hand mills were to be 'bargained for'; his servant, Robert Turbridge, was sent to Ireland to supervise the stocking of winter feed for horses while the horses bought for the army were to be branded with the mark of a 'broad arrowhead', the Sidney family emblem later adopted as the mark of the Ordnance office. The provision of chaplains was undertaken. Propaganda already in hand with the publication of Temple's *The Irish Rebellion* in April and later of *Ormond's Curtain undrawn* and Henry Parker's *The Irish Massacre*, was also encouraged. In July, Sir Hardress Waller was ordered to provide papers on the sufferings of the Protestants in Ireland 'for the use of this

[10] *CSPI, 1633-47,* 405-446, 447-520; for the troops, 449-471 *passim;* Clarendon, *History*, v, 58; *CJ,* iv, 577.
[11] *CPSI, 1633-47,* 449, 450, 453, 462, 467, 471, 478.

committee'. [12] To raise money, on 25 May agents were appointed to enforce the collection of the assessment in nine counties. They were forcefully instructed to arrest 'refractory or negligent' assessors and hand them over to the county committees. The instructions were repeated at intervals for other agents attempting to dragoon money out of the remaining counties over the following months. Inevitably, the committee had to look for loans in the meantime against the anticipated income: from May onwards Lisle's colleagues were approaching all available institutions – the Committee for Excise, the Committee at Goldsmith's Hall and that at Haberdashers – for cash to 'expedite the assessment'. To fund the £50,000 promised by the Commons for the Ulster force, the committee called for a new source of income: the sale of the estates of English delinquents. By September some £20,000 had been raised in this way. In the meantime, with limited funds raised from the parliamentary agencies, private individuals, for instance Thomas Radberd and Nathan Wright of London, were persuaded to advance much-needed money. In addition, John Davies offered the supply of goods on credit and was guaranteed payment; by early July he had promised some £55,000 worth of goods for both Munster and Ulster.[13]

In the midst of all this activity, only Lisle's destination remained uncertain. As Percival had written on 13 April, 'which way he [Lisle] intends to go I have not heard. Some say he may safely go to Dublin with a small force'. The king's flight from Oxford to the Scottish army signified the effective defeat of the royalist cause in England, but Ormond still held Dublin for the king against both parliament and the Catholic Confederates, refusing to surrender it without royal consent. On 11 May, just a week after the king's flight, Lisle was teller in a Commons' motion asking for the Lords' concurrence in a demand to the king that he should surrender all remaining garrisons and leave the Irish war to parliament. Nothing came of this proposal, but on 3 July, Lisle, Holles, Clotworthy and others were instructed to prepare a letter to the king asking him to 'positively command' Ormond to surrender Dublin to its agents. The hand-over of Ireland's capital to Lisle, as a base to begin the fight against the Confederates, was clearly his ideal scenario. With the king's refusal to co-operate, however, Lisle was compelled to consider the only alternative: an expedition to

[12] *CPSI, 1633-47*, 450; 464; 455; 465.
[13] *CPSI, 1633-47,* 452, 448, 463, 450, 491, 467.

Inchiquin's province of Munster. By early June this had become accepted as the only practical option.[14]

But factional rivalries overshadowed relations with Munster from the start. Nicholas reported to Ormond that the parliamentarians had given Inchiquin 'much trouble and discontent in preferring the Lord Lisle before him' to the office of Lord Lieutenant. For their part, Lisle and his Independent allies regarded Inchiquin with suspicion. He was closely connected to the Presbyterian leadership and reckoned to be in contact with the unswervingly royalist Ormond (who was Holles's cousin). To warn Inchiquin of the necessity of compliance with Lisle's Lieutenantship, on 16 May the Irish committee demanded he give an account of the money he had received from the Commons since the previous year. Over the summer the Irish committee attempted to reduce his authority by promoting his rival in Munster, Roger Boyle, Lord Broghill, third son of the New English magnate, the earl of Cork, who had become a supporter of Lisle's Lieutenancy. (Lisle and Broghill would have met in Saumur in the late 1630s). The committee possibly even resorted to discrediting Inchiquin's reputation by the circulation of 'sundry false reports' and a 'private pamphlet' claiming his secret dealings and co-operation with the Irish and misappropriation of parliamentary funds. Compounding factional rivalry was the anti-Irish prejudice of the New English, as exemplified in Temple's *The Irish Rebellion.* The underlying theme of the book, and one which Lisle had almost certainly absorbed from his mentor for Irish affairs, was the utter untrustworthiness of the Irish and their inability to co-exist with the English in Ireland. Only separation of the two peoples, Temple argued, could ensure the safety of the English in Ireland and the civilising process of English rule. Unfortunately, Inchiquin, though Protestant, was of old Irish stock, and in Temple's definition always to be distrusted. [15]

However divisive such a view was to prove in the future, more immediate problems were to create serious difficulties for the planned expedition by the end of July. Contractors failed to deliver the promised troops; other troops refused to go at all. As the Venetian ambassador observed, employment in Ireland was 'detested by all'. Better pay in any case for disbanded soldiers was on offer in the armies of France and Spain. The Irish committee urged that recruitment for foreign armies should be

[14] *HMC Egmont*, i, 288; *CJ*, iv, 542, 599.
[15] Bodl., MS Carte 16, fo.531; *CSPI, 1633-47*, 448; Little ' 'Irish Independents' ', 952; P. Little, *Lord Broghill and the Cromwellian Union with Ireland and Scotland* (Woodbridge, 2004), 20; TT, E.354[6], *A Letter from a Person of Quality residing in Kinsale* (15 September, 1646), 1-3.

suspended, but to little effect. The fundamental problem was lack of adequate finance. The £35,000 originally voted for an expedition should have covered the cost of transporting 6,000 foot and 1,800 horse to Ireland. But this did not cover the cost of their supplies, nor the wastage when contractors failed to deliver, nor the expense of the attempted collection of the assessment and the anticipation of its cash by loans. Still less did it provide for the maintenance of the troops once in Ireland. By 25 June the Irish committee prepared to inform the House that the money voted for Lisle's expedition was already spent. There was no response, although the recruiting of the forces continued. But on 30 July, the diarist John Harington recorded that Lisle, 'his person disliked of some' (presumably the Presbyterians), complained in the House that 'men and money appointed for Ireland fail greatly'. He offered, either in genuine exasperation, or in a deliberate attempt to force the issue, to relinquish his Lieutenancy and serve in Ireland as a colonel of horse instead. According to Lawrence Whitacre, in a debate lasting all morning, the possibility of sending the New Model Army to Ireland was raised, but further debate was postponed till the following day when, according to the official record, it was agreed to discuss the recommendations of the Irish committee.[16]

That afternoon, most unusually, Lisle was absent from the committee, which was, equally unusually, attended by Holles and Stapleton. Though the minutes do not record any decision reached on the issue, the following day the two Presbyterians presented with 'eagerness' their recommendation to the Commons: that six regiments of the New Model Army should be sent to Ireland. Factional considerations were, of course, uppermost in their proposal, their aim being to remove the New Model Army, the Independents' power base, from England. Similar considerations inevitably governed the response of the Independents. Cromwell, in a crucial debate that lasted all day, argued that the New Model Army should not leave England 'unprotected' while the Scottish army (the Presbyterian's allies), remained. As an extraordinary gesture of personal support, Cromwell even offered to forgo £10,000 of money voted to him personally to pay for the levying of other troops by Lisle. Clearly, the priority for the Independents was not Ireland but the retention of the New Model army in England for their own security. As for Lisle, the evidence strongly suggests that he had privately

[16] *CPSI, 1633-47,* 476, 475, *CSPV, 1643-7,* 26 September, 1645, 213; *CSPI, 1633-47,* 466, 463; M. Stieg (ed.), *The Diary of John Harington, M.P., 1646-53,* Somerset Record Society, no. 74 (1977), 30; BL., Add MS 31116, *Whitacre's Diary,* fol. 279r; *CJ*. iv, 630.

connived at the Presbyterian proposal in order to gain the elite New Model Army regiments to his Irish expedition. The motion to send the army, proposed by Holles and Stapleton and opposed by the Independents Evelyn and Heselrige, was finally defeated by ninety votes to ninety-one; no units of the New Model Army were to go to Ireland. By the narrowest of margins the self-interest of the Independent leadership had prevailed.[17]

In the event, Lisle did not resign. In compensation for the withholding of the New Model Army regiments, the Commons offered Lisle a deal: members of parliament who were also members of their county committees were to attend the Committee for Irish Affairs the following day in order to indicate the forces on disbandment available in their counties for service in Ireland. On 1 August, having heard the reports of the members, the committee agreed that Cromwell and four members of the committee should devise a plan for the sending of these forces to Ireland. A new system of recruitment was set up with the backing of Cromwell, perhaps anxious not to lose credibility over his refusal to allow the New Model Army to go to Ireland but also indicating his personal support for Lisle. On 4 August the county committee MPs were charged with the responsibility of supervising the recruitment of troops for Ireland from the forces for disbandment in their counties; even more usefully, they were also to provide from county revenues a month's pay in advance for those enlisting for Ireland, thus offering a token sum towards maintenance of the forces. In all, the members of the county committees promised well in excess of 1,640 horse and 4,800 foot for Ireland. It was ruled that troops (including those for Ulster), were to be at the ports of Bristol, Chester and Liverpool by 20 August. Sir John Veale, Temple's brother-in-law, was sent to Bristol, Henry Whalley, a rich City Adventurer, to Chester to organize the shipping of men and equipment to Munster. The Irish Affairs Committee nevertheless continued to press Goldsmith's Hall for money and to look for loans, claiming that 'many men are ready to march, but cannot do so for want of money'. [18]

In the event, the new system proved little more effective than the old. By early September the Irish committee was complaining of 'obstructions' in certain counties, as well as the continuing presence of officers remaining in London. It was also threatening to punish those dissuading soldiers from service in Ireland. It was still

[17] *CPSI, 1633-47*, 483; Stieg, *Diary*, 30; BL., Add MS 31116, fol. 279r., *CJ*, iv, 631-2.
[18] *CJ*, iv, 632; *CSPI, 1633-47*, 485; *CJ*, iv, 633-4, *CSPI,,1633-47,* 493, 505, 486-7, 491 .

seeking to raise troops by contract with a further dozen or so officers. As an indication of the on-going haemorrhage in troop numbers, on 17 September Sir Hardress Waller was given warrant to raise four more regiments of 1,000 each. Nevertheless, at least on paper 1,300 horse and 4,000 foot could be accounted for, and many of these, had clearly arrived at the embarkation ports. On 29 September, Lisle and his committee wrote to inform Inchiquin that the troops for Munster were then ready to ship. All their efforts over the previous five months were about to come to fruition.[19]

It has been argued in this section that Lisle took his responsibilities as Lord Lieutenant seriously over the period from April to September, energetically attempting to organize an expedition to Munster, and to send help to Ulster. He even seems to have used manipulation to try to gain the forces of the New Model Army for his expedition. He was not, as Bottigheimer claimed, a 'do-nothing figurehead' as his sponsors seem to have expected. But nor was he the emissary of a single powerful faction seeking to impose English hegemony on the three kingdoms, as Adamson has argued. Appointed primarily for his social status and relationship to Northumberland, he was little more than a pawn in the factional struggle at Westminster between the Independents and Presbyterians. His misfortune was to have been appointed to fill a position, the Lieutenancy, created merely for tactical political motives by his allies, the Independents, and of secondary concern to them, as their attitude to the deployment of the New Model Army in Ireland demonstrated. Ireland, as ever, was of less importance to parliament than the securing of a political settlement in England. There is no evidence that, as Armstrong claims, 'a new vigour' to an Irish campaign infused members' attitude to the Irish war – at least not until 1649. In the circumstances, inadequately funded and facing widespread opposition to service in Ireland, Lisle had achieved more in the circumstances by September than he has been given credit for. It can be suggested from his efforts to create a new expeditionary force for Ireland that he demonstrated his identification with his great-uncle's career of active service in Ireland against Irish rebels and the popish threat.

[19] *CSPI, 1633-47,* 502, 504; 514, 520.

2. The Lord Lieutenancy of Ireland, September 1646 – January 1647

By the middle of September 1646, his forces for Munster on the point of embarkation, Lisle must have also felt some confidence about the political situation in England. The recruiter elections held from the summer of 1645 onwards had added to the strength of the Independents in the Commons. The refusal of the king, by then in the hands of the Scottish army, to respond to the Newcastle Propositions had deprived the Presbyterians of a chance to mediate a peace. Parliament's vote in August to pay off the Scottish army promised to remove the Presbyterians' military allies out of England over the winter. The death of the earl of Essex, the retired but still revered elder statesman of the Presbyterians, on 14 September, was another blow. His funeral on 22 October, the most elaborate since that of James I and in which his cousin Lisle played a prominent role as one of the eight assistants to the chief mourner, was organised as an occasion for national mourning, but all agreed on the loss to the Presbyterians in particular. By then, according to Bellièvre, the French ambassador, the Presbyterians were losing heart, some preparing to come to terms with the Independents. There was talk of the king treating with the Independents. Though they had been prepared to fight until a settlement was imposed on the king, according to Sir Robert Moray, 'they were apt enough to turn their sails … if they see themselves ready to be invested with the whole power of the state and King's person by offices and changes'. Indeed by the middle of November there was talk of the Independents adjourning parliament and, presumably with the King's co-operation, setting up a new constitution, entrenching their faction permanently in power.[20]

But before then, at the end of September, developments in Ireland had unexpectedly opened a new opportunity for Lisle. The peace treaty finally concluded by Ormond with the Catholic Confederates in August had been rejected by the clerical party led by the Ultramontane Rinuccini, and the following month, two Confederate armies, the one under Preston, the other under O'Neill, had taken the field to attack Dublin itself. It seems that by 29 September the first reports had reached London that Ormond, out of dire necessity, was about to seek the help of parliament. The factional

[20] Bodl., MS Carte 18, fol. 620, 29 September, some 1000 shipped in the previous ten days; Woolrych, *Britain*, 348; TT, E.360[1]; *The Hamilton Papers*, ed. S.R. Gardiner, Camden Society, new series, xxvii (1880), 114; *The Diplomatic Correspondence of Jean de Montereul*, ed. J.S. Fotheringham, Scottish Historical Society, new series, xxiv, 2 vols (1898), i, 238; Gardiner, *Hamilton Papers*, 124, 126.

response to this was predictable: the Presbyterians would prefer Ormond, their ally, to stay in Dublin with the help of parliament; the Independents, inevitably, would wish to be rid of the unshakeably royalist Lord Lieutenant. Unusually both Holles and Stapleton attended the Irish committee that day, an indication that major developments were afoot. At the end of the minutes recording routine business, including the sending of the letter to Inchiquin that troops were ready to ship for Munster, quite contradictory orders to Veale and Whalley to halt the shipping of troops were tacked on as the final item. It seems very likely that Lisle, already seizing his opportunity to divert troops to Dublin in order to take it over, but concerned to conceal his plans from the two Presbyterians, sent the orders privately only after the two had left the meeting. By 5 October, however, the formal news of Ormond's 'capitulation' had been received in the House and the Irish committee ordered to send supplies to Dublin and consider diverting troops there. That afternoon the committee sent a second, now official, instruction to its agents, in particular to Veale, to delay shipping the troops for Munster, 'until further order shall be given for the place where they shall be landed'. [21]

All Lisle's hopes now depended on Ormond. He had first to hold off the Confederate attack, but then to agree to hand over Dublin to him. For the moment, however, both factions accepted that immediate help for Ormond could only come from Inchiquin, and Lisle hastened to mend fences with the Munster president. By the time of the meeting of the Irish Affairs Committee on 8 October, attended by Holles, a provocative commission of Lisle's in September for Broghill to command four regiments of the Munster forces independently of Inchiquin had been cancelled. With the ready co-operation of the Presbyterians, Lisle abandoned his Munster ally in the interests of securing Inchiquin's help for Ormond in Dublin. Factionalism nevertheless returned to the fore on 12 October. That day, Ormond's terms were presented to the House. He was to continue his 'employment' in Dublin taking his orders from parliament, or to retire and hand his office over to a nominee of parliament. The Independents managed to refer consideration of the terms to the Independent-dominated Committee of Both Kingdoms, with the addition of Lisle, Temple, Clotworthy and Holles. As intended, on 14 October, the Commons duly agreed with its recommendations that Ormond should be treated with 'for his retirement' and that the Committee of Both Kingdoms should be in charge of the negotiation 'in respect of the

[21] TNA, SP 63/262, fols 121v, 125; *CJ*, iv, 684; TNA, SP 63/262 fol. 126.

secrecy and expedition thereunto necessary'. For the negotiations with Ormond, three more members – Nathaniel Fiennes, Sir William Lewes and Robert Goodwin – were added to the 12 October committee, creating a new committee, soon to be known as the Derby House Committee from its meeting place. Lisle and the Independents had achieved their main aim, the 'retirement' of Ormond, but the creation of the Derby House Committee also provided a foothold for Presbyterians, such as Holles and Lewes, in the decision-making process of the following months. This they were to exploit to great effect the following year. [22]

Records of the Derby House Committee, which included Lisle (and frequently Northumberland), are incomplete, but several days later it named five commissioners – Clotworthy, Goodwin, (replaced by Major Salwey), Sir Robert King, Sir Thomas Wharton and Sir Robert Meredith – to conduct negotiations with Ormond for the handover of Dublin. By the end of the month they were in Chester, joining their firebrand chaplain, the Independent Hugh Peters, who had been sent ahead to arrange food, military supplies and the commandeering of some 2,300 troops originally intended for Ulster, but now ordered to accompany the commissioners to Dublin. On 27 October, Northumberland reported from the committee to the House of Lords, on Lisle's 'desire to go to Dublin (upon the surrender thereof), or to any other part of Ireland … And for that his Commission relates to instructions, to desire the Houses to give order for the preparation thereof'. A draft of Lisle's instructions was ready on 17 November for reporting to both Houses. At the request of Lisle, the meeting also agreed to the appointment of Algernon Sidney (elected as a recruiter member of parliament in 1645), as governor of Dublin, with Colonel Monck as his deputy. Meanwhile, the Star Chamber Committee for the Affairs of Ireland under Lisle continued its efforts to find money and men for Ireland. On 15 October it sent to Inchiquin ordering him to create a diversion to help save Dublin before the parliamentary forces arrived. From 19 October onwards records of this committee cease, but on 6 November Ormond's two commissioners remaining in London wrote to Dublin that there was much activity in both committees, and that, on their warning of

[22] *CSPI, 1633-47,* 527; Bodl., MS Carte 18, fols 594, 596; Bodl., MS Carte 19, fol. 158; *CJ,* iv, 690, 694.

the imminent threat to Dublin, they were assured by the Star Chamber Committee that 'all things should be done effectually'.[23]

But Lisle was to be thwarted. O'Neill's army abandoned the siege of Dublin on the appearance of the parliamentary fleet with its supplies and forces, Preston's soon after. By the time the parliamentary commissioners arrived in Dublin on 14 November, the immediate threat to the city had been removed. The welcome for the English party from Ormond was cool. The English forces were allowed to land, but not to enter the castle. After a week of negotiations which began to look increasingly like prevarication on his part, Ormond ended the talks, declaring – to the fury of the commissioners – that he needed royal permission to hand over the city (which, as Little points out, they had failed to obtain). No doubt his overtures to parliament had been genuine enough in September, but as he candidly admitted in November, 'with the rebels marching away from us', the 'necessity [for the treaty] is since removed'. Peters returned to London on 27 November with letters from the English commissioners for Lisle and the Irish committees, warning that the outcome of the talks might be 'doubtful'. Confirmation of Ormond's rejection of the parliamentary terms came on 1 December. The commissioners, together with the troops, moved on to Scots-held Belfast and an even chillier reception than they had received in Dublin. [24]

For Lisle the failure of the negotiations must have been a huge disappointment, but one to which he energetically responded. Although some troops had been shipped to Munster, most of the forces for the province had remained in the ports waiting for orders to divert to Dublin. Two months had gone by and scarce resources wasted in what turned out to be a futile delay. Lisle's Lieutenancy, already under question in September, when it was suggested that a Commander-in-Chief for Ireland be appointed 'in the absence of the Lord Lieutenant', was now in danger of losing credibility. It was at this point that Little suggests that the group of New English now in London, Temple, Sir Adam Loftus, Sir William Parsons and Sir Hardress Waller, whom he identifies as Irish Independents, took the initiative and presented to the Derby House Committee on 10 December a detailed plan of action for the restoration of Ireland to the 'due subjection and government of the crown of England'. The plan's first demand was the

[23] TT, E.513[19], *A Perfect Diurnall, 12-19 October*; Bodl., MS Carte 19, fol. 210; *CPSI, 1633-47,* 535*; LJ,* viii, 547; TNA, SP 21/26, Derby House, Foule book of Orders, 1; *CPSI, 1633-47*, 530; Bodl., MS Carte 19, fol. 327v.

[24] Bodl., MS Carte 19, fol. 532r-v; P. Little, 'The Marquess of Ormond and the English Parliament, 1645-1647', in Barnard and Fenlon, *The Dukes of Ormonde*, 92-3; *HMC Egmont*, i, 334*;* TT, E.365[1], *Perfect Occurrences, 27 November-4 December* .

dispatch of the Lord Lieutenant to Munster. The preamble of the paper, however, reveals it to have been compiled at Lisle's request: 'According to your Lordship's directions we have considered as well of the present state of the kingdom of Ireland in general as of some expedients for the present'. Lisle himself, it seems, rather than the Irish Independents had taken the lead in an initiative to press parliament for action. Already on 3 December Lisle had requested in the House that he be sent to Ireland, 'being resolved (had his Lordship but one county left), to maintain it to the uttermost of his power', (or, according to another version, 'being resolved to spend his blood for the settling of the kingdom in peace and prosperity and redeeming the poor distressed Protestants from the barbarous and inhuman tyranny of the bloodthirsty papists'). Already on 8 December the Derby House Committee had met in an all-day session to plan for Lisle's departure, amending the draft of Lisle's instructions drawn up by 17 November. For Adamson, the decision that day to prepare a sword of state for Lisle symbolized the regal powers claimed for his Lieutenancy and the aspirations of a single faction for ultimately entrenching themselves in power over three kingdoms. [25]

It has, however, been argued in this chapter, following Little's interpretation, that there was no 'single faction' aiming at hegemonic control of the three kingdoms: the Lieutenancy was of secondary concern to the Independents at Westminster whose priority was the control of English affairs. Nevertheless the Independents were Lisle's sponsors and, to add to his problems, they were fast losing control of the Commons. In the event, the departure of the Scottish army had benefited the Presbyterians. Its going had removed a major cause of friction in the country which had provided much of the support for the Independents. Resentment was now directed against the New Model Army and the high taxation it required. The army, home for radical preachers, the religious Independents, was depicted in Thomas Edwards's influential *Gangraena* (published at the end of the year) as representing a threat to the very fabric of society. Many at Westminster, even the newly recruited MPs, were moving to a more conservative stance, one more inclined to favour the Presbyterians. The Presbyterians had also won back much support from the City by Holles's device of paying off the Scots on the security of bishops' lands, a profitable source of investment for city merchants. On 19 December the City organised a petition to parliament calling for the

[25] *HMC Egmont*, i, 324, Stieg, *Diary*, 39; Little, ' 'Irish Independents' ', 955; Bodl., MS Carte 19, fols 604-6; TT, E. 365[1], *Perfect Occurrences*, TT, E. 365[7], *His Majesty's Speech*; *CSPI, 1647-1660*, 726; *Adamson*, 'Strafford's Ghost', 136.

suppression of unordained preachers – the core of New Model Army religious Independency – and the disbandment of the Army itself. Two days later, elections to the Common Council of the City resulted in an overwhelmingly anti-Independent, pro-Presbyterian majority. On 31 December, reflecting the swing to Presbyterianism in the City, the Commons discussed the City Petition and even more significantly, voted to ban lay preaching.[26]

It was in this climate that, on 23 December the Commons considered the recommendations of the Derby House Committee. They agreed that an 'offensive war in Ireland' be prosecuted and that Lisle should 'forthwith make his repair to Munster' upon his 'earnest desire and readiness'. Significantly, this motion was voted on as only the last item of business when presumably the Presbyterians had mostly left. It was also referred to the Derby House Committee to consider 'what further number of forces will be necessary to send over'. However, the Commons offered only £21,000 to be raised on loan for the expedition, a small sum in comparison to the £200,000 found without difficulty to pay off the Scottish army. The details of the campaign – including the vital political decision on the unresolved method of maintaining an Irish army – were referred back to the committee to arrange. The Commons thus effectively shelved responsibility for maintaining the army. [27]

Lisle, with the support of Northumberland on the Derby House Committee, nevertheless pressed ahead with arrangements for his Lieutenancy. Two days after the Commons' vote the Derby House committee met to follow up the Commons' recommendations, and on New Year's day 1647 appointed a Privy Council to advise Lisle as Lord Lieutenant, the first to be created without royal permission. For Adamson, as with the order for the sword of state, this represented the aspirations of the faction for power; but given that six of the Councillors had been Councillors in Ireland, it can be suggested instead that the Council was simply concerned with bolstering Lisle's authority in Ireland. Again factional considerations were evident. Several Presbyterians, including Inchiquin, were appointed as Councillors, but they were to hold office only on a temporary basis. It was clear that Presbyterians would be tolerated for the time being, but not for long. [28]

[26] Little, ' 'Irish Independents' ' , 958; Woolrych, *Britain*, 350, Scott, *Politics*, 132-3; *CJ*, v, 33, 34.
[27] *CJ*, v, 27; Adamson, 'Strafford's Ghost', 136.
[28] *CSPI, 1647-1660*, 727, 727-8.

Four more meetings of the Derby House Committee are recorded before Lisle's departure at the end of the month. On 4 January the Commons approved his instructions as amended by Derby House. He was to act in 'all ways as Lord Lieutenant', with powers and responsibilities to abolish popery, grant commissions, dispose of garrisons, displace the disaffected, dispose of lands, take musters and levy taxes. Loans of £31,000 were to be secured on delinquents' fines from Goldsmith's Hall and grants made available to Algernon Sidney and Sir Hardress Waller. Lisle himself received £3,792 as salary. Later resolutions of the House called for Fairfax to issue arms and munitions to Lisle's forces. But yet again factional considerations were evident. On 4 January, The Commons ruled that an ordinance should be passed that Lisle was to impose the Presbyterian form of church government as established in England. Nevertheless, on 25 January the House gave leave of absence to Thomas Harrison, 'the preaching major', to join the expedition 'upon the Lord Lieutenant's desire'. Lisle was apparently planning to introduce the radicals of New Model Army Independency to Ireland. Perhaps accordingly, the Presbyterian-dominated Lords failed to offer support to the expedition. On Saturday 30 January, two days after Lisle had taken his formal leave of the Commons, wishing them a continual blessing on all their proceedings, Northumberland informed the Lords, who had still not agreed to his instructions, that his nephew 'desires to know whether the House will command him anything before he goes to Ireland, he being intended to set forward on Monday'. No answer is recorded. Lisle left for Ireland the following Monday, eleven days after the birth of his first son and heir; the boy was named Algernon, in honour of the uncle whose prestige and support had brought Lisle the Lieutenancy. [29]

Lisle had been unlucky in the events of autumn 1646. His hopes had been raised that the beleaguered Ormond, the King's Lord Lieutenant, would hand over Dublin, the centre of Irish government, and he had responded immediately to the opportunity this offered. The failure of those hopes meant that valuable time and money had been wasted. But over the winter, as during the summer, he pressed ahead indomitably with a revived plan to launch his expedition to Munster. Factional rivalries continued to shape events. It has been suggested that, though Lisle's natural allies were the

[29] TT, E.370[21] *Perfect Occurrences, 1-8 January*; *CJ*, v, 48 *CJ*, v, 40, 63; B. Whitelocke, *Memorials of the English Affairs from the Beginning of the Reign of Charles the First,* new ed., 4 vols (Oxford, 1854), ii, 109; *CJ*, v, 68; *LJ*, viii, 646, 656, 676, 680; *HMC De L'Isle*, vi, 560.

Independents, there was little sign as earlier, that the Independents were seriously committed to his Lieutenancy, though they co-operated with him to remove Ormond from Dublin. But at least by the end of the year Northumberland was playing a more active role in supporting his nephew than had been evident earlier. On the eve of his departure for Munster, revealing his support for New Model Army Independency, Lisle had indicated his challenge to the Presbyterian attack on lay preaching. Ironically, his best hope of success in Ireland, as earlier, lay in the possibility that his factional rivals, the Presbyterians, now in a majority in the Commons, would send the New Model Army over to Ireland to secure his main aim: the defence of Protestantism in Ireland. Whether they would renew his Lieutenantship at the end of his year of office was a chance he was prepared to take.

3. Munster, February-April 1647

Having crossed from Minehead to Cork, Lisle arrived in Munster on 21 February to take up his Lieutenancy; he was to leave Ireland less than two months later in what was obviously humiliation and failure. If his short stay in Ireland has been seen by Bottigheimer as merely a 'farcical interlude' in the unfolding tragedy of Irish seventeenth-century history, it has been dismissed by Robert Armstrong as the 'brutally divisive and incompetent campaign' of a 'self-destructive' Lisle. Here it will be argued that Lisle's Lieutenancy was more serious than Bottigheimer suggests. But if his policies were to prove divisive, this was only to be expected. Lisle's remit was to take control in Munster, establishing a secure base there in preparation as he hoped, for the arrival of units from the New Model Army. As soon as feasible, the campaign to crush Catholic rebellion and restore English and Protestant rule over the whole country would be launched. Some friction was likely enough as Lisle, the Lord Lieutenant, sought to establish his authority over that of Lord Inchiquin, the current President of the province. But given that Inchiquin was suspected of contact with the royalist Ormond in Dublin, and was in any case an ally of the Presbyterians in London and – as it transpired – more than ready to co-operate with them in the sabotage of Lisle's Lieutenancy, conflict was almost certain.[30]

[30] *HMC De L'Isle*, vi, 564; Armstrong, 'Ireland', 96; Armstrong, *Protestant War*, 203.

Lisle arrived in Munster with a large entourage: 'the gentlemen of Ireland', his New English Privy Councillors – Temple, Lord Valentia, Sir Adam Loftus (with his son Arthur) – together with a respected English lawyer, William Basil as his Attorney-General, army officers such as Sir Hardress Waller and George Monck, and his brother Algernon. A Captain Cromwell, identified as Richard, Oliver's eldest surviving son, was captain of his lifeguard, a significant indication of Lisle's ties of friendship with, and gratitude to, his father. Lisle carried some 600 troops over with him, although on Inchiquin's advice that there was a shortage of fodder, their horses were left behind. Lisle also brought a number of chaplains, all apparently Independents (although their names are not known), as well as £30,000 in coin. Waiting to greet him were the English forces already shipped over, and also Broghill who had returned to Munster the previous month. Observers expressed little confidence in their chances of success. On 13 January John Davies in Belfast had commented that 'if destruction doth not befall some of them, I know nothing ….Neither he [Lisle], nor any about him know the condition of the place where he is to go and the business he goeth about; it will be more hard than he is aware'. On 4 February had been reported that Lisle was on his way to Bristol, 'intending rather than seeing it possible to get footing in Ireland speedily'. Edmund Smyth wrote to his brother-in-law, Sir Philip Percival that 'neither you nor I care by whom it is done, but I have no confidence in the one's counsel [Temple's] or in the other's action [Lisle's]'. Smyth was later to complain of the 'tender gent [Lisle] … with his vast sums and charge to Parliament'.[31]

Lisle, however, set to work immediately 'most industriously … regulating affairs, both martial and civil… sitting twice a day for that purpose'. He ordered his officers to bring in lists of their forces; having found that out that only 6,000 foot and 300 horse were fit to march, major offensive action was ruled out for the moment. He sent back to England for the 600 horses left behind, but transport was refused without payment. A proposed expedition to send 4,000 foot to besiege a rebel-held castle on the Blackwater was also discounted after a three-day debate, on the grounds that provisions and an artillery train were lacking. In the meantime, Lisle took control of the coastal strongholds of Cork, Youghal and Kinsale, replacing local troops with his own 'redcoats', apparently wearing the uniform of the New Model Army; local forces were

[31] *HMC De L'Isle*, vi, 566; *Calendar, Committee for the Advancement of Money*, 59; P. Little, *Oliver Cromwell: New Perspectives* (Basingstoke, 2009), 126; A. Laurence, *Parliamentary Army Chaplains, 1642-1651* (Woodbridge, 1990), 61; *HMC Egmont*, i, 352; Bodl., MS Clarendon 29, fol. 91; *HMC Egmont*, i, 364, 397.

moved to hold the outlying garrisons in the Blackwater area, some twenty miles from Cork. On 15 March Lisle led an expedition of some 3,000 foot and 600 horse first to Youghal, and then to the Blackwater region to re-inforce the vulnerable, but forward-placed, garrisons of Tallow, Lismore, and Fermoy. No significant attack on the rebels was launched, but a fort, Knockmourne, was ceded by the Irish before the troops returned to Cork. [32]

Lisle, expecting that more forces would soon follow, had at least established a 'footing', a secure base for the English army and useful staging posts for future offensive action. A letter of 26 March to London from Cork stressed the need for reinforcement: 'The Lord Lieutenant … is in no capacity to take the field, having no addition of power since his arrival here; he hath fortified the places around the Blackwater, settled the garrisons and is now ready, had he horse and men … to take the field and to show himself a faithful and true servant to the parliament'. Lisle had also been much involved in administration and in reforming perceived abuses; he planned to set up a Committee of Accounts on the English model. He also established the first hospital for the soldiers in the province. He reallocated the custodiums so that income from rebel property now went directly to the army, the first regular maintenance for the army. He claimed, perhaps not unreasonably, to have made a 'good beginning' in reforming the administration of the army and thus preparing the way for offensive action against the Confederates.[33]

But if Lisle had secured his military control in the Protestant-held areas of the province, he found, predictably, his political authority contested. In his speech on taking office at Cork, as summarised by Inchiquin, Lisle had proclaimed the disinterested principles of the humanist-educated, virtuous public servant declaring that 'without his privity or desire the place was put upon him, and how really he would follow the public good without bias or partiality'. Inchiquin, a combustible character who had defected from the king to parliament on the King's appointment of a courtier as Lord President of Munster in 1644, was not likely to be co-operative. He had been 'discontented' by Lisle's appointment in early 1646 and once Lisle was in Munster took every opportunity to complain to England of his treatment. Within a day of his

[32] TT, E.381[16], *Moderate Intelligencer, 18-25 March,* 973,974; *LJ*, ix, 94; TT, E.381[1], *Kingdomes Weekly Intelligencer, 9-16 March,* 455, *HMC Egmont*, i, 391, *HMC Portland*, i, 412; TT, E.382[2], *Perfect Occurrences, 19-26 March,* 94, 96; Borlase, *History*, 220; TT. E.384[8], *Perfect Occurrences, 9-16 April*, 116.
[33] TT, E. 384[3], *Moderate Intelligencer, 8-15 April,* 1020; *HMC Egmont*, i, 375; *HMC Egmont*, i, 366-7; TT, E. 383[25], *Perfect Occurrences, 2-9 April,* 109-10.

arrival, Inchiquin had taken offence at Lisle's replacement of one of his officers with one of Broghill's. On 5 March Inchiquin wrote to his cousin Thomas Pigott attacking the 'excessively high hand' of Lisle's administration and his exclusion from decisions. There was little to choose, he wrote, between 'the effects of his Lordship's access and those we might expect from being subdued by the rebels'. Lisle's arrival had 'the semblance rather of a conquest than of relief'. On 13 March Inchiquin wrote to his friend Sir Philip Percival in London complaining of the dominance of Broghill in Lisle's counsels. There was, he wrote, a 'pre-designed aim' to fasten 'as many injuries and affronts' on him as could be found. He later complained of Lisle's failure to launch a major campaign against the Confederates. At the end of March he was declaring 'my person and authority daily affronted'. [34]

Personal pique on the part of Inchiquin was undoubtedly a factor in the breakdown of relations, but his major complaints against Lisle were political and designed to a factional agenda. Given his own links to the Presbyterians, he objected to Lisle's promotion of Independents. In his letter of 29 March he declared that 'My Lord Lieutenant hath nothing in design or action but plots how to place and displace such as are, or are not Independents.' Also unacceptable was Lisle's support for religious Independency: 'the doctrine here preached by the Lord Lieutenant's chaplains is strong and direct Independency and the government [of the Church] prescribed and pursued by the Parliament both inveighed against and decried publicly in the pulpit'. On 16 March Inchiquin wrote directly to Lenthall, Speaker of the Commons. Other such letters, now lost, may have been sent to friends in the Presbyterian leadership, Holles, Clotworthy and the earl of Holland. Given that Lisle's Lieutenancy was due to be renewed by parliament in early April, the discrediting of Lisle's leadership in Munster was in the interests of the Presbyterian supporters in both kingdoms. Inchiquin was more than ready to make his contribution. Indeed, Adamson concludes that there was a campaign concerted by Inchiquin and his allies against Lisle 'with an intensity not seen since the prosecution of Strafford in 1641'. [35]

But even if Inchiquin's complaints were designed for political purposes, there can be little doubt that they were fair enough. In spite of various assurances of co-operation, Lisle for his part distrusted Inchiquin for his suspected contacts with Ormond and English Presbyterians, and had campaigned against him long before he

[34] *HMC Egmont*, i, 365, 367, 374, 371, 382, 380.
[35] *HMC Egmont*, i, 380, 374, 376, 382, note; Adamson, 'Strafford's Ghost', 152.

had arrived in Munster. As Piggott observed of the party *en route* for Munster, 'doubtless they mean much ill to Inchiquin'. Certainly Lisle's active promotion of Independency in Munster ranks as unnecessarily provocative. Lisle's reallocation of custodiums, though good for the army, harmed Inchiquin's supporters. The movement of local troops to out-garrisons also created offence. If Inchiquin briefed against Lisle, Lisle also briefed against Inchiquin; in the middle of March he sent Sir Arthur Loftus to London with letters accusing the Lord President of the protection of rebels as well as corruption. These were read at the Derby House Committee and prompted an energetic refutation from Inchiquin himself. [36]

But from Lisle's point of view such policies were integral to his concept of his role as Lord Lieutenant and required by his instructions. On 26 February Lisle wrote to Lenthall promising him that, 'with God's assistance' and 'as God shall please to bless me', he would be 'promoting the parliament's interest in this kingdom'. This meant ensuring control of the province, not only against Catholic rebels, but also against those whose loyalties to parliament's 'interest' (in Lisle's reckoning), were suspect, above all the Presbyterian-connected Inchiquin with his rumoured links to royalist Ormond. But Inchiquin was also of old Irish descent and therefore, according to Temple, irremediably treacherous. As the Adventurer, Henry Whalley, one of Lisle's entourage, let slip in writing to the City when commending Lisle's abilities, 'these Irish (though protected) want nothing but opportunity to cut our throats'. It was not so much, as Adamson claims, that Lisle and his New English councillors were to rule over a nation they 'manifestly despised', rather that it was one they deeply feared. Exclusion for the moment, and then wholesale population clearance and 'a wall of separation' between Irish and New English planters after military victory, as Temple advised, was most probably Lisle's own recipe for the long-term future of English, Protestant Ireland.[37]

If Lisle failed in Ireland, where Cromwell later succeeded, it was not because he was divisive in Munster (though he certainly was and inevitably so), but because he was destroyed by his factional rivals in Westminster. His vulnerability was evident even before his arrival in Munster. Within a week of his departure the Commons ordered the Derby House Committee to make 'all the haste they can' in creating a considerable army for an offensive war in Ireland. The Independent-dominated

[36] For Lisle's assurances, *HMC Egmont,* i, 312, 357, 362, 376-8.
[37] Bodl., MS Nalson 6, fol. 66; *HMC Egmont,* i, 377, 367; Adamson, 'Strafford's Ghost, 142, Temple, *Irish Rebellion,* preface, [4].

committee met only twelve days after Lisle's departure. Its recommendations on the size of the forces for Ireland were not recorded and, whatever they were, they were only reported to the commons on 6 March. Meanwhile, on 18 and 19 February Holles and Stapleton secured votes in the Commons to reduce the cavalry in England to a mere 6,600 and to disband the infantry beyond that needed for garrisons. On 6 March, following the report from the committee the Commons voted to send over to Ireland 4,200 horse and 8,400 foot otherwise to be disbanded from the New Model Army. Though Lisle must have welcomed the prospect of the arrival of the best forces available, the indication that the now dominant Presbyterian leadership was sufficiently powerful to threaten the disbandment of the New Model Army or its removal to Ireland was an ominous development.[38]

Meanwhile, on 20 February, letters had been received in London from Ormond again offering to hand over Dublin to parliament, but this time without the requirement of the king's formal consent. Holles and Stapleton attended the Derby House Committee the same morning as the Commons accepted Ormond's offer, and sent orders to Lisle (and other commanders) to 'make what diversion he can' to protect Dublin 'till our forces arrive for the safety of that place'; some 4,600 troops together with supplies were to be sent over. Significantly, there was no order for Lisle to go there, but neither was an alternative arrangement made until 7 April, since the Independents continued to dominate the Derby House committee while the Presbyterians, parliament. As a result, the government of Ireland was left unresolved as the Presbyterians began the task of organizing the removal of Army regiments to Ireland, a task which by the end of the month erupted into major political confrontation with the army. On 12 March, Inchiquin, probably still concerned to prevent any possibility of the replacement of Ormond by Lisle, wrote to London complaining of the ruin of Munster if Lisle removed his troops to Dublin. On 18 March the committee finally named a commander for the force, Colonel Michael Jones, known to be unsympathetic to the Independents. But he was appointed only as deputy-governor in Dublin; he was still (at least nominally) subordinate 'to Algernon Sidney in his absence'. [39]

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[38] *CJ*, v, 77; TNA, SP 21/26, 9; *CJ*, v, 107, 90-1.

[39] P. Little, 'The Marquess of Ormond and the English Parliament, 1645-7', in T. Barnard and J. Fenlon (eds), *The Dukes of Ormonde, 1610-1745* (Woodbridge, 2000), 94-6. Although the earl of Leicester complained (*HMC De L'Isle*, vi, 564), that Ormond had deliberately waited till Lisle's departure before offering terms to Parliament, Ormond can have had no guarantee that Parliament would not have

All the same, Lisle was steadily being sidelined. As early as 20 February there was talk in England that he would be recalled and on 22 February it was commented that his commission was unlikely to be renewed since the party that nominated him was no longer the 'swaying party'. In a letter to the Lords sent on 12 March, Lisle reported on the state of the forces in Munster and informed the Lords that he had sent twenty barrels of powder to Dublin by ship as requested, even though, he noted, there were no rebels in that area. He was perhaps hoping to remind them of his equally easy access to Dublin by ship and his readiness to go there. The letter, however, must have crossed with one sent on 9 March to Inchiquin assuring him that there was no possibility of Lisle's commission being renewed and that Lisle was being informed of this by Fairfax. There was no formal vote to end the Lieutenancy, but on 1 and 2 April the Commons voted for the separation of the civil and military government in Ireland on the expiry of Lisle's commission, the civil to be under the Lords Justices and for the military command to be under Skippon and the Presbyterian Massey. On 8 April Algernon was replaced as Governor of Dublin. As a parliamentary agent commented, 'My Lord Lisle and all men that favour Independency will be outed'.[40]

Lisle must have known by then of the non-renewal of his Lieutenancy. In an account of his farewell speech to his council and officers which reached London by 6 April he promised that, 'recalled by both Houses of Parliament unto that place', he would 'endeavour to the utmost of his power to maintain the parliament's interest there [i.e in Ireland]'. To parliament he sent a letter which arrived the following day in which he expressed his 'readiness to serve the parliament to his uttermost in the service of Ireland', or return when required, but promising in the meantime to do 'what service he may for their assistance against the rebels'. It was not opened till 13 April, the day before the termination of his Lieutenancy, by which time it could safely be ignored. [41]

Three days later Lisle and his advisors organised a last-ditch attempt to avoid leaving the new forces in Munster under the sole control of the distrusted Inchiquin. Lisle's Lieutenancy terminated on the 15 April, but some days earlier his attorney general, William Basil, had claimed that a commission, consisting of Inchiquin,

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diverted Lisle to Dublin from Cork. It seems more likely that Ormond's offer to Parliament was triggered by the rejection of the Confederate General Assembly on 2 February of the two peace treaties with Ormond (Scott, *Politics*, 140); TNA, SP 21/26, 10, 12, 10-33: *HMC Egmont*, i, 371; TNA, SP 21/26, 31.

[40] Culpeper, *Letters*, 290, *HMC Egmont*, i, 364; *LJ*, ix, 94; *HMC Egmont*, i, 369; *CJ*, v, 131-2; *HMC De L'Isle*, vi, 565; *CJ*, v, 136, *HMC Ormond*, ii, 60.

[41] TT, E.383[25], *Perfect Occurrences, 2-9 April*, 109; TT, E.515[8], *Perfect Diurnall, 13-19 April*, 1647; *CJ*. v, 140.

Broghill, Algernon Sidney and Hardress Waller, could thereafter lawfully take charge of the armies in the province, pending a decision from parliament. Only on the evening of 15 April, by which time Lisle was merely a 'private person', did Inchiquin formally reject the proposal. Lisle's own regiment was ordered to stand in arms in Cork to 'escort' him to his ship the following day. Inchiquin's forces were summoned in from the countryside. All day, on 16 April, Lisle and his party delayed their departure, presumably debating whether to order the troops to seize the city, but at some point lost their nerve. Negotiations by Lisle's councillors, Temple and Loftus, defused the situation and prevented a fight for the control of Cork and Munster. On 17 April, as Lisle's party prepared to sail in ignominy and apparent failure, Inchiquin ordered, as a parting insult, the searching of Lisle's baggage.[42]

Lisle had not, however, completely failed as Lord Lieutenant. The greater part of the forces he had taken over stayed, and with their help Inchiquin took the offensive the following month against the Confederates, and by December had regained control of almost the whole province.[43] Perhaps if Lisle's Lieutenancy had been renewed, he could have achieved the same. It has been argued in this chapter that Lisle was considerably more active than Bottigheimer's 'do-nothing figurehead', though less than Adamson's 'emissary' of an 'imperial design'. He was a certainly a patron of Little's Irish Independents, but sought their advice rather than their directions. He was not 'self-destructive' as Armstrong claims. If anything, at critical times such as late July and early October, he had shown an ability to manipulate the political situation at Westminster. In late July he even discretely pushed his own agenda – the acquisition of New Model Army forces – against the interests of his own party. In the event, his Lieutenancy was ended by his political opponents as part of the same factional struggle at Westminster that had brought his Lieutenancy into being and influenced its development throughout. For both Independents and Presbyterians the problems of Ireland continued to take second place to the struggle for control in England. Armstrong's 'new vigour' in Parliament's attitude to the Irish war is scarcely in evidence until 1649.

[42] Bodl., MS Nalson 6, fol. 80, TT, E.385 [13], *A true and brief Relation of the Lord Lisle's Departure from his Command in Ireland.*
[43] Scott, *Politics*, 155.

Though short-lived and ending in humiliation, Lisle's Lieutenancy is nevertheless significant for the evidence it provides of his continued identification with the legacy of Sir Philip Sidney. As his efforts during 1646 reveal, he saw himself as a 'fighting Lord Lieutenant', aiming to crush Catholic rebellion in Ireland and hoping to acquire the forces of the New Model Army to do so. If he could use the discourse of the humanist-inspired 'public good' on arrival in Munster, in his leave taking of the Commons he had wished them a 'continual blessing' and in his letters to Parliament he acknowledged the need for 'God's help' or 'assistance'. Whether these phrases represented an inner piety or merely a conventional expression, from late 1646 he had demonstrated his support for the army's religious Independency – his choice of a Protestant alternative to Presbyterianism – and introduced it into Munster. The importation of religious Independency as well as political independency into Munster resulted in divisive confrontation with Inchiquin. But confrontation between Lisle and Inchiquin also reflected a deeper hostility: the fear of the treachery of the Irish since the massacres of 1641, depicted so convincingly by Temple in *The Irish Rebellion.* Yet Lisle's failure to attempt an offensive campaign or to pursue a coup in Munster showed, that he suffered, to some extent at least, from the hesitancy and lack of decisiveness so evident in his father. He was not, in spite of his role model, Sir Philip, truly the stuff of which 'fighting Lieutenants' were made. [44]

[44] *CJ*, v, 68, *LJ*, ix, 94, Bodl, MS Nalson, 6, fol. 66.

Chapter Four

Lisle and English Politics 1647-54: From Parliament to the Council of State

1. English Politics, 1647-9

For over a year after the ignominious loss of his Irish command in April 1647, Lisle perhaps hoped to return to Ireland to continue Sir Philip's legacy of the defence of Protestantism there. During that year his political involvement in England languished. But with the crisis of the Second Civil War in 1648 he returned to an active role in politics as a member of the Derby House committee. He welcomed the expulsion of Presbyterians in Pride's Purge in December that year and although he stayed away from the trial of the king, he supported the government set up in 1649. Elected councillor of state for three of the five councils of the Commonwealth, he was to be at the centre of affairs in England for much of the period until Cromwell's dissolution of the Rump. In the two years between 1647 and 1649 his career had been dramatically transformed from failure and political marginalization to a central role in the creation of a kingless state. What factors were responsible for the revival of Lisle's political career? This chapter will show that Lisle's social status, in combination with his ties to the Independent party and the army, ensured his place in the new government. But it will also argue that Sir Philip Sidney's humanist requirement of service to the country for the public good profoundly influenced his readiness to support the new regime.

On his return from Ireland, Lisle would have found the Presbyterians confidently arranging the disbandment or removal of the New Model to Ireland. His own Independent party, according to one of Hyde's correspondents, was by contrast 'exceedingly sunk in spirits'. But by June the situation had changed dramatically. The army, incensed by the 'Declaration of Dislike', drafted by Holles and passed by the Commons on 27 March, which branded its petitioners as 'enemies of the state', refused to disband. Instead it developed its own increasingly politicized organization with agitators in each regiment and, later, a co-ordinating general council. Following Cornet Joyce's seizure of the king from his Presbyterian guards at Holdenby on 2 June, and the army's charges of treason against eleven leading Presbyterians, the Independents regained the political initiative at Westminster. Though driven out of London at the end of July by Presbyterian counter-attack, the Independents returned on 6 August as the

army under Fairfax took control of the capital. With the army presence and the flight of the eleven leading Presbyterians, the Independents now dominated the Lords, while the Presbyterians could still rally a majority in the Commons. However, with the king's refusal of new peace offers, 'the Heads of the Proposals', a peace settlement remained as distant as ever. [1]

There was no such rapid turn around in Lisle's political fortunes. He arrived back in England on 21 April with, for the most part, the group of Irish Independents which had accompanied him to Munster in February. Hyde's correspondent noted on 26 April that 'the army is the more indisposed to the service of Ireland because the Lord Lisle (one of their party) is returned and his people are all discontented at the parliament's ill-usage of them'. Ill-used was also the opinion of Lisle's father on his sons' treatment in Ireland. Lisle himself, it can be suggested, was not so much conscious of failure in Munster as furious with parliament for refusing to renew his Lieutenancy. By 1 May he had arrived in London, having sent Sir Arthur Loftus on ahead to present Lenthall with an account of his attempted coup of 16 April. On 5 May he was back in the Commons and two days later he gave the Commons a terse account of the resources he had relinquished in Munster. He left it to Temple to provide a detailed assessment of the situation there. The 'particular thanks' of the Speaker for his good service in Ireland probably added insult to Lisle's sense of injury. [2]

But, if almost silent in the Commons, elsewhere Lisle 'has much to say for himself', according to Fairfax. He was accusing Inchiquin of 'unfaithfulness' and promising to prove it. The Commons agreed on 7 May to discuss accusations against Inchiquin the following week, but no debate took place. On 2 June, Lisle, Temple and Algernon Sidney launched an attack on Perceval, as proxy for Inchiquin (although Lisle offered some defence of Perceval). A committee comprising the three, together with eighty other members of parliament, was set up, but never met. Still in control, the Presbyterians were able to halt the campaign against their ally in parliament. But when the Independents' regained the initiative later in the month, charges against Inchiquin were included in the list of treasons alleged against the eleven leading Presbyterians. Sometime after the Independents' return to Parliament in August, Lisle presented

[1] Bodl., MS Clarendon 29, fol. 193; Woolrych, *Britain*, 353-365, 369-380.
[2] Bodl., MS Clarendon 29, fol. 195v.; *HMC De L'Isle*, vi, 565; ibid, 566, *HMC Portland*, i, 419, Bodl., MS Nalson 6, fo. 80, (printed in TT, E.385[13] ; *CJ*, v, 166.

charges drawn up by Broghill against Inchiquin to the Commons.[3] However, Inchiquin's friends Richard Gething and William Jephson defended him in print, and a letter from Inchiquin himself, defending his actions, was referred to the Derby House committee supplemented by his ally Jephson, on 7 September. Though they may have been debated at the next and unminuted meeting of 14 September, there is no indication that the accusations were ever discussed. Military successes during late 1647 disproving hostile Independent propaganda helped to secure Inchiquin's reputation.[4] The Independents, now in possession of Dublin, were content to leave Inchiquin underfunded and Munster to its own devices. Lisle had failed in his attempt to redeem his reputation.

In spite of his promise to uphold the interests of Ireland on his departure from Munster, Lisle failed to play an active role in Irish business at Westminster. He attended just eight of the ninety-two meetings of the Derby House committee held from May 1647 till the end of May 1648, and only four of the thirty-one Star Chamber committee for Irish affairs meetings held from May 1647 to August 1648. Nevertheless, he invested in Ireland, buying £300 worth of shares in the Adventurers Company in November 1647.[5] In the summer of that year, William Prynne had suggested that he was even hoping to regain office there. The following year, after news arrived that Inchiquin had abandoned parliament for the king, Clement Walker recorded a story that on 14 April, the 'Lord Lisle (who gaped after his employment) … is to go general into Munster in his room'. Unconfirmed in the official record, the appointment was never made. [6]

Lisle was similarly inactive on Commons' committees during the same period. He was nominated for only three out of the eighty-two set up during the year following his return from Ireland; of those, the one on the Forest of Dean ironworks involved the interests of his father-in-law, the earl of Salisbury. Indeed his only conspicuous parliamentary activity from May 1647 to the following May was his part in the exodus

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[3] *HMC Egmont,* i, 400; *CJ*, v, 166; *HMC Egmont,* i, 430-1, *CJ*, v, 195; TT, E.398[17] William Prynne, *A full Vindication and Answer…* (1647), 25; *HMC Egmont,* i, 462.

[4] TT, E.402[19] *Articles exhibited to the Honourable House of Commons assembled in Parliament against Lord Inchiquine* (August, 1647), *HMC Egmont,* i, 458-60, *CJ*, v, 292; *CSPI, 1647-1660*, 764; TT, E..399[23], *A Letter from Lieutenant Colonel John Knight.*

[5] Chapter 8, below.

[6] TNA SP 21/26, Derby House, Foule book of Orders, 17 December 1646-1 September, 1648, 53-163; *CSPI*, *1633-1647*, 625-750, 1647-60, 1-28; W. Prynne, *The Hypocrites unmasking …some brief Observations concerning Sir Hardress Waller and the Lord Lisle* (1647), Wing P3984, 8;TT, E. 463 [19]), C. Walker, *The History of Independency* (1648), 88, 90, *CJ*, v, 531.

of the fifty or so Independent MPs and six peers (including Northumberland) from parliament in late July 1647; on 4 August they took an engagement 'to live and die with the army'. Though the surviving lists of the MPs are discrepant, his name, reflecting his social status, is first on Rushworth's list, and on that of the *Old Parliamentary History,* second in the *Lords Journals.* Adamson's claim, however, for the nobility's leading role in the compilation of the Heads of the Proposals for a settlement with Charles during the summer has not convinced most historians and in any case there is no indication that Lisle was present at the meetings Adamson conjectured to have been held at Northumberland's house.[7]

Lisle's resentment over the non-renewal of his Lieutenantship must have been a major factor in his detachment at this time from the Commons. His sympathies would seem to have been rather with the army. These sympathies were no doubt reinforced by the religious Independency he had sponsored in Ireland, though no evidence survives of his religious affiliation at this time. Prynne noted in the summer of 1647 that he was 'a great Independent and friend of the army's'. Implying connections with the army which cannot now be identified, Prynne complained of Lisle's 'interest in the officers and soldiers of the army at this time [which] hath obstructed the relief of Ireland of purpose to gain a new commission for himself to be governor there, rather to promote his own ends and the Independents' interests and designs than the welfare of that bleeding kingdom'. A personal connection with Cromwell (suggested earlier in the political romance *Theophania,* of 1644-5), is indicated by a passing reference to Cromwell returning home one night in April 1648 in Lisle's coach and narrowly missing being shot at by some 'roaring boys'.[8]

The crisis of 1648 and the irruption of the second Civil War, however, brought Lisle back into active politics. In the previous November, Charles's attempted flight to France from Hampton Court had convinced many, including perhaps Lisle himself, that the king had no intention of settling with parliament. Held in subsequent custody on the Isle of Wight, Charles was able to negotiate a secret treaty with Scots commissioners,

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[7] *CJ,* v, 484, 531; J. Rushworth, *Historical Collections* (1721), vii, 755, *Old Parliamentary History,* xvi, 242; *LJ,* ix, 385; the full list, partially printed in *HMC Egmont,* i, 440, is BL, Add. MS 46931(B) fol. 150. In this, Lisle comes 30th, in a group added in another hand, following Lenthall, the Speaker and Lord Cranborne and preceding Sir Michael Livesey, Lord Grey, and later, 'Mr Oliver Cromwell, Lieutenant-general'; J. S.A. Adamson, 'The English Nobility and the Projected Settlement of 1647', *HJ,* xxx (1987), 567-602; for exhaustive refutation of Adamson's interpretation, M. Kishlansky in 'Saye No More', *Journal of British Studies* (1991), 407-448.

[8] Prynne, *Hypocrites,* 8; BL, Add. MS 78198, fol. 165, first noted in Little, *Cromwell,* 132.

the Engagement, for a new invasion of England to be launched in conjunction with royalist risings in order to restore him to power. On 3 January the Independents persuaded the Commons to agree to halt all peace offers to the king, the 'Vote of No Addresses'. At the same time they reconstituted the earlier Committee of Both Kingdoms to act as the executive body for parliament to deal with renewed war. Dominated by Independents from both Houses, the Derby House committee, as it was known, was soon taking the initiative from parliament itself. Overwhelmed by the pressure of organizing the military response to the many English risings, the Lords appealed for additional members. On 30 May a further twelve MPs, including both Lisle and his brother-in-law Lord Cranborne, were voted on to the committee.[9]

According to Marchamont Nedham, Lisle had 'pawn'd all his soul to the Independent faction', to avoid the 'dreadful doomsday of accounts' he still owed from his Lieutenancy. 'Of the same complexion with Ananias' (i.e. deathly pale), he had brought Cranbourne, 'just such another stewed thing as himself that looks as if he had been overwrought with purging confects', onto the committee 'to become his brother by faction as well as alliance'. Certainly Nedham was right that there was a close family tie between the two in spite of factional differences: Cranborne, unlike Lisle, had supported demands in the House for a settlement with the king. But it is not clear, as Nedham claims, that Lisle was about to be pressed for his accounts and that this was his motive for joining the committee. It is more likely that he was prompted into action by the seriousness of the situation and that, as in the autumn of 1643, he was prepared to commit himself to resistance to the king when the parliamentarian cause was most under threat. There must also have been some appeal for Lisle in the prospect of joining the 'grandees of parliament and the army acting as a council of state' (words attributed to Nedham). The talk that the Derby House committee might even adjourn parliament and rule on its own might have attracted even more.[10]

Lisle was sworn in to the committee on 2 June, the day after Cranborne. For the next week, during the tense period when London and parliament were threatened by risings in Kent and Essex as well as by conspiracies within London itself, both attended almost constantly. From 8 to 20 June, however, Lisle's attendance was interrupted by the death and burial at Penshurst of his only son and heir, Algernon. Thereafter, as the

[9] *CJ*, v, 415-6*;* Scott, *Politics*, 162-3; *CJ*, v, 579.
[10] TT, E.448[17] *Mercurius Pragmaticus, 13-20 June*, [2-3]; *HMC De L'Isle*, vi, 557, *CJ*, v, 547, 572; TT E.433[15], *Westminster Projects, or the Mysterie of Darby House discovered* (1648), 7, C. Walker, *Relations and Observations Historical and Politick* (1648), 75, 144-5.

risings were put down and the Scottish invasion defeated, so the importance of the committee declined and the attendance of both Lisle and Cranborne tailed off. From July to September Lisle attended the sixty-six meetings of the committee only eight times; Cranborne ten.[11] But from September onwards political crisis returned. Following the end of the Second Civil War, the majority Presbyterian peace party in the Commons had repealed the vote of No Addresses, and on 15 September had sent fifteen commissioners, led by Northumberland, to the Isle of Wight to begin negotiations with the king. In spite of the king's prevarications – and his negotiations with Ormond, now returned to Ireland, for military help – the Commons ruled on 5 December that Charles's answers were an acceptable basis for a settlement. But by then the *Remonstrance* agreed by the army's Council of Officers on 18 November (and read to the Commons two days later) had demanded 'exemplary justice being done in capital punishment upon the principal author … of our late wars and thereby the blood thereof expiated'. They also called for supreme power in the state to be invested in parliament. Since Cromwell was then in the North, Ireton, his son-in-law, ordered Charles to be removed from the Isle of Wight to the more secure fortress of Hurst Castle on 1 December. The following day the army took control of Whitehall. Rejecting the option of dissolving parliament, Ireton organised a purge of members on 6 and 7 December. Those thought hostile to the army or favourable to the peace settlement were either arrested or denied entry, the so-called 'Pride's Purge'. [12]

From 16 October till 1 December, during the intensifying crisis, Lisle had attended the Derby House committee's thirty-three sessions on twenty occasions, Cranborne, fifteen. From 7 November to 1 December he attended all bar one of the committee's fourteen meetings. On the meetings of 13, 14 and 16 November Lisle would have learnt news of Charles's latest attempts at escape from custody. From 26 September to 25 November he even attended seven of the twelve sessions of the Derby House Irish committee. The careers of the brothers-in-law, however, diverged sharply at Pride's Purge. Cranborne, a teller in favour of the 5 December vote for a settlement, though not actually excluded by the purge, absented himself from the Commons and never returned to active politics. By contrast, Lisle was conspicuous in the reduced membership of the Commons. He was listed as one of the seventy-two members who

[11] *CSPD, 1648-9,* 91; *CSPD, 1648-9,* 109-261.
[12] *CSPD, 1648*-9, 305-337, 320-337; Scott, *Politics,* 178; TT, E. 473[11] *Remonstrance of his Excellency Thomas, Lord Fairfax* (1648), 64, 66; Scott, *Politics,* 186-8.

reassembled in the House on 12 December and on 14 December he was listed in a group, described as 'purely for the army' who voted against a request to re-instate the secluded Members. Two days later Lisle was added to the committee of the revenue, one of the most influential committees of the Commons. On 19 December he attended the last meeting of the Derby House committee. According to Nedham and Clement Walker, on the following day he supported John Gourdon's declaration registering dissent from the Commons vote of 5 December for a peace settlement. Although David Underdown dismisses Nedham's list as 'totally inaccurate', it is still indicative of Lisle's reputation that both Nedham and Walker named Lisle as the first to register his dissent. The recording of Lisle's name with Henry Vane junior, Cromwell and Ireton in the group 'purely for the army' may also have been guess work, but again, this indicates a perception of Lisle's political stance from a (usually) well-informed commentator. The former New Model Army Colonel John Jubbes, in his moderate version of radical Leveller demands published in December, included Lisle as one of forty-two members of a committee of state he proposed to handle affairs in the intervals between parliaments. [13]

The evidence therefore suggests that Lisle readily supported the army's purge of parliament. The aims of the army, however, remain controversial. The recent work of Sean Kelsey and Adamson has added new insights to Gardiner's generally accepted account of negotiations with the king over December and even January. Their analysis suggested that the army leaders and Charles's judges were reluctant regicides. Only with the breakdown of negotiations with Charles did the king's execution become inevitable. But recently Mark Kishlansky and Clive Holmes have revived the earlier interpretation of C.V. Wedgwood. Though using different evidence, both dismiss the suggestion of 'ongoing negotiations' and stress the importance of the *Remonstrance* of 18 November, termed by Ian Gentles the 'masterplan' for the army's actions. For Holmes, this clearly defined the army's intention of bringing the king to judgment and execution. In the weeks that followed, Holmes argues that apparent negotiations of leaders such as Cromwell amounted to spin; demurrers distanced themselves. Since Lisle was one of thirty-eight MPs on the Commons committee set up on 23 December

[13] *CJ*, vi, 93; TT, E.476[35], *Mercurius Pragmaticus*, 12-19 December, [8]; TT, E.476[36], *Mercurius Elencticus*, 12-19 December, 539; *CJ*, vi, 99; *CSPD, 1648-9*, 340; TT, E.477[30], *Mercurius Pragmaticus*, 19-25 December, [5], TT, E.1052[2], C. Walker, *Anarchia Anglicana* (1661), 48; D. Underdown, *Pride's Purge, Politics in the Puritan Revolution* (Oxford, 1971), 214, note 13; TT, E.477[18], J. Jubbes, *Several Proposals for Peace and Freedom by an Agreement of the People*, 10

to consider 'how to proceed in a way of justice against the king and other capital offenders', this interpretation suggests that Lisle can be considered to have favoured the army's agenda for the trial and execution of the king. [14]

Although nominated for the first committee to consider procedure for the king's trial, Lisle was not nominated for the later committees. But, on 6 January, together with Algernon, he was selected as one of the 135 commissioners nominated by the Commons, in the expectation (though not the guarantee) of their co-operation for the trial. His name was listed fifteenth out of the 135. He was one of just three Lords nominated from the Commons, the others being Thomas, Baron Grey of Groby, and William, Viscount Monson. 'A golden number indeed', commented Nedham, 'enough to set a gloss upon the business, but weigh them and you'll find them dross'. Lisle attended neither the meetings of the court nor the trial itself which began on 20 January, still less did he sign the death warrant of 27 January. Algernon later claimed to have declared that the court had no authority to try the king, but all the same he attended three preliminary sessions of the court.[15]

Scott wrongly states that, according to their father, both brothers were at Penshurst at the time of the king's execution, which took place on 30 January. In fact the earl recorded in his journal that his 'two sons Philip and Algernon came unexpected to Penshurst Monday, 22, and stayed there till Monday, 29 January, so as neither of them was at the condemnation of the king' (pronounced on 27 January). Thus (*pace* Scott), their father's account indicates that the brothers returned to London the day *before* the execution. There was plenty of time on 28 January for the news of the sentence to have reached Penshurst, which was only four hours' fast ride from London. The return of both brothers to London on the following day, once the sentence was pronounced but before the death of the king, suggests their readiness to be part of the political arrangements that were to follow. It is quite possible that, having returned to London on 29 January, on the following day they were both in the Commons helping to

[14] For instance, S. Kelsey 'The Trial of Charles I', *EHR*, cxviii, 477 (2003), 583- 614, and 'The Death of Charles I', *HJ*, xlv (2002), 727-54; J. S.A. Adamson, 'The Frightened Junto: Perceptions of Ireland and the Last Attempts at Settlement with Charles I', in J. Peacey, *The Regicides and the Execution of Charles I* (Basingstoke, 2003), 36-70; M. Kishlansky, 'Mission Impossible: Charles I, Oliver Cromwell and the Regicide', *EHR*, cxxv, 515 (2010), 844-74, particularly, 873-4; C. Holmes, 'The Trial and Execution of Charles I', *HJ*, liv (2010), 289-316; also presenting the case for the army's irreconcilable hostility to Charles, I. Gentles, *The English Revolution and the Wars in the Three Kingdoms, 1638-1652* (Harlow, 2007), 356-7; TT, E.1013[22], William Prynne, *A Full Declaration* (1660), 23; *CJ*, vi, 103

[15] *A&O*, i, 1254; TT. E. 538[18], [4], *Mercurius Pragmaticus, 9-16 January, 1649*; Blencowe, *Sydney Papers*, 237.

pass the bill prohibiting the proclamation of a new king. Their absence from London during the previous week was not proof of their objection to the regicide, but perhaps merely of their unwillingness, given their prominent social status, to take the risk of involvement in the sentencing. A week's stay in Penshurst provided a cast-iron alibi against future possible charges of responsibility for king-killing. [16]

Attending the council of state for the first time on 19 February, Lisle refused (on unrecorded grounds) to take an oath for councillors recognizing the legality of the proceedings against the late king. But as noted above, he had been a member of the 23 December committee which promised justice against capital offenders, including the king. If Kishlansky and Holmes's interpretation is accepted, he must have known of the determination of the army officers to proceed to the execution of the king. What then were Lisle's objections to the proceedings? A possible clue is offered in a little-noticed letter of Algernon's to his father on 10 January in which Algernon wrote that the Lords are 'very seasonably passing an ordinance making it treason for any king to make war on the parliament', but that the precipitate claim of the Commons [on 4 Jan], for the validity of laws passed on their authority alone, prevented the Lords from assenting to the ordinance for the king's trial. He added that the Lords were 'now in a temper to have given their assent'. If Algernon's description of the Lords' actions indicates his acceptance of regicide, it also suggests his sympathy with the Lords' opposition to the Commons claim to sole sovereignty. The closeness of the brothers at the time suggests that Lisle too, while supporting the king's execution, may have objected to the legality of the king's treason trial following the exclusion of the constitutional rights of the Lords by the Commons. [17]

By 1 February, if not two days earlier, Lisle was back in the Commons, recorded as one of the thirty-one members, including Lords Monson and Grey, nominated to the committee to register the dissent of members from the 5 December vote. Even though he registered his own dissent only on that day, he was evidently regarded as sufficiently supportive of the new order to register the credentials of others. On 6 February, Algernon, although not Lisle, was nominated for the committee to abolish the House of Lords; the following day the same committee was charged with drafting the act to abolish kingship. The next day, both brothers were placed on the

[16] Scott, *English Republic*, 92; *HMC De L'Isle*, vi, 580

[17] *CSPD, 1649-50*, 9; *CJ*, vi, 111; BL, Add. MS 21506, fol. 55. The letter contradicts Scott's claim that Algernon objected to the army's interference in politics; his objection was rather to the 'hasty' Commons claim to sole legislative authority.

committee to view JPs throughout the country. On 14 February, Lisle was elected to the council of state set up to implement the decisions of the 'Rump' parliament, the supreme power in the kingless new Commonwealth. David Underdown has categorized Lisle as a 'conformist', rather than a 'revolutionary'; an unenthusiastic moderate prepared to work with the new government, or indeed any government, to avoid anarchy. It has nevertheless been argued from the surviving evidence that Lisle supported the army's intention of bringing the king to trial and execution. His appointment to the council of state was certainly in part due to his social status; it provided reassurance to the public that traditional social structures were unaffected by the removal of the king. But it also reflected his support for the radical courses of the army, rather than his reluctance to endorse them. [18]

During 1647-8 Lisle had been thwarted in his ambition to revive the legacy of Sir Philip's defence of Protestantism in Ireland. He demonstrated little interest in parliamentary business during these years. If his sympathies were apparently with the army rather than parliament, this was perhaps not only due to disgruntlement with his treatment over the Irish Lieutenancy and a distaste for parliamentary politics, but also a reflection of the Sidney tradition of military endeavour. But the king's attempts to regain power in the Second Civil War prompted Lisle's return to active politics and an energetic resistance to the crown. The causes of opposition to the crown, however, had changed since the early 1640s. By 1648 Charles was no longer portrayed as a monarch led astray by papist evil councillors, but as a tyrant responsible for war on his own people. It was also clear, at least to the army, that he would never abide by any settlement extracted under duress. The army's overwhelming hostility to a settlement was in part a pragmatic recognition of political reality. Lisle had apparently come to accept this by late 1648, if not earlier. But the army's stance was also ideological. As religious justification, the testimony of providence was invoked against Charles, 'this man against whom the Lord hath witnessed': Charles's blood-guilt also required sacrifice. In political terms, the *salus populi* was declared by the army's *Remonstrance* of November 1648 to be the sole legitimizing authority for government. Stressed throughout the document as the 'public interest', this encapsulated the humanist requirement for the upholding of the public good. The influence of the fervour of army

[18] *CSPD, 1649-50,* 1; *CJ,* vi, 132, 133, 141; Underdown, *Pride's Purge,* 200, 205, 221.

Independency, as well as Sir Philip's advocacy of political virtue in the cause of the public good, explain Lisle's support for the trial and execution of a king who had become a tyrant.[19]

2. A Councillor of State under the Commonwealth, 1649-52

Sarah Barber has traced the development of the regicides' condemnation of Charles for his personal misrule in 1649 into a rejection of the institution of monarchy as a whole and an acceptance by some of the advantages of a republic. Certainly from that date onwards Lisle, having abandoned his hopes of a military career, aimed to fulfil Sir Philip's requirements of the *activa vita* by service to a Commonwealth which justified its actions in Sidneian terms for the 'common good' and whose ideology has been identified as a 'politics of virtue'.[20] From February 1649 to October 1652, he was elected councillor of state for the first, second and fourth councils of state set up to implement the decisions of the Rump and take responsibility for foreign affairs, security and trade. He was president of the council for a month from 23 February to 22 March 1652, a member throughout the existence of the 'Rump' parliament from December 1648 to April 1653, and in 1653 appointed ambassador to Sweden. Lisle was at the centre of the politics of the Commonwealth government set up after the execution of the King.[21] For over four years the government survived, defeating all threats to its survival from home and abroad. By 1650 it had effectively crushed the Irish rebellion; the following year it had destroyed the royalist challenge from Scotland at the battles of Dunbar and Worcester; by the summer of 1652 it was at war with the United Provinces, the world's most powerful maritime power. Its existence was only ended by the intervention of the army – the very force that had brought it into being – when the Rump was expelled by Cromwell in April 1653.

Given its military successes but short political life, there are sharply divergent interpretations of the nature and identity of the regime. Sean Kelsey has drawn a picture of proactive and purposeful Commonwealth politicians, accustomed to rule in their

[19] J. Morrill, *Nature of the English Revolution* (1993), 23; Peacey, *The Regicides,* 26-9, 147; Gentles, *English Revolution*; for instance, see Cust, 'Public Man', 122.
[20] S. Barber, *Regicide and Republicanism: Politics and Ethics in the English Revolution, 1646-59* (Edinburgh, 1989), in particular, 133-5; for instance, TT, E.548 [12], *A Declaration of the Parliament* (1649), 5, 16; J. Scott, *Commonwealth Principles: Republican Writing of the English Revolution* (Cambridge, 2004), 9, 170-183.
[21] *CJ*, vi, 141, 362, vii, 42.

localities, readily settling into power at Whitehall and successfully creating ceremonies and spectacle out of the forms of the old polity in order to establish the identity of the new. He explains the dissolution of this government in terms of the jealousy of an army fearful of a civilian regime permanently entrenching itself into power and access to the profits of office. Jonathan Scott has suggested that the Rump's military successes, celebrated by its republican propagandists, 'would have laid some basis for self-belief in any government'. But in the historiography a more negative view of the Commonwealth tends to prevail. If Underdown's division of the MPs of the purged Parliament into 'conformists' and a minority of 'revolutionaries', has since been challenged as unhelpful, Worden has also depicted a regime beset with problems, which for 'much of the time did not know if it were coming or going'. Ronald Hutton has seen the Rump, created by the army merely as an interim regime, remaining 'somewhat insecure in its identity'. Kevin Sharpe has argued for the inability of the Commonwealth to exorcise the images and the power of monarchy, thereby failing to establish its identity as the government of the nation. David Smith has delineated the failure of the Rump to fulfil the army's hopes for social justice and religious reform; it was this failure that ensured its dissolution by the army. Few historians would contest Woolrych's verdict that the Rump was unpopular during its lifetime and unlamented on its dissolution.[22]

The State Papers and the *Commons Journal* provide a record of Lisle's attendances and committee nominations at the council of state and parliament, but given the nature of the documentation, they provide no information on his political views. However, forty-six letters of Lisle's to his father from September 1649 to February 1651 survive. Prompted by Lisle's need to ensure his father's favour following the 'great settlement' of the Sidney estates in 1648, and demonstrating Lisle's anxiety to assure him that 'not only in little things but in great ones I exceedingly desire to obey your Lordship', they are mostly concerned with the earl's own affairs. Lisle was also doubtless constrained by the councillors' oath of

[22] S. Kelsey, *Inventing a Republic: the Political Culture of the English Commonwealth 1649-1653* (Manchester, 1997), 2-9, 45, 13; J. Scott, 'The English Republican Imagination', in J.S. Morrill, *Revolution and Restoration: England in the 1650s* (1992), 40; B. Worden, *The Rump Parliament* (Oxford, 1972), 185; R. Hutton, *The English Republic, 1649-1660*, 2nd ed. (Basingstoke, 2000), 21; K. Sharpe, ' 'An Image-doting Rabble': the Failure of Republican Culture in Seventeenth-century England', in K. Sharpe and S. N. Zwicker, *Refiguring Revolution: Aesthetics and Politics from the English Revolution to the Romantic Revolution* (Berkeley, 1998), 29-42, 44; Smith, *History*, 180-183; Woolrych, *Britain*, 515, 537.

confidentiality in the information he sent to Penshurst. Nevertheless, given the absence of parliamentary diaries of the period, the letters provide rare and valuable insights into the attitudes of a Commonwealth politician and those of Lisle in particular. [23]

Although he may have had doubts over the legality of the king's trial and execution, both the official and the private sources suggest that Lisle was willing enough to support a republican form of government. A non-retrospective oath, promising loyalty to a new government 'in the way of a republic without king or House of Peers', was devised by Cromwell in parliament on 22 February and must have been taken by Lisle and the others the following day before they took their places on the council. On 7 March, Lisle was nominated member of the committee for the third reading of the 'Act for the abolishing the king's office', justified on the grounds that it was 'unnecessary, burdensome and dangerous to the liberty, safety and public interest of the people'. His thirty-eight fellow committee members included Ireton, Cromwell, Harrison, Chaloner and Vane, the core of hardline opposition to the monarchy. The same committee, including Lisle, gave the third reading to the act abolishing the House of Lords. On 1 May, as a councillor of state he was nominated to a committee to 'settle the government of the Commonwealth'. On 11 May the act was passed declaring England a 'Commonwealth and free state'. [24]

Lisle's letters to his father from late 1649 onwards suggest his positive identification with the new government. On 11 October he wrote that the Estates of Holland 'seem very resolute for us … saying they are not to examine how those, which govern now in England have got power, but that they have it by a great army and a great fleet and by being victorious everywhere'. On 2 November he assured his father that 'the House of Parliament grows pretty full' and that the Queen of Sweden 'seems to have a better opinion of the parliament than formerly'. Four days later he wrote that the ministers in Switzerland 'do publically give thanks for the establishment of the republic'. Early the next year, he proudly reported that 'parliament's fleet this next summer is as likely to be as good as, I think, England ever had'. In April that year he assured his father, wrongly as it turned out, that Lord General Fairfax, known to be

[23] *HMC De L'Isle*, vi, 456. Omitting Lisle's signature on the letters, 'your Lordship's most obedient son, P. Lisle', the *HMC* printed version fails to convey the deferential tone of the manuscript letters, KHLC De Lisle MSS, U 1475 C83/6- 50.

[24] *CSPD, 1649-1650,* 9; Worden, *Rump,* 180-1; Barber, *Regicide*, 160, wrongly states that no oath was required for the twenty-two non-jurors; however, a comment of Lisle's to his father, indicates that Fairfax (and the rest) had taken the revised oath, *HMC De L'Isle*, vi, 474; TT, 669.f.14[2], An Act Abolishing the Kingly Office, 19 March, 1649; *CJ*, vi, 158, 199, 208.

unwilling to lead the army against the Scots, would in fact be 'hearty in his northern journey, even as far as Scotland'. Some days later he promised that parliament's agent to Portugal had been received with 'much civility'.[25] In contrast his comments on the Stuarts were tinged with malice. On 23 October 1649, he wrote that 'from France we hear that … the English Queen is in such want that …she sent lately to her sister of France desiring that some course might be taken for bread for her domestics'. According to Lisle, on 8 September 1650 the news of the death of William II, Prince of Orange, brother-in-law and active supporter of Charles II, was sent to the council of state by the Holland Commissioner, 'full of the joy as many are here'. The following month on receiving the news of Charles's estrangement from his Presbyterian allies in Scotland, Lisle wrote that the council would recommend sending his younger brother, the Duke of Gloucester there, 'the kirk now wanting a king'. [26]

Lisle would seem to have been one of those Commonwealthsmen considered by Kelsey to have settled readily into public service in the new government. He would have appreciated the councillors' privilege of lodgings in Whitehall. He had relatives on the council to keep him company: Salisbury, his father-in-law, for whose election he had acted as teller, as well as the fourth earl of Pembroke, his father's cousin. In Kelsey's definition, both earls, complicit in the events of December and January, should be regarded as 'revolutionaries' rather than 'conservatives'. On the morning of 20 April Lisle presented Pembroke, newly elected as a member of the Commons, to the Speaker of the House. That afternoon a party of ten councillors – Lisle himself, the earls of Pembroke and Denbigh, Lord Grey of Groby, together with Sir Henry Mildmay, Sir Gilbert Pickering, Sir William Masham, William Heveningham, Thomas Scot and Antony Stapley – all arrived late at the council, whose meetings began at 3 p.m. It seems that a celebratory dinner had been held and the party a good one. Of this group, four (Grey, Heveningham, Scot and Stapley), were regicides and two (Mildmay and Pickering) regarded as 'fiery spirits'; all were to be enthusiastic supporters of the Commonwealth. With the possible exception of Masham, none of the ten, including Lisle, could be described as 'conformists'.[27]

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[25] *HMC De L'Isle*, vi, 461, 462, 462, 467, 477, 478.
[26] BL, Add. MS 18738, fol. 82; *HMC De L'Isle*, vi, 483, 485.
[27] O. Millar (ed.), *The Inventories and Valuations of the King's Goods, 1649-1651*, Walpole Society, xliii (1972), 407; S. Kelsey, 'Constructing the Council of State', *Parliamentary History*, xxii (2003), 232-3; *CJ*, vi, 141; TT, E.551[15] *Mercurius Pragmaticus, 17-24 April, 1649, CSPD, 1649-50*, liii; biographical information from *ODNB*.

The group was not, however, particularly close-knit. Lisle was later to refer to Scot as 'the intelligencer of the council, at least that hath £800 a year for that service', suggesting friction between the two. Lisle's closest working partnership was apparently with his father-in-law, Salisbury, with whom he shared membership of a number of committees. Another councillor, Sir Henry Vane the younger, was described in 1652 by Lisle's father as Lisle's 'great friend'. The tie could well have been forged years earlier, created through a common bond of religious independency and family connections. Some evidence of this 'great friendship' is suggested in a record of the Admiralty committee. On 7 January, 1652, Lisle and Vane were the only two members attending the committee and working through a pile of petitions. It looks as if Vane, the driving force behind naval expansion, had summoned in an old friend in to help with a tedious backlog of paper work. It seems likely that Lisle was already acquainted with Peter Sterry, later to be his own chaplain, who was appointed preacher to the Council in 1649. But Lisle also retained his friendship with those outside the new government. Although his uncle Northumberland had retired from national politics after the execution of the king, he retained his offices in local government, and he and Lisle conferred on political issues at least during the early years of the Commonwealth. Retiring to Petworth in 1651, Northumberland left Lisle as his tenant in Northumberland House, his London home. Algernon, nominally governor of Dover Castle, was often away from 1649 onwards, but the two brothers were to continue their mutually-supportive relationship during the lifetime of the Commonwealth.[28]

Within days of taking his place on the council, Lisle was nominated for committee work. His first concern, reflecting traditional Sidney interests and his own experience, was with Ireland. On 27 February he was nominated to a committee to liaise with the old Star Chamber committee for the affairs of Ireland to assess the state of the funds for Ireland, and on 22 March to a committee to consider offers of money for the proposed Irish expedition. On 16 April he was added to the council's standing committee for Irish affairs (set up on 31 March in his absence), and the following day, together with Vane, Cromwell and Sir William Armyne, he was nominated for the committee on relations with Scotland. He was reinstated on the Irish committee on 26 October, after absence from London during the summer, appointed to a temporary Irish committee on the creation of the second council of state, and on 2 March 1650,

[28] BL, Add. MS 18738, fol. 82; *HMC De L'Isle*, vi, 614; for example, *CSPD, 1650*, 67; Bodl., MS Rawlinson A 225, 45-46v. ; *CPSD, 1649-50*, 239; *HMC De L'Isle*, vi, 613.

nominated to the standing committee on Irish affairs. Again, on the establishment of the fourth council of state, on 2 December he was nominated to the committee on Irish Affairs, which by then included Scottish Affairs. He was also involved in Irish affairs in parliament: on 6 July 1649 reporting to the House on a parliamentary committee's attempt to secure a loan of £150,000 from the City for Cromwell's Irish expedition and – in true Sidneian tradition – on 30 November nominated for a committee to 'encourage learning and true religion in Ireland' by the setting up of two colleges.[29]

As well as Irish affairs, and increasingly, Lisle was involved with foreign relations, reflecting the European-wide outlook of his family. On 13 March 1649 he was nominated for a standing committee to review alliances with foreign powers. Though its existence was intermittent that year, and its membership undefined in the early part of 1650, from the outset of the fourth council of State Lisle was a member of the committee for foreign ambassadors. This was reconstituted on 17 December 1651, as the committee for trade and foreign affairs, meeting twice weekly. In January 1650 Lisle was deputed to conferences with the two agents appointed to go to Spain and Portugal; later in the year he was nominated for a committee to discuss the state of France with Augier, the French agent, and added to a committee on Hamburg business.[30] On 21 January 1651 he reported to parliament the view of the council that a 'public minister' be sent to the United Provinces; the following day he was nominated for the council committee to consider relations with the United Provinces. In April, not a member of the third council, he was a member of a parliamentary committee on a Treaty with Portugal; in May he was one of a committee for an audience to the representative of the Grand Duchy of Tuscany. Having been voted back on the council (the fourth) in December 1651, the following June he was on the council's committee to receive and report talks with the Danish ambassador extraordinary. On 12 October that year, he was appointed to the council's committee to treat with the ambassador from Portugal.[31]

During the fourth council, relations with the United Provinces were Lisle's main foreign policy concern. Together with Pembroke and Sir Peter Wentworth, he was deputed to receive the three Dutch ambassadors who arrived on 17 December and on

[29] *CSPD, 1649-50*, 22, 48, 93, 97, 365, *CPSD, 1650*, 2, 18; *CSPD, 1651-2*, 43; *CJ*, vi, 253, 327.
[30] *CSPD, 1649-50*, 37, 111, 233, 312, 412, 1650, 1, 1651-2, 43, 67; *CSPD, 1649-50,* 465, 496, *CSPD, 1650,* 177, 368.
[31] *CJ*, vi, 525, *CPSD, 1651-2*, 19; *CJ*, vi, 558, 576; *CSPD, 1651*-2, 247, 284-5, 321, 349; *CSPD, 1651-2,* 436, 455, 464, 493, 499.

16 January 1652 he was nominated to the committee to treat with them. Steven Pincus has seen both groups, including Lisle, as 'committed to the Protestant cause'. Lisle's traditional loyalties were, of course, with the Protestant United Provinces, in the cause of whose independence from Catholic Spain his famous namesake had died fighting. He certainly had a particular allegiance, as suggested by a letter of 12 June 1650, to the republican province of Holland, where his younger brother, Robert, held a military command. But, as noted earlier, he had welcomed the death of the prince of Orange in 1650. The continued prestige of the Orange family with its Stuart allegiances in the other provinces and the rejection of the English offer of political union in 1651, had created much distrust and resentment in England, no doubt shared by Lisle himself.[32] The distrust was further exacerbated, according to Pincus, by a press campaign attacking the Dutch for worldliness and a falling-off from reformed Protestantism. Xenophobic atrocity stories increased tensions and had particular impact on an already highly politicized navy under the command of the republican Admiral Blake. Pincus has argued that the Navigation Act of 1651 and the subsequent conflict resulted from fear of royalist Orange influence in the United Provinces and dislike of Dutch religious backsliding, rather than from commercial rivalries, the traditional interpretation for the war. Woolrych, however, points out the two explanations are not incompatible, and argues that the English wish to challenge the commercial domination of the United Provinces was probably as important a factor in the causes of the war as alarm over Orangist influence in the United Provinces. [33]

Lisle certainly shared popular fears of the Orange-Stuart connections in the Netherlands; whether he also contemplated war with the Dutch on the grounds of their 'worldliness' is less clear. Hugh Peters, one of the chaplains to the council of state, complained that the ambassadors' party from the United Provinces were all strong sympathizers with House of Orange, 'which was an enemy of this state and would never have the Lord's blessing'. The distinguished scholar Van Vliet, a member of the party, found the doors of Selden, Milton, and Junius closed to him. A courtesy call on Lisle himself, from another member of the delegation on 8 March when he was president of the council, found that he too was 'not at home'. Perhaps that really was the case, perhaps not. In this unpromising atmosphere, Lisle's committee began

[32] *CSPD, 1651-2,* 46, 106; S. Pincus, *Protestantism and Patriotism: Ideologies and the Making of English Foreign Policy, 1650-1668* (Cambridge, 1996), 52; *HMC De L'Isle,* vi, 481, 483.
[33] Pincus, *Protestantism,* 37, 59-60, 64, 12-4, 78; Woolrych, *Britain,* 507.

negotiations on 19 January, meeting the Dutch ambassadors six, possibly seven, times and acting as an intermediary between them, the council and its committee for foreign affairs. [34] Almost from the first there was a note of belligerency in the council's demands and this continued while Lisle himself was president of the council. Within two days of his taking office on 23 February, there was a demand that the committee for foreign affairs bring in a paper listing the 'affronts' done to the Commonwealth. On 8 March, all ships requisitioned for the state were to gather at the Downs, there to receive the orders of Admiral Blake. Guns and cannon were ordered to the Tower, the navy commissioners were told to use their 'utmost diligence in expediting the fleet … for the safety of the Commonwealth', and customs officers in all ports were required to survey shipping 'fit and ready to be employed for the common defence and prevent all attempts of affront to be put upon us'. [35]

The extent to which this belligerency reflected Lisle's own personal opinion rather than a majority view of the council, can be questioned. For Worden, the radicals, Marten, Chaloner, Neville and Morley – a group Lisle was not associated with – had won control of the council and were the driving proponents for war. They, and not their president, were responsible for council decisions. Nevertheless, in the meantime and in spite of tensions, the negotiations made steady progress and by May the Dutch ambassadors, offering an alliance based on the earlier unsuccessful Treaty of 1651, were confident of an imminent settlement. But on 19 May fighting broke out in the Channel between the English navy under Blake and a Dutch fleet under the Orangist Admiral Tromp, provocatively flying the Orange flag. Pressure for war became intense and negotiations were suspended until the arrival of another Ambassador Extraordinary, Lord Pauw, on 8 June. On 14 June Lisle was again placed on the negotiating committee. This time the talks were more intensive and urgent, beginning the same afternoon. Nevertheless, the insistence of the war party in the council on compensation from the Dutch for Tromp's attack ensured the breakdown of negotiations and the return to the Netherlands of all ambassadors, with war formally declared on 9 July. Lisle's father, perhaps repeating information told him by Lisle, observed in his journal that the ambassadors left England 'much discontented' and 'very sorry' that they had not been able to prevent war. No other clue to Lisle's attitude

[34] L. Huygens, *The English Journal, 1651-2* (Leiden, 1982), 143, 19, 98, 66, 73, 80, 101 (dates new style); *CSPD, 1651-2*, 150-1, 214, 220.
[35] *CSPD, 1651-2,* 151, 171, 173, 176, 179.

to the war survives, but it would seem that he preferred peace to war with the traditional allies of the Sidneys.[36]

In addition to these well-established Sidney concerns with Irish and foreign affairs, Lisle was also nominated to a number of other committees: in March 1650 to the standing committee of the council to liaise with the Army, and the following month, to the standing committee on the Admiralty. In addition he was appointed to a number of important *ad hoc* council committees: for instance, in 1649, one on the amalgamation of financial departments into a single treasury and another on the inspection of the new coinage in the Mint; in 1650, one on the affairs of Guernsey and two on the reservation of items for the use of the state from the sale of the 'late king's goods'; in December 1651 (a very busy) one on captured Scots prisoners; in 1652 another on the differences between the Mayor and Aldermen and the Common Council of London, as well as a dozen or more on private business. [37]

In contrast to his earlier non-involvement in the work of the Commons, he was even active in parliament. During the first council of state he was named to ten committees of the House, presented five reports from the council and acted as teller three times. In all he was nominated for thirty of the 378 committees set up during the lifetime of the Rump, acted as teller sixteen times and seven times reported to the House from the council of state. His commitment, however, declined. During the second council, he was nominated for eleven committees, but seven of these were in the last six weeks before the elections to the third council; Worden notes his perhaps deliberately higher profile in the Commons just before the elections. From January 1652 until the dissolution of the Rump in 1653 Lisle presented no reports, was nominated for just three committees (all on the reception of foreign ambassadors) and acted as teller just three times. His comment on the prospect of elections to the council in 1651, 'the House, I believe, will have that pleasure', suggests his lack of identification with the Rump parliament; this lack of identification was apparently to decline further thereafter. [38]

But in other ways Lisle upheld Sir Philip's ideal of the life of virtuous public service. On 15 June 1649 when the outstanding accounts for his Irish Lieutenancy were

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[36] Worden, *Rump*, 301; Henry Neville made a scurrilous reference to Lisle in his *Newes from the New Exchange*, TT, E.590[10], 4; Pincus, *Protestantism*, 56, 71; Huygens, *English*, 138, 142; *CSPD, 1651-2*, 290, 294, 296-7, 298, 302, 303; *CSPD, 1651-2*, 307-8, Huygens, *English*, 151; *HMC De L'Isle*, vi, 613.
[37] *CPSD, 1650*, 18-19, 90; *CSPD, 1649-50*, 188, 430, *CSPD, 1650*, 67; *CSPD, 1651-2*, 76, 119.
[38] *CJ*, vi, vii; Worden, *Rump*, 249; *HMC De L'Isle*, vi, 488.

presented to Parliament, Lisle declined to take £3,000 of the £7,868 4s 5d owing to him on the grounds of the shortness of his stay in Ireland, a magnanimous gesture he could ill afford. The following year on 26 March, when his father urged him to acquire the Wardenship of Ashdown Forest on the death of the previous Warden, the fourth earl of Pembroke, Lisle refused, declaring 'Your Lordship will do me a great favour to discharge me towards that pursuit, for it is extremely contrary to my judgment, that, having never yet asked anything of gifts from the parliament and it being so exceedingly contrary to my disposition to solicit such a thing, I should begin with a thing of so little value'. On 7 August 1651, acting on similar principles, he was nominated to a parliamentary committee preparing an act prohibiting public servants from accepting gifts or pensions from foreign powers. He also showed awareness of the government's financial obligations: on 20 May 1649 his name was the first signature on an order to the revenue committee for small sums to be paid to the servants of the late king 'to keep them from starving'. The same October he wrote to his father that parliament had begun 'a good work, the reforming of money matters, the conclusion of which we hope will be the ease of the people in taxes'. He was also prominent in attempting to secure pardons for the defeated opponents of the regime; he acted as a teller (in favour of their appeals for pardons) in March 1649 to save five condemned royalists and twice in the summer of 1651 to save the condemned Presbyterian minister, Christopher Love.[39]

In addition to such public-spiritedness, Lisle also helped out with the more particular interests of his family and friends. On 29 March 1649, together with Salisbury, Armyne, Harrington and Heveningham, he was nominated for a committee to 'consider of the proposals of Colonel Sidney'. But whatever these proposals were, the committee never met. When Algernon was later in trouble over some unrecorded crisis in his governorship of Dover Castle, Lisle took care to be one of the parliamentary committee on his threatened court-martial, declaring sympathetically to his father that 'truly I think he hath had very hard measure'. In 1649 Lisle also helped arrange the transfer of guardianship of the royal children from Northumberland to his mother, a guardianship worth £3,000 a year.[40] He used his contacts to forward his father's concerns and worked to secure the release of his aunt, Lady Carlisle, sent to the

[39] *CJ*, vi, 232; *HMC De L'Isle*, vi, 477; *CJ*, vi, 618; BL, Add. MS 21482, fol. 13; BL, Add. MS 18738, fol. 82; *CJ*, vi, 158, 603, vii, 5.
[40] TNA, SP 25/1, 36v.; *CJ*, vi, 523, *HMC De L'Isle*, vi, 487; *CJ*, vi, 216, TT, E.556[25], *Mercurius Pragmaticus, 22-29 May, 1649*, 48.

Tower in early 1649 for suspected contacts with exiled royalists. While he was president of the council a number of petitions from family and friends were allowed: one from Northumberland, another from Richard Lovell, former tutor at Penshurst, while a post for Weckerlin, an old friend of Leicester's, was recommended to the committee for foreign affairs. [41]

In attendance at council, Lisle was conscientious enough, allowing that councillors were not expected to be full-time administrators. For the first council, he attended 124 out of the 319 sessions, ranking him fifteenth out of the forty-one councillors for attendance. For the second, he attended 158 out of 295 sessions, ranking him a similar fifteenth, but for the fourth council – his attendance interrupted by his wife's death – he attended only 113 out of 330 sessions, a ranking of twenty-fifth for attendance. On the first council, however, his attendance was more assiduous than that of his aristocratic colleagues, Denbigh, Pembroke, Salisbury and Lord Grey of Groby; only on the fourth council were his attendances exceeded by the fifth earl of Pembroke. His membership of committees was less notable: he was nominated for sixteen of the 182 committees set up during the first council, ranking him nineteenth in frequency of nomination: for fourteen of the 111 committees of the second council, ranking him seventeenth in frequency of nomination, and twelve of the fifty-six committees of the fourth council, him ranking only twenty-second. (The council's increasing tendency to refer business to existing standing committees rather than creating individual *ad hoc* committees, explains why fewer committees were set up during the later councils). In comparison to his aristocratic colleagues he was surpassed only by Denbigh on the first council, and the fifth earl of Pembroke on the fourth council for committee nomination.[42]

Lisle's attendance rate on any of the committees, however, cannot be calculated. He is recorded as attending only six of the 131 sessions of the Admiralty Committee, whose minutes survive for the period April 1650 and March 1651. Perhaps he left naval affairs to the group of experts led by Vane. Between April and November 1652, he attended the committee for trade and foreign relations, whose records again survive, only once out of fifty sessions; in the earlier months, however, he was involved

[41] For instance, *HMC De L'Isle,* vi, 461, 463, 465-6 458; *HMC De L'Isle,* vi, 456-7, *CPSD, 1651-2*, 167; TNA, SP 25/66, 439, 411; *HMC De L'Isle,* vi, 332, *CSPD, 1651-2*, 172.

[42] For Lisle's actual attendance at Councils recorded in the State Papers, see Appendix F; the figures on Lisle's relative ranking for council attendance and committee nomination are derived from *CSPD, 1649-50, CSPD, 1650, CSPD, 1651-2*.

with the Dutch negotiations, and between August and October absent from politics after his wife's death. Otherwise there are no records of his committee attendance. But it is possible that he was more active on committees than these two sources suggest. For example, the standing committee on Irish affairs (which from 1651 onwards included Scottish affairs), was immensely busy, with some 174 items referred to the first council, 147 to the second and 229 to the fourth. Lisle's nomination as a member in all three councils indicates willingness on his part to share in the work load. It also seems highly likely, as Violet Rowe suggests, that notes in the council minutes of groups of councillors arriving together and late after the start of business, provide evidence that they were coming on from other committees. On the first council, Lisle came in late in the company of at least two others, fifteen times; on the second, fifty times; on the third, forty-five times. Almost all of these late arrivals of Lisle's strongly suggest he had been attending other committees first. His nomination as president of the council in February 1652 also indicates some recognition of his reliability and usefulness in committee work. For the month of his presidency he is recorded as attending all bar one of its twenty-one sessions; he dealt with a total of 337 items, an average of almost seventeen items a day. Whatever his committee attendance, he was almost certainly more involved with the central administration of the state than any member of his family since Sir Henry Sidney in the 1570s.[43]

In many ways, Lisle can be viewed as one of Kelsey's archetypal Commonwealth politicians, readily settling into power at Whitehall. On the prospect of new elections to the council in early 1651, he declared revealingly to his father that 'many of us, I think, have a mind to keep our seats'. On the other hand, there is also evidence that he was only too aware of the unpopularity and fragility of the government. In September 1649, writing to his father of the promise of new elections, he reported warily that 'some rules' would be devised by parliament so that new members 'of the same temper' of those previously excluded would not be elected. In December he noted that, 'our Levellers, we hear, are hard at work again' and the following March he wrote of the 'contrivances we hear from many parts'. Chief of his worries were his old opponents, the Presbyterians. In May 1650 he warned his father that not only were the Scots, in alliance with 'their king', planning to invade England

[43] TNA, SP 25/123; Bodl., MS Rawlinson A 225; TNA, SP 25/131; V. Rowe, *A Life of Sir Henry Vane the Younger: a Study in Political and Administrative History* (1974), 168; *CSPD, 1651-2*, 150-187.

again, but that the 'Presbyterian party of England are comprehended in this agreement'.[44]

Lisle was therefore much involved with attempts from late 1649 onwards to impose more widely the taking of the Engagement, the oath of loyalty to the Commonwealth taken by the majority of councillors in February of that year. On 12 October he was nominated to the parliamentary committee to impose the oath on existing members and on 9 November to the committee to consider the imposition of the oath on the rest of the population. The following month he was put on a council committee to examine the taking of the oath in Norfolk. Early the next year he was writing to his father to persuade him of the necessity of taking the Engagement. But he also advised circumspection: 'not to be one of the first of your rank in this matter', since, 'if things break now, we who are the engagers should carry a very ill character upon us, but if it [i.e. taking the oath] grow general it will grow nothing [i.e. be of no consequence]'. Lisle would seem to have held no very confident view of the survival of the Commonwealth. [45]

Lisle's career as a councillor of state under the Commonwealth provides evidence for a view of the regime as inherently unstable. Lisle played no part in parliamentary committee work for the new elections or the legal reform urged by the army. As such he contributed to the army's disillusionment with the Rump and its subsequent dissolution. Although prominent as an army supporter in the years up to, and then immediately after, Pride's Purge, he seems to have had no close connection with the army after 1649, though as a member of the Irish committee and the committee for officers he worked to support the army's needs. The evidence also suggests that Lisle was no friend of the parliamentary radical group of Neville, Chaloner and Marten. Certainly he did not question the existing social order, but then, nor did most politicians of the Rump. He preferred the more traditional and privileged noble role of councillor to that of parliamentary activity. But if socially conservative, politically he can hardly be considered of 'pronounced conservative views' as Worden has claimed. A party to the coup which had overthrown monarchy, this in itself, as Kelsey has argued, constituted complicity in revolution. The overwhelming majority of his class reacted with horror to the execution of the king and withdrew from political

[44] *HMC De L'Isle,* vi, 488, 456, 466, 476, 479.
[45] *CJ,* vi, 307, 321; *CSPD, 1649-50,* 438; *HMC De L'Isle,* vi, 472.

life. Lisle was one of the very few of his rank prepared to engage with the new government. Actively involved from the outset in the establishment of a Commonwealth and councillor on three of the Commonwealth councils of State, he showed himself to be a committed member of a kingless government. The evidence suggests that he also continued to support religious Independency. In his activity on both the council of state and in parliament, Lisle continued his family's particular interest in Irish and foreign affairs while also undertaking work of more general public importance. In spite of the precarious nature of the government, of which he was only too well aware, as a minister of state he sought to fulfil Sir Philip's requirements of public service and active political virtue. [46]

3. Ambassador to Sweden, 1652-3

Lisle's political career was disrupted from the summer of 1652 onwards by a series of personal misfortunes. On 18 August his twenty-four year old wife died of puerperal fever following the birth of their fourth child at their London home. Propped up by Algernon in this unexpected tragedy, he found his father willing to take his two older children into the Penshurst household. Within days the children had been moved to Penshurst and Lisle's immediate family circle broken up. Lisle, evidently badly affected by his loss, did not return to the council until 20 October nor did he accept any more committee nominations for the duration of that council. On 2 November, however, he appeared at the Committee for Public Revenue, in the company of his father-in-law. This was not a committee he was associated with, and the presence of the two together suggests he was taken there by his father-in-law, in the hope of distracting him from grief and depression.[47] Given his lack of activity on the council and quite probably in parliament too – though he did act as a teller in the House on 11 November against a vote to resume the sitting of parliament on Saturdays and Mondays – not surprisingly he failed to secure election to the fifth council of state at the end of November. He was, however, unlucky. He tied for the last two places on the council with two other members; a hat vote gave them the membership. On 16 December Lisle then at Penshurst, was told by his father – four months after the death of his wife – that

[46] Worden, *Rump*, 179; TT, E. 560[19], *Mercurius Pragmaticus, 12-19 June 1649*, [6] for Lisle's membership of the 'new Gospel'; Kelsey, 'Constructing', 233.
[47] *HMC De L'Isle*, vi, 613-4; BL, Add. MS 63788B, fol. 111.

he would be reducing Lisle's income from £800 to £600 a year as permitted by the marriage articles. This seems to have been the final straw for a demoralised Lisle. After a bitter row, he struck his father in the face. With this outrage to the values of a patriarchal society, Lisle was at great risk of court proceedings, if not actual disinheritance. He was rescued, as his father recorded, by his friends. On 31 December his 'great friend' Sir Henry Vane reported to parliament the council's decision to send Lisle as ambassador to Sweden.[48]

Links with Sweden had been set up with the mission of Daniel Lisle as agent to the court of Queen Christiana earlier that summer, but following the outbreak of war with the Dutch, the need for a more formal friendship and alliance was becoming imperative. By early December, Denmark, in support of the United Provinces, had closed the Sound to English shipping, threatening the supply of raw materials essential for the English navy, and in January, formally allied to the Dutch, the Danish king promised a fleet to enforce the blockade. With the help of Sweden, the Commonwealth hoped to pressurize the Danes into re-opening the Sound, or at least to providing an alternative trade route via Sweden. A failure in December to respond promptly to a letter from the queen alarmed parliament, and, instead of sending another agent, members called for the dispatch of an ambassador with full diplomatic status. Lisle, underemployed, aristocratic, of unimpeachable Protestant reputation and Commonwealth principles, was an appropriate choice. Lorenzo Paulucci, the Venetian ambassador, favourably reported home that the new ambassador was of 'high birth and equal ability'. But no doubt the influence of Vane and Algernon (now on the council), must have been a major factor in securing his nomination.[49]

For Lisle, the attractions of such a posting were enormous. The prestige of his new post provided some protection against possible recriminations from his father and must have compensated for his failure to be re-elected to the council. He was offered a substantial salary: £3,000 before his departure and £3,000 while abroad, ten times his recently-reduced annual income. From the time of his appointment, he chose, accordingly, to keep open house, able to maintain for the first time a truly aristocratic lifestyle of hospitality and magnificence. A correspondent of Hyde's noted that 'he is resolved to go over in a great deal of state', reflecting the honour and power of the

[48] *CJ*, vii, 214, 220; *HMC De L'Isle*, vi, 614; *CJ*, vii, 240.
[49] *CSPD, 1651-2*, 173, 342; S.R. Gardiner, *History of the Commonwealth and Protectorate, 1649-1656*, new ed., 4 vols (1903), ii, 213; *CJ*, vii, 233; *CSPV, 1653-4*, 9.

Commonwealth. Above all perhaps, ambassadorship had the appeal for Lisle of maintaining family tradition of leading great embassies. But this embassy had especial Sidney resonances since Queen Christina was the heir and daughter of Gustavus Adolphus, the Protestant hero of the Thirty Years War. Lisle now had a new role. No longer a military leader or civilian politician, he was to be a diplomat on the European scene, his purpose to create a Protestant alliance: an aspiration worthy of Sir Philip himself.[50]

Lisle's choice of colleagues for the embassy provides rare information on his religious affiliations and social world at that time. He appointed as his senior chaplain, the irenic minister, John Dury, indefatigable traveller throughout Europe, who was attempting to promote Protestant unity by the reconciliation of doctrinal divisions. Disregarding precise doctrinal affiliation himself, Dury was also deeply dedicated to social and educational reform, and, since the early 1640s, had been one of a group in England connected to the reformist Samuel Hartlib. More recently he had become prominent as a propagandist for the Commonwealth. A gifted linguist, who had spent some years in Sweden and had accompanied Daniel Lisle on the earlier mission there in 1652, Dury was on practical grounds an obvious choice for Lisle, but a family connection dating back to 1641, when he had been appointed chaplain to Lisle's father (though he never took up the post), suggests that there had been a long acquaintance between the two and that Lisle knew him well. Lisle's other chaplain was the Independent minister, Nathaniel Ingelo. Formerly a fellow of Queens' College, Cambridge, then an Independent minister in Bristol, Ingelo had fallen out with his congregation over his inappropriately fashionable dress and preoccupation with music-making. He had left Bristol to take up a fellowship at Eton, where perhaps he became known to Lisle through Peter Sterry's contacts there. If Dury represented the internationalist Protestant cause, Ingelo personified taste and cultural sophistication – all elements of the Sidney agenda. [51]

As his secretary, Lisle chose Benjamin Worsley, formerly a surgeon to the army in Ireland whom he would have met there in 1642-3. Later an enterprising projector,

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[50] *CSPD, 1652-3*, 118; Bodl., MS Clarendon 45, fol. 206;

[51] For Dury: S. Mandelbrote, 'John Dury and the Practice of Irenicism', in N. Aston, (ed.), *Religious Change in Europe, 1650-1914: Essays for John McManners* (Oxford, 1997), 43-9; T. Leng, *Trade, Interest and the Spirit in Revolutionary England* (Woodbridge, 2008), 25-6; Hartlib papers, 2nd edition, online, 9/1/147A. In 1650, Lisle had been on the committee which appointed Dury as Librarian at St James's Palace, *CSPD, 1650*, 401, 436; J.T. Young, 'John Durie, *ODNB*; I.W. McClellan, 'Nathaniel Ingelo', *ODNB*.

experimental scientist and secretary to the Board of Trade, he also was an appropriate choice for an embassy which would be involved in matters of trade. Lisle must have had a high regard for him, since he summoned him back from a new post in Ireland to join his embassy. Worsley, a committed Commonwealth supporter and in religion favouring an 'irenic piety' similar to that of Dury, had many ties to the Hartlib circle. He had a particularly close association with Dury; both were friends with the London-based Lady Ranelagh, sister of Broghill, Lisle's ally in Munster in 1647. Lisle himself appears to have had a personal contact with Lady Ranelagh in the early 1650s, and on the evidence of a letter in the Sidney family papers, Lisle's mother apparently had shared political and religious discussions with Worsley at this time.[52]

The preparations for Lisle's departure took several months. On 6 January 1653 the committee for foreign affairs was asked to draw up Lisle's instructions; not till 22 March were these formally agreed. The instructions required Lisle to remind the queen of the common interest of the two countries in the 'true Protestant religion', and to warn her of the dangers to Sweden of the Dutch design to 'engross to themselves the trade of the world and particularly of the East Sea', and then to persuade Queen Christina into a 'strict alliance and union'. She was also to be urged to avoid all diplomatic contacts with the Stuarts, since they were 'derogatory to the honour and right of this Commonwealth'. In the secret and most important instructions, Lisle was to find out what help the queen would provide if the Commonwealth sent a fleet into the Baltic to break the Danish-Dutch blockade.[53] Two days after Lisle's instructions were formalised and reported to parliament by Algernon, the council considered the Admiralty's offer of ships and a convoy for the journey. By the end of the month Lisle's letters credential had been assented to, on 7 April parliament ordered Lisle's commission to be authorised under the Great Seal, and two days later, Paulucci reported Lisle's readiness to leave, 'with great pomp and a numerous retinue'. Hyde wrote gloomily from France, 'if Lisle … can make a league between that crown and this [i.e.France], Holland and the rebels at Westm[inster] he hath performed a great work and one that will make all hearts ache'. But there were doubts emerging. On 18 March, one of Hyde's correspondents had reported that Lisle's voyage 'seems to be becalmed'. On 1 April the correspondent reported that, 'it is believed by some he will

[52] Leng, *Trade*, 8, 24-5, 28, 60, 81, 46, 26; *HMC De L'Isle*, vi, 468, Leng, *Trade*, 93-4 and *HMC De L'Isle*, vi, 496-8.
[53] *CJ*. vii, 270*; CSPD, 1652*-3, 84, 91, 130, Bodl., MS Rawlinson A.2, fols 392, 364-7, 373.

not go'; a week later that, 'he will not go at all'. The same source also wrote that Lisle was apparently considering travelling overland from Dunkirk to Sweden, a somewhat desperate plan, suggesting his worries over the safety of the sea route during war with the Dutch. Perhaps Lisle was also becoming alarmed by the threat of assassination once in Sweden, the fate that had befallen the earlier Commonwealth ambassadors, Dorislaus and Ascham.[54]

If Lisle was fast losing enthusiasm for going to Sweden, he was soon to be given a let-out, at least temporarily. On 20 April, Cromwell expelled the Rump and in the political uncertainty that followed, the journey, according to Dorothy Osborne (whose fiancé, William Temple, was to have been one of the entourage), was 'broke', but whether Lisle had abandoned his embassy altogether is unclear. On 12 May the new council of state planned 'to hear the Lord Viscount Lisle in what he hath to propound'. There is no record of his proposals, but it seems that it was agreed to postpone the embassy for the time being, since on 10 August the council of state resolved to reactivate it. Thirteen days later, with Lisle evidently refusing to go, it was decided to approach Bulstrode Whitelocke instead. On 4 September, it was left to the ever-supportive Algernon, 'sent by his brother to sift and try whether Whitelocke were likely to undertake what he had left', to browbeat Whitelocke into compliance. Algernon forcefully (and disingenuously) denied that any fear of danger or failure had dissuaded Lisle from the mission. It was merely the risk of a winter journey to his health. 'My brother', he claimed, according to Whitelocke's later accounts, 'is a melancholy man, and ofttimes very sickly, especially in the winter time … cold not agreeing with his constitution'. Indeed, 'he could hardly endure the cold of England, much less of Sweden'. Pressurized also by the possible displeasure of Cromwell, the deeply-unwilling Whitelocke was forced to accept the position. 'Want of health' was given as the official reason for Lisle's refusal and in spite of his protests that he had 'been at great charge in keeping a table and maintaining a retinue and horses taken on', he was required to pay back £1,000 of the £3,000 salary he had been paid earlier and hand over to Whitelocke the goods bought for the journey.[55]

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[54] *CJ*, vii, 269, *CSPD*, *1652*-3, 230; *CJ*, vii, 273, 276, *CSPV*, *1653-4*, 58; Bodl., MS Clarendon 45, fol. 94r.; Bodl., MS Clarendon 45, 204v., 221v, 293.

[55] D. Osborne, *The Letters of Dorothy Osborne to Sir William Temple, 1652-1654*, ed. K. Hart (1968), 57; TNA, SP 25/69, 48; *CSPD*, *1653-4*, 84, BL, Add. MS 4992, *Annals*, fol. 30v; BL, Add. MS 53727, 54; BL, Add. MS 4902, fol. 4v.; *CSPD*, *1653-4*, 146, *CJ*, vii, 318; *CPSD*, *1653-4*, 156, TNA SP 25/71, 3.

Of interest for the religious, intellectual, and cultural enthusiasms of his selected companions, and the great style in which he intended to travel, Lisle's Swedish ambassadorship was nevertheless a non-event, for which he had only himself to blame. Lisle's political credibility in the late summer of 1653 must have been lower than in the spring of 1647, when he returned from his Lieutenancy in Ireland. But in the intervening years his career had flourished with his appointment as a member of the council of state, and his role in the government of the new Commonwealth. It was not, however, through his parliamentary reputation that he had come to power, but through his social rank, his association with the army and with religious and political Independency. His status as one of the very few nobles prepared to support the new regime – as a 'revolutionary' rather than a 'conformist' – ensured his selection for the council. If he had been guided by the principles of Sir Philip in the 1640s, namely the defence of Protestantism and military endeavour, other Sidney ideals, such as the aspiration to political virtue in the cause of the public good, can be traced in his support for the army's execution of the king and the creation of a republic. It was adherence to these principles of virtue and the public interest that accounts for his readiness to be member of the Commonwealth government. And, if the principles of his great-uncle inspired his political allegiance in the destruction of the monarchy and establishment of the Commonwealth, so his most prominent activities as a civilian councillor reflected traditional Sidney interests: Irish affairs and foreign policy, together with more general issues of public concern, in accordance with high-minded virtuous rule. Undistinguished as a parliamentarian and in the event unwilling to take on the hazards of a mission to Sweden, Lisle nevertheless had found his niche as a member of the council of state thereby demonstrating his identity as the heir to Sir Philip Sidney.

Chapter Five

Lisle and English politics, 1653-1660

1. A Councillor of State under the Nominated Assembly, 1653

From the summer of 1653 onwards, and for the next six years without interruption, Lisle resumed his role as councillor of state. He served firstly under the Nominated Assembly, or 'Barebone's Parliament', set up by Cromwell and the Council of Officers in May 1653 following the expulsion of the Rump parliament. Then, after the resignation of the assembly in December that year, he was appointed a councillor under the Protectorates first of Oliver and then of Richard Cromwell. On the dissolution of Richard's Protectorate in April 1659 he returned to his seat in the restored Rump. Not until early 1660 did Lisle retire from politics, at least for a time; he returned to political activity only many years later during the Exclusion crisis.

The continuity of Lisle's high-profile political service, unique among the nobility, from his earlier parliamentarianism in the Civil War, to support of the Commonwealth, the Nominated Assembly, the Protectorate and finally to a reversion to republicanism, inevitably gives rise to charges of unprincipled opportunism. One contemporary complained of his 'changing with every change, and keeping still (like his father-in-law, the earl of Salisbury and Peter Sterry), on that side which hath proved trump'. In this chapter, however, the case will be made for his consistent adherence to the Sidneian principles which had governed his career since the early 1640s: rejection of the tyranny of Stuart monarchy in the public and Protestant interest following the ideal of the virtuous, active life.[1] Such principles identified Lisle with the winning side during and after the Civil War and ensured his acceptability to both the Commonwealth and the Protectorate.

Lisle's attitude to the expulsion of the Rump and the overthrow of the Commonwealth is undocumented. His closest friends, the enthusiastic republicans Vane and Algernon, retired from active politics in protest, only returning on the downfall of Richard's Protectorate. Lisle himself, perhaps unenthusiastic for

[1] TT, E.977[3#], G. Wharton, *A Second Narrative of the Late Parliament (so-called)* (1659), 15-6; Dorothy Osborne warned her suitor William Temple that her family regarded him as having 'Lord Lisle's principles. That religion or honour were things you did not consider at all and that …you would take any engagements, serve any employment or do anything to advance yourself', *Letters of Dorothy Osborne*, 157.

parliamentary government in general, or disillusioned with the Rump in particular, was apparently less outraged. As suggested in the previous chapter, in May 1653 he seems to have come to an arrangement with the new council of state to postpone, but not cancel, his Swedish embassy. The following month he was one of the five nominated by Cromwell and the Council of Officers to represent Kent in an assembly of 'men fearing God and of approved fidelity'. Lisle's ties to religious Independency and sympathies with the army qualified him for selection, but his social status and earlier friendship with Cromwell ensured it. A correspondent of Hyde's noted that 'Lord Lisle, Fairfax and Ewers [Eure] … are the most eminent among them [the new representatives]. Those serve to gild the bill, the rest being a company of the most obscure persons of the nation'. [2]

Historians have been kinder to the assembly than were contemporaries. Woolrych notes that the composition of the House was not dissimilar to that of an elected parliament; an estimated four-fifths of the members were of the gentry class. Lisle and Lord Eure were the only noble members of the House, since Fairfax never attended. For Woolrych the assembly's record of legislation was not 'unimpressive': some thirty statutes in the five months of its existence, a more productive record of legislation than that achieved by the Rump in its last year or by the whole of the Protectorate's first parliament. But within weeks divisions had emerged between millenarian radicals and a more moderate majority; by September, Cromwell's disillusionment with the assembly was reported. [3]

Lisle's own view of the Nominated Assembly is unrecorded and can only be surmised from official accounts. Presumably he was one of the 120 present at the opening of the assembly on 4 July when Cromwell handed over authority to the new body. This was a day, Cromwell proclaimed, 'of the power of Jesus Christ… Never was a supreme authority …in such a way of owning of God and being owned by Him'. Perhaps Lisle also attended the ten-hour-long prayer and preaching session in the assembly the following day. But he was probably absent on 9 July, since he then failed to be nominated for membership of the first parliamentary committees, and absent again on 20 July, when he was not named for any of the ten standing committees of the House. Only nine of the 140 members of the parliament failed to receive nomination

[2] TT, 728[5], M. Nedham, *A true State of the Case of the Commonwealth* (1654), 12-3; Bodl., MS Clarendon 45, fol. 498; TT, 669.7.17[14], *A Catalogue of the Names of the New Representative* (1654).
[3] Woolrych, *Commonwealth*, 169, 290-4, 235, 274.

for at least one of these committees, but Lisle was one of the nine. Thereafter his activities in the House are only recorded once: on 21 October as a teller in favour of the motion for the forfeiture of two-thirds of the estates of recusants. Even this is uncertain, as the teller is named as 'Colonel Sidney' and Algernon was not a member of the assembly. Yet despite his almost non-existent profile in the assembly, Lisle was re-elected as a councillor on 1 November. He came thirteenth (with fifty-eight votes) in the election of sixteen existing members to continue in office. Woolrych, probably correctly, ascribes his success to his social rank and moderate politics rather his contribution to the assembly's committee work. [4]

If Lisle distanced himself from the assembly almost from the start, he was readier to return to his role as a councillor of state. Elected to the existing council of state on 14 July, he resumed attendance on 3 August. His attendance from then onwards was at much the same level as his attendance at earlier councils: for the next four months or so of the assembly, he attended forty-nine of the 144 sessions of the council, an average of just over twelve sessions a month (as opposed to an average of ten a month for his membership of the first council of state, twelve for the second). But, as Woolrych points out, assembly and council met more frequently than under the Rump; both met six days a week and the council sometimes twice a day. Lisle's attendance rate – he attended only 34 per cent of these council sessions – was therefore considerably lower than at, for instance, the second council when he attended some 53 per cent of council meetings. His total record of attendance ranked him only nineteenth out of thirty-one councillors rather than fifteenth out of forty-one during the first Councils of State. [5]

On the council of state, Lisle was nominated to sit on five ad hoc committees, including a committee on Scottish affairs. But his chief interest, as before, lay in foreign affairs. On 13 August he was nominated to the committee to treat with the Spanish Ambassador and three days later to the standing committee for foreign affairs. Ambassadors had commented critically on its lack of competent direction before the assembly had met, but the criticisms continued. Overwhelmed by paperwork, on 27 October the committee was ordered to sit every morning at 7 a.m. until the backlog was dispatched. Two weeks later this was reduced to three mornings a week, suggesting that

[4] TT, E.813[13], *The Lord General Cromwel's Speech delivered in the Council Chamber* (1654), 22-3; *CJ*, vii, 281, 283, 286, 337, 348, 344; Woolrych, *Commonwealth*, 313-4.
[5] *CSPD, 1653-4*, 25, 84; Woolrych, *Commonwealth*, 157; figures calculated from *CPSD, 1653-4*, xxxvi-xl.

the situation had been brought under control. It was perhaps in this area, Woolrych suggests, that Lisle was one of four councillors who really brought their previous experience to bear.[6]

But it was in the negotiations for the ending of the Dutch War, the conflict with fellow Protestants, that Lisle played his most significant part in the government. Since late June four ambassadors from the United Provinces had been in England seeking negotiations. Two, Beverning and Nieupoort, were Hollanders with republican sympathies, and two others, Jongstall and Van de Perre, were Orangists. News over the summer that the Orangist party was gaining ground throughout the provinces seems to have prompted the council of state to propose a federation of the two states, a proposal anathema to the Dutch since it aimed to marginalize the House of Orange. But the death and replacement of the Orangist admiral Tromp by the republican Opdam, signalled the rapid collapse of the Orange party over the autumn and a new willingness in both countries to negotiate. Lisle was not named one of the fourteen Commissioners for renewed negotiations on 29 October, since he was absent from the council all that week, but he is recorded as meeting the Ambassadors in the council chamber on 16 November, and in conference with them as a commissioner on 18 November when Cromwell presented the draft treaty to them. [7]

The Dutch regarded the English demands as overbearing and unacceptable. In particular they objected to article 12 requiring that the Prince of Orange, given his 'relation to the public enemy of this state [i.e. Charles II]', should be explicitly excluded from all future positions in the Provinces. For Pincus, Cromwell, described by a contemporary as *dominus factotum,* which Pincus interprets as 'only the leader of a faction', was compelled to insist on draconian demands to outbid his factional rivals, the millenarian radicals in Parliament who preferred to continue the war. A rather different view is provided by the *Oxford English Dictionary*'s translation of *dominus factotum* as 'one who controls everything'. It can be argued that Cromwell, in reality the *de facto* ruler of the state, had no great need to appease his Fifth Monarchist opponents in parliament, nuisance though they were. It was more the case that he and the council, buoyed up by English naval victories, fully intended to press harsh

[6] *CPSD, 1653-4,* 93, 267, 87, 90; *CSPV, 1653-4,* 129; *CSPD, 1653-4,* 218, 242; Woolrych, *Commonwealth,* 171.
[7] TNA, SP 105/98 45; Pincus, *Protestantism,* 120-1, 143-5, 153-6,157; *CSPD, 1653-4,* 223, *1652-3,* xl; *Verbael gehouden door de Heeren H. Van Beverningk, W. Nieupoort, J. Van de Peere, en A.P. Jongestall…* (In's Gravenhage, 1725), 188, 214, 215.

demands on the Dutch in order to secure the regime and also to win popular support at home. Lisle, in the interest of the Protestant cause, was arguably more anxious for peace than his fellow councillors, but at the same time he too was concerned to strengthen the survival prospects of the republic by ensuring the exclusion of the Orangist allies of the Stuarts. On 22 and 25 November the Dutch presented their written objections to the draft treaty in the strongest possible terms. Following meetings with the English commissioners on 1 and 3 December, the ambassadors despaired that their objections would be met and a treaty concluded, and so applied on 3 December for their passports to return home. They were further disheartened by the sudden death of Van de Perre on 5 December. It was left to Lisle, apparently regarded as the most sympathetic of the commissioners, to act as intermediary. On the evening of Friday, 9 December he visited the Dutch deputies in their lodgings, urging them (in their words), not to leave, but to consider that 'matters of such great importance, concluded in haste with such precise detail, will be neither well ordered nor perfected' (my translation). He promised them that the commissioners had full power to settle all matters – an indication that the Dutch could look for more sympathetic terms from them than from Cromwell and the rest of the council – and that his meeting on Monday 12 December to report to the council could provide a 'final determination'.[8]

But the ambassadors were to be disappointed. There was no council meeting on Monday. Instead, in a pre-arranged coup, when most of the radicals of the parliament were absent at their prayer meeting, the moderates voted to end the parliament. Led by the Speaker, they processed to Whitehall to hand the mace, the symbol of political authority, over to Cromwell. There would be no peace talks with the Dutch for over a week until a new government was constructed. It is not recorded whether Lisle was part of the day's proceedings, but there can be little doubt that he supported the dissolution. Whatever his earlier enthusiasms for the radical Independency of the army, formerly represented by 'the preaching major' Harrison, he seems to have had no sympathy for Harrison's current millenarian and Fifth Monarchist sects, perhaps particularly disliking their demand for the continuation of war with the United Provinces. Lisle showed no interest in the useful social reforms achieved by members of the assembly

[8] TNA, SP 105/98, 44v; Pincus, *Protestantism*, 162; TNA, SP 105/98, 38-9, 39-40;*Verbael*, 237, 240; TT, E.723[12] *Mercurius Politicus, 2-9 December*, 3022; *Verbael*, 246-7, 'saeken van soo groote importantie, soo in den haest ende met sulchen preciesheyt niet kosten gemanieert noghte geperfectioneert worden'. Bodl., MS Clarendon 47, fol. 166r. paraphrases Lisle's words as 'great affairs must have a slow motion'; Pincus, ibid, 161, note 40.

and almost certainly was alienated by the radicals' plan to abolish the tithe system. Abolition threatened established property rights as well as the removal of the funding necessary for an educated clergy; the radicals aimed at the replacement of the class of professionally educated clergy with self-taught laymen. Such a prospect was irreconcilable with the Sidney respect for learning. A list of 1654 unsurprisingly included Lisle as one of the members of Barebone's parliament who were 'for the Godly Learned Ministry and Universities'. Although the list is in part conjectural, Lisle's inclusion was almost certainly appropriate. He might have rejected hierarchical Laudianism and puritanical Presbyterianism in favour of the radical preaching of army Independents during the mid to late 1640s, but by 1653 he can be seen as identified with the reformed Protestantism of moderate Independency, led by learned and cultured ministers such as John Dury and Nathaniel Ingelo.[9]

Lisle's selection for the Nominated Assembly is clear evidence of his reputation for religious piety. But he seems to have stood apart from the assembly almost from the start. Probably he was uninterested in the assembly's concern for social reform and also wary of radical millenarian excesses. His experience of the 'Assembly of the Saints', would seem to have confirmed him in his detached attitude to parliaments. Nevertheless, in his more congenial role as a councillor of state, he had continued to work for the public interest and in particular, in his negotiations for the ending of the Dutch war, the cause of international Protestantism and regime security.

2. A Councillor of State under the Protectorate of Oliver Cromwell, 1653-8

Within four days of the self-dissolution of Barebone's Parliament, a new government was formed with Oliver Cromwell head of state as Lord Protector. Barry Coward has challenged the earlier view of the Protectorate as a government of increasing conservatism and reversion to monarchical forms, arguing the case that Cromwell's commitment to 'godly reformation' continued until the end of his life. But he sees Cromwell as attempting to reconcile two fundamentally incompatible aims: that of implementing 'religion and liberty', the goals for which the Civil Wars were fought,

[9] Woolrych, *Britain*, 556-8; TT, 669 f.19[3], *A Catalogue of the Names of the Members of the last Parliament.*

while at the same time attempting to win over the support of the traditional ruling classes. David Smith has reckoned that Cromwell's inability to realize the incompatibility of these aims were a major factor in his unsuccessful relations with parliament, and hence his failure to achieve the stability of the regime. Others, such as Chris Durston and Peter Gaunt, have enlarged on the government's aspiration to radical and energetic reform, in particular the achievement of a 'godly commonwealth'. It will be suggested below that 'godly reform' was not incompatible with Cromwell's aim of 'healing and settling'; the root of the problem was that Cromwell and military rule were simply unacceptable to the majority of the political nation.

Sources for the inner workings of the government are even more limited than for those of the Rump: almost no private diaries or letters from those in power survive and only one letter of Lisle's is extant from this period. Given the lack of documentation, the reality of power under the new constitution has also been debated. Peter Gaunt has argued for a council of 'vigour and independent resolve', and stressed Cromwell's public declarations on the constraints on his power under the constitution. Worden, however, argues against taking such Cromwellian protestations at face value. Contemporaries, he points out, commented on the weakness rather than the independence of the council, while Cromwell himself was generally seen, both at home and abroad, as the real 'initiator and arbiter of policy'. Cromwell tended to consult with small groups of intimates in unofficial meetings, appoint committee members at will and take decisions on his own authority, so undermining his council's theoretical powers. This, it will be shown, was very much Lisle's own experience. [10]

Lisle was one of the fourteen councillors appointed by Cromwell at the outset of his Protectorate. According to Worden, Lisle's stance as one of the moderates in Barebone's Parliament had earned him Cromwell's trust and with it, his selection, but a personal friendship and connection between Lisle and Cromwell has been traced in this thesis from 1645 onwards. Lisle's aristocratic status, as throughout his career, no doubt also helped in his nomination. Although two other members of the nobility, the earl of Mulgrave and Nathaniel Fiennes, second son of Lord Saye, were later appointed to the

[10] B. Coward, *Cromwell* (Harlow, 1991), 98-9 ; D. L. Smith 'Oliver Cromwell and the Protectorate Parliaments', in P. Little (ed.), *The Cromwellian Protectorate* (Woodbridge, 2007), 14; C. Durston, 'Policing the Cromwellian Church', in Little, *Cromwellian Protectorate,* 189, P. Gaunt, 'To Create a Little World out of Chaos': The Protectoral Ordinances of 1653-1654 reconsidered', in Little, *Cromwellian Protectorate*, 117; P. Gaunt, ' 'The Single Person's Confidants and Dependants'? Oliver Cromwell and his Protectoral Councillors', *Historical Journal,* xxxii (1989), 553, 560: B. Worden, 'Oliver Cromwell and the Council', in Little, *Cromwellian Protectorate,* 88-93, 96.

council, Lisle was the only representative of the nobility on the council in the first months of its existence. Not only his social position, but also his name brought much needed credibility to the government. Milton, extolling the virtues of the new councillors (and hence their entitlement to rule) in his *Pro Populo Anglicano Defensio Secunda,* published in 1654, was to single out 'Sidney' for special mention, rejoicing that this 'illustrious name' had ever 'been on our side'. The name of Sidney perhaps was perhaps all the more celebrated since the publication in 1652 of Fulke Greville's *The life of the Renowned Sir Philip Sidney,* with its hagiographical account of the Elizabethan Protestant hero ('thy necessity is yet greater than mine'). [11]

For Lisle, the attractions of a councillorship under the Protectorate were numerous. Whatever the political reality proved to be, a written constitution, the Instrument of Government, defined the new government and by law limited the powers of the Protector. He was required to act on the advice and consent of his council, whose members were elected for life and irremovable, except for gross misconduct. Cromwell soon added the incentive of a salary of £1,000 a year. Parliaments were to meet triennially, but in the intervals between parliaments the council and Protector together were responsible for the administration of the state. The 'rule of royal will' in Worden's words, had been replaced by that of 'conciliar government', in an apparently mixed constitution that was acceptable to a Commonwealthsman like Lisle, who had taken an oath against the rule of a single person. Membership of the Protectorate council renewed Lisle's opportunity to emulate Sir Philip's aspiration to the *vita activa* for the public good. But it can also be suggested that, ensuring both Lisle's appointment and acceptance of office, was a bond of personal loyalty to Cromwell, initiated in the 1640s and subsequently strengthened by their shared political and religious principles: rejection of Stuart monarchy, identification with a tolerant Independency and concern for the cause of international Protestantism. [12]

[11] B. Worden, 'Oliver Cromwell', in Little, *Cromwellian Protectorate,* 85-6; *Theophania*, 299; P. Little (ed.), *Oliver Cromwell: New Perspectives* (Basingstoke, 2009), 57; *The Works of John Milton*, 18 vols in 21 (Columbia, 1931-8), ed. F.A. Patterson, viii, 234, 'Sidneuim (quod ego illustre nomen nostris semper adhaersisse partibus laetor'). Scott, *English Republic*, 106 (and others), wrongly identify this as a commendation of Algernon, but in the context of Milton's listing of protectoral councillors it must refer to Lisle, since Algernon was not a councillor. Milton chose to use Lisle's family name, which presumably had greater resonances for the public than his title (or was, to Milton's taste, more agreeably egalitarian).

[12] Worden, 'Oliver Cromwell', 82-3.

Lisle's first task as a councillor was to press ahead with the Dutch negotiations, suspended by the collapse of the Nominated Assembly. In these negotiations Lisle, sympathetic to the cause of peace, again played a leading role as intermediary between the Dutch and the new government. On 21 December, without apparently consulting the council, Cromwell nominated four commissioners to begin negotiations the following day. According to the Dutch account, Lisle, together with Walter Strickland, Sir Charles Wolseley and Sir Anthony Ashley Cooper, met the ambassadors on 22 December. On the following day the three Dutch deputies went ' in person' to Lisle at his house before 8 a.m, to hand him a copy of the draft treaty with their notes suggesting 'alternatives' on which they could compromise. As the account explained, 'we thought it right to go all three to hand the viscount Lisle our considerations in person, and remonstrated eagerly and seriously with him about the importance of the business and the necessity of deciding it'. They asked Lisle to warn Cromwell that they were tired of waiting and did not intend to stay any longer. They also insisted that Cromwell now had a complete knowledge of 'the whole work and an absolute power to conclude it'. Lisle sent a message back to the Dutch that afternoon: he had reported 'as before' to the Lord Protector and the council, and the whole afternoon would be spent examining their proposals. On 26 December, having discussed the Dutch responses of 23 December, the council returned a paper to them that, among other emendations, offered to omit the objectionable exclusion article 12 from the public treaty, *provided* that it was included in a secret clause. Who devised the government's solution to the Dutch rejection of the Orange exclusion clause is not recorded, but it was a device potentially acceptable to Beverning and Nieupoort, the two republican deputies. The following evening Beverning recorded a private discussion with Cromwell, Lisle, Thurloe (secretary to the Council, but not a councillor), and Lawrence, from which all other officials had been dismissed. At this meeting Cromwell, insisting on the incorporation of the exclusion clause into the Treaty, suggested that the agreement of Holland alone would be sufficient for the English.[13]

At 7 a.m. on 28 December Lisle collected the formal Dutch response to the Council replies of 26 December for delivery to the council. The paper, however, reiterated their demand for the exclusion clause to be omitted, while also insisting on

[13] *CSPD, 1653-4,* 308; *Verbael,* 260, 265, TNA, SP 105/98, 42. I am indebted to Dr Faramerz Dabhoiwala and Dr Johanneke Sytsema for these translations from the Dutch; TNA, SP 105/98, 44v; *Verbael*, 276, *The Writings and Speeches of Oliver Cromwell,* ed. W.C. Abbott, 4 vols (Cambridge, Mass., 1937-47), iii, 154.

the incorporation of article 6, the inclusion of their Danish allies, in the treaty. On the same day the ambassadors again requested their passports to return home. Nevertheless, negotiations continued in private over the New Year, from which, to his anger, Jongstall was excluded. Jongstall's fears that his colleagues were exceeding their instructions were well founded. In the private talks between Cromwell and the commissioners, Beverning and Nieupoort accepted the exclusion clause as a secret clause on their authority as representatives of the province of Holland.[14] By 3 January, however, with the question of the Danish inclusion still unresolved, the Dutch ambassadors prepared to leave, having failed to end the war. The French ambassador, Bourdeaux, reported the chill on their departure: 'beaucoup de froideur et non pas le moins de ressentiment du people qui estoit assemblé en grand nombre dans Withehall pour voir la fin'. Either, the consciousness of this public demand for peace, or persuasion from his own commissioners, must have persuaded Cromwell of the necessity of compromise. He is not recorded as attending the council that week and therefore not cannot have consulted his councillors on a formal basis. Another 'expedient' was devised by which the king of Denmark would be included in the Treaty in return for a Dutch indemnity for losses to English shipping impounded by the Danes during the war. Cromwell's offer, sent in haste to Gravesend where the Dutch were on the point of departing for Holland, was accepted, and the ambassadors were able to return home with negotiations successfully completed. On 13 January, Beverning, then back in The Hague wrote to 'Colonel Sidney' (in this context, Lisle's brother Robert) at Leicester House, 'if my Lord your brother will continue his good affection to us, to whom I desire to be recommended, I pray let me have a word'. It is apparent that Lisle, throughout the negotiations, had been a good friend and ally of Protestant, republican Holland and had been working to secure peace with the United Provinces. [15]

As the two Hollanders had reckoned, although news of the secret exclusion clause provoked dismay when known, the treaty could be presented as a *fait accompli*, which the States General had little alternative but to accept. Lisle himself continued his 'good affection' and efforts for peace when the Dutch returned for the ratification of the Treaty at the end of February. He was present at their formal reception on 4 March

[14] *Verbael*, 278; TNA, SP 195/98, 53v., 56v.; *The Clarke Papers*: *further Selections from the Papers of William Clarke,* ed. F. Henderson, Camden fifth series, xxvii (2005), 138, *TSP*, ii, 7.
[15] TNA, PRO 31/3/92 fol. 20v; *Verbael*, 290-1, *TSP*, ii, 20; Dolman, not Lisle, brought the offer to Gravesend, as Pincus states, *Protestantism*, 180, note 35, see *Verbael*, 291; Bodl., MS Rawlinson A10, 213 (printed in *TSP*, ii, 19).

at the Banqueting House, when their 'entertainment was stately', and was appointed to entertain them that night at supper. Several days later he was nominated, again on Cromwell's sole authority, as one of the six commissioners for the negotiations which began on 15 March. At this point a new difficulty emerged: the unexpectedly large size of the indemnity – nearly £150,000 – now claimed by the commissioners. [16]

It is difficult to believe that this demand did not come from Cromwell himself, anxious to make the maximum political capital out of the treaty and prepared to use manipulation and bullying to achieve his objectives. Responding to the ambassadors' protests at the amount demanded, he disclaimed all responsibility, insisting that his commissioners had 'knowledge of everything and full power'. But he threatened that if the demand were not conceded the treaty would be broken off, since, he claimed, most of his councillors of state (though not, apparently, his commissioners), were inclined to war. Unwillingly, seeing 'how it finally stood with the disposition of his Highness and of the lords of this council', and desperate for peace, the ambassadors conceded the demand. The treaty was signed on 5 April and peace proclaimed on 26 April. At the state dinner the following day, in recognition of his role as leading intermediary in the talks, Lisle was especially marked out for honour, placed on the high table with the ambassadors, the president of the council, and Cromwell himself. Lisle's contribution to the Treaty of Westminster was perhaps the high point of his career, but it had introduced him to the reality of power in the new government. Whatever the Instrument of Government had prescribed, the 'advice and consent of the Council' were limited constraints on a Protector who was already regarded by the Dutch as having 'an absolute power' to manage affairs.[17]

In the following years, foreign affairs in the Protestant interest continued to be an important concern of Lisle's. Historians of Cromwell's foreign policy such as Michael Roberts, Charles Korr and Timothy Venning have stressed its pragmatic, rather than its ideological basis. Little, on the other hand, has claimed that 'religion was at the very heart of all his [Cromwell's] decisions'. As Thurloe later claimed, although the security of the regime was undoubtedly the priority, the role of religion was almost as important. Thurloe recorded that Cromwell asserted 'on all occasions' the cause and

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[16] Pincus, *Protestantism,*182; *Verbael*, 315, TT, E.731[12], *Mercurius Politicus, 2-9 March,* 3325, TSP, ii, 154, *CSPD,* 1654, 3; TT.E.225[29] *Severall Proceedings of State Affaires, 9-16, March,* 3699, *Verbael*, 318; TT, 227[3], *Severall Proceedings, 23-9 March,* 3738.

[17] *TSP*, ii, 194-5; TT, E.227[9], *Severall Proceedings, 30 March-6 April,* 3754, TT, E.227[27], *Severall Proceedings, 20-27 April,* 3801, TT, E.227[32], *Severall Proceedings, 27 April-4 May,* 3803.

interest of Protestants throughout Europe and sought to become their head and protector. Cromwell himself claimed there was no inconsistency between the 'interest of Christians and the interest of nations'. The rhetoric of the Protestant cause can be seen as a valuable device both to win legitimacy for the government and to promote national unity, but religious faith was nonetheless Cromwell's deepest conviction and arguably held a particular importance for Lisle too. In 1655 Peter Julius Coyet, the envoy from Sweden, wrote that he believed that Lisle, Lambert and others of the government had 'pretty well no religion' but that, nevertheless they wished 'to appear as men of great piety and anxious for the liberty of religion against the papists'. Given the other evidence for Lisle's religious commitment, Coyet's surmise as to Lisle's irreligion may probably be discounted, but his observation on Lisle's keenness to demonstrate his enthusiasm for the Protestant cause was certainly well-founded.[18]

After his experience with the Dutch negotiations, however, Lisle was apparently more hesitant about involving himself in diplomacy. There was talk in March of his appointment as ambassador to France, although, in the event, none was appointed till 1656. Instead, on 14 April as the Dutch war was drawing to a close and Cromwell was considering the attractions of a future war with France or Spain, Lisle was nominated as a commissioner for talks with Bourdeaux, the French ambassador, with a view to forming an alliance with France. But no commissioners turned up as required that evening, and four days later Lisle, being 'out of town', was replaced by Sydenham. A conversation of 4 May between Beverning and Bourdeaux offered some explanation for Lisle's absence. Beverning warned his French colleague, that he had had a discourse 'in great confidence from one of the 'ministers' of the council', that Cromwell, confident in his strength at sea, was in no hurry to conclude a treaty with France and that the minister had excused himself from the commission, not wishing to be involved in an affair which would not succeed ('mesler d'une affaire pour n'y pas réussir'). Bourdeaux recognized the minister as 'le fils de Mr Le Comte de Leicester', since Lisle had indicated to him that he was withdrawing from the talks on the pretext of a malady.[19]

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[18] M. Roberts, 'Cromwell and the Baltic', in his *Essays on Swedish History* (1967), 174, C. P. Korr, *Cromwell and the New Model Foreign Policy* (Berkeley, 1975), 207, T. Venning, *Cromwellian Foreign Policy* (Basingstoke, 1995), 4-5; Little, *Oliver Cromwell*, 236; *Somers Tracts*, vi, 330; *The Letters and Speeches of Oliver Cromwell*, ed. S.C. Lomas, 3 vols (1904), iii, 31; M. Roberts (ed.), *Swedish Diplomats at Cromwell's Court, 1655-56*, Camden Society, fourth series, xxxvi (1988), 70, note 1.
[19] Bodl., MS Clarendon 48, fol. 44r. ; *TSP*, ii, 234, TNA, PRO 31/3/94, *CPSD, 1654*, 108; TNA, PRO 31/4/94 fol. 155r.

But there could have been another factor in Lisle's opting out of talks with the French ambassador: his links with the aristocratic Huguenot opposition. Lisle, it appears, had a long-standing connection with Jean-Baptiste Stouppe, formerly tutor to the eminent Huguenot Montbrun family (who most probably had become acquainted with the Sidneys during the earl's embassy in Paris in the 1630s). Since 1652 Stouppe had been minister of the French Protestant congregation in London. In 1653 Lisle had proposed that Stouppe should travel abroad, almost certainly to make contacts with dissident Huguenots in order to investigate the possibility of a rebellion. Stouppe's consistory in London did not wish to forbid him, 'in view of the respect and deference we owe so important an individual [Lisle]', but it seems he did not go that year. He went, however, early the following year and was then acting in cooperation with Lisle: mention is made on 18 April of a letter from a friend of Stouppe's to be given to 'le milord Laile' by the marquis de Montpouillon (son of the Duc de la Forcé, an opponent of Mazarin's), then planning to travel to England to arrange a secret meeting with Cromwell. The hope of the aristocratic Huguenots was that Cromwell, with the help of Spain, would back an uprising assisted by the leader of the opposition, the Prince of Condé, to improve the lot of the Protector's co-religionists in France. Lisle, who subsequently requested the council to pay Stouppe £200 'for his dangers and charges in his journey to France in the state's service', was upholding the Sidney commitment to the cause of international Protestantism. But this required a *realpolitik* alliance with Spain, not France, and might explain his unwillingness to act as a commissioner for talks with Bourdeaux.[20]

In the event there was to be no English intervention in France on behalf of the Huguenots since, in early July, with the majority of the Huguenots preferring a peaceful settlement, Stouppe reported on the unlikelihood of a rising. Cromwell, keen to use the large navy built up during the Dutch wars, not least because of his inability to pay it off, now determined to attack the Spanish possessions in the West Indies. Although Lambert is known to have argued energetically against the advisability of a war with Spain, the attitude of the other councillors, including Lisle, is obscure. One hearsay

[20] M. (François) Guizot, *History of Oliver Cromwell and the English Commonwealth from the Execution of Charles I to the death of Oliver Cromwell,* 2nd ed. 2 vols (1854), ii, 428; see *Burnet's History of my own Time*, ed. O. Airy, new ed. 2 vols (1900) i, 137 and *A Supplement to Burnet's History*, ed. H.C Foxcroft (Oxford, 1902), 238-9; R. D. Gwyn, *A Calendar of the Letter Books of the French Church of London from the Civil War to the Restoration, 1643-1659* (1979), 80; BL, Add. MS 35252, fol. 151, La mission de …Barriere, agent du Prince de Condé à Londres, 1652-6; *CSPD, 1655*, 319, *CSPD, 1656-7*, 357.

account recorded that Cromwell insisted on the war 'against the desire and consent of the whole council'. Thurloe, on the other hand, later claimed that the majority of the councillors had approved the policy, stating that Cromwell's chief consideration was to make war on the king of Spain and the House of Austria, the 'head and protector of the papists'.

Lisle certainly attended the two council meetings in late April, when the options of war with France or Spain were discussed, as well as the meeting of 20 July, when the crucial debate took place.[21] Pincus has contrasted the Elizabethan policy of war in Europe and harassment of Spain in its colonies with the Cromwellian concentration on war in the Caribbean, but it is difficult to believe that, following family tradition and influenced by current propaganda, Lisle would not have favoured war with Spain and an activist Protestant foreign policy in the New World. In February the previous year, he had reported from a committee on a petition from Rhode Island (in all probability requesting reunion with the colony of Providence from which it had recently seceded). This interest in colonial development echoed that of Sir Philip's in overseas exploration. It is perhaps suggestive of Lisle's support for the Western Design that in August he was nominated to the committee to pay the arrears of Colonel Venables, chosen to lead the expedition to capture the Spanish island of Hispaniola and provided with £30,000 for his forces. Although the attempt on Hispaniola proved a humiliating failure, Jamaica was seized instead and became a new focus of enthusiasm as Cromwell and his council regained their confidence. In September 1655, Lisle was nominated to a committee for its development. In mid October 1655, when the council formally issued a declaration of war on Spain, Lisle was placed on the committee to report on the embargo of Spanish goods in preparation for the coming war. [22]

In early 1657, after the naval campaign against Spain had failed to achieve decisive results, Lisle was involved in the preparations for Cromwell's new front in the war with Spain: the campaign to capture the Flanders ports of Mardyke, Dunkirk and Gravelines following the conclusion of an Anglo-French offensive treaty. According to

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[21] *TSP*, ii, 262, 447; Roberts, *Swedish Diplomats,* 14, note 2, *TSP*, i, 761; *Somers Tracts,* vi, 330; *CSPD, 1654,* xxxvii, xl.

[22] S. Pincus, 'England and the World in the 1650s', in J. Morrill, (ed.), *Revolution and Restoration: England in the 1650s* (1992), 141; TNA, SP 25/75, 112, 124; *CSPD, 1654,* 338, 357; Duncan-Jones, *Sir Philip,* 273; Venning, *Cromwellian,* 107; *CSPD, 1655,* 65, 330. For the work referred to this committee, *Calendar of State Papers, Colonial, 1574-1660,* 428, 429, 430, 431 434, onwards; *CPSD, 1655,* 394; in March, 1655 Lisle had already become member of a standing committee for foreign plantations, *CPSD, 1655,* 65*; CSPD, 1655-6,* 12.

Thurloe, Cromwell's alliances were principally designed to deprive Charles II of foreign support in order to ensure the security of the regime. The aim of the Anglo-French alliance was to prevent France from making a separate peace with Spain which might threaten England, while Cromwell also hoped to gain a base on the continent in order to forestall invasion. But Thurloe also claimed this as a Protestant interest since the possession of Dunkirk gave Cromwell, now considered the 'patron and protector of Protestant religion', a base from which to liberate his co-religionists from Spanish persecution in Flanders and to secure the better treatment of French Huguenots. Lisle's view of the plan is unrecorded; Bourdeaux claimed that most of Cromwell's councillors disapproved of the conquest on the grounds of cost. As with the Western Design, however, Lisle's involvement in the administration of the campaign is suggestive of his support. On 5 May 1657 he was nominated for the committee responsible for providing equipment and directions for the six regiments assembling at Dover and on 16 July he was placed on the committee to examine accounts of provisions and to consider money supplies for the expedition. On 19 January, after the capture of Mardyke, he was nominated for another committee responsible for provisioning and supplying money to the new garrison there. A reference to the 'Mardyke committee' in April apparently refers to this committee and suggests that it had the character of a standing committee. The capture of first Mardyke and then, in June 1658, of Dunkirk, England's first acquisition of continental territory since the early Tudors, was a major propaganda boost for the government. For Lisle, the campaign must have resonated more personally than the Hispaniola campaign; it evoked his family's military record fighting Spain in the Low Countries in the Protestant cause.[23]

But if, as argued, Lisle had come to support war with Spain, he had been less ready to treat for a French alliance. In early 1654, as shown above, he had opted out of talks for a French alliance, nor was he ever recorded as a commissioner for subsequent negotiations. In early May 1655 he would have been outraged by the news of atrocities against Protestants in the Vaudois, for which the French government was partially blamed. As with all his colleagues, he joined the council committee for the Protestants in Piedmont organising a relief fund. Only towards the end of 1655, did he become involved in the final stages of the treaty. Perhaps by then he had been won over by promises of better treatment of the Huguenots, as well as the security advantages

[23] *Somers Tracts*, vi, 329-331; Guizot, *History*, ii, 583; TNA, SP 25/77, 811; *CSPD, 1656-7*, 374, *CSPD, 1657-8*, 30, 269, 361.

offered by the treaty. Although not a signatory to its main articles signed in October, he was one of the three commissioners who, on 2 November, signed the treaty's secret articles requiring the French government to expel named Stuarts and royalists.[24]

Other brief references connect him with French diplomacy. Henry Neville's satire, *A Game of Pickquet*, written in 1655, warned that if Lisle went to France, he would be 'over-reacht by Mazarin', suggesting there was still talk of Lisle as ambassador in Paris. Two years later, Thomas Tanner's work on French politics was dedicated to Lisle, 'a great authority to any intelligence of this nature (especially France)'. All the same, there is no evidence that he was involved in the negotiations for the offensive Anglo-French alliance of early 1657. Later that year, having presented papers from the newly arrived Portuguese ambassador, he was appointed a commissioner to negotiate with him. Though the ambassador's brief was to discuss financial claims outstanding from a treaty of 1654, his secret instructions were to negotiate a general offensive and defensive alliance, comprising England, France, Sweden and Portugal against Spain. Nothing more, however, was heard of the project, chiefly because of Mazarin's approaches to Spain for a general peace.[25]

If religious sympathies constrained Lisle's attitude to relations with France, he was able to show greater enthusiasm for good relations with Protestant Sweden. In 1655 two envoys were sent to England from the new king, Charles X, who was anxious to build up alliances and forces for his expansionist policy in the Baltic. Coyet, who arrived first, thought it expedient to visit Lisle 'at his estate at Richmond' describing him as 'one of the Lord Protector's council and well-affected to the Crown of Sweden', in order to take soundings as to Cromwell's interests and to see how best to expedite talks. In spite of the prohibition on the communication of servants of the state with foreign powers, Coyet arranged with one of Lisle's close friends that 'he should make no difficulty about my visiting him'. At their meeting Lisle assured Coyet of his country's 'great disposition' in favour of Charles X and the particular regard (as heir to the Protestant hero Gustavus Adolphus) in which he was held. Lisle also indicated that the Swedish king might be able to recruit soldiers from Scotland for his forthcoming

[24] *CPSD, 1655*, 176, TNA, SP 25/126, frontispiece; a similar fund was proposed for persecuted Polish Protestants on 5 January 1658, a day when Lisle was president of the council, *CSPD, 1657-8*, 256; BL, MS Stowe 193, fol. 3.

[25] TT, E.983[9], (1659) 4, printed from BL, MS Stowe 185, fol. 94; T. Tanner, *The Entrance of Mazzarini, or, some Memorials of the State of France* (Oxford, 1657), preface; *CSPD,1657-8*, 110, 127, E. Prestage, *The Diplomatic Relations of Portugal with France, England and Holland from 1640 to 1668* (Watford, 1925), 136-9.

campaign and promised he would do all in his power to assist him. Nominated a commissioner to deal with Coyet's colleague, Christer Bonde, Lisle, however, failed to attend the first meeting on 15 August on the grounds of illness, though he attended a subsequent meeting on 5 December. By then, Cromwell had set up a second committee to conduct negotiations for a formal alliance, and to add to the confusion the following month announced that he himself would be conducting negotiations in secret with Bonde. On 28 January Lisle was replaced by Fiennes on the first committee, by then concerned with commercial questions. Whatever Lisle's Protestant sympathies with the heir to Gustavus Adolphus he, like Cromwell, had perhaps come to realize the complexities of a Northern Design: alliance with Sweden might threaten relations with the United Provinces, whose own interests in Baltic trade ranged them against Swedish expansionism and threatened to impel the Dutch into an alliance with Spain.[26]

Perhaps Lisle failed to take part in subsequent talks with the Swedish representatives because of his greater sympathies with the Dutch republic. Following the Treaty of Westminster he sat on a number of ad hoc committees (set up on 11 January and 5 June 1655, 4 March, 24 June and 25 November 1656, and 26 May 1657), to deal with Dutch complaints of English harassment of their shipping in the interests of maintaining good relations. On 6 March 1656 he was placed on a committee for the regulation of trade between the two countries established at the request of Nieupoort. At the end of 1657, Hyde was informed from Breda that there was talk that Lisle would shortly arrive as ambassador to the States – some indication of his continuing sympathies with the Protestant, republican Dutch. [27]

Not only in foreign affairs, but also in domestic matters, Lisle's conciliar activities during the Interregnum reveal his commitment to reformed Protestantism and the 'godly reformation' of the Protectorate. Although Coward has argued for the incompatibility between this policy and Cromwell's hope for reconciliation with the traditional ruling classes, many of the 'godly' reforms were in line with long-standing efforts to raise religious and moral standards, and so could have been expected to appeal to a wider section of the political nation. As with Cromwell's Protestant foreign policy, attempts at such reforms helped provide legitimation for the regime. In March 1654 Lisle was added to the committee for the trial of public preachers and lecturers

[26] Roberts, *Swedish Diplomats*, 65, 139, 211, 16-8; Venning, *Cromwellian*, 191.
[27] TNA, SP 25/75, 640, SP 25/76, 119, SP 25/76, 574, SP 25/ 122, 19, SP 25/77, 524, SP 25/77, 827; SP 25/76, 576, SP 25/122, Council Committee book, 10 April, 1656, 4; Bodl., MS Clarendon 56, 323.

and in August he was appointed one of the commissioners to eject scandalous and ignorant ministers in Kent, Surrey and South Wales; he was nominated for later conciliar committees designed to raise the standard of the clergy. On 4 October 1655 Lisle was one of those nominated to report on Lambert's paper on additional instructions for the newly appointed major-generals; this included further responsibilities for the major-generals to implement 'godly reformation' in their localities. The report was accepted four days later. In April 1656 he was nominated to a committee to investigate violence against immigrant communities of 'poor Protestant strangers' in the north and east, and he was also nominated for a committee considering the propagation of the gospel in the Commonwealth's plantations. As a demonstration of his rejection of surviving popish festivals, he unfailingly attended meetings of the council of state on Christmas Day. Out of all his fellow Protectoral councillors, he seems to have had closest personal ties with the pious Sir Charles Wolseley. [28]

Another indication of Lisle's religious sympathies is shown by his membership of the committee for the legal readmission of the Jews to England in late 1655. David Katz has narrated the increasingly sympathetic approach to Judaism and Jewry in the early seventeenth century England from academics such as the irenic John Dury and the Independent Peter Sterry, both connections of Lisle's. Cromwell himself was drawn to the policy of readmission. No doubt his aspiration for the conversion of the Jews gave him a religious motive, but it was mixed with a charitable compassion for a persecuted minority and with more mundane considerations of financial gain and possible access to new sources of foreign intelligence. Lisle himself seems to have shared his views; in November 1654 he was nominated for a committee to consider an application for citizenship from Manuel Martinez Dormido, a Jew originally from Spain, but one of a handful of Jews living inconspicuously in London. Although the committee failed to respond positively, the following year Cromwell determined to press the matter. On 14 November, after the presentation of a petition from Menasseh ben Israel, a rabbi of Amsterdam, asking for citizenship and freedom of worship 'on behalf of the Hebrew nation', Lisle, Wolseley, Lawrence and Pickering were, by Cromwell's special order, appointed as a sub-committee of four from a larger council committee of seven (the others being Rous, Lambert and Sydenham), set up to consider the petition. The task of

[28] *CPSD, 1654,* 27; A&O, ii, 971,973, 975, 976; *CPSD, 1655-6,* 90, 221, 252, *1656-7,* 132; *CSPD, 1655,* 370,373; C. Durston, *Cromwell's Major-Generals: Godly Government during the English Revolution* (Manchester, 2001), 26; *CPSD, 1655-6,* 269-70, *1657-8,* 366; *The Diary of John Evelyn,* ed. E.S. Beer, 6 vols (Oxford, 1955), iii, 164; BL, Add. MS 43465, fol. 1.

the sub-committee was to draw up a list of clergy, lawyers and merchants who would discuss the proposals with the full committee. The list containing some twenty-eight names was presented on 15 November and the following day those named were notified to attend the council committee at Whitehall on 4 December to discuss the petition. [29]

Cromwell clearly intended a public relations exercise which would win backing from a carefully-selected group in order to legitimize a radical innovation in national life. But the Whitehall Conference proved counter-productive. The atmosphere at two closed meetings held on 4 and 7 December was apparently unfavourable, since an additional three committed Independent supporters of the project, Peter Sterry, Hugh Peter and a Mr Bulkeley 'of Eton' were hastily drafted into a third and public meeting on 12 December. On 18 December, in spite of an impassioned speech by Cromwell, the meeting failed to reach agreement, thanks not least to the impact of a vitriolic pamphlet published by Prynne. The equivocal report which Lisle's committee produced, reflected its members' divergent opinions but also the public opposition. 'As to point of conscience we judge lawfull for the magistrate to admit', but the report also stated that until certain 'material and weighty considerations … be provided for [e.g. a prohibition on Jews holding office], we cannot but in conscience suspend our resolution in this matter'. Cromwell allowed the matter to drop in public, but went ahead 'by connivance'. From the evidence of a petition from seven 'Hebrews' of the city of London dated 24 March 1656, he had by then given them verbal assurance of protection in their 'private devotions'. His referral to the Council of the petition, which requested written confirmation of the privilege, indicates that he expected their compliance. Lisle's sub-committee had failed to ensure public acceptance of readmission and a refuge for Menasseh ben Israel, as Cromwell had hoped, but the legality of readmission had been stated and the tiny Jewish community in London given some protection, at least while Cromwell lived. Lisle's nomination for the sub-committee 'by the special order' of Cromwell himself, strongly suggests his sympathy with Cromwell's policy as advocated by leading Independents; the outcome of the

[29] D.S. Katz, *Philo-Semitism and the Readmission of the Jews to England, 1603-1655* (Oxford, 1982), 45, 216-7, 126, 195-6; *CSPD, 1654*, 393, 407; *CSPD, 1655-6*, 15, 20, 23.

affair yet again shows Cromwell's determination to achieve his aims by one means or another.[30]

In all, Lisle was nominated for some 328 committees during the four and a half years of Oliver Cromwell's Protectorate. These nominations, as under the Rump, reflected his willingness to accept committee nominations and provide clues to his interests already evident, although, as noted earlier, they do not document his committee attendance. By March 1654, as during the period 1649-52, he was recorded as a member of the committee for the 'business of Ireland', which presumably was acting as a standing committee. For some unknown reason (perhaps illness) he was absent from the council for seven weeks in May and June 1654 when the membership of the standing committees was allocated. Nevertheless he was recorded as a member of the standing committee for the affairs of Ireland in December 1655 and a month later that for Scottish affairs. In April 1658 the two committees re-established after Cromwell's second investiture as Protector were ordered to meet 'constantly' on Wednesday afternoons and Friday mornings.[31] As earlier, Lisle was also involved in army concerns. He was named for committees to consider the pay of the forces in January 1655, the new county militia of the major-generals (twice) in January and February 1656 and for committees on the navy. He was nominated for three committees concerned with the assessment, the tax which supported the army, in 1655, 1656 and 1657. [32] In addition he was involved in the more general issue of money supplies. In July 1657 he became a member of two committees, the one on the 'public faith', the government's obligations to its creditors, the other on 'the whole affair of public money', the government's expenditure. As the financial situation grew increasingly desperate, in April 1658 he was placed on a committee to find £2,719 to pay the country's ambassadors. On the morning of 27 July the financial situation was so bad that he and three others were deputed to consider the names of anyone who

[30] *CSPD, 1655-6,* 52; Lisle is not mentioned as present by the newsletters, but presumably was included in a reference to members of the committee of the council at, for instance, the third meeting, TT, E.491[6], *Publick Intelligencer, 10-17 December*, 276; W. Prynne, *A Short Demurrer to the Jewes long-discontinued remitter in England*, (1655) ; H. Jessey, *A Narrative of the Late Proceeds at White-hall* (1656), reporting the final meeting, stated that Cromwell himself was favourable and so were 'some of his council, though some inclined not to their coming hither', 10; TNA, SP 18/101, undated, summarized in *CSPD, 1655-6,* 15-6. Katz accepts the *Calendar's* date of 13 November, but the report was surely compiled and presented, after, and not before, the Whitehall Conference; petition of 24 March, 1656: TNA, SP 18/125, 173, printed in *CSPD, 1655-6*, 237.

[31] *CSPD, 1654*, 58, 215; SP 25/122, 4; *CSPD, 1657-8,* 33, 373.

[32] *CSPD, 1655*, 26, *1655-6*, 89, 141, 201, *1656-7*, 256; *1655-6*, 9, *1657-8*, 128, 161, *1658-9*, 101-2; *1655-6*, 8, *1656-7*, 14, *1657-8*, 27.

might lend the government £6,000 for the immediate needs of the newly captured Dunkirk. [33]

During the Protectorate, as during the Rump, Lisle's membership of committees suggests his very real concern for the security of the regime at home. In March 1655, on the collapse of Penruddock's rising, the one organised if ineffectual challenge to the government, Lisle was nominated for the committee 'to consider the whole business of the trials of the rebels'. His involvement in the committee discussing Lambert's additional instructions for the major-generals led to further security demands for them to implement. A petition from the inhabitants of Salisbury in February 1656 (the centre of Penruddock's rising the previous year) that 'godliness may be encouraged and good government established', resulted in the establishment of a committee, including Lisle, to consider its charter. A week later the same committee was ordered to consider more general business 'concerning the renewing of charters'. Based on the rule of the major-generals, the government began to implement a policy of remodelling municipal corporations to entrench the power of its local allies. Though membership of the committee for charters fluctuated, Lisle was still involved in its work at least until late 1657. In April 1658, along with the majority of his colleagues, he was one of a committee to consider the date and place of a High Court of Justice set up to try the most recent rebels; the following month he was on the committee to arrange the management of the trials. The subsequent execution of the accused, Dr Hewitt and Sir Henry Slingsby, which outraged royalist opinion, reflected the government's continuing sense of insecurity. [34]

The overwhelming majority of Lisle's committees, however, were of a less high-profile political nature and concerned with routine administration. They covered a wide range of topics, from one on 'the whole business of transporting horses out of this nation', to another on the repair of Weymouth harbour. A few may have been particularly congenial: in 1656 Lisle was nominated to a committee for the setting up of a college in Durham and in 1657 to another for the establishment of a music college (musicians having lost employment with the abolition of cathedral choirs). But the majority of committees must have been of no personal concern to Lisle. Some hundred of his committees were set up to deal with private petitions from individuals. A few,

[33] *CSPD, 1657-8,* 32-3; *1657-8,* 370; *1658-9,* 102.
[34] *CPSD, 1655,* 89; *1655,* 370, 373-4, Durston, *Cromwell's Major-Generals,* 26; *CSPD, 1655-6,* 195, *1657-8,* 169, Durston, *Major-Generals,* 88-91; *CSPD 1657-8,* 381, *1658-9,* 53.

such as those from the earl of Northumberland and Sir John Temple, were from connections whom he would wish to oblige.[35] Several indicate Lisle's interest in entrepreneurial development: for instance, the petitions from Sir Cornelius Vermuyden for the draining of Sedgemoor, from John Potter for a patent for his pumping engine for the drainage of mines, and from John Taylor for a patent for 'the better making of white salt'. But the great majority were from strangers. Some forty or so other committees to which he was nominated, were prompted by petitions from groups, a handful of them from merchant groups. His membership of the committee on a petition from 'several companies of the City of London', for instance, may suggest an interest in cultivating good relations with the City. As a shareholder, he certainly had a vested interest in the committee set up on a petition from the East India Company. So numerous were the petitions – some 600 had been listed by 1656 – that a committee was set up in March 1655 'to peruse and report' on them and in September Lisle joined the committee to help speed the work. In November this was constituted a standing committee and ordered to meet every Thursday afternoon.[36]

The evidence of Lisle's committee nominations not only indicates his political, religious and private concerns, but also his willingness to undertake tasks in the general public interest. It is also a reminder of the sheer weight of administrative, as well as executive responsibility that was placed on the councillors of the Protectorate. As Worden points out, if the burden of government had been substantial before the Civil Wars, it had been made enormous by the problems bequeathed by them. Councillors, he remarks, were there to work. Peter Gaunt has recently examined the Ordinances produced by the council in the nine months before the sitting of the first Protectorate parliament, pointing out that they comfortably exceeded the rate at which most seventeenth-century parliaments produced legislation. As Bonde noted in 1655, admittedly in a tense time, 'His highness is so extremely busy with his council … that neither he nor they give themselves time to eat, but are meeting every day'. By March 1658 the Venetian ambassador famously reported that the council was meeting 'without

[35] TNA , SP, 25/76, 531, *CSPD, 1658-9*, 27; *CSPD, 1655-6*, 213, *1656-7*, 285; *CSPD, 1654*, 72, 168, *1656-7*, 236. On a number of occasions Lisle also requested passes for relatives, e.g. his brother-in-law, Lord Cranborne, TNA, SP 25/77, 818, and even the agent of his royalist uncle Henry Percy, *CSPD, 1658-9*, 115.

[36] See *HMC De L'Isle*, vi, 464, *CSPD, 1655*, 302, *1655-6*, 202, 329; TNA, SP 25/76, 112, SP 25/75, 688; *CSPD, 1655*, 106, 352, *1655-6*, 148-154, *1655-6*, 2.

intermission and every hour of the day', (although significantly, there is little indication of this in the official record). [37]

Lisle's nominations, more numerous in the State Papers than in the printed *Calendars* (but that was also the case for his colleagues), do not, however, show his rate of attendance at the committees. For the less important, ad hoc committees perhaps six councillors would typically be named for a particular committee; business would then be handed over to any two or three of them. Most councillors, therefore, did not sit on the majority of the ad hoc committees they were nominated to. The only evidence of attendance in the Protectorate comes from the council minutes listing those present. The table of attendances of the councils of state in the *Calendars of State Papers Domestic,* shows that out of 779 sessions for the period of Oliver's Protectorate, Lawrence, the president of the council, attended 767 times, Strickland 669, Philip Jones 629, Sydenham 548, Wolseley 533, and Lisle 525 times. From these it appears that out of sixteen colleagues Lisle was the sixth most frequent attender at the council during Oliver's Protectorate. From the frequency of references to Councillors' committee work printed in the *Calendars*, a roughly similar pattern emerges. Philip Jones appears 743 times, Strickland 668, Sydenham 547, Desborough 498, Lambert 446, Wolseley 439 and Lisle 325 times, making Lisle the councillor with the seventh most numerous entries.[38]

The latter gap, however, between Lisle and the most active councillors is more marked than that in the council attendance lists. It can be concluded, as for his career under the Rump, that Lisle was conscientious enough in his attendance, but he was not one of the workhorses of the Protectorate administration. There were three of these: Jones, Strickland and Sydenham. Indeed, Lisle's attendance record looks still less impressive when it is considered that some, though not all, of the lower scoring councillors, for instance, Desborough (with 415 attendances) and Montagu (with 331), were also involved in non-conciliar roles, Desborough for a time as major-general in the west country and Montagu from 1656 onwards as a general of the fleet. Lisle, significantly, was the only councillor who was not elected to either of Oliver's Protectorate parliaments. Perhaps this reflected his earlier detachment from parliamentary affairs, but it could also reflect Lisle's apprehension of likely conflict

[37] Worden, in Little, *Cromwellian Protectorate,* 87; Gaunt, 'The Protectoral Ordinances' 117; Roberts, *Swedish Diplomats,* 303; *CSPV, 1657-9,* 173.
[38] *CSPD, 1653-4, 1655, 1655-6, 1656-7, 1657-8, 1658-9;* figures taken from the *CPSD* indexes. NB. Lawrence, as president of the council, did not sit on committees.

with these parliaments. Whatever the reason, his absence represented a failure to join his fellow-councillors in supporting the government.

All the same, he must have been regarded with some respect and trust by his colleagues. On twenty-four occasions from August 1655 to August 1658 he was selected by his fellow councillors as temporary president of the council in the Lawrence's absence. Worden suggests that Lisle and the earl of Mulgrave tended to be chosen as acting presidents due to their social rank or distance from factional fighting. In fact, Mulgrave took the chair only once, and in Lisle's absence; on fourteen other occasions Lisle was in the chair with Mulgrave present. Fiennes was the other choice as deputy for Lawrence, but he took the chair on only four occasions. Lisle's selection for the presidency would seem therefore have been determined, not by social rank but rather by his colleagues' recognition of his competence. His activity as a councillor may have been only average but, given the huge demands on the council, conciliar service nevertheless represented a heavy burden, of which he took a fair share.[39]

The side he might have taken in the factional divisions of the council, reckoned to have become divided between the civilian and military councillors is, however, indiscernible. Worden writes of his 'distance from factional fighting' and of his 'semi-detachment' from the regime. Burnet later described Lisle's attempt to discredit the civilian Thurloe, 'whom he hated', over the Sindercombe plot. Such hatred, however, perhaps reflected Lisle's personal resentment of an all-powerful secretary who controlled access to the Protector and the intelligence networks of the government. Remembering his own army career, Lisle may well have identified with the army councillors and favoured Lambert's scheme for the rule of major-generals. He sat on several committees connected with the rule of the major-generals. On the other hand, these included the 1656 committee to consider petitions for exemptions from their proceedings. Durston indicates that the committee was so generous in allowing exemptions that it significantly reduced the major-generals' income and effectiveness. Perhaps this was Lisle's intention. Nevertheless, two days before the second Protectorate parliament was expected to defeat Desborough's Militia bill in 1657, thereby removing the funding for the major-generals, Lisle was nominated for a committee to 'consider a supply of money for the new militia forces'. This would seem to represent an attempt to find an alternative source of supply for the major-generals

[39] For Desborough and Montagu, *ODNB*; TT, E.230[17], *Severall Proceedings, 13-20 July, 1654*, 3980-4; Worden in Little, *Cromwellian Protectorate*, 86, note 12;

and thus to ensure the perpetuation of military rule. If Lisle was a supporter of the major-generals' work for 'godly reformation', he may equally have valued the army's contribution to the security of the government. [40]

Over the most important political issue of the Protectorate, the offer of the crown to Cromwell in 1657, Lisle was again perhaps on the side of the army councillors. The possibility of Cromwell taking the crown had been raised in the first Protectorate parliament, but following the opening of the second Protectorate parliament in September 1656, gentry resentment at the rule of the major-generals had made them more receptive to the restoration of traditional forms of government. The demand for 'settlement' was led by the regime's civilian elite, anxious to entrench the government's authority on a traditional legal basis and to provide for the succession. In February 1657, Sir Christopher Pack's remonstrance was the first formal request to Cromwell to abandon the Instrument of Government and to return to a fully monarchical constitution. Subsequent speeches in parliament revealed marked factional division amongst the councillors. The army councillors, and some others, argued forcefully against the proposals, the civilian councillors, and many others, argued in favour. Lisle's name was not included in a list sent to Henry Cromwell in Ireland from Anthony Morgan, his trusted lobbyist in London, of those Councillors 'highly for it', namely, Lawrence, Jones, Mountagu, Wolseley, Fiennes, Skippon and Thurloe. But nor did Morgan mention him by name among the councillors opposing the kingship proposal, namely Desborough, Sydenham, the Lord Deputy [Fleetwood], Strickland and Pickering, although he added that 'some others of the Council are against it'. Since there were only four other members of the council left unidentified – Lisle, Lambert, Rous and Mulgrave – it seems quite possible that Lisle was one of those also opposing the change.[41]

But it could also have been the case that Lisle was torn between two unwelcome options and unwilling to commit himself to either. The narrative of events has generally portrayed a Cromwell initially undecided about the kingship offer, gradually persuaded over the following months, and only dissuaded in early May by the threat of resignation from Desborough and Fleetwood. Woolrych suggests that Cromwell was attracted by the constitutional package offered by the Humble Petition and Advice, which planned,

[40] Worden, Little, *Cromwellian Protectorate,* 86, note 12; Burnet, *A Supplement,* 238-9 ; *CPSD, 1655-6,* 89, Durston, *Cromwell's Major-generals*, 108-111; *CSPD, 1656-7,* 256.
[41] *The Correspondence of Henry Cromwell, 1655-1659,* ed. P. Gaunt, Camden fifth series, xxxi (Cambridge, 2007), 205.

among other reforms, to revive an upper House of Lords, now to be nominated by the Protector. If Cromwell delayed his response to parliament, it was, according to Woolrych to give him time to win parliament's agreement to the acceptance of the package as a whole – which he wanted – but without the kingship title, which he did not want and never intended to accept. But Patrick Little has recently offered evidence for an alternative scenario. He argues that the kingship proposal was in fact driven by Thurloe with the tacit support of Cromwell, the latter now in favour of the title. By 3 April, however, Cromwell had turned against the idea, not so much because of the opposition of the army's leaders but because of the verdict of his own conscience. Little's version of events provides a possible explanation for Lisle's reticence on the issue. Given his years of opposition to Stuart monarchy and his acceptance of a republican constitution after the regicide, Lisle seems most likely to have opposed the return of a monarchy on principle and to have been in agreement with the army on this issue. On the other hand, he had personal ties of loyalty to Cromwell and was quite possibly loathe to challenge Cromwell's private wishes in the matter. To other aspects of the Humble Petition and Advice, Lisle apparently had no objection. He supported the revival of a second chamber and proved willing enough to be nominated a Lord of Cromwell's 'other house', which was, in Thurloe's words, designed to be a 'security and bulwark' of the protectoral interest against an unreliable lower house. [42]

In the event, Cromwell's final refusal of the crown on 8 May solved Lisle's dilemma. The title of king having been rejected, he was able to continue his commitment to the Protectorate and its revised constitution without difficulty. On 26 June 1657, Lisle played a prominent role in Cromwell's second, and more splendid, investiture as Protector in Westminster Hall. In the presence of members of parliament, ambassadors, officers of state, judges, alderman of the City, and Cromwell's family, the Protector was invested with the regal symbols of sword, sceptre and robe of purple. On Cromwell's right, representing the nobility, stood the earl of Warwick, holding the sword of state and on his left, representing the City, the Mayor of London with a drawn sword. A few steps below Warwick, stood Lisle and Edward Montagu (nephew of the first earl of Manchester), with drawn swords, two more representatives of the nobility, and on the left, also with a drawn sword and representing the law, Bulstrode Whitelocke. The ceremony over, Lisle, Montagu and Whitelocke, still with their drawn

[42] Woolrych, *Britain*, 655-60; Little, *Oliver Cromwell*, 232-6.

swords, sat on either side of Cromwell on the journey back to Whitehall in the coach of state.[43]

Lisle was among the nine who were sworn in as councillors in the following month, at the first meeting of the new council, now the privy council. On the opening of Cromwell's 'Other House' at the second session of the second Protectorate Parliament in January 1658, Lisle took his seat as one of Cromwell's newly created Lords. He attended all fourteen sessions of parliament in the 'Other House' until the premature dismissal of the parliament the following month. He was even nominated for the House's committee of privileges, a notable contrast to his lack of activity in previous parliaments. During the last year of Cromwell's rule, he was more assiduous than ever in attending councils. If, during the first year of the Protectorate (from December 1653 to December 1654), he had attended some 117 of the 227 sessions of the council, an attendance of 51.5 per cent, ranking him tenth out of sixteen (excluding Lawrence) for attendance, in 1658, the final year of Cromwell's life, he attended 56 of the 64 council sessions, an attendance of 87 per cent, which ranked third for attendance. The decline in the number of councils, however, is an indication that policy decisions were being taken elsewhere. Nevertheless, in August, the last month of Oliver's Protectorate, he attended all nine sessions of the council. As the Protectorate faced multiple crises of bankruptcy, unpopularity, subversion and the failing health of its head, it seems his commitment to the regime, founded on personal loyalty to Cromwell, shared religious ideals, and anxiety for the survival of the government, merely intensified. [44]

Lisle was not one of the three most significant figures of the Protectorate (after Cromwell himself). These were Lambert (until his resignation over Cromwell's acceptance of the Humble Petition and Advice), Desborough and Fleetwood. Nor, apparently, was he one of Cromwell's inner circle of friends and advisors, Thurloe, Broghill, Wolseley and Whitelocke, invited by Cromwell to private social gatherings in the last years of the Protectorate, when he 'laid aside his greatness'. Yet Lisle's relation to the government was far closer than the 'semi-detachment' observed by Worden. His loyalty to Cromwell remained constant. The one letter of his that survives from this period written probably in June 1656, reveals his fury with his family at a 'public

[43] TT, E.505[1], *Mercurius Politics, 25 June-2 July*, 7881-4.
[44] *CSPD, 1657-8*, 26; *HMC, House of Lords Manuscripts*, 15 vols, new series (1887-1977), iv, Appendix, *Journal of the Protectorate House of Lords*.

affront' to Cromwell at Leicester House 'which doth much entertain the town'. It appears that Algernon, then occupying Leicester House had put on a play there with himself as 'chief actor'. Whatever the play, later claimed (without any evidence) to have been *Julius Caesar* with Algernon playing Brutus, it had apparently become the talk of London for what must have been a scurrilous take-off of Cromwell by Algernon. It would have been better, wrote Lisle to his father in Penshurst, to have done a 'seasonable courtesy to my Lord Protector' rather than to have had such a play acted there.[45]

The letter also indicated another vital element of Lisle's office-holding: his wish to be known for his detachment from self-serving private interests in favour of the public good. He stressed, obviously in rebuttal of a charge from his father, that he himself had received no favours from Cromwell, beyond the office of *Custos Rotulorum* in Kent. And this, he wrote, he had requested Cromwell to give to his father instead, although Cromwell had not done so; he added, in a uniquely revealing *cri de coeur*, that it was his 'most constant sorrow that your lordship never fails of an opportunity of reproach to me'. Lisle's aspiration for virtue was more publicly celebrated in 1656 by James Howell, who had accompanied Leicester and Lisle on the 1632 embassy to Denmark. In the forward to his book on the reception of foreign ambassadors, which was dedicated to Lisle, he praised in Lisle, 'the true Sidneyan soul, which by a peculiar noble genius is observed to be extraordinarily inclined to the theory and speculative part of virtue as well as the practical'. The following year Thomas Tanner reminded Lisle of his position as 'heir' to the perfections of the 'glorious name of Sir Philip Sidney' and his status as of a 'higher quality to adorn them'.[46]

As Oliver's Protectorate came to an end, Lisle was active in ensuring the smooth transition of power to his son, Richard. On 2 September, as Oliver's condition worsened on the day before his death, Lisle had attended a council with a full agenda. He was not present at the council meeting the next day, but following Cromwell's death around 4 p.m. and the reassembling of the council, Lisle was one of the councillors signing the proclamation declaring Richard Protector some four hours later. Jonathan Fitzgibbon has recently provided new insights into the events of that evening. Examining the discrepancies in the accounts of Richard's nomination, he has argued

[45] *HMC De L'Isle,* vi, 499; the affront would surely have been much greater if, allowing the play were Julius Caesar, Algernon had played Caesar, rather than Brutus.
[46] *HMC De L'Isle,* vi, 499; Howell, *Finetti,* preface; Tanner, *Entrance,* preface.

convincingly that Cromwell had, in fact, failed to nominate his successor as required by the Humble Petition and Advice. It was left to the councillors meeting after Cromwell's death and with Lisle present, to elect his successor themselves; they subsequently tried to cover up the unconstitutional basis of Richard's accession. Although Fitzgibbon implies that Lisle simply went along with the majority of civilian councillors in opting for Richard, it is suggested here that, given his loyalty to Oliver, he was probably as willing as any to support Richard's succession.[47]

On the following day Lisle attended the council and the proclamations of Richard at Whitehall 'where the councillors showed themselves at the council window' and then at Westminster and the City of London. At the afternoon meeting of the council that day, he witnessed Richard taking the oath as Protector and was nominated one of a committee of six to arrange Oliver's funeral. The committee decided on the most lavish and spectacular display since the funeral of James I, on which the arrangements were to be modelled and which were to cost an estimated £60,000. The detailed arrangements of the lying in state of the effigy were delegated to the Officer of the Green Cloth and the funeral itself to the Heralds. Lisle was designated a prestigious role in the huge procession for the funeral eventually held on 23 November. He was appointed supporter to the chief mourner, Lord Fleetwood, Cromwell's elder son-in-law, to walk, alongside Lord Fauconberg, Cromwell's younger son-in-law, immediately behind the effigy, the most significant position in the procession. Lisle was not a member of the family, nor the most senior nobleman present: the earl of Manchester and Lord Saye preceded the effigy. Such an honour can only have reflected recognition of his long-standing commitment and service to the late Protector. [48]

Evidence for the inner workings of the first Cromwellian government is notoriously lacking, but from the bald record of official documents and the fragmentary observations of outsiders, some picture of Lisle's role in the Protectorate can be assembled. The sources show that Lisle had not been the most notable or active councillor of the Protectorate. But his prominence at Oliver's second installation as

[47] Longleat House, MS 67A, 3 September, 1659; TNA, PRO 31/17/33/, 1; J. Fitzgibbon, 'Reassessing the Nomination of Richard Cromwell', *Historical Research*, lxxxiii (2010), 281-99.
[48] TT, E.756[14], *Publicke Intelligencer, 30 August – 6 September*, 798-9; Longleat House, MS 67A, 4-7 Sepember; BL, MS Lansdowne 95, fol. 45r. It was not customary for a monarch to attend his predecessor's funeral, although TT, E.1866[2], *The True Manner of the Most Magnificent Conveyance of his Highnesse Effigies* (1658), 15, suggests that, in the event, Richard 'in close mourning', might also have taken part incognito.

Protector and at Oliver's funeral suggests his importance to the government; his 'illustrious' name and rank brought prestige to the council. Yet he was more than a token aristocrat on the council. He had shouldered a fair share of its enormous workload, his attendance apparently limited on occasion through illness, and was respected enough by his colleagues to be selected as its president when needed. Above all, the concerns he chose to be involved with, in foreign, but also in domestic affairs, reveal the consistency of his principles to Sir Philip's ideals of the defence of Protestantism and disinterested and virtuous public service.

Cromwell's aim of 'godly reformation' and upholding of a activist Protestant foreign policy secured Lisle's loyal attachment to the Protectorate. It has been suggested that 'godly reform' was not incompatible with reconciliation with traditional elites as Coward has suggested; both moral reform and a Protestant foreign policy could have been designed to win over elements of the political nation. Settlement proved impossible because the greater part of the political nation, as they indicated in the Protectoral parliaments, continued to oppose military rule. Lisle's concern with security measures, his possible sympathy with the army faction over the Humble Petition and Advice, and his willingness to become a member of Cromwell's 'Other House', all perhaps suggest his awareness of the fundamental instability of the government. Lisle's experience as a councillor also shows the determination of Cromwell to achieve his aims regardless of any theoretical constraints on his power.

3. A Privy Councillor under the Protectorate of Richard Cromwell, 1658-9; the return of the Rump and the collapse of the Republic, 1659-60

For some months after the death of Oliver Cromwell, Lisle continued his loyal service under the Cromwellian Protectorate, but in the early months of 1659 he was moving into opposition and he was to play an active role in the downfall of the Protectorate. Jason Peacey has rightly challenged the easy acceptance of the 'inevitability' of Richard Cromwell's fall, but given the constitutional uncertainties of his succession, together with his lack of authority over the army and a critical financial situation, the chances of his survival seem fairly slim. Soon after Richard's fall in May 1659, Lisle returned to the Commons as a member under the revived republic and was

involved in parliamentary business until apparently the beginning of 1660. The point at which he abandoned politics cannot be identified, but by the time of the Restoration, he had left London and was living on his Sheen estate. It can be argued that, having fallen out with Richard's Protectorate, he rejoined forces with his former republican allies in the hope that a stable government could be created to avoid the restoration of the monarchy, but the defeat of the final republican efforts in early 1660 ensured that his attempts were doomed to failure.[49]

Yet in spite of what was to come, Richard's accession to power was smooth enough. He was welcomed by many addresses of congratulations from the localities, and the work of his privy council, which was composed entirely of his father's councillors, continued seamlessly and without a break. Lisle's role as a councillor followed much the same pattern he had established under the first Protectorate. He attended fifty-four of the seventy-three sessions of the council recorded from 3 September till 18 January 1659 when the evidence of the order book ceases. This attendance rate of 74 per cent ranks him sixth in order of attendance out of thirteen councillors. His average monthly attendance was twelve, as it had been in 1655. On the absence of Lawrence on three occasions he took the chair, as he had during 1655-58. He was nominated for some fifty-four of the council's eighty-two committees, some 65 per cent of the total. His committee nominations reflected his evident interests: foreign and colonial affairs, money, army pay, and 'godly reform'.[50]

But the appearance in the council order book of business as usual was illusory. Over the autumn republican and Commonwealthsmen opponents of the government were winning allies in an increasingly restless army and even in the council itself, where factionalism developed and rows were reported. According to Baker's near-contemporary *Chronicle*, Richard faced a phalanx of six 'aiders and abettors of the army' on the Privy Council; these were identified as Skippon, Strickland, Sydenham and Pickering as well as Desborough and Fleetwood. With the exception of Skippon, all had opposed the kingship offer in 1657. The unnamed author of an intercepted letter of 5 November listed, on the other hand, the 'strict adherents of the protectoral party': Lawrence, Montagu, Fiennes, Jones, Thurloe and Wolseley, all former supporters of

[49] J. Peacey, 'The Protector humbled: Richard Cromwell and the Constitution', in Little, *Cromwellian Protectorate*, 32.
[50] Longleat House, MS 67A. Lisle was nominated for committees on, for instance: Sweden, 24 September; Jamaica, 9 November; money, 20 September; army pay, 9 December; 23 December, the opera show at the Cockpit and the enforcement of the laws abolishing Christmas.

kingship. The same report suggested that Lisle had recently changed his allegiance, claiming that 'the protectoral and republican parties are absolutely irreconcilable … the republicans gain much upon the protectoral party both in the army and in the civil magistracy also, as appears by the said Lord Lisle and Pickering declaring for them both which not a fortnight since were against'. There is no supporting evidence for this, but it seems possible. Pickering, an ally of the army in opposition to the kingship proposal, and Lisle perhaps also one, were prepared to revive their Commonwealth sympathies given Richard's dependence on his quasi-royalist supporters, Thurloe, Wolseley and Broghill. Pickering, by this time a Brownist or an Anabaptist, and the Independent Lisle may also have been alienated by Richard's appearance of sympathy for the Presbyterians, whose support of the court party can be dated back to 1657 but perhaps became divisive only in late 1658. [51]

Baker's *Chronicle* gives a less clear-cut date for Lisle's abandoning the Protectorate, merely remarking that he was 'often absent and uncertain, endeavouring as much as he could to appear a neuter'. This certainly does not apply to his appearances at the Council which he regularly attended, at least until 18 January 1659, when the record finishes. But nine days later, a new parliament assembled, summoned on the advice of the privy council in December to provide the government with urgently needed money. As a Cromwellian Lord, Lisle attended all but one sessions of the 'Other House' until 8 February. On 4 February he was present at the customary day of fasting and humiliation for the House (the only occasion during the entire Interregnum for which attendance was recorded). After that he attended just six out of forty-three sessions held over the next two months up to 12 April. Most probably this represents the period of his absence and uncertainty referred to by Baker. In the Commons, republicans such as Vane and Hesilrige were challenging the existence of the 'Other House', seen as dominated by the army interest. As indicated at the start of this chapter, Lisle was himself personally attacked by the republican author of the *Second Narrative* for his political time-serving as well as his privilege in having 'a settled negative voice in the Other House over all the good people of these lands'.

[51] Sir R. Baker, *A Chronicle of the Kings of England* (1674), 657. Based on the evidence of Sir Thomas Clarges, Monck's agent in London (Monck then in Scotland), this is probably a well-informed source; *TSP*, vii, 495-6; R. Hutton, *Restoration: a Political and Religious History of England and Wales, 1658-1667* (Oxford, 1985), 34; for Pickering, *ODNB*; for the 1657 origins of the army alliance with Commonwealthsmen and the court party with the Presbyterians, P. Little and D. L Smith, *Parliaments and Politics during the Cromwellian Protectorate* (Cambridge, 2007), 113.

Distrusting the Protectoral party, he also found himself the target of criticism from his new friends. Not surprisingly he stayed away from parliament for a time.[52]

But from 12 April he returned to the House, now apparently ready to obstruct the government. At the same time in London a newly-assembled General Council of the army, in contact with the republicans and resentful of the conservative majority in the Commons, prepared to challenge Richard's authority. On three occasions from 15 to 20 April Lisle acted as teller in votes against the court: on the 15th in a vote for a three-day adjournment against Richard's supporter, Colonel Whalley and on the 19th against Lord Broghill, in a vote for another adjournment. This latter adjournment was designed to delay the Lord's support for two provocative Commons resolutions. These required, first, the suspension of the General Council and secondly an oath from officers abjuring the coercion of parliament. On the 20th Lisle was again a teller, calling for a third adjournment, this time against Richard Hampden, another Cromwellian. Lisle lost the latter two votes, but the delaying tactics had succeeded. No vote had been taken in the 'Other House', and thus the Commons' resolutions lacked the force of law. When, on 21 April Richard Cromwell demanded that the army should disperse, his own troops abandoned him and on the following day, he was forced to agree to the generals' demand to dissolve parliament.[53]

The Protectorate was effectively over. Lisle had played his part in the downfall of Richard Cromwell. It is possible that in the government's final days Lisle had been acting in co-operation with the General Council of officers, who now found themselves in charge of the country. But, perhaps too identified as a Cromwellian, he was not included in the arrangements that followed. The Council, yielding to pressure from junior officers influenced by the Commonwealthsmen, agreed to restore the pre-dissolution Rump of 1653, pension off Richard and rule with a single chamber. On 7 May the former members returned, and on 19 May they elected twenty-one members of the House and ten non-members to be a new council of state. Only Desborough and Fleetwood survived from Richard's Council; it was made clear from the start that the new government regarded the army as subordinate to the civil power. A number of new councillors were prominent Commonwealthsmen, such as Vane, Chaloner, Hesilrige, and Neville. Algernon Sidney, who had played no part in politics since 1653 and was probably still estranged from his brother, was also elected. On 25 May, the day Richard

[52] *HMC House of Lords,* new series, iv, Appendix, *passsim*; [p.1], above.
[53] *HMC House of Lords,* new series, iv, Appendix, 561-565.

formerly resigned, it was reported to France that 'Pickering, Jones and Lisle are out of place'. Not only had they lost office but in early July they were also ordered to give up their Whitehall lodgings to their successors.[54]

But by then Lisle, as a former member of the Rump, was back at work in parliament. In contrast to his earlier detachment from the Commons, he now involved himself in work for parliamentary committees, suggesting his keenness to support the revived Commonwealth against the threat of a monarchical restoration. On 8 June he was nominated for two committees, one on money matters, and on 6 July another, this time on Irish concerns. Three days later he was nominated to a committee for the returns from London householders of their lodgers, horses and arms, an obvious security precaution as rumours of royalist conspiracy grew. On 20 July he was placed on a committee on revenue from the exchequer and, on 8 August, as news came in of Booth's royalist rising in Cheshire, on a committee to assign lands from the rebels to their tenants. Apparently absent from parliament around the time of the death of his mother on 20 August, on 6 September he was nominated for the committee to draw up an engagement for the officers of the militia, renouncing Charles Stuart and promising fidelity to the Commonwealth, an engagement very similar to the one he had supported in 1650. In all he sat on some twelve parliamentary committees from June to September, most of them involved with the familiar task of ensuring security. Two of these committees were concerned with naming 'suitable persons' for the local county militias. On 19 July he was added to the militia commission for Glamorgan, together with his former colleague, Walter Strickland; on 26 July, together with his former 'great friend', the republican Henry Vane, as well as Algernon Sidney, he was nominated for the Kentish commission. Such commissioners did not work in the counties for which they were appointed (at the time Algernon was in Sweden as an ambassador); they merely gave authority to local committees and indicated the political choices which they were expected to make. But Lisle's nomination to these committees indicates his acceptability to the governing republican council.[55]

Lisle's nomination for a committee on the better government of towns on 17 September, was his last recorded contribution to the Republic. By the end of September, with the defeat of Booth's royalist rising, parliament had come to distrust

[54] *CSPD, 1658-9,* 357, *1659-60*, 5, 11, 14.
[55] *CJ*, vii, 676, 705, 710, 726, 751, 774; *CJ*, vii, 725, A&O, ii, 1326, 1328; Scott, *English Republic*, 129.

the ambitions of Lambert, who had successfully put the rising down. On 30 September, Lisle was one of thirty-nine MPs absent from the call of the House, as relations deteriorated between the army and parliament. On 13 October Lambert responded to a parliamentary attempt to dismiss him by expelling parliament, and an army-run Committee of Safety, dominated by radical sectarians and including Vane, took over the government. But as Monck and his army from Scotland moved south, the leadership of the army was overwhelmed, partly by lack of money, partly by the hostility of public opinion and forced to hand power back to a parliament.[56]

On 26 December, the pre-dissolution Rump was recalled for a second time and a mere fifty-five MPs, now led by the indomitable republican Hesilrige, formed yet another council of state. Lisle was not a member of the council, but apparently attended at least some of the parliamentary sessions and was treated as a supporter of the government. On 26 January 1660, he was nominated a commissioner for the tax assessments in Kent and Glamorgan. Vane and his brother-in-law Honeywood, were now omitted from the Kent committee, but Lisle's fellow commissioners included (as in the 26 July Act), two other republicans, Sir Thomas Stile and Sir Michael Livesey. On 8 February, two days after Monck had been received in parliament, Lisle was nominated for a committee to summon Lambert to appear before the House. But, as republican power drained away, that was to be the last record of Lisle's activity in the House. On 21 February, Monck, arguably anxious to preserve a national church from dissolution, pressed the House to admit members excluded by Pride's Purge. Elections, certain to favour a settlement with the king, were organized for a new parliament. On 12 March, a new militia act voided that of 26 July, and leading local families were restored to county commissions. In Kent, Lisle and his republican colleagues were replaced by royalists, though in Glamorgan he retained a place on the commission (perhaps through the influence of his cousin, Philip, fifth earl of Pembroke). On 16 March the Long Parliament was finally dissolved and new elections returned a parliament which accepted Charles II's restoration on the terms of his Declaration of Breda. The English Republic and Lisle's career in it were finally over. [57]

From 1653 to 1660, Lisle had played a part as councillor and parliamentarian in three very different governments, the Nominated Assembly, the near-monarchical

[56] *CJ*, vii, 780, 790; Hutton, *Restoration*, 75, 81-2.
[57] *CJ*, vii, 797; A&O, ii, 1370, 1383; *CJ*, vii, 837; vii, 846; A&O, ii, 1447; *CJ*, vii, 880.

Protectorate and the twice-revived republican Rump of 1659-60. Appointed at least in part for his celebrated name and social status, his adherence added much-needed credibility to all three. Although he was not one of the leading members of any of them, this chapter has suggested that the workload which he undertook during this period was still considerable; his work for the ending of the Anglo-Dutch war can be reckoned the high point of his career. In spite of the accusation of unprincipled opportunism in his continuation in office throughout the period, a case has been made for the consistency of his principles to Sir Philip's defence of Protestantism and commitment to virtuous and disinterested rule. These bound him in particular to Oliver Cromwell's Protectorate, with its aims of 'godly reformation' at home and 'forward' Protestantism abroad: policies that had been adopted in the hope of winning support. But that Lisle was also much influenced by his awareness of the unpopularity and insecurity of the government is evident in the work he undertook at the time; he supported coercive measures and was ready to support an 'Other House' to act as a counter-balance to an unco-operative lower House. It has been surmised that his sympathies tended to align him with the army interest on the council rather than the civilian, a recognition that only military support could provide security and protect the country from a Stuart restoration. If he abandoned Richard Cromwell's Protectorate, it was to opt initially for the army and then a return to a republic as the most effective means of preventing that restoration. It was not the case that the Protectorate suffered from incompatible aims; it suffered from its unacceptability to the overwhelming majority of the political nation, and Lisle's responses suggest that this was all too bleakly his view.

Chapter Six

Retirement, an earldom and a return to politics, 1660-88

1. The years of retirement, 1660-77

On 29 May the newly restored Charles II entered London. By the Declaration of Breda issued in the previous month he had promised a general pardon to all but those whom a parliament might choose to exempt from an Act of Indemnity.[1] Kelsey's account in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* dismisses the danger to Lisle on the grounds that Lisle had previously exercised very little political influence. But Lisle's survival after the return of the monarchy in early May 1660 was no proof of any former lack of political influence; his former protectoral colleagues such as Fleetwood, Thurloe, Pickering, Fiennes, Philip Jones, Sydenham, Wolseley and Lawrence were all – as it turned out – allowed to retire into the country without punishment. Lisle, however, if not perhaps of Cromwell's inner circle, had been a noted councillor under the governments that had followed the regicide and was only too well-known to the royalists for his continued opposition to the Stuarts. At the time, following developments in London from his estate at Sheen, Lisle might well have felt increasing grounds for nervousness. Not only had he been a prominent supporter of both Commonwealth and Protectorate, and one in possession of former crown lands and goods, but above all, as one of the 135 named commissioners for the king's trial – even if he had never attended the trial – he was vulnerable to the vengeance of returning royalists. By August some 104 of his former political associates had been exempted from pardon; by October thirteen of them had been executed as traitors. Two years later Sir Henry Vane the younger, his friend in the early 1650s, was also executed. As Ronald Hutton points out, the targets for royalist revenge were those most conspicuously responsible for the death of Charles I, as well as those unrepentant in their republicanism. [2]

But Lisle's survival was probably likely enough, given his social status and connections. Both his uncle, Northumberland, and his father were reinstated as privy councillors on 31 May 1660, having resumed their places in the House of Lords earlier that month. Charles would have hesitated to penalize one so closely related to such

[1] Printed in *LJ*, xi, 7-8.
[2] Kelsey, 'Philip Sidney', Hutton, *Restoration*, 132-4.

prominent peers. As many of Lisle's former colleagues also found, debts of gratitude owed for services rendered during the previous decades eased the way to securing pardon. Both Northumberland himself, and his sister, Lady Carlisle, had reason to be grateful to Lisle for his help during the Interregnum. Above all, Monck, the power-broker of the Restoration, had never forgotten what he owed the Sidney family. On 26 April, Monck had written to the States-General of the United Provinces requesting permission for Lisle's brother, Colonel Robert Sidney, 'a person whom I very much value, both for his own worth and upon the account of his noble family and relations in this country', to come to England.[3] In June, Algernon, then at Stockholm, wrote to his father of his hopes of the good offices of Monck ('his expressions of kindness towards me and his remembrance of the ancient friendship that was between us'), in easing his return to the country.[4] But it was Lisle himself, who had the greatest call on Monck's friendship. Thanks to his securing Monck's release from the Tower in 1646 to serve in his Irish expedition, Monck was able to resume his career, first in Ireland and then in England and Scotland. Indeed, without Monck's control of the army, the Restoration could hardly have been accomplished without bloodshed. In this sense, not only Monck but the Stuarts too had cause for gratitude to Lisle. There is no record of Monck's canvassing on Lisle's behalf, but there can be little doubt that he would have done so if requested and that any claim that he might make could hardly be refused.

All the same, Lisle still had to make restitution to the crown. On 12 May, it was ordered that all former royal property sold under the Commonwealth should be returned to the crown. Six days later, the earls of Northumberland and Peterborough admitted in the Lords that they 'conceived' they had in their possession some statues and pictures that had belonged to Charles I. On the same day, Lisle wrote to Manchester, speaker of the Lords, stating that, although he had purchased pictures and statues over a number of years which might have belonged to the late king, there was no certainty that they were in fact former royal possessions. In any case he expected that items bought on the open market should not be subject to resumption without compensation. The following day a more cooperative message was delivered to the Lords, perhaps by Leicester, then present, that Lisle would keep the items in safety until order was given, either by the king or the House, for their return 'at the place

[3] *TSP*, vii, 909.
[4] Collins, *Letters*, ii, 688-9.

directed'.[5] In a long and garbled letter of early June to Ormond (by then Steward of the royal household), Lisle's tone was markedly more contrite. He claimed that he had earlier thought of 'presenting some of the best statues', to the king, but had been advised by a friend to wait until the time was more 'seasonable'. In the meantime, wrote Lisle, a 'gentleman' who had come to inspect the collection (almost certainly the former clerk to the sales, Thomas Beauchamp), and who had the 'books' (that is, the sale inventories), had agreed to draw up a list of the items at Sheen with their sale valuations. Lisle assured Ormond of his readiness to attend the King's pleasure and to give a full account of his transactions 'without any embezzling', but also hinted at his 'interest' in the matter, again indicating some expectation of compensation.[6] Not until 8 and 10 September were the goods, or at least some eighty items of the collection, delivered in two lots from Sheen.[7] On 14 September an effusive letter of gratitude to Ormond, accompanied by a basket of fruit from the Sheen gardens, marked the return of the items from a chastened Lisle.[8] Although Lisle had thus lost a collection of 125 works of art valued at £3,000 apparently without compensation, he had at least by then secured his estate from confiscation. Following a general practice which was adopted to solve the problem of dealing with purchases of Crown property, he had been granted on 7 August a 60-year lease on his houses and land at Sheen for the low annual rent of £3 6s 8d.[9] And on 30 October he received a general pardon under the Great Seal for his activities under the Commonwealth and Protectorate.[10]

For the next eleven or so years Lisle lived in Sheen, making only personal or business visits to nearby London. Unlike some of his former colleagues, such as Ashley Cooper or Edward Montagu, he made no attempt to ease himself back into the world of the new court politics. On the contrary, he seems to have deliberately dissociated himself from the political world, conspicuously cultivating the image of the retired statesman in self-imposed detachment from the current regime. But like his fellow-

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[5] *LJ,* xi, 26, 33; BL, Add. MS 32455, Rough minute book for the House of Lords, 25 April – 19 December 1660, fol. 30v; *HMC 8th Report,* pt 2, 66a, listed MS Manchester no. 663, but untraced. Printed in *Court and Society from Elizabeth to Anne, edited from the Papers at Kimbolton,* ed. Duke of Manchester, 2 vols (1864) i, 404; *LJ,* xi, 34.

[6] Bodl., MS Carte 30, fol. 695.

[7] *HMC De L'Isle,* vi, 502-3, inventory of eighty items returned in September, signed by Thomas Beauchamp. Another inventory, existing only in manuscript, KHLC, De L'Isle MS, U1500 E111, also signed by Beauchamp, however, lists in much more detail some 125 items returned to the Crown in September.

[8] Bodl., MS Carte 31, fol. 33.

[9] For the art collection, see chapter seven; *CSPD, 1660-1*, 208; TNA, E367/1765.

[10] KHLC, De L'Isle MS U1475 F7.

councillor and friend, Sir Charles Wolseley, and his old colleague, Bulstrode Whitelocke (whom he continued to use for legal business), he maintained a commitment to religious Independency. After his own general pardon in November, Peter Sterry, one of the four most prominent Independent chaplains of the Interregnum, came out of hiding in London and settled at Sheen.[11] There, under Lisle's patronage, Sterry gathered around him a group of dissenters, his 'lovely society', and set up a small academy to provide education for the nonconformists now excluded from the universities. Nabil Matar has argued for both the intellectual breadth of the education offered by Sterry's teaching and the intense religiosity of the community which he likens to the spirituality of the 'nunnery' of Little Gidding and the Catholic family community of Sir Thomas More at Chelsea.[12] Lisle's hospitality to Sterry's household and his support of the community might be accounted for, at least in part, by Sterry's link to Sir Philip Sidney. One of the Cambridge Platonists who elevated the claims of the spirit over reason, and a man of 'truly immense learning', Sterry had given up his Cambridge fellowship at Emmanuel on the appointment of a Laudian as master there; as noted earlier, he had subsequently been appointed as chaplain to Lord Brooke, adopted heir to Fulke Greville, secretary to Sir Philip Sidney, and author of the *Life of Sir Philip Sidney.* [13] Following the death of Lord Brooke in 1643, Sterry had moved to London, becoming one of the leaders of Independency in Parliamentary circles and a close friend of Lisle's friend, Sir Henry Vane the younger. Over the 1650s Sterry, like Lisle, had become particularly identified with the Cromwellian Protectorate; both worked with Cromwell to establish the legality of Jewish readmission to England.

But in addition to family and political connections, Lisle must have found Sterry personally congenial. Sterry was a lover of art, literature and music; his writings make frequent reference to paintings and single out Titian and Van Dyck for special praise.[14] Although Capp points out that such cultural tastes were compatible with the ideal of godly, puritan reformation, Sterry differed considerably from his Presbyterian counterparts in being a great advocate of music in worship as well as education. Much influenced by Renaissance neo-platonic themes, his letters and treatises sought to trace Christian motifs in classical works. Sterry wrote poetry and was the author of the first

[11] Sola Pinto, *Peter Sterry*, 31-2, points out that Sterry's children had been at school in Richmond in the early 1650s, so it is possible that Sterry's family were already Lisle's tenants long before the Restoration.
[12] N.I. Matar, ' 'Alone in our Eden': a Puritan Utopia in Restoration England', *Seventeenth Century*, ii (1987), 189-98.
[13] Above, 75.
[14] Sola Pinto, *Peter Sterry*, 21.

poem in the English language on the druids. *Of Divine Friendship* was inspired by *Astrae*, the English translation of Honoré D'Urfé's novel about a Gaullish druid and from this romance Sterry adopted names for places and members of his Sheen community. Matar suggests that for Sterry, the proto-Christian druids represented the earliest and truest ecclesiastical establishment in Britain, one antedating and eclipsing the claims of Anglicanism and providing an example of 'mystical solidarity' to enable the 'saints' of nonconformity to withstand persecution.[15]

Lisle's patronage of Sterry was not, however, determined merely by family links, political allegiance, and similarity of tastes: there was also apparently a close religious sympathy between them. Independency, as it developed from the mid 1640s, had rejected the discipline and structural organisation of Presbyterianism in favour of the looser association of gathered churches (though within an Erastian framework). If Lisle was attracted to the greater freedoms of Independency, he seems also to have been particularly drawn to Sterry's elevated spirituality, which was far removed from the anxiety-ridden introspection of more orthodox Calvinist Presbyterianism. Five letters on theological subjects from Sterry to Lisle survive, the first dated 30 January 1668. One mentions Lisle's lending of a book on the Trinity to Sterry; another refers to 'that love which is mutual between us in the spirit of Christ, of which I daily receive from you manifold and great testimonies …that good and divine ground which the heavenly seed of spiritual truths meeteth with in your heart'. Another acknowledges that 'you are pleased many ways to contribute to the leisure and freedom which I enjoy through the Grace of God to attend upon and minister to the mysteries of God …It is also my duty and delight to minister to your spirit in the discovery of these mysteries'.[16] These letters, indicating Lisle's spiritual relationship with Sterry so many years after the political downfall of religious Independency, suggest that Lisle had a deeper attachment to its faith, or at least to Sterry's mystical version of it, than is evidenced elsewhere. Lisle's practice, significantly, did not always include puritan

[15] B.S. Capp, *England's Culture Wars: Puritan Reformation and its Enemies in the Interregnum* (Oxford, 2012), 262; Matar . '*Alone'*, 192; N.I. Matar, 'Peter Sterry and the First English Poem on the Druids', *National Library of Wales Journal* (1985), 222-5.

[16] P. Sterry, *The Appearance of God to Man in the Gospel and the Gospel Change … taken from the original Manuscripts left by P.S., late of Emanuel College Cambridge* (1710), 470, 475, 472.

observance of the Sabbath; in 1661 Bulstrode Whitelock recorded his disapproval of Lisle's planning to visit him on legal business 'on the lord's day'. [17]

Matar's claims for the breadth of education at Sterry's academy may be exaggerated: Sterry was the sole teacher, and apart from family members, there were at most three pupils (one being Henry Vane's nephew). But there can be no disputing Matar's view that the community opted for a separation from the outside world, an 'internal exile' and an isolation from current intellectual and scientific developments, in favour of the cultivation of spirituality. Such a community could not, however, hope to detach itself entirely. The government continued to fear the subversive political tendencies of nonconformity. At some point in the mid 1660s, when persecution of nonconformists was at its height, a list of '13 Fanaticks at East Sheen … where the conventiclers are innumerable … these the grandees', was sent anonymously to the courtier, Lord Crofts. Eleventh on the list comes 'Mas[ter] Sterry at West Sheen' and thirteenth, 'Mas[ter] Hethe Chaplain to my Lord Lisle'.[18] No other reference can be traced to 'Mr Hethe' [Heath]; perhaps he lived in Lisle's house and was a tutor for his son, as well as an extra chaplain.[19]

It seems unlikely that harassment followed the revelations. Lord Crofts was a Sheen resident, having taken a lease in 1662 on the mansion built there by Lisle in the 1650s. A stalwart royalist during the Civil Wars, he must have been perfectly aware of his dissenting neighbours. He was high enough in favour at court to have been appointed as guardian to the future duke of Monmouth, but he also had a Sidney connection through his marriage to Dorothy Hobart, a cousin of Lisle's (though Dorothy had died before he took up residence there). A closer family connection was to be provided by William Temple, who moved into a small house on the estate in 1664 with his family. Son of Sir John Temple, Lisle's devoted confidant during his Irish expeditions in the 1640s, William was grandson of William Temple, secretary to Sir Philip Sidney. Within a year, however, of becoming Lisle's neighbour, William was to be posted abroad on his first diplomatic mission. Several letters survive from what

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[17] Roberts, *Swedish Diplomats*, 70 note 1, for Coyet's comment that Viscount Lisle and others 'have pretty well no religion'; *The Diary of Bulstrode Whitelocke, 1605-1675,* ed. R. Spalding (Oxford, 1990), 639.

[18] TNA, SP 29/109 fol. 82; printed in C. M. Rose, *Mortlake in the Seventeenth Century and the History of its Congregational Church, 1662-1950* (n.p., 1955), 21-2. I owe this reference to John Cloake.

[19] *Surrey Hearth Tax, 1664,* ed. C.A.F. Meekings, Surrey Record Society (1940); Sterry is not recorded as paying hearth tax at Sheen, but must have had his own house there. Of the ninety-two hearths taxable at Sheen, Lisle paid tax on thirty-four, of which perhaps eighteen were for his house; the remaining sixteen hearths would include the lodgings he provided for Sterry and his household.

seems to have been a regular correspondence between the two and their families during Temple's embassies in the Low Countries. If William had felt obliged to maintain the Temple family link with Lisle, the letters also suggest his genuine affection for the 'pleasures' of the place and 'much more of the conversations at Sheen'. Temple wrote that he was thinking of perhaps retiring there himself 'though your Lordship will leave it, I know, in time for some of those greater and nobler houses that attend you'. [20] For Lisle's part, Temple with his love of music, art and gardening, not to mention poetry, must have been a welcome addition to the company at Sheen.[21]

Writing to Temple in the summer of 1666, Lisle created the impression of his 'good-humour' and enjoyment of perfect 'repose' in his retirement. He was, according to Sterry, much employed in gardening: 'Lord Lisle takes up himself very much in his retirement with that ingenious delight of planting of trees, setting flowers and seeing them grow'.[22] Lisle never remarried after the death of his wife in 1652 (in spite of at least one attempt) but his children, his daughter Dorothy, and his son, Robert, were living with him; he continued to be on good terms with both Northumberland, and his brother Robert, appointed colonel to Charles's Dutch regiment in 1665. [23] In September 1666 Lisle wrote to Temple listing the 'assemblies' of the neighbourhood: those of Lord Crofts himself, Sir Thomas Ingram, the dowager countess of Devonshire, Sir Thomas Clifford, together with their notable guests, the poets Edmund Waller and John Denham. All the same, a sense of purposelessness in his life is suggested by his definition of retirement, in the same letter to Temple, as 'in several respects like the night of one's life, in the obscurity and darkness, and in the sleepiness and dosedness'.[24]

But even during this period of self-proclaimed repose, there were underlying tensions. Reconciled with his father in 1659, Lisle's relations with him had soured again by the early 1660s. [25] In 1667 the earl refused to assign any part of the Sidney

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[20] *The Works of Sir William Temple, Bart.: complete in four volumes*, 4 vols (1814), i, 254.
[21] Martha, Lady Giffard, *The Character of Sir John Temple*, printed in R. Faber, *The Brave Courtier* (1983) as Appendix A.
[22] Temple, *Works*, i, 254; Emmanuel College, Cambridge, Sterry MS III, EC 292, fol. 284.
[23] In 1657 Lisle was courting Sarah Bodville, daughter of Sir John Bodville, only to be jilted in favour of the eldest son of Lord Robartes, *The Correspondence of Henry Cromwell*, Gaunt, 253, 289; *HMC De L'Isle*, vi, 517-8; KHLC, De L'Isle MS U1475 L53: Robert Sidney acted as witness to the lease of Lisle's Glaslough estate, 20 August, 1664.
[24] Temple, *Works*, i, 458-9. The letter has been dated 26 September, 1667, but since it refers to talk of the Great Fire of London which had started on 2 September, 1666, it seems more likely it was written that year.
[25] See chapter eight.

estates as jointure and maintenance for a possible marriage for the younger Robert when Lisle was negotiating for his son to marry a wealthy young widow. [26] In October 1668 Lisle was writing to his father of his deep unhappiness that the earl refused financial help in the marriage of his eighteen-year old daughter. In stoical fashion, however, he insisted 'we please ourselves more in looking forwards than backwards'.[27] In the event, Dorothy Sidney married her suitor, Thomas Cheeke of Pirgo (son of Lady Essex Cheeke, court friend of the late countess of Leicester), two months later. There is some possibility that she eloped with Cheeke since they were married by special licence; in any case she moved away from Sheen, and, in what must have been an even bigger blow to Lisle, was dead within a year or so.[28]

The loss of his daughter marked the breaking up of Lisle's family circle. Robert, the only surviving child of his marriage, seems to have been frequently absent from Sheen visiting his grandfather, not least to counter the malign influence of the earl's steward, Robert Spencer, who was in partnership with Henry Sidney, Lisle's youngest brother, to undermine the interests of Lisle's own family. By 1668 both Northumberland and Salisbury had died, as had Colonel Robert. Perhaps the final severance of links with the world of the 1640s and 1650s came when Sterry, much in demand as a preacher in London was licensed to preach at Hackney in 1672 and died soon after. Even Temple's return to Sheen to buy and extend his house there in 1670 could not compensate for Lisle's isolation and lack of occupation. Coincidentally, perhaps the death of Monck provided a lifeline for his rehabilitation to London society. In 1671, Lisle allowed the manuscript of a military treatise offered to him by Monck in 1646 to be published and dedicated to Charles II, a reminder of Lisle's indirect contribution to the Restoration. [29] By 1672, possibly using the money Temple had paid him for the purchase of the lease on his Sheen property, Lisle moved back to live in London, though making frequent visits to his house at Sheen. [30]

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[26] Susan Armyne, the widow of Sir Henry Belasyse.

[27] BL, Add MS 32680 fols. 13, 15.

[28] There is no record of her fate, but Cheeke had remarried by 1671, so she must have died some months before this date.

[29] G. Monck, *Observations on Military and Political Affairs* (1671). I am indebted to Patrick Little for this reference.

[30] According to the Hearth Tax returns, Lisle did not begin to pay tax on the property till mid 1672, but he was certainly living in London by February 1672: LMA, MR/T/H/021, MR/T/H/042; KHLC, De L'Isle MS U1475 A43, accounts for February 1672 onwards. (The U1475 A43 accounts are wrongly identified as the second earl's by F. Hull in *Catalogue of the De L'Isle MSS*, 3 vols (Maidstone, 1969-72), ii, 378).

Lisle's new home in Great Queen Street, was sited in a fashionable location, noted for the elegance of its brick-built town houses. Seven doors along the street, Lisle's nephew, the earl of Sunderland (to be named by Lisle in his will as his 'special friend and relation'), had a house. Though Sunderland, driven to a political career by chronic indebtedness, was abroad for much of the early 1670s, Lisle was in friendly contact with his wife; coaches and servants were frequently exchanged between the two and gifts of venison arrived from Althorp. Not far away in the Barbican was the town house of the earl of Bridgewater, known to Lisle since their time together at Gray's Inn in 1633. In April 1672, Lisle's son Robert married Lady Elizabeth Egerton, Bridgewater's only daughter. Lisle was to become a frequent guest at the earl's house.

Only after his son's marriage did Lisle bring into public view another child of his, one Philadelphia Saunders, whose mother, Grace Saunders (also recorded by her maiden name of Pensac, or Pensax), lived in St. Martin in the Field's parish.[31] Grace's father, Francis Pensax, 'gentleman' had been a scrivener; she was thus of educated and possibly well-off parentage, but almost nothing else is known about her or the liaison, except that it perhaps began in the early 1660s and that Lisle, a widower since 1652, treated it as a long-term commitment.[32] The continued use of her maiden name suggests that Grace's marriage was something of a formality, arranged by Lisle to provide legitimacy for their child. It seems that in June 1672 Philadelphia moved to the Great Queen Street house, to be cared for by Mrs Elizabeth Baxter, Lisle's housekeeper; from then on she took on the role of favoured daughter of the house, looking after her father in his last years.[33] Subsequently, and more unusually, Lisle took Grace's sister Jane, as his mistress. In the 1670s three more children, Catherine, Elizabeth and Francis Highems, were born of this relationship and later lived for a time

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[31] According to Leicester's will, TNA, PRO PROB 11/444. fol. 269r.; Temple's teasing offer to send Lisle a Spanish mistress from Brussels in 1666 suggested he knew nothing of the liaison with Grace, Temple, *Works*, i, 255.

[32] LMA P69/GIS/A/002/Ms 06419, Parish Register (General) for St Giles Cripplegate: Grace, daughter of Francis Pensax, 'gentleman' , baptized 4 December 1630; LMA P69/BRI/A/01/Ms 6536, Parish Register (Baptisms) 1587/8-1653 for St. Bride's Fleet Street, Jane, daughter of Francis and Elizabeth Pensax, baptized 29 December 1640. For Francis Pensax, 'son of Edward Pensax, gentleman' *The Scriveners' Company Common Paper, 1357-1628*, ed. F.W. Steer, London Record Society, iv (1968), 57, 117. In 1664 Lisle paid £4,000 for a mortgage on part of the manor of Stoke Dry, Rutland, the income of which went to Grace, so Philadelphia was certainly born by then.

[33] The first indication that Philadelphia was living, or at least staying, in the Queen's Street house, is in KHLC, De L'Isle MS U1475 A43: for 7 June 1672, 'a box of toothpicks for Miss, 6d' ; other accounts at U1475 A44, 1677-1680, and U1475 A66 document frequent payments on her behalf, including schooling at Clerkenwell; Bodl., MS Montagu d.1: T.D'Urfey, *A Funeral poem … to the memory of …Phillip Earle of Leicester*, refers to Philadelphia as his 'Nurse, Physician, Comfort, Year by Year' and her 'hourly Deeds to show true Filial Love'. Leicester appointed her an executor to his will.

with their father; all four 'natural' children and their mothers were to be well-provided for in Leicester's will. [34]

The move back to London marked the end of Lisle's internal exile and his patronage of Sterry's nonconformist community. The death of Sterry in 1672 seems to have broken Lisle's tie not just with Independency but with any form of organised religion. From then onwards, there is almost no evidence that he was thereafter a member of any church, established or dissenter.[35] To what extent might Lisle's drift from organised religion have reflected a more general shift in the values of society? If earlier views of post-Restoration England tended to assume the decline of 'godly magistracy' among the gentry, modern historiography tends to stress the continuing vitality of religious affiliation, particularly that of dissent in London. [36] Blair Worden has also argued, not so much for a 'secularization' of society, but a shift in the emphasis of religion. Election was less of a preoccupation; 'good conduct not right belief', became the test of a Christian. Lisle's purchase of a book on the Quakers in 1676, suggests he himself was perhaps still looking for a substitute for Sterry's Independency. But that he retained a deep religiosity is indicated by the preamble to his will of 1685: in this, in clearly his own choice of words, he 'surrendered' his soul, with 'all humility of spirit … unto God the Father my creator in the merits of God the son my Redeemer', before disposing of his worldly goods, 'wherewith God Almighty of his infinite goodness and mercy hath blessed me in this life'. All the same, church attendance was the public expression of Christian belief, and Lisle's non-attendance at any church aroused criticism. After his death, one of his literary clients, Tom D'Urfey, felt obliged to defend him from the 'dirt of atheism', thrown at him by clergymen, since 'his mellow'd reason could not theirs obey',

So some church errors by his judgment known,
Made him reject their rules to keep his own.[37]

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[34] TNA, PRO PROB 11/444, fols 263r-269v.

[35] KHLC, De L'Isle MS U1475 A43, passim; Camden Local Studies and Archives Centre, P/GF/M/1/1-2, St Giles in the Fields, Vestry Minutes 1618-1719, on 21 October 1680 allowed earl of Leicester 'and two members of his family' to be seated in the pew of their neighbour, Sir Thomas Chichely. It can be suggested this was at Philadelphia's request; the family clearly had no pew of their own.

[36] For instance, Heal and Holmes, *Gentry*, 374-7*;* T. Harris, P. Seaward M. Goldie (eds), *The Politics of Religion in Restoration England* (Oxford, 1990), 10-4.

[37] B. Worden, 'The Question of Secularization', in A. Houston and S. Pincus (eds), *A Nation Transformed : England after the Restoration* (Cambridge, 2001), 32, 36; 10-4; KHLC, De L'Isle MS U1475 A43, 27 February, 1676; TNA PROB 11/444, fol. 263r; D'Urfey, *A Funeral Poem*, 3.

Nevertheless, such lack of formal religious observance was a far cry from the piety Lisle had evinced from the late 1640s onwards. In other ways other changes in Lisle's life after his return to London suggest rather different values from those he upheld during the Interregnum. Significantly, the 'irregularity' of Lisle's private life as noted by Gerald Aylmer – his two mistresses and four 'natural' children – began some years after his career as a councillor had ended and was made public only years later again in the more lax moral environment of Restoration London. Indeed, Lisle's fondness for the Restoration theatre after his return to London – he attended some 36 plays and musical dramas between 1672 and 1676 – stands in some contrast to the 'godly' policies he had endorsed earlier. Alan Houston has argued that moral and religious imperatives were challenged in this period by the growth of the language of 'interest', which offered 'objective facts' to explain human conduct. 'Politicians [by the end of the century] appealed to reason and interest, not faith and virtue'. Lisle's claim in 1660 (among other instances of his uses of the word) to his 'interest' in compensation for the return of his art collection, suggests he was moving from the humanist disapproval of private interest to an acceptance of its legitimacy. For Keith Thomas, honour, not mentioned by Lisle after 1643, was becoming a 'less explicit preoccupation of national life'.[38] Nevertheless, that Lisle continued to identify with Sir Philip's defence of Protestantism is shown by his stance during the political crisis that erupted in the late 1670s.

2. An Earldom and a Return to Politics, 1678-88

In spite of his move back to London in 1672, Lisle continued to avoid involvement with the political world. In 1677, however, inheritance of the earldom and family estates, which brought with them membership of the House of Lords, led to his return to politics, a return unrecorded by historians. On the inheritance of the earldom, however, he showed no more immediate enthusiasm for attending parliament than he had displayed over much of the 1640s and 1650s. Indeed, he may well have tried to evade taking his seat in the House of Lords by leaving the country. The writ for his

[38] Above, 11; KHLC, De L'Isle MSS U1475 A43, 44; Houston, 'Republicanism, the Politics of Necessity and the Rule of Law' in Houston and Pincus, *Nation*, 254-6, 14; K. Thomas, *The Ends of Life: Roads to Fulfilment in Early Modern England* (Oxford, 2009), 180.

attendance at the House was dated 29 November 1677; on 8 January 1678 he was issued with a pass to go to France, with servants, coach and horses and £50 in money.[39] The following day he bought four trunks and a hamper.[40] On 16 February his absence from the House was excused, presumably because of the proposed journey to France, though at the time he was still in London. From 25 March until 2 May a gap in the accounts indicates his absence from London; he could possibly have made the journey to France and back in the time, but it must have been a very short visit. [41] But wherever he had been, he attended the Lords only on 2 May, some six months after the death of his father, and only then perhaps, because a letter of 30 April from the Lord Chancellor required the attendance of all peers absent without leave or proxies. [42]

Having taken his seat, the new Earl's attendance at some seven sessions out of forty-eight over the following five months, was desultory. He was not named for any of the committees, nor is there record that he took the required oaths of allegiance and supremacy. When parliament re-assembled on 21 October, engulfed by the political storm created by Titus Oates's stories of a 'Popish plot' to assassinate the king and overthrow Protestantism, Leicester was absent and did not attend until 28 October. Possibly he only then resumed attendance on information that the Clerk of the House of Lords had been asked on 24 October to draw up a list of peers who had failed to take the oaths. In the event, it was not until 2 December that he was required to take the oaths and then, in company with the earl of St. Albans, a suspected papist, and the aged earl of Dorchester, he had to repeat them on the grounds that they 'did not pronounce some words in taking the oaths'.[43] It seems that his loyalty was suspect.

But once back in the House, Leicester involved himself in the unfolding drama with the first commitment to politics he had shown for almost twenty years. Historians have tended recently to regard the label 'Exclusion Crisis', the attempt of the opposition from 1678-81 to exclude the catholic James, duke of York, from the succession, which developed out of the Popish Plot, as misleading. For Jonathan Scott, the central issue was not exclusion, but rather the underlying seventeenth-century fear of popery and arbitrary government; the events of 1679-81 were a 'rescreening' of the crisis of 1641. For George Southcombe, exclusion was not the only issue but the focus

[39] For instance, Kelsey, 'Philip Sidney'; Parliamentary Archives, HL/PO/JO/5/1/19, House of Lords, Minute Manuscript book, 16 February-7 May 1678, 2 May; *CSPD, 1677-78*, 562.
[40] KHLC, De L'Isle MS U1475 A44, 9 January 1678.
[41] *LJ*, xiii, 151.
[42] *LJ*, xiii, 210, 209.
[43] *LJ*, xiii, 396; Bodl., MS Carte 81, fol. 388.

of political and constitutional fears. He suggests that religion remained a 'vital and divisive part of the political landscape'.[44] Indicating a revival of his concern with events, Leicester attended eight of the nine sessions of the Lords in the week following his return, a further fourteen out of the remaining twenty-six in November, and sixteen of twenty-five sessions in December.[45] In almost all of the Lords divisions on the major issues of the period 1678-81, he was to vote with the opposition against the court party. He was one of the minority of peers who were 'content' on 15 November that a test about transubstantiation be added to the oaths of allegiance and supremacy, a test certain to disable the Catholic James from parliament and councils. The motion was defeated by a majority of thirty-six to thirty-three.[46] On 20 and again on 26 December, Leicester was one of first fifteen, then twenty, peers who unsuccessfully opposed the Lords' amendments to the Commons' bill to have £200,000 voted for the paying-off of Charles's recently formed army paid into the Chamber of the City rather than the government-controlled exchequer.[47] Following Danby's impeachment by the Commons, on 23 December Leicester, together with seventeen other Peers dissented from the majority vote in the Lords which refused to require Danby's withdrawal from their House. Four days later the Lords refused the Commons' request to commit Danby, although this time Leicester did not join the fifteen who protested against this decision.[48]

After the dissolution of the 'Cavalier' parliament and the summoning of the 'first Exclusion Parliament' for 6 March 1679, Leicester maintained his involvement in the political crisis. He attended twenty-nine of the seventy-five sessions of the Lords before this parliament was prorogued in May and he was also one of those nominated for the Lords' committees on privileges, and on petitions.[49] He was recorded as 'content' in the division list on the final (and successful) reading of the bill for Danby's attainder on 4 April.[50] Faced with the prospect of the trial of the five catholic peers who had been impeached by the Commons, on 27 May Leicester and twenty-seven

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[44] Scott, *England's Troubles*, 29-31, 184- 201; G. Southcombe, *Restoration Politics, Religion and Culture: Britain and Ireland, 1660-1714* (Basingstoke, 2010), 41-2.
[45] Parliamentary Archives, HL/PO/JO/1/57, Manuscript Journal of the House of Lords, 23 May – 30 December 1678.
[46] K. Haley, *The First Earl of Shaftesbury* (Oxford, 1968), 471-2; J.P. Kenyon, *The Popish Plot* (1972), 89; Bodl., MS Carte 81, fol. 380r.
[47] *LJ*, xiii, 426, 436.
[48] *LJ*, xiii, 434, 441.
[49] Parliamentary Archives, HL/PO/JO/1/58, Manuscript Journal of the House of Lords, 6 March -27 May 1679; *LJ*, xiii, 454, 455.
[50] Bodl., MS Carte 81, fol. 588 r.

other peers voted against the government's insistence that the bishops (a bloc of government supporters), should be allowed to vote in capital cases.[51] While the court, lacking effective leadership, continued to consider various alternatives, such as limitations on the powers of a future catholic King, the exclusion of James from the succession was becoming a major concern of the Commons. On 15 May a bill to exclude James from the succession was introduced into the Commons. The attack was only halted by Charles' unexpected prorogation of parliament, followed by its dissolution.

Leicester sat in twenty-eight of the sixty-one sessions of the second 'Exclusion Parliament', which met after a series of prorogations on 21 October 1680. [52] This time he was not nominated for any of the committees, though Lord Wharton noted his name on a list of proxies in the 1680 parliament, his proxy apparently being Wharton himself, the former Independent, colonel in the parliamentary army, and one of the opposition leaders. [53] Exclusion dominated the session from the outset. A second exclusion bill passed by the Commons reached the Lords on 15 November where it was decisively defeated, Leicester being one of the thirty-two peers who, in the presence of Charles himself, defiantly voted against the rejection and in favour of a second reading.[54] With the exclusion of James temporarily halted yet again, though the alternative successor was unspecified, the attack on popery continued by other means. From 16 November onwards the Lords took up the policy of limitations by formulating a bill, entitled 'for the securing of the Protestant religion' and considering another which aimed to exempt protestant dissenters from the penalties of the Recusancy laws (thus bidding for protestant solidarity). Leicester, however, was absent from almost all the debates which followed the introduction of the limitations bill and attended only a few of the sessions concerned with the Protestant dissenters' bill. During these weeks the Lords were also

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[51] *LJ*, xiii, 594; Bodl., MS Carte 81, fol. 549 r.

[52] Parliamentary Archives, HL/PO/JO/1/59, Manuscript Journal of the House of Lords, 17 October 1680–8 March 1681. However, the Manuscript Minute book of the House of Lords (Parliamentary Archives, HL/PO/JO/5/1/22, 17 October 1679-10 January 1681), fails to record Leicester's presence on nine out of the twelve sessions which the Manuscript Journal noted him as attending in November. As Leicester was undoubtedly present on one, 15 November (for the vote on Exclusion), had a tendency to arrive late, and a new clerk was entering names that month, it seems reasonable to follow the Manuscript Journal which was written up within a day of the proceedings.

[53] Bodl., MS Carte 81, fol. 668r.; However, no pairing was recorded in the Lords' Proxy Book, 1675-1680, Parliamentary Archives, HL/PO/JO/13/6.

[54] *HMC, Calendar of the Manuscripts of the Marquess of Ormonde*, new series, v, 488; Bodl., MS Carte 81, fol. 654r.; BL, Add. MS 51319, fol. 55; BL, Add. MS 36988, fol. 159, lists Leicester as one of thirty-two who voted against the rejection, but was one of seven who did not protest against those who voted for the rejection, almost certainly because he was absent the following day from the House when the protestors signed the protestation. The latter vote is the one listed in *LJ*, xiii, 665.

pressing ahead with the trial of Lord Stafford, the one impeached catholic peer whose conviction seemed feasible. Leicester attended each of the seven days of the trial which began on 30 November, his mind no doubt concentrated by the King's warning that absent lords would be sent to the Tower. On 7 December he was one of the majority of lords who found Stafford guilty, an expression of feelings on 'popery and James' and defiance towards Charles.[55] Although he was present in the House on 3 January 1681 and probably voted for the bill passed that day to exempt Protestant dissenters from the recusancy laws, he failed to attend on 8 January, when startling new restrictions on a Catholic king were introduced into the limitations bill. But by then Charles was determined to crush the opposition; he prorogued Parliament on 10 January 1681 and dissolved it eleven days later. On 21 March 1681 he summoned a 'third Exclusion Parliament' to royalist Oxford, only to dissolve it the following week.

Leicester never appeared at the Oxford Parliament, but a picture of the political role he adopted during the years 1678-80 can be drawn from the account of his activities in the Lords up to that date. His voting for exclusion on 15 November reflected his long-standing identification with the defence of Protestantism, but also included him in the numbers of those soon to be known as Whigs, led by Shaftesbury, who were 'no friends of monarchy': Exclusion threatened to undermine the hereditary succession of the crown and to create an elective monarchy. But even though an anti-monarchist, Leicester was not a party man, nor an enthusiastic parliamentarian. He was almost always one of the last to arrive in the House in the mornings.[56] Nevertheless, he was conspicuously involved in the opposition during the crisis of 1678-80, and his actions reveal his readiness to attack the powers of a government seen as 'arbitrary', as well as his concern to ensure the safety of Protestantism by preventing a catholic succession. But why then, did he not bother to attend the debates on limitations, a solution which, according to Mark Knights and Gaby Mahlberg, was designed to protect the Protestant interest as well as to impose constraints on future monarchs? Perhaps Leicester distrusted the scheme as merely a court device not worth the paper it was written on. But he may too have disliked the prospect it offered of a commonwealth based on parliamentary and popular sovereignty, including the

[55] Bodl.. MS Carte 80, fol. 823r.; *Historical Collections or Transactions of the late Parliament* (London, 1682); Kenyon, *Popish plot*, 202-3.

[56] As is evident from the Manuscript Minute books of the House which records peers in order of arrival, Parliamentary Archives, HL/PO/JO/5/1/20, 7 May – 30 December 1678, HL/PO/JO/5/1/21, 6 March – 27 May 1679.

transformation of the House of Lords into one based on meritocracy rather than aristocracy.[57]

Whatever his principles, Leicester's relatives had their worries over his readiness to support the opposition. On 5 April 1681, the politician William Harbord wrote to Henry Sidney that 'the dissolution of the last parliament will secure you off your fears relating to your brother Leicester', adding 'but you have a spark in your family who labours hard to confound himself and us too'.[58] The latter reference, to Algernon and his hardline republican activities, is clear enough; Harbord's comment on Leicester is more obscure. Why might Henry have had fears over his brother Leicester? In early April 1681 Henry was at The Hague cultivating relations with William of Orange in the interest of Sunderland's faction, which sought a Protestant alternative to Monmouth, now promoted by Shaftesbury. William, a Stuart by both descent and marriage, was almost certainly distrusted by Leicester for his Stuart connections – his 'relation to the enemy of this state' as stated in 1654 – and thus association with 'popery and arbitrary government'.[59] On 24 March 1681, Shaftesbury had proposed in the House of Lords for the first time that Charles nominate Monmouth as his heir. [60] Harbord may well have been referring to a fear of Henry's that Leicester might choose to back Monmouth's candidature rather than William's.[61] With parliament dissolved, however, there was less risk that Leicester could actively support William's rival; nor could he so easily support other anti-monarchical, anti-Orangist measures. Harbord's comment is a reminder of Leicester's fundamental antipathy to Stuart monarchy.

Henry had little cause for concern. Charles, determined to prevent Exclusion, never again summoned parliament after the dissolution of the Oxford Parliament. Unlike his father in 1641, confident of a French subsidy and backed by a growing tide of Tory support in the country, Charles II could dispense with parliament. The opposition had lost the initiative and rapidly crumbled under the Court's assault on City and municipal government. Even if Leicester had wished to continue with opposition,

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[57] M. Knights, *Politics and Opinion in Crisis, 1678-1681* (Cambridge, 1994), 99-100; for the republican Neville's plans for the House of Lords in his limitations scheme, G. Mahlberg, 'Henry Neville and the toleration of Catholics during the Exclusion Crisis', *Historical Research*, lxxxii (2010), 624.

[58] BL, Add. MS 32680, fol. 216v; printed in *Diary of the Times of Charles II, by the Hon. Henry Sidney* ed. R.W. Blencowe, 2 vols (1825), ii, 24, where however it is dated, April 1680; 1681 would make more sense.

[59] For Algernon's view of William, probably shared by Leicester, J. Scott, *Algernon Sidney and the Restoration Crisis, 1677-83* (Cambridge, 1991), 106-7.

[60] Knights, *Politics*, 96.

[61] There is no evidence that Leicester had previously been a member of Shaftesbury's circle or had backed Monmouth.

there was no parliament to use as a forum for resistance. But for Algernon the fight continued. Attempting to instigate rebellion in Scotland two years later he was arrested, tried for high treason in November, and executed the following month.[62] Although Henry arranged the burial of the body, Leicester had earlier shown magnanimous support for Algernon. It was noted that, though he did not visit Algernon in the Tower, nevertheless, in spite of 'very great differences' between the two over money, Leicester sent him £1,000 'because he can no longer take up the cudgels' and apparently attended the trial.[63] The guilty verdict on Algernon, achieved without the evidence of two witnesses as required by law, was evidence of the Crown's ruthless determination to crush its enemies and must have given Leicester reason to be cautious. Leicester duly attended the first day of James II's first parliament after his succession, taking the oaths of allegiance and supremacy that day, 19 May 1685, and he attended four more sessions till early June. But he was absent from all the November sessions later that year, including that of the call of the House, 16 November, when he was recorded as absent without excuse. Thereafter, though a new parliament was promised, it never met, as James hesitated to introduce his hoped-for measures of toleration for Catholics. James was right to hesitate: two lists of peers drawn up in 1687 for the benefit of William of Orange show sixty-five peers, including Leicester, who had declared their intention of opposing the repeal of the Test Acts if James introduced any such measure in parliament.[64]

Nevertheless Leicester did not welcome the invasion of William of Orange. He failed to join the council set up by peers on 11 December as a provisional government after the flight of James, although some 65 other peers were attending by 21 December.[65] On 25 January 1689, three days after William's Convention Parliament met, Leicester was recorded as absent, this time as 'extra regnum'.[66] Was he really

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[62] Scott, *Restoration Crisis*, 282-347.

[63] *The Entring Book of Roger Morrice, 1677-91* ed. M. Goldie, 7 vols (Woodbridge, 2007-9), ii, 418; Algernon remarked in court defending himself against the use of his manuscript *Discourses* as evidence equivalent to that of a second witness: 'I believe there is a brother of mine here has forty quires of paper written by my father …' Scott, *English Republic*, 56.

[64] 'A list of the English Peers, c. May, 1687', ed. K.H.D. Haley, *EHR*, lxix (1954), 302-6; 'The Peerage and the Test Act: a list, c.November 1687', ed. D.H. Hosford, *Historical Research*, xlii (1969), 116-20.

[65] R. Beddard, *A Kingdom without a King: the Journal of the Provisional Government* (Oxford, 1988), 121.

[66] On the other hand, his son Lord Lisle, welcomed William enthusiastically, entertaining him at 'an extraordinary repast' in London on 18 January, BL, MS Egerton 2717, fol. 426; thus before the Convention met, Gilbert Burnet put Lisle's name put forward on a list of those 'in whom the nation

abroad, as he apparently had planned in 1678, or merely skulking in Penshurst to avoid attending parliament? He did attend a single session on 4 March in order to take the oath of allegiance, but that was the last time he attended. By this time it is possible that age (he was seventy in January 1690), and infirmity may have played their part.[67] But more probably it was the case that, in spite of William's Protestantism, Leicester continued to distrust him for his political associations with Stuart monarchy and its association with 'Popery and arbitrary government'.[68] Nevertheless, before long, Leicester was apparently reconciled with the government; he selected two prominent members of William's government, first his brother Henry, and then Charles, earl of Shrewsbury (one of the seven who had invited William to England), as his proxies for votes in the Lords. And, in spite of his detachment from organised religion, his ancestral loyalties to Protestantism continued: one of the last surviving receipts in his accounts records a quarterly payment of £3 'for the poor of the French Protestants'. [69]

On the collapse of the republic in 1660 Lisle had retreated from the political world into an internal exile and the protection of a remarkable non-conformist community. Twelve years later, after the death of his spiritual mentor, he returned to London to recreate family and social life. After his inheritance of the earldom in 1677, however, he found himself drawn back into the political world. During the years of the Exclusion crisis, unrecorded by historians, Leicester joined the opposition to work for Exclusion, in defence of the Protestant interest and to challenge the court's perceived arbitrary polices, as he had done from 1642 onwards. If he failed to support the policy of limitations, this perhaps suggests his long-standing detachment from parliamentary processes and his preference for an aristocratic and oligarchic form of government. His political career finally ended soon after the accession of James in 1685, though it is clear that in the following years his house was a centre and meeting place for politicians.[70] During the greater part of the 1680s and 1690s, as will be shown, Leicester's chief concern was not with politics, but the construction of his identity as

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trusts' for employment as Vice-Treasurer of Ireland in the new administration, BL, Add. MS 32681, fol. 317.

[67] Ailesbury, *Memoirs*, i, 342, 'a most infirm man … for his health, was morning and afternoon in his coach for air'.

[68] Scott, *Restoration Crisis*, 107.

[69] Parliamentary Archives, HL/PO/JO/13/7, Proxy Book 1685-1733; KHLC, De Lisle MS U1475 A68, 1 November, 1693.

[70] Ailesbury, *Memoirs*, i, 344.

heir to Sir Philip, this time as a patron of literary figures and a collector and connoisseur of art.

Chapter Seven

Cultural career, 1640-98

1. Literary patronage, 1672-98

Lisle's connections with poets and writers can be traced from the 1640s onwards. He was associated with Edmund Waller and Sidney Godolphin in parliament in 1640; according to Dryden he had insisted on the beauties of Chaucer's poetry in the original to Abraham Cowley (who died in 1667). Perhaps Lisle's enthusiasm for Chaucer consciously echoed that of Sir Philip's. But although Lisle maintained ties with Edmund Waller, it was not at rural Sheen, as the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* claims, but at his London home in Great Queen Street from 1672 onwards that he began to expand the circle of his literary friends and his literary patronage. Yet again he was modelling his identity on that of Sir Philip. Nevertheless, his activities go unrecorded in the classic account of Restoration literary London.[1]

By 1672 Lisle had resumed friendship (if it had ever lapsed), with John Harvey, long-established Sidney client and a former patron of Abraham Cowley.[2] Soon after this Lisle had also become friends with Sir Charles Sedley, writer and critic, and with George Porter, a Great Queen Street neighbour and close friend of John Harvey's. In 1673, after Porter moved to Berkshire, Lisle went to stay with him there for a week or so; exchange of presents continued thereafter while Porter remained in the country. In April, 1676 Lisle was a guest at Copt Hall, Essex, with another friend of Harvey's and Porter's: Charles Sackville, formerly Lord Buckhurst, then earl of Middlesex and soon to be sixth earl of Dorset, himself a poet and the most notable patron of writers in Charles II's reign.[3] Another two connections of Lisle's are suggested by Rochester's note from the country to Henry Savile (brother-in-law of Sunderland's sister), 'when you dine at my Lord Lisle's let me be remembered', echoed by Savile's comment to Rochester on Lisle's inheritance of his earldom in 1677, 'My Lord of Leicester is at last dead and our friend just as proud of the earldom fallen to him as our other friend of Dorset was'.[4]

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[1] Above, 47; *Works of John Dryden*, 20 vols (Berkeley, 1956-2000), vii, 39; Kelsey, 'Philip Sidney'; J. H. Wilson, *The Court Wits of the Restoration: an Introduction* (Princeton, 1948), 6-24.
[2] KHLC, De L'Isle MS U1475 A43, 16 February, 1672. Harvey was possibly the author of *Theophania.*
[3] KHLC, De L'Isle MS U1475 A43, 14 October, 1672, 17 August, 1673; 10 April, 1676.
[4] J. Treglown (ed.), *The Letters of John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester* (Chicago, 1980), 117, 170; Parliamentary Archives, HL/PO/JO/5/1/21, 6 March – 27 May 1679, the House of Lords Minute

That Lisle had built up a small, close-knit circle among the leading wits of Restoration London is indicated by a hitherto unnoticed sonnet written by Sir Charles Sedley and dedicated to Lisle soon after his inheritance of the earldom. The point of the sonnet is to remind the new earl not to forget his old friends as 'worse company' crowd into his hospitality, attracted by his grander status. Sedley portrays Lisle's former dinner table as 'constantly laid' at which a 'few, cheerful, easy friends sat round' and where 'truth and wit impartial welcome found'. [5] Lisle's membership of this group of Restoration 'rake-hells' would seem a far cry from the image of godly Protectoral councillor he formerly presented. All his literary friends in the 1670s had been aspiring courtiers the previous decade, notorious for their licentious behaviour and contempt for religion. He must, however, have found common ground in their political alienation from the court from 1673 onwards, caused by the rise of Charles's new chief minister, Danby. Sedley pointedly praises Lisle as

True to thy country's interest and good sense,
Above all court temptations and base ends…

But chiefly, and in spite of their deserved notoriety, all were cultivated writers or patrons of writers, deeply imbued with a classical education; and this was perhaps the bond which drew Lisle into their circle. Sedley acknowledges Lisle in the opening line of the sonnet as

Learn'd thyself and having such for friends,

This was the reputation Lisle no doubt wished to cultivate, but it was also true of his literary circle.

All the same, the company Lisle kept, taken together with his lack of religious observance and his unconventional private life, made him vulnerable. In the mid 1670s Gilbert Spencer, reputedly on the orders of Lisle's father, wrote to call on him to abandon the 'lewd, infamous and atheistical life that he led'. It is likely the letter was

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Manuscript book records the new earl, coming into the House on a number of occasions in company of Dorset and Rochester as well as Sunderland.

[5] Yale University, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, James Marshall and Marie-Louise Osborn Collection, MS Osborn fb68, 75r: 'The Character of L[ord] Leicester', [?] Sidley,[recte Sedley];75v, sonnet, reproduced in Appendix E.

the work of the hostile Spencer rather than the earl himself; it provided useful ammunition for Algernon's character assassination of the new earl in the inheritance dispute that followed the old earl's death in November 1677. [6] The new earl, at least in public, responded to the possibility of near ruinous payments to his younger brothers with *Arcadian* Stoic detachment. Writing to Rochester some days after the old earl's death, Henry Savile reported that, 'we do not yet know whether H[enry] Sidney's portion be left so large as to disturb my Lord Leicester's philosophy, but in the mean time he says, Tis all one'.[7] According to his sister Dorothy, even in 1680 when the court case had found against him, the new earl was 'as unconcerned as if he had lost but a *crême* from his table'. [8]

Not until 1681 was the new earl able to take possession of Leicester House and Penshurst Place, but in the meantime he had maintained his links with the Restoration wits, though with Rochester and Harvey dead, the group had diminished. In 1680 he entertained Sir Carr Scrope and John, Lord Vaughan (later third earl of Carbery) at a large house party in the house of his nephew Smith, at Boundes, in Kent. [9] Both were courtiers; if Scrope was chiefly known for his satiric verse, Vaughan, was distinguished for his wit and learning, becoming President of the Royal Society in 1686. According to Pepys 'one of the lewdest fellows of the age', he was still thought a suitable match for Anne Savile, Leicester's great-niece, in 1682. Nevertheless, as Sedley had warned, over the 1680s Leicester's literary circle was increasingly composed of clients rather than friends of his own class. Vaughan was a great admirer and patron of Dryden with whom Leicester was building up ties of patronage and friendship from at least 1681.[10] In 1689 Dryden, then out of favour with the new government for his conversion to Catholicism in 1686, and replaced as Poet Laureate by his rival Thomas Shadwell, dedicated his tragedy, arguably his greatest play, *Don Sebastian*, to Leicester.[11] With its themes of the loss and renunciation of power the play was appropriate to both men. But Leicester was also a patron of Shadwell, providing his son John (later an eminent

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[6] BL, MS Egerton 1049, 'The Case of Algernon and Henry Sidney' fol. 8; see chapter eight.
[7] Treglown, *Letters*, 169-170. For an earlier reference to 'Lord L—'s generous philosophy', 119.
[8] *Diary*, ed. Blencowe, i, 239, 241; Gilbert Spencer, however, was to assure his friend Henry that, 'I hear he [Leicester] storms and rages like mad and calls me a hundred rogues'.
[9] J. M. Cartwright (ed.), *Sacharissa: some Account of Dorothy Sidney, Countess of Sunderland, 1617-1684*, 3rd ed. (1901), 278.
[10] KHLC, De L'Isle MS U1475 A66, 23 March 1681 'for carrying wine to Mr Dryden, 1d'.
[11] *Works of Dryden*, 59-64. The play was first performed 4 December 1689 and revised before publication in 1690: *The London Stage, 1660-1800: a Calendar of Plays, pt 1, 1660-1700*, ed. W. Van Lennep (Carbondale, 1965), 378; J.A.Winn, *John Dryden and his World* (New Haven, 1987), 437, 439.

physician) with an exhibition in the gift of the earls of Leicester at University College, Oxford. [12] According to Ailesbury's memoirs, Leicester, 'particular besides in all his ways, neither making nor receiving a visit', reserved Saturdays as free from the Lords and others of the court, who apparently thronged Leicester House, 'though naturally he was addicted to none', for the company of poets. 'Two of his most constant guests on the Saturdays were Mr Dryden and Mr Wycherley, professed Jacobites, but their company pleased him'. 'Many 'poetasters' in Ailesbury's account also intruded themselves into the gatherings, uninvited but still treated politely by their host.[13]

Among those less distinguished poets were Tom D'Urfey and an anonymous writer (almost certainly Elkanah Settle), whose funeral eulogies for Leicester, together with Dryden's dedication of *Don Sebastian* to Leicester, portray the identity Leicester had fashioned for himself in the last years of his life.[14] All three remind their readers of his Sidney inheritance. For Dryden he was a 'second Sir Philip Sidney', for Settle 'Leicester's a name renown'd … The Sydney's are Apollinary Heads', while for D'Urfey, he was simply 'noble Sidney'. All, accordingly, spell out his patronage of literature. For D'Urfey he was the 'best prop' of 'Wits' fabrick' and the 'chiefest Bards of Albion's happy land'. For Settle, he was born, 'Proud literature's whole spacious Reign to adorn,' while Dryden noted that Leicester had provided him with patronage 'unasked', unlike Spencer who had had to request help from Sir Philip. Two of the eulogies stress Leicester's learning. According to Settle, 'The whole *Learn'd world* his *Rites* supplies' and for D'Urfey, Leicester, 'learning's Patron', had 'laboured in the golden mines of wise philosophers' since youth; there was 'none so learn'd known but he could teach'. D'Urfey even hailed him as 'Master of the tuneful art', a rare indication of Leicester's otherwise little-documented love of music.

All celebrated the hospitality offered by Leicester, which, for D'Urfey was enhanced by Leicester's 'matchless knowledge' and 'experienced wit':

The best Mæcenas to the Learn'd Kind,
He fed at once the body and the mind.

[12] University College, Oxford, Admission Register, 5 October 1683; my thanks to Robin Darwall-Smith, College Librarian, for providing this information and also the information that Leicester had earlier nominated both his nephew Sidney Carte, and his housekeeper's son, Arthur Baxter, to exhibitions.
[13] Ailesbury, *Memoirs* i,342-3.
[14] D'Urfey, *Funeral Poem*; Anon, *Threnodium Apollinare: to the Memory of the Right Honourable Philip, Late Earl of Leicester* (1698); for identification of the author as Settle, see H. Maddicott, 'An unidentified poem by Elkanah Settle' *Notes and Queries*, new series, xlvii (2000), 189-192). For convenience I refer to the author of the poem as Settle.

Settle, in similar vein, commemorated the hospitality of Leicester House,

Great *Hospitable* ROOF, thy walls so Fair,
Once WITS whole *Pantheon*, and their LORD shined there'.

For D'Urfey, Leicester represented 'the Genius of old sta[u]nch nobility'; Settle celebrated his prosperity. Settle nevertheless wondered at Leicester's (apparent) lack of a military career and absence from court, given that, he was 'an ORACLE above the *Helm of State'*; but Dryden's identification of Leicester as a second Atticus, the loyal friend of Cicero, provided some answer.

Both of them born of noble families in unhappy ages of change and tumult; both of them retiring from affairs of state, yet not leaving the Common-wealth until it had left itself.

Dryden depicted Leicester in Stoic terms, one who 'centring on himself, remains immovable and smiles at the madness of the dance around him', yet sharing with Atticus 'a noble, vigorous and practical philosophy which exerted itself in all the offices of pity to those who were unfortunate and deserved not to be'. D'Urfey agreed: 'his purse was open and his praise not spar'd' while Settle wrote of how he 'Reliev'd *Distress*, and succour'd *Miseries'*. Although scarcely noticed in modern accounts of the Restoration literary world, during the 1680s and 1690s Leicester established a reputation as one of the leading literary patrons in London, building on his friendship with poets which can be dated back to the 1640s and which reflected his ambition to emulate his distinguished namesake, Sir Philip. But as Ailesbury reveals, Leicester played no part in London society, nor had he liking for courtiers.[15] His preferred social activity lay in his hospitality to the literary world, through which he sought to establish his identity – in Dryden's words – as the 'second Sir Philip Sidney'.

[15] Ailesbury, *Memoirs*, i, 243.

2. A Collector of Works of Art, 1640-95

Lisle was to collect works of art on a large scale over many years: his first recorded purchase of a painting was in 1640, his last in 1695. The consumption of cultural goods has been seen both as an element in constructing social identity, and as a means of delineating class distinctions.[16] More recently, it has been argued that cultural goods provide differentiation for individuals even within classes.[17] Certainly the acquisition of works of art can be considered one of the many markers which identified the gentry and noble classes in the early modern period and which provided individual identity within the elite. In the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries country houses of the landed classes were distinguished by tapestries and icon-like family portraits displayed in newly built long galleries. But from the 1600s onwards a new fashion for collecting works of art began to appear in court circles. Aristocrats, courtiers and Charles I himself, using foreign-based agents imported Italian and Flemish paintings of the High Renaissance and Baroque and, in a very few cases, statuary from the classical world.[18] Such works were high-status commodities of aesthetic appeal, which contributed to the 'magnificence' expected of the nobility and also signified a European, cosmopolitan culture.

Pre-eminent among the collectors of what has been identified as the 'Whitehall group' was Thomas Howard, earl of Arundel. According to David Howarth, by 1640 Arundel owned some 600 Italian and Flemish paintings, in addition to 250 antique marble statues, and hundreds of drawings, prints, coins, gems and archaeological inscriptions and fragments. Amongst the paintings, a group of Holbein portraits celebrating the court circle of Henry VIII (of which the Howard family were leading members) held an honoured place. The collection provided Arundel with an unrivalled reputation for cultural eminence and *gravitas*; it also contributed, according to Clarendon, to his 'image and representation of the primitive nobility …when they had

[16] A. Bermingham, J. Brewer (eds), *The Consumption of Culture, 1600-1800: Image, Object, Text* (1995), 4; P. Bourdieu, *Distinction: a Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste* (1984), 66.
[17] H. Jacobsen, 'Luxury Consumption, Cultural Politics and the Career of the Earl of Arlington, 1660-85', *Historical Journal*, lii (2009), 298.
[18] For instance, William Cecil, earl of Salisbury: see S. Bracken, 'The Early Cecils and Italianate Taste', in E. Chaney (ed.), *The Evolution of English Collecting: the Reception of Italian Art in the Tudor and Stuart Periods* (New Haven, 2003), 201-14.

been most venerable'. Consumption of high-status material goods had constructed his intellectual and aristocratic identity. [19]

Lisle's family did not take up the new court fashion, but Sir Philip had taken some interest in Italian art. He had his portrait painted by Veronese and in his *Arcadia* he describes a 'house of pleasure, built as a summer retiring place … full of delightful pictures made by the most excellent workmen of Greece [i.e.Italy]'. [20] His brother Robert, the first earl, built up a small but fine collection of miniatures of English provenance and a larger, but aesthetically undistinguished collection of paintings which included some eighty portraits of his family and their famous connections. Prominently displayed in the public long gallery and lower great chamber at Penshurst Place, the collection was designed to impress visitors with the European-wide contacts and careers of the Sidneys.[21] Though his son, the second earl, had no taste for art at all, Lisle must have absorbed a lesson from his grandfather's collection in the uses of art in projecting family prestige and identity. He also acquired a taste for the more fashionable Italian art, though whether from an undocumented visit to Italy in 1639 or from contact with the great collections of the 'Whitehall group' in the early 1640s, or both, cannot be surmised. Certainly, within weeks of the opening of the sale of the 'Late King's Goods' in October 1649 he had made his first purchases of paintings from the former royal collections. Over the next few years he was to buy 125 works of art, appraised at over £3,000, from the royal palaces. Although out of discretion he did not buy directly from the sale but only through agents or middlemen, almost all his purchases can be identified, thanks to a detailed inventory of 1660 recording the return of the items to the restored monarchy, as noted above. [22]

Space does not permit a detailed examination of his purchases, which I have examined at length elsewhere, but the findings can be summarized as follows.[23] From the royal collection, Lisle bought sixty-one fine and visually spectacular paintings, no doubt acquired for eventual display in Leicester House. No other collection remaining in England and built up from the sale of the 'late king's goods' could rival it for size

[19] D. Howarth, *Lord Arundel and his Circle* (New Haven), 1985, 69, 2, 41, 96; Special issue, *Apollo*, no. 414 (1996); Clarendon, *History*, i, 70.
[20] Sir P. Sidney, *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*, ed. M. Evans (1987), 74. Perhaps Lisle's 'painting house' in the garden at Sheen was modelled on the Arcadian summer house.
[21] R. Strong, 'The Leicester House Miniatures: Robert Sidney 1st Earl of Leicester and his Circle', *Burlington Magazine*, cxxvii (1985), 694-703; *HMC De L'Isle*, vi, 547-554.
[22] KHLC, De L'Isle MS U1500 E111; above, 173, note 7.
[23] H. Maddicott, 'A Collection of the Interregnum Period: Philip, Lord Viscount Lisle and his Purchases from the 'Late King's Goods' 1649-1660', *Journal of the History of Collections*, xi (1999), 17-18.

and magnificence. With perhaps two-thirds of the paintings of Italian origin, and attributed to the greatest artists such as Raphael, Titian and Reni, the collection can be seen as inspired by the taste of the aristocratic and court collectors of the early seventeenth century. In particular, with its combination of Italian paintings, in addition to a number of Holbeins (a reminder of the prominence of the Sidneys, like the Howards, at Henry VIII's court), it reflected an aristocratic taste very similar to that of Arundel. But Lisle's selection contained a higher proportion of paintings on classical themes, literary and biblical narratives, and portraits of scholars than did Arundel's. This collection, it can be argued, served to project the Sidney family reputation for learning and literature as well as its elite status. But, as Lisle emphasised to Ormond, Steward of the royal Household, on the return of the items, his purchases of sixty-two works of sculpture – antique whole marble figures of emperors, gods, goddesses, mythological and bacchanalian figures and marble busts, as well as renaissance bronzes – were 'much more considerable than the paintings'.[24] For their extreme rarity (their export was banned from Italy) and artistic perfection, such works have been described as 'trophies of the highest prestige'. [25] They were also seen by contemporaries as educative in that they provided a link for the learned to the world of antiquity and its moral virtues. Lisle's purchases of antique statuary again mirrored Arundel's taste, but in this case Arundel's particular intellectual interests, as well as those of the Sidneys. This was a collection by which Lisle marked out his aristocratic status but also invoked the traditions of his family, projecting an individual identity of social and intellectual distinction.

The return of his carefully assembled collection of the 'Late King's Goods' to the restored Crown in 1660 must have been a bitter blow to Lisle, but in all probability it did not leave his Sheen house bereft of all works of art. His request at the council of state for a pass for Nicholas Lanier (formerly an art collector to Charles I), to import pictures in late 1658 (and almost certainly in 1655 as well) suggests his use of Lanier to act as his agent for the importation of high-quality paintings during the 1650s.[26] By the time of his death in 1698 some forty years later, he had acquired some two thousand works of art representing a much larger, though less distinguished, collection than that returned to the crown in 1660. There are numerous references to his purchases of works

[24] Bodl., MS Carte 30, fol. 695.
[25] J. Scott, *The Pleasures of Antiquity: British Collectors of Greece and Rome* (New Haven, 2003), 3.
[26] Longleat House MS 67A, 5 October, 1659; TNA SP 25/76, 258.

of art in family accounts and other sources from the 1670s onwards, but information on the collection comes chiefly from catalogues drawn up on its dispersal after his death in 1698. To raise cash, his son Robert, the fourth earl, auctioned those items from his father's collection which he apparently valued least. In April and May 1701 'The Great and Famous Collection of the late Earl of Leicester's Italian Drawings and Prints', consisting of 1029 drawings (forty-seven of which were apparently framed, but most arranged in parcels) and 346 prints in a total of 231 lots, was put up for auction at 'the Great White House', Charing Cross. The sale of these items was followed by the sale of 568 paintings at the same location and a further forty-six (apparently higher quality pictures) at the 'Exchange' (Exeter, or the New Exchange, on the Strand).[27]

Robert himself, however, was to die in 1702 and to settle his debts, almost all the major works of art remaining in Leicester House were sold off over several days beginning 15 April 1703 'at the Twisted Posts' in Great Queen Street. They comprised 206 paintings, 107 drawings and prints (sixty-seven of which were framed), and eighty-three pieces of statuary.[28] Yet another sale, that of remaining portfolios of 'Capital Italian drawings', was promised for 24 April at the 'Twisted Posts', although no record survives of this auction. Detailed information is lacking for most items in all three sale catalogues, and since Robert himself bought some works of art (though apparently not on his father's scale), it is not possible to distinguish the third earl's collection confidently from that of his son in the 1703 sales. [29]

But the earlier sale in 1701 of 'Italian drawings and prints' is a revealing documentation of Leicester's taste, demonstrating yet another similarity with Arundel's collection. By the seventeenth century, drawings were prized by the *virtuosi*, the most avid collectors of works of art, not merely because they represented the immediate creative genius of the artist, but because they helped to distinguish originals from copies.[30] Prints were regarded as an invaluable tool in disseminating knowledge of the works of great artists and aiding correct attribution of authorship, the essence of

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[27] *The Great and Famous Collection of the late Earl of Leicester's Italian Drawings and Prints, by the most celebrated Masters in the World* [1701]; KHLC, De L'Isle MS U1500 E124 gives the selling prices of only 137 lots of the drawings, but the prices of 568 paintings sold at Charing Cross and the forty-six sold at 'The Exchange'. It records the sale of 614 paintings with a gross selling price of £241 17s.

[28] London Gazette 12-15 April, 1703; BL Cup.645.e.5. (no. 12), *A most excellent and curious Collection of Paintings, Drawings and Prints, Marble Statues and Heads … being those of the Right Honourable Philip and Robert, late Earls of Leicester*. No price list survives for this sale.

[29] London Gazette, 19-22 April, 1703; KHLC, De L'Isle MS U1500 E125.

[30] J. S. Held, 'The Early Appreciation of Drawings', *Latin American Art and the Baroque Period in Europe*, (Princeton, 1963), 85-7, 92.

connoisseurship. Exact numeration or authentication of the items is impossible since the drawings were sold in mixed parcels and cannot now be traced, but lots which included drawings attributed to Raphael were among the most numerous; drawings by Titian, Correggio, Polidoro, Giulio Romano, the Carracci, Michelangelo and Parmigianino were also well represented. Some twenty-one lots included drawings by unidentified Italian artists. Of the thirty-nine lots of prints in the same sale, seven included items claimed to be by Raphael, six by Titian and two by Michelangelo. Few of the ninety-eight drawings on sale in 1703 had attributions, but their expensive gilt and ebony frames suggested they were the most highly-regarded of all Leicester's drawings and designed, like the paintings, for display rather than private study and pleasure. Among the number were several attributed to Raphael and Giulio Romano, together with familiar subjects from classical mythology: *Jupiter and Semele, Mars, Venus and Cupid*, and the like. In addition, Leicester's later seventeenth-century collecting demonstrates some evolution of taste. The 1701 catalogue shows that Leicester had acquired the work of more modern artists working in Italy: works by Luca Giordano (1634-1705), Ribera (1591-1652) Poussin (1615-45) and Testa (1611-50) alongside Rembrandt (1606-69) and Isaac Fuller (1606-72).

Other sources reveal Leicester's continued admiration for Italian works of art. In his will he left to his nephew, Sunderland, another enthusiastic art-collector, what must have been a prized painting, that of *Susanna and the Elders* attributed to Guido Reni. To his brother, Henry, earl of Romney, he left a painting of a *Madonna* (probably of Italian origins). His will also referred to a *Phaeton*, later ascribed to Giulio Romano by his son.[31] The will of his son the fourth earl, lists a number of other 'great paintings' still in Leicester House: a 'great' *Madonna* by Raphael, a *Venus, Mars and Cupid* by Correggio, an *Abraham* by Guido [Reni], a 'large' painting of Alexander the Great (presumably of Italian origins), all of which most probably had belonged to his father.[32] In the 1703 sale some thirty-seven out of over 200 other paintings were either attributed to Italian artists or described as Italian in origin.

Leicester had also continued to admire Holbein. In August 1678 John Evelyn noted in the earl's house at Sheen 'diverse rare pictures, above all that of *Sir Brian*

[31] TNA, PRO PROB 11/444 fol.269r.; *Susanna and the Elders* 'after Guido' was recorded at Althorp in 1746 and 1750, but untraced thereafter, K.J. Garlick (ed.), 'Catalogue of pictures at Althorp', *Walpole Society,* xlv (1976), 94, 112. Neither the *Madonna* nor the *Phaeton* have been traced.
[32] TNA, PRO PROB 11/467 fol. 252r. These too can not be traced.

Tuke of Holbein'.[33] In his will Leicester left this painting as another legacy to his brother Henry.[34] In the 1701 sale of drawings, the star attraction of the sale was 'the large and admirable drawing of Holbin that the famous Picture in Surgeons Hall of Henry the 8th was painted from'.[35] Leicester also continued to collect antique statuary. In the first of the great public sales of Sir Peter Lely's collection held in 1682, Leicester showed no interest in Lely's many fine paintings and portraits of former royalists and courtiers. Instead he bought three antique marble heads and a whole statue of *Apollo* in white marble (in addition to half a dozen drawings and a cartoon by Raphael and another by Guido Reni).[36] The *Apollo* can be detected in the 1703 sale catalogue amongst eighty-three pieces of statuary; another four heads specified as 'antique' and perhaps two other antique figures in marble are also listed.

There were, however, differences between the later collection and Lisle's selection of goods from the Commonwealth sale. Excluded from his earlier purchases, no doubt for their royalist associations, were portraits by Van Dyck. But in 1678 the agent of the Verneys' wrote home complaining that the earls of Leicester and Sunderland and others were attempting to buy Van Dyck's portrait of *Sir Edmund Verney*, 'for no other reason, but because it was done by Vandike'.[37] In September, 1690 Leicester even bought a copy of the famous Van Dyck portrait of Charles I 'in three postures' at auction.[38] In his will he left another distinguished painting of Van Dyck's to his nephew and executor Thomas Pelham: the portrait of '*Sir John* [*sic*] *Gage* 'in three heads', one which he had probably acquired from the dispersal of Arundel's collection.[39] Irredeemably old-fashioned, however, was the set of sixteen *Constables of Queenborough Castle* (Kent), painted by Lucas Cornelius in the early

[33] *Diary of John Evelyn*, iv, 142.
[34] It cannot be determined which of the two main versions of this painting surviving today was Leicester's version: J. Rowlands, *Holbein: the Paintings of Hans Holbein the Younger* (Oxford, 1985), 144-5.
[35] For the authenticity of this cartoon, Rowlands, *Holbein*, 148-9.
[36] D. Dethloff, 'The Executors' Account Book and the Dispersal of Sir Peter Lely's Collection', *Journal of the History of Collections*, viii (1996), 31. Leicester paid £39 10s for the marbles, £20 19s for the drawings.
[37] M. Jaffé, 'Van Dyke's Portrait of Sir Edmund Verney', in D. Howarth (ed.), *Art and Patronage in the Caroline Courts* (Cambridge, 1993), 98.
[38] KHLC, De L'Isle MS U1500 E117, September 25, for £2 13s.
[39] TNA, PRO, PROB 11/444, 269r; The early history of *George Gage*, now in the National Gallery, has never been established: see Barnes, *Van Dyck*, 186-8. I am indebted to my former tutor at the Oxford Brookes University, Jeremy Wood, for identifying the reference in Leicester's will, and so providing this provenance for the painting. It can probably be identified with the *Ritratto de Mr Gage*, listed in the Countess of Arundel's Inventory of 1654: *Burlington Magazine* xix (1911), 286.

seventeenth century, which Leicester bought in 1686.[40] Never intended for display in London, they were bought for Penshurst Place on the strength of their historical associations; one of the Constables, Humphrey Stafford, duke of Buckingham, was a former owner of Penshurst, the last Constable, Philip Herbert, earl of Pembroke, was a cousin of the Sidneys. But the most striking difference between Leicester's acquisitions from the crown in the 1650s and his later collection of paintings lies in the latter's overwhelming preponderance of works from Dutch, Flemish or possibly even English painters. If from the 'Late King's Goods' two-thirds of Lisle's purchases were Italian paintings, the catalogue for the second sale of 1701 listed just three out of 383 paintings as Italian; the 1703 catalogue listed thirty-seven out of 206 attributed to Italian artists. In the 1650s the then Lisle had bought several landscapes, still-life and sea scenes, apparently as token representatives of northern art, but by 1703 his collection contained some seventy-three landscapes, sixty-five fruit, flowers or still life scenes, fifteen genre-type works and fifteen paintings described as histories, the great majority of which must have been in the style of Dutch and Flemish artists. Works on antique subjects amounted to a mere nine, while 233 paintings were described as 'heads'; a few of these were portraits, but most seem to have been studies.

The majority of items in Leicester's later collection reflected a post-Restoration fashion for a 'Dutch style'. [41] Such purchases were indicative of the new availability of such works. The acquisition of Italian paintings remained largely dependent upon access to agents abroad, which Leicester could no longer command, or foreign travel.[42] But Carol Gibson-Wood, challenging Iain Pears's claim that the English art market only developed in the years after 1680, has made a persuasive case for an art market in England flourishing from at least 1660. Such a market was based on imports from the Netherlands, together with paintings by immigrant or even native-born artists, made readily available in artists' shops, as well as on the growth of auctions from 1674 onwards. Neil de Marchi estimates that some 35,000 paintings were offered at auctions in the late seventeenth century.[43] Leicester's numerous art purchases throughout the

[40] KHLC, De L'Isle MS U1475 A66, 26 May 1686, 'Paid to Mr Brown for the 19 [*sic*] Constables of Quinborough, £26'. Two remain at Penshurst Place.
[41] Howarth, *Art*, 26-7.
[42] Jacobsen, 'Luxury Consumption', 295-317.
[43] I. Pears, *The Discovery of Painting: the Growth of Interest in the Arts, 1680-1768* (New Haven, 1888), 1-2; C. Gibson-Wood 'Picture Consumption in London at the end of the Seventeenth Century', *Art Bulletin*, lxxxiv (2002), 491-500; B. Cowan, 'Auctions and Connoisseurship in London', N. de Marchi and H. J. van Miegroet (eds), *Mapping Markets for Paintings in Europe, 1450-1750* (Turnhout, 2006), 272.

period 1674 to 1695 as recorded in his accounts were acquired from just such sources: auctioneers such as Alexander Browne and Richard Tompson and sellers such as Robert Walton and Edward Davis.[44] The average cost of the paintings he purchased, as listed in the accounts, was under £1 (the average for his paintings bought from the royal collection in the 1650s, was £20). At the 1701 sale, which admittedly comprised the least valued paintings, the items were sold for an average of 7s 8d each. But as Gibson-Wood has pointed out, many paintings at auction were sold for only a few shillings each.

Nevertheless, although the financial value of his works of art was perhaps less than his outlay, in other respects Leicester's art collection must have fulfilled his expectations. Settle celebrated the earl at home in Leicester House,

'Around him all his *Pensionary* Band,
Of *Reuben's, Angelo's* and *Raphael's* stand.
Ent'ring those *Walls,* what an all-dazzling *Scene*
Does our Surveying *Wonder* entertain? [45]

The mass of Netherlandish school paintings, if artistically unremarkable, served nevertheless as a decorative and colourful backdrop to the more spectacular Italian works and antique sculptures on display. Aristocratic 'magnificence' was thus ensured in London, while the acquisition of a set of historic portraits for Penshurst Place served as a reminder of the aristocratic stress on lineage. Sir Philip Sidney's ideals of learning and cosmopolitan culture, of moral and intellectual instruction, could still be read into the Leicester House ensemble in spite of the loss of the earlier collection originally planned for the house. With his collection of paintings and sculptures, Leicester continued to display his identity as both an aristocrat and an heir to Sir Philip Sidney, but with his collection of drawings, he had also constructed an individual identity as a *virtuoso*, in the sense of skilled and enthusiastic 'lover of art'. Uniquely, his selection reflected the taste of the early Stuart court collectors displayed and transmitted to the London of the late seventeenth-century. His collection can claim a place in the history of the development of art collecting in England.

[44] KHLC De L'Isle MS U1475 A43 and A44, *passim.*
[45] Gibson-Wood, 'Picture Consumption', [Settle?], *Threnodium*, 6.

Although his interest in art and connections with the literary world can be dated from 1640, in the last twenty or so years of his life Leicester was particularly active in cultivating his image both as a patron of literature and of learning, and as a *virtuoso* collector of works of art. Having inherited an earldom, he upheld aristocratic traditions of hospitality in keeping open house for both poets and courtiers; his collection of works of art at Leicester House provided a display appropriately splendid for one of his status. Nevertheless, as Ailesbury observed, he was not attracted to the world of the court, nor did he bother with the conventions of polite society. The worlds of literature and art were his preferred interests. In constructing his identity in the last years of his life, it can be argued that Leicester upheld one aspect of the legacy of Sir Philip, the cultural legacy of his great uncle, appropriate to his new status in the late seventeenth century.

Chapter 8

Family and Finance, 1640-1700

1. Honour and profit: Lisle's finances, 1640-60

The historic under-endowment of the Sidney family in relation to its status meant that for much of his early adult life Lisle faced a pressing need to acquire income to support the lifestyle appropriate to one of his rank. But he had to reconcile the making of money with his attempt to live up to Sir Philip's ideal of virtue and disinterested public service. Virtue and profit, as Lisle came to recognize, were by no means always compatible. Hostility from an over-critical father, however, was to prove his greatest problem and one which came to threaten his inheritance of the Sidney property and his ability to hand it on to his descendants. But, once earl, thanks to the wealth which he acquired through his own resourcefulness, he was able both to display the appearance of nobility and to preserve intact the estate which he inherited.

Lisle's return to England from France in May 1640 to fight in the second Bishops' War indicated the financial constraints he was going to face for many years. He came home 'bare of money', his father providing funds just sufficient for the return journey. £50 was given him on arrival in London by William Hawkins, the family's agent in England, with the promise of more at an unspecified later date. At the same time, the earl of Leicester insisted that Lisle was not to be allowed to borrow household goods from Leicester House, then tenanted to the earl of Strafford, for his lodgings in Queen's Street since 'I am well acquainted with the carelessness of young men and how they squander away all things that come into their hands'. The earl later complained that Lisle was 'young and giddy'. Others were more helpful. Northumberland offered to feed Lisle's servants in his own household. Hawkins also came to Lisle's defence. Lisle, he wrote to the earl, was 'exceeding frugal in all things' and 'his Lordship spends nothing vainly … it is a pity he should want what is fit'. Hawkins was allowed to spend an extra £99 on liveries for Lisle's grooms and footmen.[1]

A military career which provided money as well as the opportunity to win honour, was the solution to Lisle's need for an income. As captain of one of the two

[1] *HMC De L'Isle*, vi, 260, 318, 266, 282, 345, 305.

troops of Northumberland's horse guards formed for the war, Lisle was paid 39 shillings a day and by early July had received some £200 from the Crown. Although the purchase of wagons, horses and 'divers other necessities' largely exhausted the sum, with an additional £50 paid him by Hawkins, Lisle was able to leave London for the north in August. By September, Lisle's troop had been promoted as Charles's own horse guards, and from a complaint of Henry Percy, it seems that Lisle had been allowed an extra 20 shillings a day. Hawkins thus reported from York at the beginning of October that Lisle was 'very well and accommodated with all necessaries'.[2] Even after his return to London at the start of Parliament, Lisle received at least some of his army pay. Though it was in arrears for almost all officers and men, before his resignation as Lord General of the army Northumberland secured Lisle an order for a month's pay on 29 March 1641.[3] In the summer of 1641, however, with the disbandment of the army, all payments ceased. After that date, Lisle's sole income would seem to have been the £4 a week allowed to members of Parliament.[4] By early October, however, the Sidney family were back in England and resident at Leicester House in preparation for the move to Ireland and the taking up of the earl's appointment as Lord Lieutenant; Lisle presumably rejoined the family household and made the most of family hospitality while it was available.

When the Irish rebellion broke out in late October 1641, Lisle, conscious as ever of the need for an income but now keen to emulate his great-uncle's defence of Protestantism, was ready to resume a military career. From 11 December commissions were being issued for officers in a cavalry regiment he was to command and by 26 January he had been promoted to the rank of Lieutenant-general of the horse, with pay of 40 shillings a day from the time of his departure from London (in the event, 5 April 1643).[5] Inevitably the pay fell into arrears. Most campaigns were underfunded, and in spite of the Adventurers' scheme, the Irish campaign particularly so, given the coming of civil war in England. Lisle was later to complain to his father that he had not received one-sixth part of his salary in Ireland, and in January 1643 he wrote that without money of his own, he was forced to borrow to pay Leicester's servants in Dublin who were still awaiting the arrival of the Lord Lieutenant. He claimed that he had never borrowed more than £20 for himself, and he promised his father that he

[2] *HMC De L'Isle*, vi, 282, 292, 316, 329; *CSPD, 1640-1*, 77; *HMC De L'Isle*, vi, 330.
[3] *CSPD*, *1640*-1, 517.
[4] C. Walker, *The Compleat History of Independencie* (1661), 173.
[5] *HMC De L'Isle*, vi, 419; *CJ*, ii, 397.

would not help himself to his supplies of fodder in Dublin: 'I will not rob you as hitherto I have not'.[6]

Living off the land explains his managing without pay. Within weeks of his arrival, Lisle's capture of the prosperous town of Trim provided his soldiers with much pillage and Lisle himself with a large house, no doubt subsequently rented out or sold. Even more profitably, Lisle readily made use of the custodium system: the requisitioning of vacated Catholic estates for the quartering of troops, with officers taking the rents and profits of the land. William Tucker, agent for the Adventurers, visiting Ireland in the autumn of 1642, reported information that Lisle had control of estates worth as much as £2,000 p.a. Tucker also complained that soldiers were too busy farming custodial land for the private profit of their officers to take action against the Irish.[7] But such profits were short-lived and as the royalist party gained the upper hand in Dublin in June 1643 Lisle's servants came under investigation for his custodiums. He himself was to leave Ireland two months later, having commented bitterly to his mother (as noted earlier) that, with Ormond in power, he no longer had in Ireland 'the least means of getting honour or profit'.[8]

There is no evidence as to how Lisle supported himself on his return to London in September. His father was in Oxford, his mother retired to Penshurst, and Leicester House was unoccupied. His only apparent source of income was the allowance for attendance at the Commons. But with his membership of the House, and almost certainly the help of well-placed connections, he was able to ensure that the House did not forget his plight; bills were introduced to settle his arrears of army pay on 20 December 1643, 8 and 29 January and 11 May, 1644. However, it was probably not until a payment to him of £1,000 was ordered on 22 June 1644 that he received anything for his arrears. Over a year later, on 8 November 1645, he was promised a further £1,500 money to come from delinquents he 'discovered' to the committee at Haberdashers' Hall.[9]

But by then his marriage to Lady Katherine Cecil provided a steady income, if a modest one, for someone of his status. By the terms of the marriage settlement of 15 May 1645, in return for a portion of £6,000 to be paid to the earl of Leicester three years later, Lisle and his new wife, as well as a 'convenient number of servants', were

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[6] Bodl., MS Carte 5, fol. 510; *HMC De L'Isle*, vi, 418.
[7] Bodl., MS Carte 3, fol. 272; MS Carte 66, fols. 47v., 57v.
[8] Above, 66; *HMC De L'Isle*, vi, 431.
[9] *CJ*, iii, 259, 347, 361,380, 489, 539; *CJ*, iv, 336.

to be maintained by her father, the earl of Salisbury, in 'diet and lodgings' for the next three years. In addition, Salisbury was to pay Lisle interest at 8 per cent on the £6,000 (amounting to £480 a year) for these three years. In 1648, Leicester was to assign rents from lands in Glamorgan worth £600 as Catherine's jointure (in case of her widowhood), to be used as their joint income, with an additional allowance of £200 to Lisle himself. He was also to assign Leicester House and the Sidney lands in Kent, Sussex and Warwickshire to Lisle on his death, after the payments of his debts. For the years 1645-8 Lisle must have lived comfortably at the expense of the wealthy earl of Salisbury; well-furnished lodgings were allocated to the couple in both Salisbury House in London and Hatfield House in Hertfordshire.[10] But Lisle's appointment as Lord Lieutenant of Ireland in early 1646 increased his income more dramatically. His salary was fixed at £10 a day (over £3,000 p.a.) of which £1,840 was paid over to him in the summer, in addition to the £35,000 made available for the force he was taking to Munster. If money proved scarce for his troops, on 14 January 1647, on the eve of his departure to Ireland, he was paid a further £3,792 as salary and transportation money and provided with £25,000 for expenses. [11]

If the Munster expedition was a political failure for Lisle, financially it appears to have been highly profitable, perhaps dangerously so. In 1648, Prynne's *A New Magna Charta* complained of 'Lord Lisle … who wears much of Ireland's imbezzled treasure on his back and hath much more of it in his purse taking no less than £10 or £15 a day as Lord Deputy of that realm only for riding about London streets in his coach in state', while Marchmont Nedham in *Mercurius Pragmaticus* commented critically on the profits from Ireland that Lisle 'hath laid up for the next generation'.[12] Such gains threatened to dent Lisle's self-presentation as a virtuous public servant. Bearing this in mind on 15 June 1649, when the outstanding accounts for his Irish Lieutenancy were presented to the House by Thomas Chaloner, Lisle waived the right to £3,000 of the £7,868 4s 5d reckoned as owing to him on the grounds of the shortness of his stay in Ireland.[13] Clearly this was a public relations gesture, to win over the Commons after his failure in Ireland, but it still left nearly £5,000 owing to him. Of this

[10] Hatfield House, Cecil MS Deeds, 22/4; Cecil Accounts 148/16 (for year ending March 1646); Hatfield House Inventories (typescript) 294-5; Cecil bills, 221.
[11] TNA, SP 63/262 fol. 85v; TNA, SP 63/263 fol. 35; £25,000 according to Inchiquin, *HMC Egmont*, i, 392. £30,000 in pieces of eight was in hand 10 December: Bodl. MS Carte 29, fol. 605v.
[12] TT, E.427[15], *A new Magna Charta* (1647), 7; TT, E.448[17] *Mercurius Pragmaticus, June 13-20*, 1648.
[13] *CJ*, vi, 232; *CSPD, 1649-1650*, 184.

he received £1062 12s 1¾d on 15 March the following year, while at least one warrant for the payment of £1,370 10s ¾d was issued to him the next month.[14] In the meantime, and less controversially, in October 1647 he had bought £300 worth of shares in the Adventurers for Ireland Company, under the name of his servant, Robert Turbridge. In March 1648 he was affluent, and ruthless, enough to buy £400 worth of East India company shares from his cash-strapped brother, Algernon for £225.[15]

By 1649 Lisle had been able to set up his own household in Carlisle House, Lincoln's Inn Fields, a large house recently built by the earl of Carlisle, step-son of Lisle's aunt, the countess of Carlisle.[16] But income from his father proved more problematic than that from his father-in-law. From May 1648 onwards Lisle was entitled to an income of £800 a year, as laid down in his marriage settlement, but the money was not readily forthcoming. Rents from the Sidney lands in Glamorganshire were slow to collect at anytime but had been much disrupted by war and royal sequestration. In addition, the irascible earl of Leicester was in dispute – clearly of his making, since he had unilaterally altered some of the draft text – with Lisle's father-in-law over the articles for Lady Catherine's jointure. Leicester also sent back to the earl of Salisbury a letter of attorney empowering Robert Turbridge to collect Lisle's rents, on the grounds that they did not provide for Leicester's right to income in excess of the assigned £800. Not until January 1649 did Leicester give Turbridge the letters of attorney. Even then Lisle's income was not secure: the following year Lisle commented to his father 'how short the £800 a year come[s] home to me from Wales'.[17]

Nevertheless, in spite of this limited income, but thanks presumably to the profits from his Irish Lieutenancy, Lisle was able to invest in the opportunities provided by the great Commonwealth sales. Not only did he buy works of art to the appraised value of some £3,000, but he also invested in property. In all cases his use of agents, such as Robert Turbridge for the works of art, enabled his purchases to escape immediate public censure and subsequent critical attention. On 17 April 1650, one of his presumed agents, Alexander Easton 'of London, gent.' contracted to buy the former Charterhouse of Sheen, Richmond, sold for £2,333 11s 9d by the state as one of the confiscated crown properties to pay off army arrears. Of this sum, a quarter (less fees), £563 18s ¼ d, was to be paid in ready cash, the same amount in soldiers' debentures

[14] TNA, SP 28/61 fol. 3r; *Calendar, Committee for Compounding,* i, 814.
[15] *Calendar of State Papers, Ireland, Adventurers,* 66*;* BL, MS Add. Charters 70777.
[16] *HMC De L'Isle,* vi, 596.
[17] *HMC De L'Isle,* vi, 445, 557, 446-450, 451, 483.

within eight weeks, the remaining half in the same proportions six months later.[18] A year later Lisle was in possession of the estate and by 1652 he had begun development of the site.[19] But there is no record of when or how he had bought it. Easton is listed as the immediate tenant of the property but nothing else is known about him. Gentles suggests that there is little reason to believe that such civilian purchasers were acting as agents for others, but it seems more than likely there was an arrangement between Lisle and Easton. What is certain, however, is that, given the discounts negotiated with the debenture holders desperate for cash, the purchaser of the property would have paid much less than the £2,333 required. The rate paid by those buying up debentures ranged from some 1s 6d in the pound on the nominal value of the bills, to perhaps 12s in the pound.[20] If Easton or Lisle had bought debentures to use in the purchase price of Sheen at, say, the rate of 4s in the pound, they may have paid as little as £1,526 in total for the property, of which they had to find only £768 as a first instalment by July 1650.

However or whenever he acquired Sheen, Lisle's possession of the property was clearly established by early 1651 and never subsequently questioned. Surveyed in January 1650, the estate comprised some seventy-four acres on the south bank of the River Thames. It included forty-two acres of meadow land with the remaining thirty-two acres containing the former monastic buildings converted into houses, barns, stables and workshops, all enclosed by a precinct wall 'of great ornament and special use'.[21] Though the monastic church itself was ruinous, other buildings were described as of good condition, the most important being the former Prior's lodging, 'a fair and large structure' with some eighteen rooms and five acres of flower and vegetable gardens, including over 400 fruit trees. There were thirteen other smaller tenements, housing a dozen tenants, most with their own gardens. The estate also brought with it profits from the Sheen ferry. Of historic interest were the stables and barns built by Henry, Prince of Wales, for the 'King's great horses' when he had leased Sheen in 1612-13. In all, the demolition value of the building materials was estimated to be

[18] Above, 196-7; TNA, E 320/R23; J. Cloake, *Richmond's Great Monastery : the Charterhouse of Jesus of Bethlehem of Shene*, Richmond Local History Society (1990) 19.
[19] TNA, LR 3/71: Richmond and Sheen Court Baron, 20 May, 1651, 310 '… the lesser meadow at Sheene belonging to the Lord Lisle'; Court Baron, 12 April, 1652, 316 ' … the slip of ground … lately inclosed by the Lord Lisle with a pale'.
[20] I. Gentles, *The Debentures Market and Military Purchase of Crown Land, 1649-1669* (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of London, 1969), 121, 79.
[21] TNA, E 317/Surrey, 53, 'Survey of Sheen Monastery', January 1650.

worth £1,149, but the survey made clear that, apart from the church, the buildings were in good repair and 'not fit to be demolished'.

By all accounts, Sheen was a highly attractive place in its own right, and its acquisition must have particularly appealed to Lisle. In spite of his political status, he had no property of his own nor did he have a settled base in London (though as a councillor he was provided with rooms in Whitehall).[22] The purchase of Sheen provided Lisle for the first time with an estate in the country and a home just eight miles out of London. It also represented a sound investment in financial terms. The rents, estimated in 1650 as potentially worth just over £200 p.a., added usefully to his income, and, as it turned out, leasing the houses subsequently enabled Lisle to raise capital when needed. The estate also gave him the opportunity to build his own house; by 1661 he was living in a mansion of twenty-two rooms with its own garden, courtyards and outbuildings on the north of the site. Unrecorded in the 1650 survey, the mansion must have been built over the decade and quite possibly in the earliest years of Lisle's ownership, given the evidence of his building activities by 1652.[23]

Three years after the purchase of Sheen, Lisle acquired a much larger estate in Ireland. With the end of resistance in Ireland, and even before Barebone's Parliament met in 1653, the Council was implementing plans drawn up by the Rump for the distribution of confiscated Irish land. Nearly six million acres in ten Irish Counties were to be divided between the Adventurers, who had raised capital to pay for the military effort, and the soldiers who had fought in Ireland, who were offered land there as payment in lieu of their arrears.[24] A Committee based at Grocers' Hall appointed by the Council of State had already begun on 20 July to share out the confiscated land by lottery, although not until 26 September 1653 was the Act passed by the Nominated Parliament for the distribution of land.[25] As with his acquisition of the Sheen estate, it seems Lisle had invested shrewdly. On 26 July he drew an allocation of lands in Queen's County, and on 23 February 1654 a subsequent draw specified this allocation

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[22] In 1652 he was apparently living in Northumberland's London home, Suffolk House: Huygens, *English Journal*, 98.

[23] For reconstruction of the building works at Sheen see Cloake, *Richmond's Great Monastery*, 45, 30. Cloake is clearly right that Lisle must have demolished a number of buildings at Sheen, but his reconstruction of the Sheen plan in 1662 omits a number of surviving houses. A list of six tax-paying residents Sheen in 1664 (*ex inf.* John Cloake) shows that there were then ninety-two rooms with hearths, compared to the ninety-four rooms recorded in the 1649 survey: Centre for Hearth Tax Research, *Surrey Hearth Tax for Lady Day 1664 (online transcript)*, Rot 64D, and above, note 21.

[24] *CSPI, 1625-1660, Addenda, 1625-1660*, 414, 507; Bottigheimer, *English Money*, 131.

[25] *CJ*, vii, 242.

as lands in the barony (the Irish equivalent of a hundred or wapentake) of Slievemargy. His new holding was later recorded as amounting to 3,000 acres (Irish acres) in the southwest quarter of the barony. Since an Irish acre was 1.6 of an English acre, this amounted to 4,859 acres by English reckoning, a substantial grant of land. The acreage allocated was based on Lisle's estimated credit of £1800 in the scheme.[26]

What is less clear and more curious is how much Lisle had actually contributed towards this credit. In 1647 he had purchased under Robert Turbridge's name, £300 for shares under the 'doubling ordinance' of 1643.[27] By this special offer, Adventurers who paid an extra 25 per cent on top of their original investment were entitled to double the acreage they would have expected at the start of the scheme for their money (i.e. an original investment of £100 +'doubled' investment of £25 would provide lands to the value of £250). So for Lisle to have paid £300 (representing 25 per cent of his original investment) under the doubling ordinance, he should first have invested capital of £1200. There is however, no record of either Turbridge or Lisle paying £1200 – or indeed any other sum at all – into the scheme; the bulk of Lisle's investment must have been made up of shares bought on the open market, which by the late 1640s were being offered at a considerable discount.[28] But according to the rules of the doubling ordinance, shares to the combined value of £1500 should have produced lands to the value of £3,000; yet Lisle was given lands to the value of only £1800, indicating he had shares only to the value of £900 in total. This suggests that Lisle, in addition to his recorded payment of £300 under the 'doubling ordinance', could produce other shares only to the value of £600 rather than the £1200 he should have originally have invested. He had therefore, it seems, profited from the doubling ordinance with a much lower proportion of investment in the scheme than required, as well as acquiring the rest of his shares on the open market at a discount. If shares had been discounted to, say, half their value, Lisle might only have paid £600 in total, of which, of course, only the £300 paid over by Turbridge had actually gone into the scheme. Overall therefore, it would seem probable that Lisle had acquired a sizeable new estate in Ireland at much less cost to himself than others had had to pay – and to no great advantage to the scheme.[29] Of

[26] TNA, SP 63/300, 10; Bottigheimer, *English Money*, 206, prints a better version of the same table from Marsh's Library, Dublin, Z 2.1.5, but he fails to distinguish Philip, Lord Lisle, from Lord Commissioner John Lisle who was allocated 1,000 acres in Kilkenny [West], Westmeath, in return for an original investment of £600; *CSPI, 1625-1660, Addenda,* 546.
[27] *CSPI, Adventurers,* 66.
[28] Bottigheimer, *English Money,* 153-156 for examples of successful speculators in Irish land.
[29] As, for instance, his colleague, Lord Commissioner John Lisle: see note 26 above.

the 1,043 Adventurers, many of whom were wealthy landowners and merchants. Only twenty-five other investors gained more Irish land than that acquired by the far-from-affluent Lisle.

Lisle almost certainly never went to Ireland to manage the lands and found, as did most Adventurers, that the only way to make any money from his investment was through leasing them to a developer. Thus on 17 September 1657 an indenture was drawn up by which John Bligh, a London merchant who had himself drawn 1,000 acres in East Meath, would lease Lisle's land for twenty-two years for £400 p.a. However – yet another puzzling feature of Lisle's investment as an Irish Adventurer – the indenture revealed that Lisle's 3,000 acres were not in the barony of Slievemargy, Queen's County (modern County Laois), as originally specified, but in the barony of Deece, in the County of Meath.[30] Either Lisle had exchanged his lands with another Adventurer, or, more probably, rejected the first award and acquired a better. Deece, not far from Dublin, was situated in the rich grasslands of Meath, rather than the upland pastures of the remoter Queen's County. As with the acquisition of Sheen, he had again secured something of a bargain, but how and when is unrecorded. The Deece estate was not Lisle's only Irish acquisition; at some date before 1661 he had inherited (or bought) the estate of Glaslough in County Monaghan from his aunt, the Countess of Carlisle. But when and how he acquired it, as with the other estates, is unrecorded. [31]

The late 1650s must have been a time of prosperity for Lisle. Not only had he acquired three (and perhaps four) income-generating estates at possibly bargain rates, but as Councillor of State under the Protectorate he was entitled to an annual salary of £1,000. His brief appointment as ambassador to Sweden in early 1653 brought in the promise of a further £6,000, of which he kept £2,000.[32] No doubt he had also benefited from gifts from ambassadors and clients. He had, all told, over the years 1640-1659 achieved some degree of wealth, and with almost no help from his father. 'The land I have in Wales' he was later to remind his father, 'is more than purchased by the £6,000 [his wife's portion, paid to Leicester]'.[33] Careful with money by all accounts, he had yet managed to take advantage of the opportunities offered by the crushing of the Irish rebellion and the destruction of the English monarchy. Even more remarkably, in spite of Prynne's and Nedham's criticisms, he was conspicuous in his absence from Clement

[30] BL, Add. MS 43465, fol.1
[31] *HMC Egmont*, i, 177, 494; KHLC, De L'Isle MS U1475 L5.
[32] *CSPD, 1652-1653*, 118: *CSPD*, 1653-*4*, 156.
[33] BL, Add. MS 32680, fol. 17.

Walker's list of those who had profited from the Civil Wars.[34] He had acquired wealth, and the status it brought, with little damage to his reputation as a virtuous 'public man'.

2. A troubled inheritance: Lisle's financial problems, 1645-83

If Lisle's marriage settlement in May 1645 ensured him an income from the Sidney estates from 1648 onwards, it was accompanied by a long-term hazard to his inheritance of the Sidney property. On 16 May, the day after the marriage settlement, the earl of Leicester devised the inheritance of the Sidney lands with a tripartite indenture in the form of a 'strict settlement' to come into effect three years after the marriage. Partly to protect the property from sequestration but also to provide money for portions to younger children and payment of the earl's debts, the Sidney estates, that is, the lands in Kent, Sussex and Warwickshire, together with the 'capital messuage' of Leicester House in London, were to be conveyed to four trustees, who would re-convey the lands back to the earl for his use as life tenant, with reversion after his death to Lisle and then to his son in tail male. Following the earl's will of 1642, the settlement laid down that £21,000 was to be assigned for the portions of Leicester's seven younger unmarried daughters. In addition, £4,000, chargeable on Lisle's inheritance of Leicester House, was to be paid to settle the earl's debts, his gifts and legacies at his death. On 16 May 1648 the 'Great deed of settlement' was duly drawn up, by which Lisle would inherit Leicester House on payment of the £4,000 for the earl's debts, gifts and legacies; the Sidney estates in Kent, Sussex and Warwickshire would be conveyed to him by the trustees on payment of £21,000 (for the daughters' portions) as well as £4,000 'for the earl's debts'. The wording was ambiguous, but there were in fact to be two separate payments of £4,000 each. [35]

Lisle knew he was liable to charges of up to £29,000 on his inheritance, a huge burden on an estate with an annual income of only £3,000. To make matters worse, this would have to be paid to the trustees of the estate by Lisle *before* they would hand over his property. The earl also allowed himself the right to re-allocate any of the portion money at his discretion as circumstances changed, for instance on the death of any of

[34] Walker, *Compleat History*, 166-72, lists a hundred prominent parliamentarians in 1648 who had made gains by that time, but makes no mention of Lisle.
[35] BL, Add MS 43465, summary of will and 'great deed of settlement'. fols 10-2; also summarized in BL, MS Egerton 1049, 'The case of Algernon Sidney and Henry Sidney' fols 9-10.

the daughters. In other words, the settlement was designed to provide the earl with a powerful weapon of control over his eldest and least favourite son as much as to provide for his daughters. Not surprisingly Lisle was said to have commented to Algernon that he 'esteemed as nothing at all he expected from the earl his father'.[36]

Although the prospect of paying up to £29,000 before he could inherit his family lands must have represented a distant nightmare to Lisle, a more immediate tragedy revealed his father's ungenerous spirit. As described earlier, Lady Lisle died in August 1652 following childbirth, and in December the earl informed Lisle that he was withdrawing £200 a year from Lisle's £800 annual income on the grounds that it was a personal allowance due only during the lifetimes of Lisle and his wife. In the violent scene that followed, a furious Lisle struck his father in the face and the two were estranged for the next seven years.[37]

It was not the case, as is generally assumed, that Lisle's relationship with his father never recovered from the blow, although he was very lucky not to have been immediately disinherited. The two were reconciled on the death and funeral of Lisle's mother in 1659. In 1661 Lisle was helping his father recover some of his arrears from the Crown by grants of property in Ireland.[38] But such co-operation was not to last. Lisle was in any case facing more difficult times in the 1660s. With the collapse of the Protectorate he had lost his Councillor's allowance of £1,000 a year; five years later, he faced eviction from his Irish estate in Meath, while his tenant John Bligh, defaulted on paying the rent.[39] In the meantime he had to bear the cost of the bringing up of his children, as well as taking responsibility for a new family, his natural daughter Philadelphia, and her mother Grace Saunders. In the late 1660s, as noted earlier, the earl refused Lisle financial help towards the marriage of his legitimate children. [40]

Careful husbanding of money was the order of the day at Sheen.[41] But apparently Lisle had capital to fall back on. To support Grace and their child he was able to invest in a mortgage of £4,000 on Sir Kenelm Digby's manor of Stoke Dry in Rutland. From 1670 onwards income from the manor provided £200 a year for their maintenance. In 1669 Lisle acquired a second mortgage on Digby's lands which

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[36] BL, MS Egerton 1049, fol. 4.
[37] Above, 130, *HMC De L'Isle,* vi, 614.
[38] Scott, *English Republic*, 61; BL, MS Egerton 1049, fol. 8; *HMC De L'Isle*, vi, 509.
[39] *HMC De L'Isle,* vi, 525. He seems to have lost the estate soon afterwards.
[40] Above, 178.
[41] This is indicated by the correspondence between Lisle and his agent in London, KHLC, De L'Isle MS U1475 C162/5-10.

provided for his two daughters by Grace's sister, Jane Highems, and some years later a mortgage of around £1,500 on property in Methwold, Norfolk, for the benefit of their son Francis Highems.[42] It was perhaps to help raise the first sum that Lisle leased out his newly built mansion in Sheen to John Lord Bellasys in 1661 for a sum of several hundred pounds.[43] In 1664 he also leased the Glaslough estate to John Leslie, bishop of Clogher for £4175.[44] In 1670 and 1675 he sold two of the houses at Sheen to Sir William Temple for some £4,000.[45] Perhaps the first of these sales enabled Lisle to buy the house in Great Queen Street in 1672.

But even without the offer of Sidney lands from his father, Lisle was still able to promise an income from his own purse of £400 p.a. for his Robert's son's marriage that year to Lady Elizabeth Egerton, daughter of the earl of Bridgewater.[46] In London in the 1670's Lisle's style of life remained modest. Sir Charles Sedley celebrated ambiguously the style of his entertaining 'Thy fortune overflowing thy expense'.[47] £1,000 from East India Company shares between 1662 and 1665, together with several sums of £200 in the early 1670s, and an annuity of £100 from his uncle, Northumberland, no doubt helped with daily expenses, but there is evidence that Lisle still had other capital available.[48] A letter of the countess of Salisbury in 1673 refers to a loan owing to Lisle; there is also a record suggesting that in 1680 he had lent the earl of St Albans £2,000. That year Algernon Sidney was to declare to the Court of Chancery that he knew his elder brother had 'great sums of money and a considerable estate'; an exaggeration, no doubt, but one, it appears, with some truth in it.[49]

By then, relations between father and son had long since broken down irretrievably. In 1663 Leicester began issuing long-term leases to Lisle's tenants in

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[42] *HMC House of Lords*, n.s. vi, 347, ix, 12; TNA, PROB 11/444; £1,500 estimated from the £58 19s rent paid on the mortgage in 1677: KHLC, De L'Isle MS U1475 A68.

[43] TNA, CRES 38/1765, 'Bellasyse to pay Lisle £150 immediately … £300 within six months for the [42 acre] meadow'; TNA, CRES 2/1241.

[44] TNA, CRES 38/1763; CRES 2/1241; KHLC, De L'Isle MS U1475 L53.

[45] J. G. Longe, *Martha Lady Giffard, Life and Letters 1664-1722* (1911), 168.

[46] BL, Add. MS 43465 fols 4-6. Bridgewater promised a portion of £10,000 in return for an eventual settlement of £1200 p.a. worth of land on the couple. Heavily indebted, he paid only £4,000 to Lisle, but supported the young couple with £600 p.a., in addition to £400 offered by Lisle (who also promised a personal allowance of £200 for Robert). There never was a formal marriage settlement.

[47] Yale, Osborn fb68, 'Character of Ld Leicester'.

[48] For the profits to be made in these decades from investment in the East India Company, P. Lawson, *The East India Company: a History* (Harlow, 1993), 44,40. Lisle had invested perhaps £2,000 in the re-establishment of the company in 1657.

[49] Hatfield House, Rutland Letters, 54, FP 8/222; KHLC, De L'Isle MS U1475 A68/3; BL, Add. MS 43465, fol. 8; BL, MS Egerton 1049, fol. 17v.

Glamorgan, having first charged them a high entry fine, thus making money for himself while depriving Lisle of future income. Since Lisle refused to confirm the leases, his father abandoned the policy after making several hundred pounds at Lisle's expense. The same year the earl granted building leases for several plots in Leicester Fields. Lisle's attitude to building leases was consistent throughout the years that followed: he claimed that since the earl was only a tenant-for-life (according to the marriage settlement), the earl had no right to issue such leases: 'By which leases' Lisle explained, 'I should have given away my right, and my son's for lives or many years … I having been for the greatest part of my life, and my children for their whole lives, been excluded from any benefit or help from your Lordship or your estate …I entreated your Lordship to pardon me if I endeavoured to keep any little hold I had upon the inheritance of the family …If your Lordship's intention be that an estate should descend in the line of your family, I am ready to do anything may be necessary for me to do towards it'.[50]

Nevertheless, Leicester's will drawn up on 28 September 1665 was not unfavourable to Lisle. Three daughters had died since the 'Great Deed of Settlement' and in accordance with its provisions, two portions (of £3,000 each) were allocated to two unmarried daughters, Anne and Diane, and a third (of £3,000) was to be divided between Leicester's younger sons. Lisle was promised the residue of the £21,000 originally set aside for the portions of the daughters, i.e., £12,000 (or four portions) less a number of bequests. He was also promised all his father's personal moveable possessions, later estimated as worth £10,000: a library of some 5,000 books as well as plate, household furnishings, horses, coaches and other items. He was however, liable for two sums of £4,000 to settle the earls debt's (as well as subsequent annuities of £150 charged on the estate for his younger brothers). And, if Lisle failed to pay the legacies in time, or hindered the raising of money by the trustees of the estate on behalf of the legatees, as the 'great deed' laid down, the trustees were entitled to raise the money themselves from the rents or profits of the estate and to pay the sums to the executors to be divided among his three younger brothers. [51]

Nothing can have been devised that was more likely to create problems for Lisle on the earl's death. By giving trustees the right to make use of the profits of the estate if

[50] *HMC De L'Isle*, vi, 523.
[51] TNA, PRO PROB 11/355.This account of the Sidney inheritance conflict provides an alternative version to that in Scott, *Restoration Crisis*, 90-7.

Lisle did not pay legacies almost immediately, the earl was depriving Lisle of the very money he need to pay in advance for his inheritance. The right of the trustees to determine whether Lisle 'hindered' the settlement of the estate stood to benefit his younger brothers to the sum of £12,000, a sure recipe for pressure on the trustees. The situation, however, changed almost immediately. Anne eloped with the local curate, Joseph Carte, and was promptly disinherited by her father. [52] Robert died in 1668, the unmarried Diana in 1671. But in none of the nine remaining codicils to his will did Leicester reassign the money due to them. Until his deathbed, there was no further apportioning of the £21,000 for the seven daughters' portions laid down by the settlement. In a letter of 30 March 1671 to the earl, his nephew Sunderland (one of the executors) clearly stated Lisle's concerns 'that the sums be fixed on' to 'hinder all disputes that might arise' from 'the great deed of settlement'.[53]

By 1670 there was a new arena for Leicester's conflict with his son: the development of Leicester Fields, part of which is the modern Leicester Square. The four-acre site that had become known as Leicester Fields (on the northern part of which Leicester House was built) had been bought by Leicester in 1630; he had enlarged the site by buying three contiguous acres, known as Swan Close, in 1648 just five days before the 'Great deed of settlement'.[54] The open fields were regarded by Leicester as his property in fee simple, since they had been neither part of his inheritance nor had they been entailed. He argued that they were separate from the house; they were not subject to the restrictions of a life tenancy, and were thus his to dispose of as he wished. He also considered they were not included in the marriage settlement of 1645 which promised the conveyance of Leicester House with its 'appurtenances' to Lisle on his death. Lisle disputed all these points. Unfortunately the marriage settlement was ambiguous. It referred firstly to 'Leicester House, its appurtenances and gardens and lands thereunto belonging'; elsewhere it mentioned 'Leicester House, its appurtenances, gardens and orchards'.[55] Nevertheless Lisle could claim that the settlement had included the fields. In 1645 these had been of little value but with the rapid development of the West End from the 1660s onwards they had become a prime development site.

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[52] *HMC De L'Isle*, vi, 624; TNA PRO PROB 11/35, Ist codicil, December 1665.
[53] BL, Add. MS 32680, fol. 22r. (dated to 1671 from internal evidence).
[54] BL, MS Egerton 1049, fol. 10r.
[55] TNA, C33/251 fol. 665; TNA, C6/195/33; Hatfield House, deeds, 22/4; the phrase 'and lands belonging' was also used in Leicester's will in 1665, TNA, PROB 11/355.

The earl applied for a licence to begin building houses on the east, west and south sides of the Fields in April 1670.[56] Although building was complete on the south by the end of the year, only by the following February were letters patent issued to allow the development. At that point, as the question of the leases became urgent, the problems began. Lisle, according to his own account, had been favourable to the development when it was first suggested, but apparently, as it became clear that his father was determined to conclude the leases on his own authority and without acknowledgement of Lisle's rights in the land, he turned against the development. In a letter of 30 March 1671 to the earl, Sunderland urged him to allow Lisle to 'join' with him in the leases 'as the best way to satisfy the builders … which he is willing to do'.[57] This would have registered Lisle's claims to the Fields. An undated letter from Leicester (but presumably of this date) declared the earl 'not unwilling' to include Lisle in the leases but indicated that the rents would then be assigned to persons of his choice for sixty years – the normal length of a lease being forty-two years – thereby depriving even Lisle's son of all benefit from the development.[58] This seems to have provoked a furious reaction from Lisle who then threatened to turn all the builders out once he inherited the earldom. On 6 July the aggrieved builders filed a lawsuit in Chancery in order to determine the legality of their leases. Subsequently it appears that both Lisle and his son 'declared their willingness to assent to such leases'.[59] But Lisle and his son had not formally confirmed the leases and thus the earl had not secured his development from Lisle's threat of legal challenge.

On 13 April 1671 Leicester intensified the pressure on Lisle in a fifth codicil to his will. The grant of his personal estate to Lisle was revoked and instead all his moveable possessions were to go to Algernon and Henry, to be divided equally between them. They were also entitled to all the rents due on his decease. The following month Leicester entered into a bond for £4,000 due to Algernon and Henry, representing the £4,000 chargeable on Leicester House, in order to secure this sum to them on his death.[60] According to Algernon, a subsequent 'enrolled deed' (dated 167-) [*sic*] gave the rents of Leicester Fields and Swan Close to the two brothers for their

[56] For the narrative of the development of Leicester Fields, Greater London Council, *Survey of London, The Parish of St. Anne Soho,* 2 vols (1966), i, 21-3, ii, 416-440.
[57] BL, Add. MS 32680, fol. 23r.
[58] KHLC, De L'Isle MS U1475 E71/2 (misleadingly dated to January 1673, in Scott, *Restoration Crisis*, 92).
[59] TNA, C 6/195/33; TNA, C 10 195/28.
[60] KHLC, De L'Isle MS U1475 E71/7, *HMC De Lisle*, vi, 530.

lives with remainder to Robert, Lisle's son.[61] In August that year Leicester made the implacable Algernon a co-executor of the will, along with Henry, their brother-in-law Sir John Pelham and their nephew, the earl of Sunderland. A seventh codicil in 1674 reallocated the earl's personal property; Algernon, then living in exile in France, was to have £5,000 in cash from the earl's personal estate instead, to be paid within six months of the earl's death, and Henry was to take all the moveables and the rents due.[62] Two subsequent codicils conveyed the manor of Long Itchington in Warwickshire to Henry.[63]

Not until 31 October 1677, just three days before his death, did Leicester, with the willing help of Henry and of Gilbert Spencer, draw up a deed with the force of a final codicil to allocate the daughters' portion money. Though the deed does not survive, it apparently required Lisle to confirm the building leases within six months and to convey the rents to Henry and Algernon, or to pay £9,000 (the portions of three dead daughters), to Henry *alone*. (Algernon, unluckily for him, arrived at Penshurst two days after the drawing up of the deed). Another £6,000 (representing portions of two more dead daughters), was to be divided between Henry and Algernon. (By the original will of 1665 the two brothers were also entitled to share a portion of £3,000 between them, but this seems to have been disregarded). Thus the earl had allocated £15,000 from five daughters' portions, but two daughter's portions of £6,000 in total remained unallocated. In addition to £4,000 charged on Leicester House, the £4,000 for his father's debts, not to mention his brother's annuities and other bequests, Lisle was therefore liable on his father's death for a sum in excess of £23,000.[64]

Though in public cultivating an image of stoic detachment from the harshness of his fate, Lisle, now third earl of Leicester, was determined to fight to preserve what 'little hold' he had on his inheritance. His immediate problem was that the chief executors of the will – Henry and Algernon – were also its principal beneficiaries. After their father's death, Henry, as heir to the personal estate, stripped Penshurst Place of its most valuable contents.[65] Philip later complained that he had defaced the house, not

[61] BL, MS Egerton 1049, fol. 11r.; Algernon's failure to give the exact date indicates that he did not have the document to hand.
[62] TNA, PROB 11/355.
[63] *HMC De L'Isle*, vi, 531-2.
[64] Scott, *English Republic*, 237; TNA, C10 195/28 provides the fullest account of the Chancery proceedings, 1677-8.
[65] *HMC De L'Isle*, vi , 647, 16 November, 1677; the contents of the house were appraised at £3415 19s of which amount, incredibly, the books were valued at a mere £100.

merely removing the tapestries (among the other movables), but even tearing down the wainscoting to which they were fixed, as well as selling 1100 'good' trees for timber from the estate. This was unconvincingly disputed by Henry, but he did admit to selling the cattle and hay from the Penshurst home farm. Both younger brothers rapidly returned to London after their father's death to execute the will. Algernon took possession of the untenanted Leicester House, pending Philip's payment of £4,000 in accordance with the bond of May 1671.[66] The will was proved on 19 December and the brothers prepared to enforce its provisions to their maximum advantage.

A crippling problem for the new earl was the failure of the trusteeship for the estate. All the trustees appointed by the settlement of 1648 were dead. Their sole heir, Sir William Temple, noting that 'there are liable to arise great suits and differences' in the inheritance, ungallantly refused to 'intermeddle' in the affair in spite of the urgings of his old friend Lord Lisle ('by persuasion of Algernon Sidney and Henry Sidney', as the now Leicester sourly observed). On 8 December, the new earl requested the court of Chancery to appoint trustees of his choice to protect his interests and ensure the conveyance of the estate according to the settlement.[67] Ten days later the court appointed six of its clerks as trustees to hold the estate and receive its income until it was released to the new earl. Leicester then applied to the clerks for conveyance of Leicester House, but, 'prevailed upon by Algernon Sidney and Henry Sidney' (Leicester's words again), they refused to act without the direction of the court.[68]

On 28 January 1678 Leicester was therefore forced to file his first suit in Chancery for possession of the Sidney lands and on 3 April a second. He insisted that no more than £25,000 was specified in the 1648 settlement: £4,000 for the late earl's 'debts, gifts and legacies', £21,000 for portions; the failure of the settlement articles to spell out clearly that there were two separate payments of £4,000 due gave his argument some plausibility, but was clearly wrong.[69] He also claimed incorrectly, that if the debts were paid off in his father's lifetime, or if any of the daughters died, then obligation to the full sum ceased. He declared that since the death of five of his sisters, there therefore remained no more than £13,000 outstanding. Leicester also pointed out that he was inheriting a diminished estate: during his father's lifetime the manors of

[66] TNA, C10 195/28.
[67] TNA, C5 515/25.
[68] TNA, C10 195/28.
[69] BL, Add MS 43,465 fols. 12, 11.

Balsall, Warwickshire, and Walsingham, Norfolk, had been alienated (as well as Long Itchington, left to Henry), thus restricting his ability to pay even this sum.

The executors, led by Algernon, based their counter-claim on the settlement of 1648 together with the late earl's will of 1665 and the final deed of 31 October. Algernon argued, clearly correctly, that the late earl had power to charge up to £29,000 on the estate: £21,000 (portion money), £4,000 (for Leicester House) and another, separate payment of £4,000 for the late earl's debts. He claimed (an inflated) £12,000 (or four portions) for Henry if Leicester failed to confirm the leases to Leicester Fields and to assign their rents to both his brothers within six months, as well as the £6,000 assigned to the two of them. Algernon seems to have hoped to be allowed the remaining £3,000 (the seventh portion), for himself, arguing for the right of his father to bequeath his property to his younger and more dutiful sons rather than his 'sinister' and morally reprobate heir.[70] To add to Leicester's difficulties, his brothers-in-law, Viscount Strangford, widower of Isabella Sidney, and Joseph Carte, husband of the disinherited Anne Sidney, joined forces with the executors and were now claiming portions in respect of their wives.[71] Not surprisingly, Leicester responded with accusations of 'combination and confederacy' and 'persuasions' to his prejudice.[72]

In June 1679 Leicester made a third application for the conveyance of his property and the question of the leases and rents became the immediate issue. The matter was referred to the court of King's Bench where a jury, on the basis of the earlier 'assent' of the new earl and his son, decided that Leicester and his son had indeed consented to the leases. Leicester's continued refusal of the confirmation was now seriously weakened. A new hearing in Chancery in May 1680 ordered the confirmation of the leases and assignment of the rents to the brothers within six months, or the payment of the £9,000 to Henry.[73] Leicester appealed for a rehearing which took place in early November. Only in January 1681 did the Lord Chancellor pronounce a verdict which proved final: Leicester was to confirm the leases and rents by the following Michaelmas, or pay £9,000 to Henry. He was also to pay £3,000 each to Algernon and Henry as provided in 1677. Perhaps unexpectedly, the two remaining portions were assigned to Anne Carte: she was to receive £3,000 in the first instance,

[70] At least so he claimed in 1680 and presumably in the earlier proceedings, BL, MS Egerton 1049, fol. 11v.
[71] TNA, C10 195/28.
[72] TNA, C6/81/75.
[73] TNA, C33/251 fol. 664. For Gilbert Spencer's vendetta with Leicester and connivance with Henry throughout, BL, Add. MS 32680, fols. 262, 356.

and then a yearly payment of £100 up to the value of a second £3,000. Strangford's claim to £3,000 was, however, disallowed. Leicester had also to pay the £4,000 for his father's debts. But on his payment of another £4,000, divided between Algernon and Henry (as well as their annuities of £150 each), he was to have conveyance of Leicester House.[74]

After four years of determined fighting in an untenable case, the new earl of Leicester had finally lost the battle. He was now liable for the full £29,000 demanded in his father's will. Ill-feeling between fathers and sons of aristocrat families has never been rare, but the bitterness aroused by the Sidney inheritance was exceptional. In his lifetime, the second earl, quarrelsome and vindictive in so many of his dealings, focused his resentments on his eldest son, and even beyond the grave sought to impose his will on his heir. But the ambiguities and lack of clarification in the settlement, the will and its codicils had provided opportunities for litigation which (as Sir John Temple had foreseen) the rest of his family were only too willing to exploit. Designed as much as a weapon of control against a loathed son and heir as a provision for the marriage of daughters, the 'great deed of settlement' of the Sidney estate predictably inevitably provoked the furious counter-attack of the heir himself. But the extent of the new earl's resentment at his father's treatment reached to the irrational: by continuing to refuse consent to the building leases of Leicester Fields, the new earl had unnecessarily raised his liabilities from over £21,000 to £29,000.

3. The years of recovery and his financial legacy, 1682-1700

The outcome was not a complete disaster for Leicester. On payment of £4,000 to his brothers in November 1681, the earl was at last able to move into Leicester House after a formal conveyance of the house and estate from the Chancery clerks to new trustees. He confirmed the Leicester Fields leases in January 1682, five years after the six months initially laid down by his father. But even if he had lost control of the rents, he now could contest his obligation to pay the £9,000 due to Henry. Once established in occupation of his property, he was also able to take a more leisurely view of the £16,000 still outstanding. Algernon had received only £1,000 of his £3,000 by the time of his arrest for high treason in May 1683 (though Leicester sent him a further

[74] TNA, C33/255, fol. 304.

£1,000 when he was in the Tower).[75] At the same time he was finally able to access the income from the estate. Given that the Chancery clerks had handled all the revenues of the estate amounting to perhaps £2,500 a year for four years, they should have received at least £10,000. Some of this would have been spent in the meantime to pay fees and settle bequests as the executors had requested, but a proportion should have remained as capital for Leicester to use for the payments still outstanding. Luckily for Leicester, the trustees do not seem to have used their powers under the will to make leases of land in order to pay the charges: his rental income as earl, proved to be about the same as his father's. Perhaps best of all, in January 1682, Henry was persuaded, having been paid both the £2,000 and the £3,000 of his inheritance (in addition to his selling of the moveable goods estimated to be worth £10,000 from his father's personal estate), to give up the deed for £9,000 and the rights of the two younger brothers to the Leicester Fields rents.[76] A furious Algernon, who had not been consulted, who had been deprived of the two portions awarded to Anne Carte which he had hoped to share with his brother, who had not received his legacies in full, and who now faced the loss of his income from Leicester Fields, launched Chancery proceedings against his former allies Henry and Gilbert Spencer, as well as his estranged brother.[77] But Leicester had secured the rents, and the rights, to Leicester Fields in 'the line of the family', as he wanted.

After November 1681 the earl was able to move into Leicester House and begin the task of settling his debts. Capitalizing on his new property was his first priority. Almost immediately he resumed his father's policies of developing the Leicester House estate, though this time with the support of his heir. On 13 April 1682 he and his son signed the first agreements for building on the only land left undeveloped there: that of the gardens and orchards of Leicester House itself on the north side of the square. By the end of 1683 two new streets had been created: Leicester Street and Sidney Street, while the already existing Lisle Street was extended westwards. By 1688 the Leicester Gardens rents were bringing in £316 a year. Ten years later, with new income also in mind, Leicester even allowed eight one-storey timber shops to be built in front of the house's courtyard wall.[78] Sales of timber were another source of ready cash. It seems

[75] Scott, *Restoration Crisis*, 98. This still of course, left £1,000 owing.
[76] KHLC, De L'Isle MS U1475 L5; Scott, *Restoration Crisis*, 97-8, does not consider the possibility of a financial deal between the two brothers.
[77] Scott, *Restoration Crisis*, 97.
[78] *St Anne Soho*, ii, 427.

unlikely that Leicester made £25,000 selling Penshurst timber to a Mr Welles of Tunbridge in 1681-2 as was claimed by 'J.G.', but he was paid at least £1799 by Sir Charles Bickerstaffe for timber sold from the park during those years, and a further £4214 1s 9d by 1685.[79] Leicester also capitalized on the property he had built up earlier. In April 1683, he leased out a third property in Sheen, its gatehouse with two small tenements, to Sir William Temple and the remainder of his holdings there to Robert Rossington, the latter for a rent of £100 a year. In July 1684 Leicester came to terms with Dean Lesley, inheritor of the Glaslough lease: for £350 the family were to have the freehold of the estate. Leicester's East India Company stocks continued to supply useful extra cash'; in 1687 he drew £1507 from the company.[80]

Such sums raised by the new earl seem hardly adequate, however, to have covered all the charges on the estate. After his wife's death, Lisle's income from Glamorganshire land had been only £600 a year. As earl, his annual income was lower than that of his father in the 1630s, given the loss of the Warwickshire and Norfolk manors. The remaining Sidney lands, the Kent and Sussex estates of Penshurst and Robertsbridge, provided a rental income of some £2,000 a year, and the Glamorgan estates perhaps £700 a year, but all accounts were in arrears.[81] Leicester kept the Glamorganshire manors in his hands, but paid perhaps £480 a year over to his son. £2,500 was no great amount to maintain the lifestyle of an earl, let alone to deal with the charges on the estate left him by his father.[82] Only the Leicester Fields rents, amounting to some £367 a year by 1697, provided some compensation for his diminished inheritance.

Yet Leicester showed little interest in active estate management. He continued to live in London, visiting Penshurst perhaps for a month in the summer during the 1680s, but not even that in the 1690s. At the time it was accepted that efficient estate management required the physical presence of landlords in order to take investment decisions and to ensure the payment of rents. Absentee landlords failed to exploit the potential of their property.[83] Nevertheless Leicester had the expense of keeping up both houses, including a staff of eleven at Penshurst and twenty-one in London. But

[79] BL, MS Egerton 1049, fol. 17v, marginal note; KHLC, De L'Isle MS U1475 A68; KHLC, De L'Isle MS U1475 E 55.
[80] TNA CRES 2/1241; KHLC, De L'Isle MS U1475 C162/11; KHLC, De L'Isle MS U1475 A68.
[81] For example, KHLC, De L'Isle MS U1475 E10/2, '1689 rental for Penshurst, £1225 7s, Robertsbridge, £843 2s 5d, arrears £1328 15s 8d'.
[82] KHLC, De L'Isle MS U1475 A68/2, receipts for 18 June 1690 to 23 May 1691, £2257 16s 11d.
[83] J.V. Beckett, *The Aristocracy in England, 1660-1914* (Oxford, 1986), 134-183.

although he remained careful with his expenditure, London living and entertaining was expensive. For the seven months up till June 1694, the wine bill from the Castle Tavern alone came to £458 12s 5d and after his death, three other vintners sent in accounts for a total of £1304 18s 2d.[84] It must have helped that he had no wife to support, but all the same he took responsibility for his natural children and their mothers. In the late 1680s he provided a portion for his daughter Catherine Highem's marriage and in April 1691 he purchased a commission for her brother Francis.[85]

Nevertheless within a few years, Leicester was affluent enough to be lending money to city businessmen and fellow peers. In 1687 he paid £500 for a bond in the East India Company. In 1690 he lent Lord Bridhill £1,000, receiving repayment of £1062 10s with interest the following year. In all, in 1691 Leicester was recorded as having made loans of some £14,800 to seven other borrowers, the interest on which brought in £665 a year.[86] After his death in 1698, it was found that he had out on loan £13,199 to (principally) the same seven individuals. He also had East India company stock worth £1688 16s 6d and ready money in the house of £2,341 1s. With the sale of the lease of Sheen by his executors for £2,500, and a further £900 held by his agents, his realizable capital and assets amounted to some £20,628. A further £8,676 6d was tied up in the two mortgages he had bought on lands in Stoke Dry and perhaps £1,500 for the mortgage on the Methwold property, while arrears of rent on his estates were reckoned at a substantial £3,634 9s 9d, not to mention the £6,000 still owing to him from the earl of Bridgewater for his daughter's portion.[87]

How had Leicester so successfully turned around his finances? Indeed how had he raised the first £4,000 to secure conveyance of Leicester House and the estate *before* he was in receipt of income? The evidence put forward earlier suggests that he enjoyed some degree of affluence even before he took possession of his inheritance. A 'great house' mentioned by his sister that he kept at his own expense at Boundes, in Kent, in the summer of 1680 and a current loan to the earl of St Albans, suggest no great shortage of money.[88] The explanation would seem to be that he had retained the profits

[84] KHLC, De L'Isle MS U1500 A15/34; BL, Add. MS 43465 fol. 3.
[85] TNA PROB 11/444; *English Army Lists and Commission Registers, 1661-1714,* ed. C. Dalton, 6 vols (1892-1904), iii, 187, 17 April, 1691, Francis Highems, to be ensign in the 1st Regiment of Foot Guards (under colonel Henry Sidney, his uncle); 188; 1 December 1693, promoted captain.
[86] Namely: earls Salisbury, Ailesbury and Sussex, Lord Dover, and Mr Price, Doughty and Morrough, KHLC, De L'Isle MS U1475 A68.
[87] BL, Add. MS 43465, fol. 63, 'money owed at the death of Philip, Earl of Leicester'.
[88] Cartwright, *Sacharissa*, 278.

from his years of office and had skilfully invested his capital from the 1640s onwards. Algernon's comment on the 'great sums of money' held by his brother were echoed in Settle's words that 'prosperous Leicester' had 'found his golden mines in the old world'.[89]

Yet ironically and in spite of, but also perhaps because of his wealth, Leicester, like his father, left a disputed inheritance on his death on 6 March 1698. In his will dated 6 March 1685 he was concerned to provide for his second family. His four natural children were to receive £2,000 each and the cashed-in mortgages for Stoke Dry and Methwold; their mothers and Elizabeth Baxter, Leicester's loyal housekeeper, £600 each. Robert Sidney, his heir (on whom the lands were entailed), was bequeathed the £6,000 for his wife's portion still owing by the Bridgewaters, as well as the moveables at Penshurst. At Leicester House, however, he was to have only two-thirds of the moveables, with a third going to Philadelphia (though Robert was to have all Leicester's prized statues).[90] With other legacies and a generous two years' salary to servants, the money Leicester promised from his own purse amounted to just under £15,000.

Unfortunately, as his wealth increased, Leicester became more generous. In a codicil of 1691 he left Philip Sidney, his eldest grandson, an annuity of £400 to be purchased (at a cost of around £2,800) from his personal estate, while a codicil of 1697 offered Philadelphia the option of taking £4,000 in cash rather than a third of the Leicester House works of art. The values of other legacies were also raised, with Philadelphia promised another £1,000. But it was perhaps only in the last week of his life that Leicester's generosity really created problems for his executors. In a final codicil to his will, dated 2 March 1698, Leicester left his five younger Sidney grandchildren £1,000 each, and £5,000 more to his three natural children. Other legacies were also raised as Leicester remembered with gratitude the servants who had worked faithfully for him: 'my good friend, Mr Folkes my great assistant' and 'Thomas Lywood …for his extraordinary pains in my sickness'. Affection and thoughtfulness were evident in the will and its codicils: every surviving member of Leicester's family

[89] Above, 215; Settle [?], *Threnodium*, 11; The East India Company was paying a staggering dividend of 50 per cent from 1685-9 (Lawson, *East India*, 44).
[90] TNA, PRO PROB 11/444. The list of Penshurst movables included 'books'; presumably this was the great library left by the second earl to Henry, which possibly had remained at Penshurst. It seems to have been finally dispersed by auction in 1743 according to G. Warkentin, 'The World and the Book at Penshurst: the second Earl of Leicester (1595-1677) and his Library', *The Library*, sixth series, xx (1998), 345-6.

was remembered, with bequests to all them of works of art or cash. In another significant contrast to his father's will, the money was to come from his personal estate, and not charged on his heir or the future income of the estate.

In the last seven years of his life Leicester had therefore added over £20,000 worth of cash bequests to his will; some £11,000 worth of those bequests were made four days before he died. In all the bequests totalled £35,526 13s 4d, which his executors, daughter, Philadelphia Saunders, assistant, Martin Folkes and nephew, Thomas Pelham, had to balance against assets of £36,633 4s 4d.[91] But some of the putative assets, including arrears of rents and mortgages amounting to over £3,000, were not readily forthcoming. It also quickly became clear that Leicester's debts were greater than expected. Forty-eight tradesmen, from the vintner to the herbwoman, speedily presented (possibly inflated) accounts which, together with funeral and other expenses, amounted to bills of £5,690 7s 5d. There was therefore a considerable shortfall in the money available and it was suggested that all beneficiaries take a cut of 16.5 per cent in their legacies. At this point the new earl and his family became obstructive, no doubt resentful of the generous treatment of the natural children, and challenged the accounts while refusing to consider reductions in their own legacies.[92] In particular the new earl complained that although his father had received £4,000 for his wife's portion, no settlement of lands had been made on his behalf, nor allowance paid to him.[93] He therefore insisted on an extra £5,300 from the estate. The impasse was broken only when all legatees agreed to submit their claims to arbitration by a master of the Court of Chancery.

On 17 July 1699 a compromise settlement was decreed. Among many other provisions, Philadelphia was to receive £1,000, not £4,000, for her share of the Leicester House pictures and moveables, while the new earl was to abandon his claim for £5,300 from his father, but to receive a mortgage for £6,000 to supply his wife's jointure. His heir, the new Lord Lisle, would receive an annuity, but subject to the necessary general reduction; the younger children would have their £1,000 each without reduction. The family were placated and the distribution of legacies took place. On 28 March 1700, the handing over of a final £728 11s 8d was noted, and 11 January

[91] BL, Add. MS 43465 for the account of the assets and debts of the third earl at the time of his death.
[92] KHLC, Streatfield MS U908/L8 for an account of the family dispute and its resolution.
[93] A number of payments of £120 recorded to him in the 1680s must represent his family's income, not the personal allowance he felt entitled to.

1701 the executors were finally released from all claims.[94] It had taken almost three years and considerable family friction to settle the will, but at least there had been nothing like the four years of bitter litigation created by the will of the second earl.

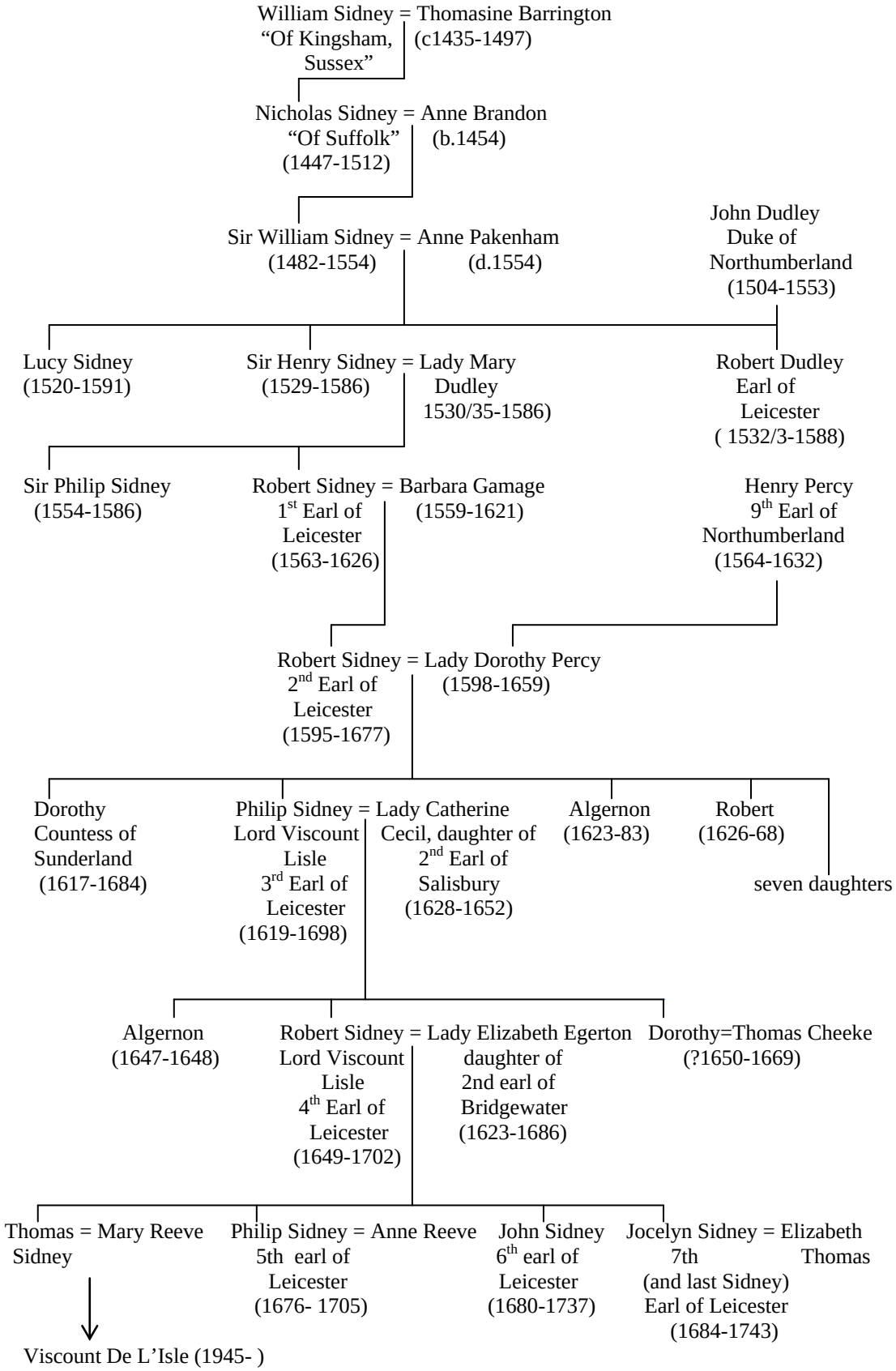
As Lord Lisle, Philip Sidney had successfully amassed the riches that provided the honourable status for one of his class. With the profits of office and government service, he had acquired an estate in Ireland, a valuable property in England and a considerable amount of working capital, all without jeopardizing his reputation as a disinterested public servant. In making his fortune he had demonstrated enterprise and even ruthlessness. As earl of Leicester, he had fought an untenable case through the courts in order to protect his interests and those of his heirs. Thanks to the assets he had built up earlier, some of which (such as the Glaslough estate), had had to be sacrificed, he was nevertheless able to overcome the crippling burden of charges placed on his inheritance by his father. He managed quite remarkably to settle those charges without selling, alienating or mortgaging Sidney lands. Unlike his father and grandfather, he left to his son the Sidney estates as he had inherited them, without the encumbrance of debt or charges. He also left him a fully developed London estate and a splendidly furnished Leicester House.

But in other respects, as earl of Leicester and trustee for the Sidney estates, he failed to fulfil the traditional paradigms of noble landownership. In spite of his wealth, he did not succeed in adding to the Sidney lands, preferring to leave the greater part of his personal fortune away from his legitimate descendants. He never lived for any length of time in the 'barony house' of Penshurst Place nor did he attempt to establish the family's standing in the county community. He played no part in the daily running of his lands, which he left to others. It has been suggested that after 1660 the association between land and power grew closer as the landed classes strengthened their control over the countryside, increasing the significance of the landed estate in local and national life. [95] Leicester opted instead for metropolitan literary society and the creation of a great cultural centre at Leicester House. In this he was merely continuing Sidney tradition. Their fortune made at court, preferring martial exploits abroad, or at least literature and learning to country pursuits at home, the Sidneys had put down no deep roots in their Kentish estate. In this they had always differed from

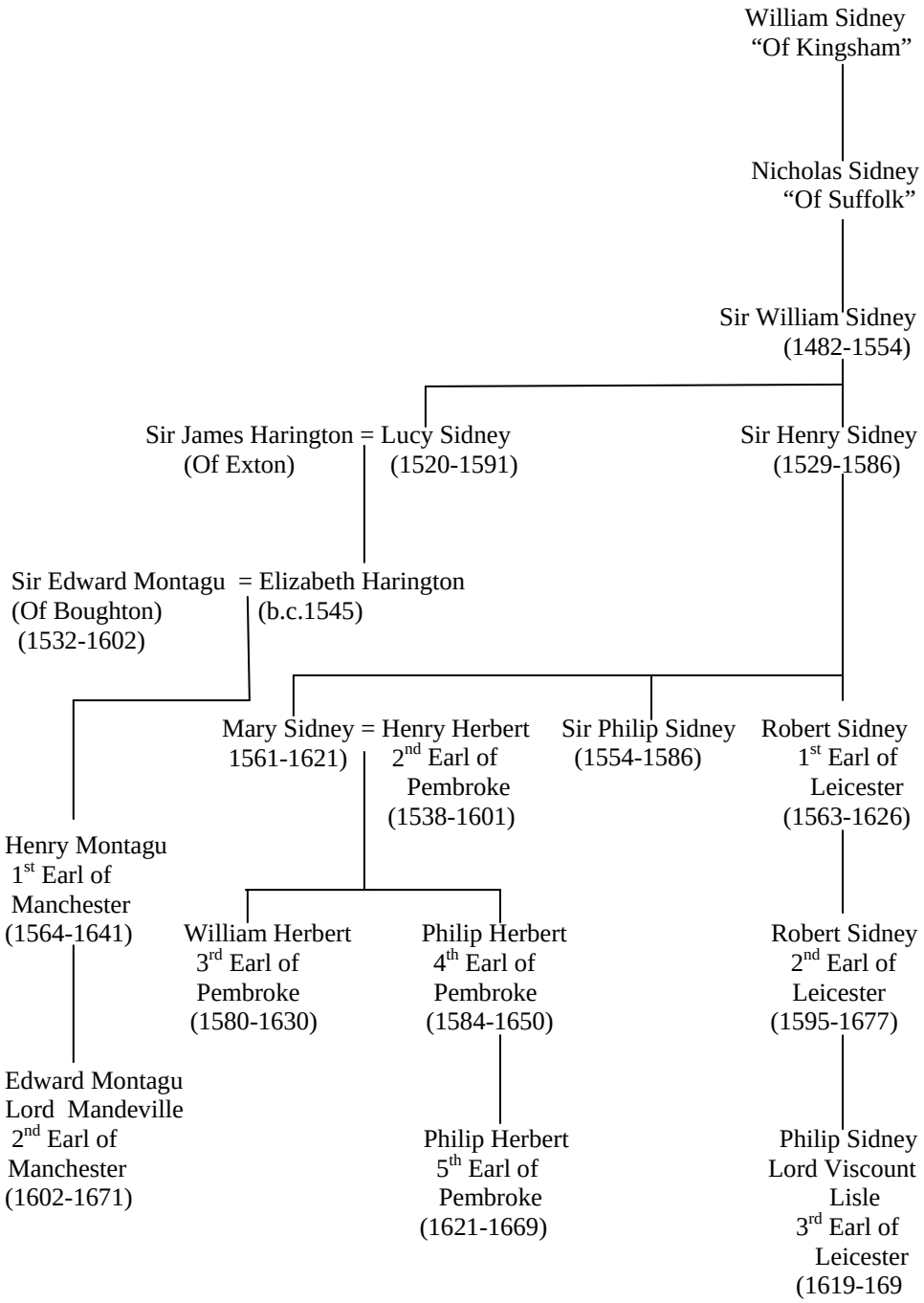
[94] BL, Add. Charters, 70779, 70780.
[95] Habakkuk, *Marriage, debt*, 58-60.

those peers for whom the landed estate was an important element in their identity. The third earl did not follow the typical pattern of the nobility but that of the Sidneys. In his financial and estate affairs, as in so many other ways, Philip Sidney, third earl of Leicester, constructed his identity on family tradition, and above all, on that of his celebrated great-uncle, Sir Philip.

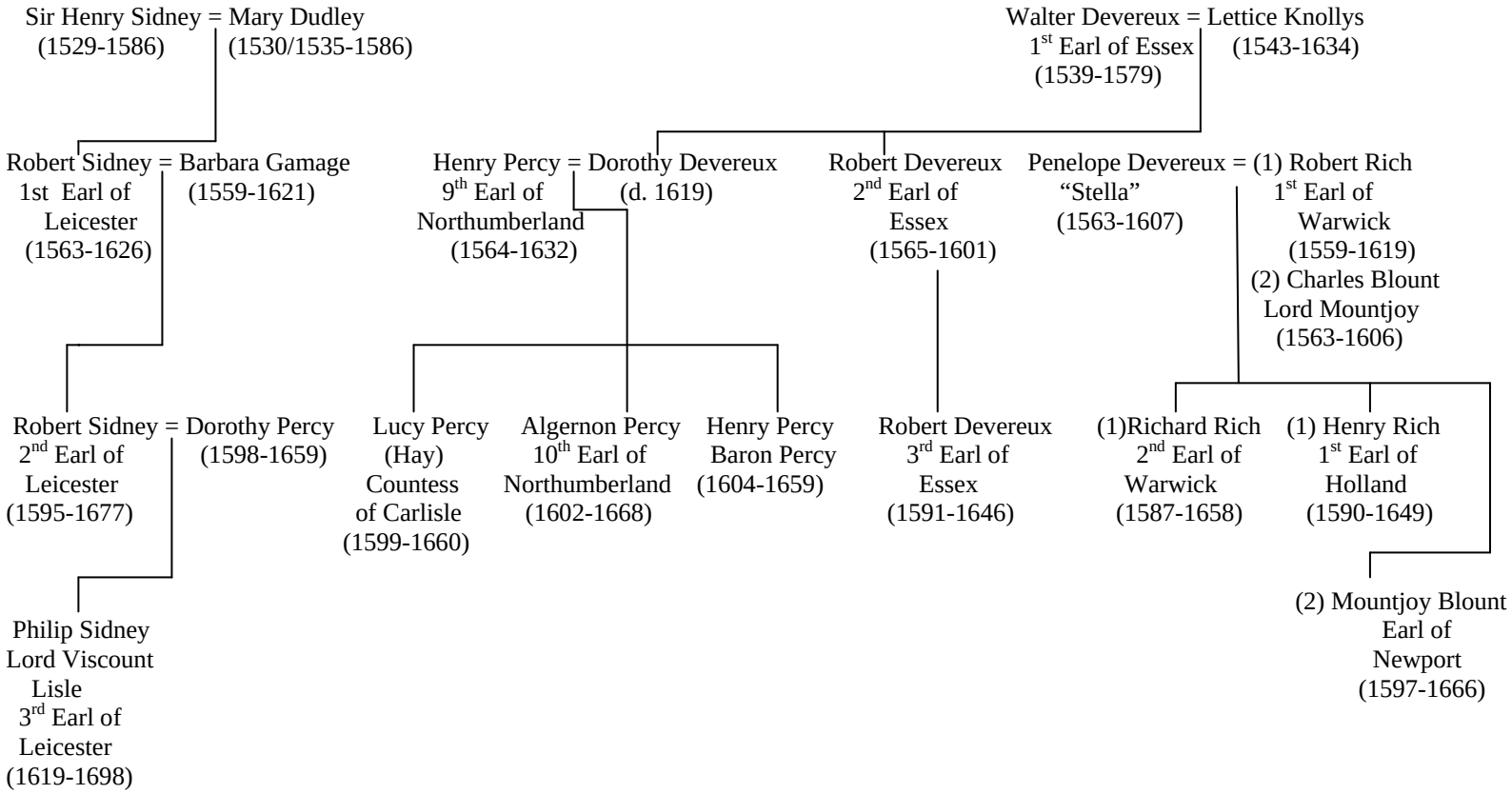
Appendix A
Line of Descent of the Sidney Family



Appendix B
Sidney family relationships to the Earls of Manchester and Pembroke



Appendix C
Sidney Family Relationships to the Earls of Northumberland, Essex, Warwick, Holland and Newport



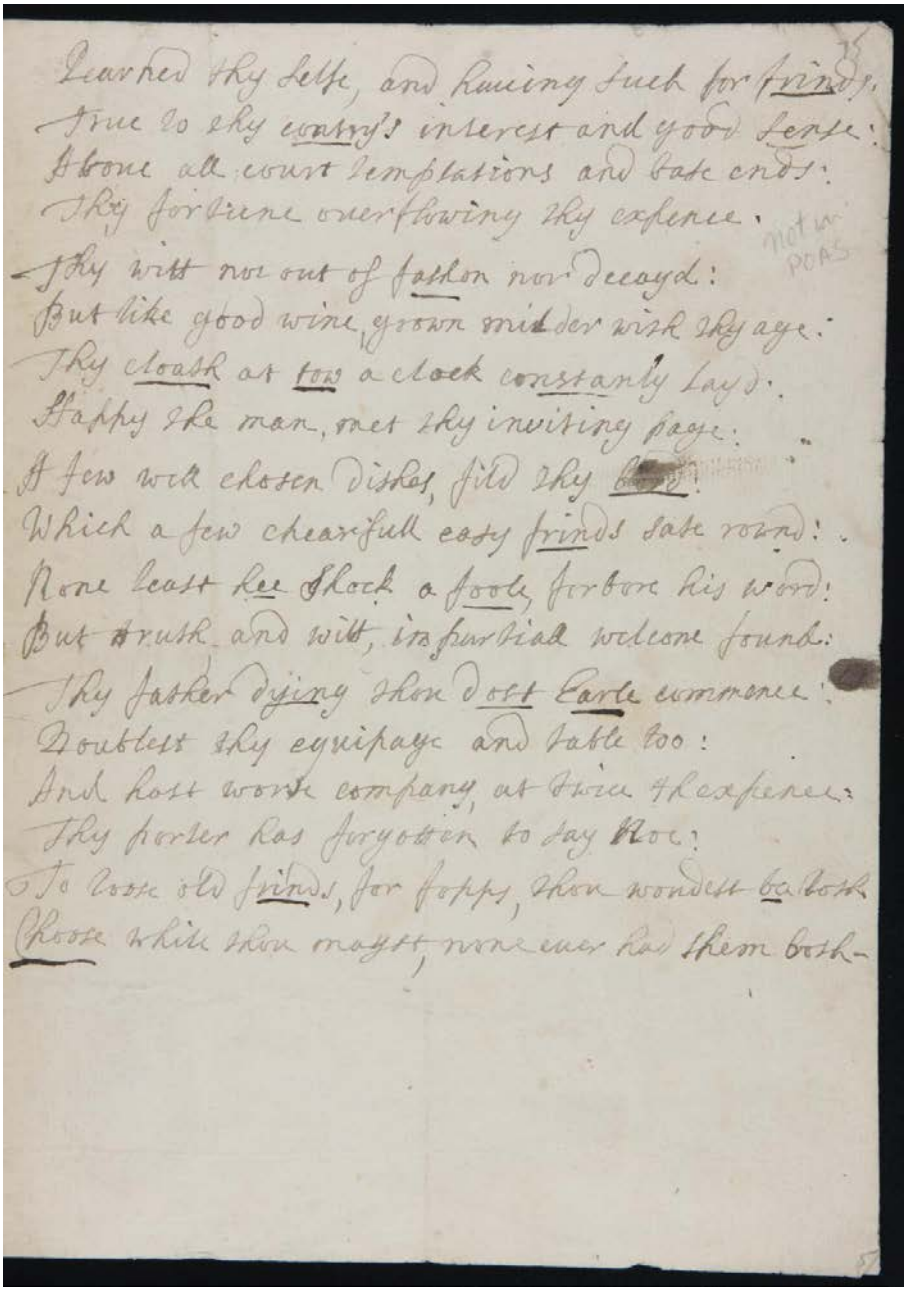
Appendix D

Map to show places named in Chapters Two and Three: Lisle's two expeditions to Ireland in 1642-3 and in 1647 as Lord Lieutenant

Appendix E

Sir Charles Sedley, *The Character of Lord Leicester* (c1677)

Yale University, Beinecke Library, MS Osborn fb68, 75


Learned thy selfe, and having such for friends,
True to thy country's interest and good sense:
Above all court temptations and base ends:
Thy fortune overflowing thy expence.
Thy witt not out of fashion nor decayd:
But like good wine grown milder with thy age.
Thy cloask at ten a clock constantly Layd.
Happy the man, met thy inviting page:
A few well chosen dishes, fild thy board:
Which a few chearfull easy friends sate round:
None least her Shock a foole, forbore his word:
But frank and witt, in seasond welcome found:
Thy father dying thou dost Earle commence:
Doubtless thy equipage and table too:
And host worse company, at twice the expence:
Thy porter has forgotten to say Noe:
To loose old friends, for foppy, thou wouldst be look
Choose while thou mayst, none ever had them both-

Appendix F
Table of Lord Lisle's Attendances at the Councils of State of the Commonwealth, the Nominated Assembly and the Protectorates

The first figure given represents Lisle's attendance for the month; the second figure, the total number of sessions each month. The final row indicates the percentage of sessions Lisle attended each year.

	1649	1650	1651	1652	1653	1654	1655	1656	1657	1658	1659
Jan		16/30	19/27	11/21		14/25	6/ 11	16/19	7/ 9	6/ 6	8/ 9
Feb	3/ 13	15/23	4/12	12/19		21/24	13/21	20/20	8/ 9	7/ 8	
Mar	13/34	20/25		20/24		12/20	11/22	12/14	4/ 6	8/ 12	
Apr	13/21	17/23		14/21		10/19	7/ 18	12/18	3/ 4	7/ 9	
May	7/ 27	15/27		10/31		4/ 18	13/20	12/16	4/ 5	5/ 9	
June	9/ 25	15/25		7/ 37		3/ 31	16/19	8/ 10	0/ 1	7/ 9	
July	1/ 22	4/ 14		11/38	0/ 22	12/23	17/19	13/16	4/ 6	7/ 9	
Aug	1/ 26	10/27		5/ 36	15/42	18/29	13/18	3/ 8	4/ 10	9/ 9	
Sep	12/24	8/ 25		0/ 26	8/ 33	4/ 9	14/17	8/ 19	12/16	12/17	
Oct	14/26	12/25		5/ 28	8/ 32	6/ 9	12/22	7/ 9	9/ 14	9/ 13	
Nov	13/27	9/ 27		10/26	15/28	4/ 10	11/16	7/ 8	13/18	15/20	
Dec	15/31	19/28	10/23		17/26	1/ 6	13/16	7/ 10	13/14	13/14	
Totals	101/ 276	160/ 299	33/ 62	105/ 307	64/ 183	109/ 220	146/ 218	124/ 168	81/ 112	105/ 135	8/ 9
%	36.6	53.5	53.2	34.2	35.0	49.5	67.0	73.8	72.3	77.7	88.9

The figures for Lisle's attendance have been compiled from TNA State Papers and Longleat House MS as follows:

124 attendances at the first Council of State: 17 February 1649 – 15 February 1650, (February 1650: 9 attendances), from SP 25/1–25/3.

158 attendances at the second Council of State: 16 February 1650 – 15 February 1651, (February 1650: 6 attendances), from SP 25/64, SP 25/8–25/16.

(Lisle not a member of the third Council of State: 16 February 1651 – 30 November 1652).

113 attendances at the fourth Council of State: 1 December 1651 – 30 November 1652, from SP 25/6–25/7, SP 25/28–25/35.

(Lisle not a member of the fifth Council of State: 1 December 1652 – 20 April 1653.

The Councils of State for the Nominated Assembly: 14 July 1653 – 10 December 1653, from SP 25/70, SP 25/43–25/47.

The Council, or Privy Council, for Oliver Cromwell's Protectorate: 16 December 1653 – 22 April 1659, from SP 25/75–48.

Privy Council of Richard Cromwell's Protectorate, from Longleat MS 67A.

(N.B. there is some discrepancy with the printed tables of attendance in the *CSPD* for the attendance figures for 1654 as for some months the printed version numbers days not sessions for the meetings of the Council).

Appendix G
Calendar of the Letters of Philip Sidney, Lord Viscount Lisle

Column 1: the date. Column 2: Lisle's MS letters, chiefly the correspondence at KLHC catalogued at U1475 C83. Column 3: the printed copy where available, principally in HMC, *De L'Isle and Dudley Manuscripts*, vol. vi. Column 4: the addressee. Column 5: an indication of the letter's chief interest.

1. 30 Dec. 1642	C83/1	HMC, vi, 414	To Father	Irish affairs
2. 6 Jan. 1642/3	C83/2	HMC, vi, 414-5	To Father	Irish affairs
3. 14 Jan. 1642/3	C83/3	HMC, vi, 415	To Father	Irish affairs
4. 19 Jan. 1642/3	C83/4	HMC, vi, 417	To Father	Irish affairs
5. 25 Jan. 1642/3	C83/5	HMC, vi, 417-8	To Father	Irish affairs
6. 16 May 1643	C126/1	HMC, vi, 431	To Mother	Irish problems
7. 21 June 1643	MS Carte, 5, f. 527	-	Unidentified	Future plans
8. 21 June 1643	MS Carte, 5, f. 510	-	Hawkins	Money matters
9. 23 June 1643	MS Carte, 5, f. 514-5	-	To Father	Returning home
10. 28 June 1643	MS Carte, 3, f. 263	-	To Sister	Returning home
11. 26 Feb. 1647	MS Nalson, 6, f. 66	-	Commons' Speaker	Munster
12. 12 Mar. 1647	-	LJ, ix, 94	House of Lords	Munster
13. 22 Sept. 1649	C83/6	HMC, vi, 455-6	To Father	Current affairs
14. 26 Sept. 1649	C83/7	HMC, vi, 456-7	To Father	Current affairs
15. 29 Sept. 1649	C83/8	HMC, vi, 458	To Father	Current affairs
16. 11 Oct. 1649	C83/9	HMC, vi, 460-1	To Father	Current affairs
17. 17 Oct. 1649	C83/10	HMC, vi, 461	To Father	Father's debts
18. 23 Oct. 1649	BL., Add. MS 18738	-	To Father	Current affairs
19. 2 Nov. 1649	C83/11	HMC, vi, 462	To Father	Current affairs
20. 6 Nov. 1649	C83/12	HMC, vi, 462-3	To Father	Current affairs
21. 13 Nov. 1649	C83/13	HMC, vi, 463	To Father	Current affairs
22. 24 Nov. 1649	C83/14	HMC, vi, 463-4	To Father	Legal affairs

23. 27 Nov. 1649	C83/15	HMC, vi, 464	To Father	Current affairs
24. 29 Nov. 1649	C83/16	HMC, vi, 464-5	To Father	Irish successes
25. 7 Dec. 1649	C83/17	HMC, vi, 465-6	To Father	Current affairs
26. 18 Dec. 1649	C83/18	HMC, vi, 466	To Father	Birth of son
27. 28 Dec. 1649	C83/19	HMC, vi, 466	To Father	The Engagement
28. 4 Jan. 1649/50	C83/20	HMC, vi, 467	To Father	The Engagement
29. 9 Jan. 1649/50	C83/21	HMC, vi, 467-8	To Father	Current affairs
30. 15 Jan. 1649/50	C83/22	HMC, vi, 468	To Father	French affairs
31. 22 Jan. 1649/50	C83/23	HMC, vi, 470	To Father	Foreign affairs
32. 1 Feb. 1649/50	C83/24	HMC, vi, 471-2	To Father	Foreign affairs
33. 8 Feb. 1649/50	C83/25	HMC, vi, 472-3	To Father	The Engagement
34. 15 Feb. 1649/50	C83/26	HMC, vi, 473-4	To Father	The Engagement
35. 21 Feb. 1649/50	C83/27	HMC, vi, 474	To Father	Political affairs
36. 27 Feb. 1649/50	C83/28	HMC, vi, 474-5	To father	Current affairs
37. 6 Mar. 1649/50	C83/29	HMC, vi, 475	To Father	Current affairs
38. 13 Mar. 1649/50	C83/30	HMC, vi, 475-6	To Father	Current affairs
39. 20 Mar. 1649/50	C83/31	HMC, vi, 476	To Father	The Engagement
40. 26 Mar. 1650	C83/32	Collins, *Letters*, 678	To Father	Ashdown Forest
41. 30 Mar. 1650	C83/33	HMC, vi, 476-7	To Father	Ashdown Forest
42. 9 Apr. 1650	C83/34	HMC, vi, 477-8	To Father	Ashdown Forest
43. 17 Apr. 1650	C83/35	HMC, vi, 478	To Father	Current affairs
44. 22 May 1650	C83/36	HMC, vi, 479	To Father	Current affairs
45. n.d.May 1650	C83/37	HMC, vi, 480	To Father	Scottish affairs
46. 12 June 1650	C83/38	HMC, vi, 480-1	To Father	Scottish affairs
47. 17 July 1650	C83/39	HMC, vi, 481-2	To Father	Scottish affairs
48. 3 Aug. 1650	C83/40	HMC, vi, 482	To Father	Current affairs
49. 17 Aug. 1650	C83/41	HMC, vi, 482-3	To Father	Current affairs
50. 8 Sep. 1650	C83/42	HMC, vi, 483	To Father	Dutch affairs
51. 4. Oct. 1650	C83/43	HMC, vi, 483-4	To Father	Foreign affairs
52. 18.Oct. 1650	C83/44	HMC, vi, 484-5	To Father	Current affairs

53. 13 Dec. 1650	C83/45	HMC, vi, 485	To Father	Current affairs
54. 27 Dec. 1650	C83/46	HMC, vi, 485	To Father	Foreign affairs
55. 7 Jan. 1650/1	C83/46	HMC, vi, 486	To Father	Current affairs
56. 18 Jan. 1650/1	C83/47	HMC, vi, 486	To Father	Current affairs
57. 29 Jan. 1650/1	C83/48	HMC, vi, 487	To Father	Current affairs
58. 4 Feb. 1650/1	C83/49	HMC, vi, 487-8	To Father	Current affairs
59. 17 June 1656	C83/51	HMC, vi, 499	To Father	L. House Play
60. 18 May 1660	-	HMC, *8th Report*, ii, 66a*	To Speaker of Lords	Art
61. ? June 1660	MS Carte, 30, f. 695	-	To Ormond	Art collection
62. 14 Sept. 1660	MS Carte, 31, f. 33	-	To Ormond	Art collection
63. 2 Apr. 1662	C83/52	HMC, vi, 509	To Father	Irish arrears
64. 19 May 1664	C83/53	HMC, vi, 523-5	To Father	Leases
65. 28 Jan. ?1666	C162/6	-	Richard Nelmes	Tobacco
66. 26 Sep. 1666	-	Temple, *Works*, i, 458-9	To Sir W.Temple	Sheen news
67. n.d. ?1666	C126/7	-	Richard Nelmes	Accounts
68. 8 May 1668	C126/8	-	Richard Nelmes	Accounts
69. n.d. ?1668	C126/9	-	Richard Nelmes	Accounts
70. 14 Oct. 1668	BL., Add MS 32680, f.15	-	To Father	Daughter's Marriage
71. 8 Oct.?1669	BL., Add MS 32680, f.13	-	To Father	Son's marriage
72. n.d. ?1670	BL., Add MS 32680, f.17	-	To Father	Leases
73. 4 Aug. 1670	C126/10	-	Richard Nelmes	Tobacco

* Printed in *Court and Society from Elizabeth to Anne, edited from the Papers at Kimbolton,* ed. Duke of Manchester, 2 vols (1864), i, 404. Original listed in *HMC 8th Report,* pt 2, 66a, as MS Manchester, no. 663, but untraced.

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