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## English Relations with, and Concepts of, Russia, 1553-1640

George. VanDusen

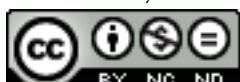
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ENGLISH RELATIONS WITH, AND  
CONCEPTS OF, RUSSIA,  
1553-1640

by  
George VanDusen

A Thesis Submitted to the Graduate School,  
Loyola University, Chicago, in Partial  
Fulfillment of the Requirements for  
the Degree of Master of Arts

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION: MATERIALS, APPROACH, AND BACKGROUND

Historians, like other people, are creatures of flesh and blood, and the author's personality will always peep through the printed page; but we must do our utmost to play fair, to understand the life of distant times and ideas we do not share.

---G. P. Gooch, History and Historians of the Nineteenth Century

José Ortega Y Gasset and Wilhelm Dilthey have accurately described man as being inescapably a historical animal made up of his own personal experiences and those past historical events which have affected all mankind. Man, in other words, is his history. This definition speaks at least one resounding truth: all individuals are part and parcel of their own era and are compelled to think either in conformity with or reaction against the past. In this sense no historian, however much he may try otherwise, writes in a vacuum completely free of personal prejudices and convictions. Hence, it is of utmost necessity that in introducing our topic, English Relations With and Concepts of Russia, 1553-1640, there be a preliminary discussion and analysis of the sources and research techniques used in preparing this paper.

English relations with, and concepts of Russia from 1553 to 1640 were tedious to research because of the variety of sources necessary to consult. For part of the diplomatic relations the

Calendars of State Papers of the foreign series for the reigns of Edward VI, Mary I, and Elizabeth were relied upon. Since there is no foreign series for the Stuart period, it was necessary to use the Venetian papers extensively. Fortunately, both sources were excellent with regard to content, indexing, and logical sequence. The diplomatic exchanges between the English ambassadors and their sovereign were frequent and their observations, for the most part, were remarkable for their accurateness and amount of content. The Venetian ambassadors had been instructed to relay to the Doge everything, rumors included, that they were able to find out. Besides the amount of detailed information, the ambassadors often included their personal opinions. For the researcher this is both good and bad. In one sense it is helpful because the historian obtains an outsider's point of view and perspective, which contributes to his own greater understanding. The problem, however, is to determine exactly what is factual and what is opinion. Fortunately, the ambassadors made our job a little easier by usually specifying when they delivered an opinion.

The sixteenth and seventeenth centuries saw a sudden awakening of English commercial expansion and this close connection between diplomatic relations and commercial interests is especially reflected in our topic. In attempting to tie the two together the domestic state papers covering the reigns from Edward VI through James I were invaluable. The domestic papers are fairly well indexed but a good revision would aid the historian in light of new researches and interest in the past forty years or

so. The Bibliotheca Lindesiana was helpful but only for the reign of James; besides, it is badly in need of an index so as to save the researcher many valuable hours.

In order to obtain an overall view of the Englishman's concept of and interest in his newly discovered trading partner, Russia, the rare book room at Newberry Library, Chicago, was invaluable because of its immense wealth of material. Many of the books proved quite valuable and interesting while others naturally contained little or nothing. There were a great many benefits derived from using these books. The most obvious advantage is that they give their reader a "feeling" for the period. This "feeling" is most important in attempting to understand the English mind in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Also they provide a supplement to the foreign and domestic papers by giving us some idea as to what the ambassadors and the king most likely thought of Muscovy. In other words, these rare books are an excellent cross reference to the State Papers.

Several problems were involved in using rare books in connection with this topic. As we will see, some authors went to great lengths in dealing with Russia, others very little and then only in passing, some not at all. What does this mean? Who were the authors and what motivated their writing? Were they professional men, such as lawyers, or were they mainly merchants and travellers? These and many other relevant questions will be dealt with at great length in Chapter IV.

Few books can legitimately purport to be completely based on

original research, since certain sources simply are not available, and the researcher is often blinded to certain trends because of the great maze of detail that accumulates over a period of time. Secondary sources, therefore, provide a good starting point and the research of these authors can be time-saving. In order to put this topic into perspective, certain secondary sources of recognized quality, although textbooks, were consulted. Among those most frequently used were Roger Lockyer's Tudor and Stuart England, 1471-1714, S. T. Bindoff's excellent Tudor England, and the Oxford History of England (Vol. IX) by Godfrey Davies.

Out of what at first appeared to be chaos, an order soon developed. For purposes of logical sequence and organization this thesis has been divided into two parts. Part I treats, in two chapters, the diplomatic and commercial intercourse between England and Russia during the later Tudors and the first two Stuarts. Part II, in one chapter covering the entire period, deals with the product of this intercourse, the English concept of Muscovy. It is in this chapter that we will attempt to determine what members of the English reading public took an interest in Russia and we will try to ascertain why. We will also investigate the various types of books (histories, geographies, commercial atlases, etc.) in order to solve this and many of the other problems previously cited.

Aside from tedious research and development of organization (which are problems common to all historians regardless of their topic), there were other difficulties which deserve mention here.

Among them were whether to use the Gregorian or Julian calendar, the use of the title "Tsar", and what to call what is today the U.S.S.R. The dates contained in this paper will be according to the Gregorian and, in the event the reader should wish to determine what the Julian date may have been, the page numbers of the various calendars have been provided in the footnotes. It might be worthwhile mentioning that Russia did not adopt the Julian calendar until the reforms of Peter the Great, at the end of the seventeenth century. The title Tsar and the use of Russia also present special problems. Vasili III and Ivan III, the immediate predecessors of Ivan IV, used the title Tsar but only informally. Ivan the Terrible (IV), in January 1547, became the first Russian emperor to officially adopt "Tsar of All the Russias" as his official title.<sup>1</sup> Therefore, when referring to the Russian sovereign, Tsar will be used as often as stylistically possible in order to clearly distinguish between the English king and his Muscovite counterpart. Since the authors of the period referred to what is today the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics as both Muscovy and Russia, this writer will feel free to use both terms interchangeably to eliminate boring repetition.

Before delving into our topic proper it might be worth our while to take a cursory glance at Muscovy and England as they were in 1553, the year England discovered Russia. Muscovy's

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<sup>1</sup>The Tsar was also called the Grand Duke of Muscovy and Novgorod. The title Tsar was adopted in order to show that he was the successor to Caesar and it accounts for the Third Rome theory which gained acceptance during Ivan's reign.

uncivilized character was symbolized by its ruler, Ivan IV (1533-1584), sometimes labelled Grozhnyi, or "the Terrible." He was a ruthless and sinister individual, who ruled over a land which, contrary to many current misconceptions, was not exceedingly large. Poland to the west and Sweden across the Baltic controlled a great share of Russia to the north and northwest, while the Crimean Tatars continued to raise havoc in the south, often raiding Muscovite cities for plunder and women. Ivan spent much of his reign battling these three unrelenting enemies. Western Siberia was not conquered and put securely under Muscovite domination until the wealthy and powerful Stroganov family sent the Cossack mercenary, Ermak Timofeevich, to do the job in 1581. The period under investigation, 1553 to 1640, coincides with a great social transformation in Russia. By 1553 the West had thrown off feudalism but Muscovy was slowly just beginning to adopt it. Besides the Tsar, the social system was composed of boyars (i.e., nobles), clergy, and peasants in the process of being engulfed by serfdom. Unlike England, Muscovy had no navy or industry, but she was rich in certain products (e.g., furs and naval stores) which the West eagerly desired.

England was in most respects quite unlike Muscovy. She was significantly more advanced industrially, socially, and intellectually. Yet her world was still comparatively small until the great voyages which began in the 1550's. The story behind the impetus to these voyages is important to our understanding of the motives behind the English merchants in Russia. The new explora-

tions were the direct result of a monetary crisis in the 1540's. Somerset, the King's chief financial expert, had debased the coinage in 1549 and by May 1551 the pound sterling's value was worth no more than fifteen shillings Flemish and prices were now double those of 1547. Blackmarket profiteering abounded. The increase in prices in turn had a diverse effect on the clothing industry, which resulted in a saturation of the important Antwerp market. Overproduction was the key problem and once the cycle began, no solution seemed effective. Overproduction, combined with a small market, led to a reduction of both prices and consumer purchases. Low wages was the immediate outcome. Sir Thomas Gresham, one of England's most distinguished merchants, was appointed the King's merchant to Antwerp. He served there for sixteen years and is credited with having saved three English sovereigns from bankruptcy. Gresham certainly realized the necessity of expanding the English market if the ailing financial situation were to be cured. At the same time that Gresham was working in Antwerp, the Londoners had a sudden and abrupt change in attitude toward voyages of discovery. We must bear in mind that London was England's financial center and whatever she did all England followed. Economic thinking also underwent a gradual reorientation during these years. The new generation, especially under Gresham's influence, began to think more in terms of money and exchange rather than simply of agriculture and industrial production. Thus the years 1547 to 1558 were not insignificant as some historians have been led to believe. Actually these eleven years

were, in the words of Professor Bindoff, the "transitional ones in the economic history of England."<sup>2</sup> When Richard Chancellor discovered Muscovy his expedition was one of the many voyages which were the result of an attempt to solve this economic crisis by expanding the English commercial market.

This author would be remiss unless he pointed out that England was not the first Western European country to come into contact with Muscovy. Russia had been known to be in contact with at least one other, Italy, prior to 1553. Fifteenth century Russian architecture displayed Italian motifs in its ornamentation of windows and portals. As a matter of fact, architects from Northern Italy were commissioned to do work in the Kremlin which accounts for the often repeated description, "the Italian Kremlin."<sup>3</sup> It is entirely possible that the Italian influence in art created a favorable environment for the initiation of friendly commercial intercourse between England and Muscovy.

<sup>2</sup>S. T. Bindoff, Tudor England (Baltimore, 1965), 140-146; Roger Lockyer, Tudor and Stuart Britain, 1471-1714 (London, 1964).

<sup>3</sup>Paul Miliukov, Outlines of Russian Culture (New York, 1960) ed. Michael Karpovich, trans. Valentine Ughet and Eleanor Davis, III, 12. The Italian influence on Russian art continued. For example, Trezzini under Peter I did the Fortress of Peter and Paul and later Rastrelli did the Palaces at Peterhof and Tsarkoe Selo. Russia had also attended the Ferrara Florence Council in the fifteenth century.

## PART I

### CHAPTER II

#### RUSSO-ENGLISH RELATIONS, 1553-1603

But he of whom we meane now to speake, is of greater power than all the rest which we know in Europe:...

--Pierre D'Avity, Estates, Empires,  
and Principalities of the World

As mentioned in the Introduction, by 1550 the quality of English cloth had declined and overproduction had come to glut the market, especially in the Antwerp trade. New outlets were therefore necessary. England was now forced to find northern passages because the two maritime powers of Spain and Portugal controlled the Mediterranean routes to the East and the dreaded Turks prevented passage through the Straits. As a result of this situation, a group of London merchants in 1553 departed from Radcliffe for Cathay and points east to obtain silk, spices, diamonds and the other rewards of India and the East. The group was under the able leadership of Captain-General Sir Hugh Willoughby and his lieutenant Richard Chancellor. Willoughby was an experienced sea captain who, in 1544, had served in the expedition to Scotland and was rewarded on May 11 of that year when he was knighted at Leith by the Earl of Hartford. Sebastian Cabot

(1476?-1557) then exerted a great influence over him and thereafter Willoughby's thoughts turned toward the sea.<sup>1</sup> Richard Chancellor was a navigator by profession who in 1550 had made a journey to Ohio and Canada. He was described as 'a man of great estimation for many parts of wit.'

The three vessels which originally composed this expedition never reached their destination. A wind separated the ships off the North Sea, never to be reunited. After a few days Chancellor assumed full command of his vessel and it gradually made its way into the territory of Muscovy. The Grand Duke of Muscovy and Novgorod, Ivan IV (1553-1584), sent for Chancellor and saw to it that the English were well provided for and entertained. The consequences of this chance mishap were many and certainly beneficial to Englishmen for many years to come.

The immediate result was the formation of a bond of friendship between Russia and England based upon mutual commercial intercourse. The reigns of Edward VI (1547-1553) and Mary I (1553-1558) set the mood for future Anglo-Russian relations. When one considers the immense distance that separated the English and the Muscovites, the state of the ships, and the language barriers, it must be concluded that during these two reigns relations, from all available evidence, were good and progressed to an even better status rapidly. In a message to Edward VI on February 2,

<sup>1</sup>All biographical information will be taken from the Dictionary of National Biography, ed. Leslie Stephen and Sidney Lee (Oxford University Press, 1917) unless otherwise indicated.

1553, Ivan IV wrote that he "permits the English merchants to have free markets within his domains," and if Hugh Willoughby should touch on Muscovy domains he would be taken care of. This dispatch, which formed the cornerstone of Russo-English relations for about a century, concluded: "Will be glad to receive one of his Majesty's Council to treat with and settle commercial intercourse between the two countries."<sup>2</sup>

Two years later, in 1555, the privileges which the Tsar had promised were enumerated, privileges which were founded on a quest for mutual amity and cooperation. The English merchants were, in effect, permitted to conduct trade anywhere in Russia "without any restraint, impeachment...custom, toll, imposition or subsidy to be demanded, taxed, paid or at any time thereafter..." In order to demonstrate his good will, the Russian Emperor provided that if any Englishman be injured or slain ("which God forbid"), the Muscovy government would correct this injustice and the guilty party would be punished. Furthermore, in the event any English ships were spoiled, robbed or damaged while leaving or returning to the Emperor's domains the government would do everything in its power to see that restitution and reparation were made. The Tsar also added three clauses concerning litigation between the two countries. The governor, consuls and assistants were granted full power and authority to rule and govern

<sup>2</sup>Great Britain, Public Record Office, Calendar of State Papers, Foreign Series, of the Reign of Edward VI, 1547-1553, ed. William B. Turnbull (London, 1861), 241, Feb. 2, 1553.

all English subjects in Muscovy. The Tsar promised a quick dispatch of any cases between an Englishman and a Russian or some other stranger. The third litigation clause especially typifies the Russian Emperor's desire for friendship: "...we grant that if any of the English nation be arrested for any debt, he shal not be laid in prison, so farre as he can be put in sufficient suretie and powne..."<sup>3</sup>

In April, 1557, Queen Mary likewise expressed her sentiments to Ivan. It was her wish that a perpetual amity would exist between Russia and her country. In order to promote this harmony, the merchants of each realm were to have equal trading privileges and also equal protection privileges.<sup>4</sup> And, in order to conduct this trade the Muscovy Company had already been formed in the years following the Chancellor expedition.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>3</sup>Cf. John Pinkerton, A General Collection, etc. (London, 1808), I, 47-50: this work is very valuable and indispensable because it is a collection of documents which very often could not be found elsewhere; Texts for Students, "Select Passages Illustrating Commercial and Diplomatic Relations Between England and Russia," ed. A. Weiner (New York, 1919), No. 17, 11-13: this work is also a compilation of primary sources. Also see Calendar of State Papers, Spanish, ed. G. A. Bergenroth, M. A. Hume, et al. (London, 1862-1954), XI, 14, March 17, 1553.

<sup>4</sup>Great Britain, Public Record Office, Calendar of State Papers, Foreign Series, of the Reign of Mary, 1553-1558, ed. William B. Turnbull (London, 1861), 300, April, 1557.

<sup>5</sup>William Camden, Annales (London, 1625), 164. Camden reports that after the Chancellor expedition these merchants ("with Queen Maries permission") formed a society or company. He then devotes some detail to the trade itself. The Publications of the Surtees Society, "The York Mercers and Merchant Adventures, 1356-1917," CXXIX, 1917: the Muscovy Company was incorporated in 1553 and her rights confirmed by Parliament in 1556. Statute 8 Elizabeth, c. 17. "'The company is, perhaps, the first example of a joint stock corporation.' (P. 219n).

Mary realized the great import of this trade and, in 1557, one Anthony Jenkinson followed in the footsteps of the Richard Chancellor expedition.<sup>6</sup> In his youth Jenkinson had been a member of the Levant Company trading in Asia Minor and Turkey, where he had gained a great amount of experience of the eastern Mediterranean and the new Eastern countries. The primary motivation behind the hazardous journey was to get to the valuable East Indies trade. Since the Turks controlled Constantinople and other key territories the new Chancellor route offered fresh possibilities. His expedition travelled from 1557 to 1560. The main accomplishments of the mission were that he won the personal confidence of Tsar Ivan, who permitted him to voyage down the Volga to Astrakhan and across the Caspian on to Bokhara via caravan. He was thus the first Englishman to cross, in the words of Camden, into "the countrey of the Bactrians."<sup>7</sup> Here Jenkinson hoped to link up with the overland trade with China.<sup>8</sup> Hence, by the time of the death of Queen Mary in 1558, relations between England and Russia had been established and put on a good footing.

Jenkinson, under Elizabeth, was to prove an important link

<sup>6</sup> Chancellor had returned to England from Russia in the summer of 1554. In the summer of 1555, he made a second voyage to the White Sea. On his homeward journey, in July 1556, his ship, the Bonaventure, was destroyed and Chancellor died in the event.

<sup>7</sup> Camden, 164-165.

<sup>8</sup> The above information concerning Jenkinson was a compilation from A. L. Rowse, The Expansion of Elizabethan England (New York, 1955), 169; A. F. Pollard and Reginald L. Poole, The Political History of England, ed. William Hunt (New York, 1910), 304.

in retaining this trade. From 1561 to 1563 he made a second journey to the Circassian states. On his third journey, in 1566, he obtained a large grant from the Tsar which was contained in a secret message he gave his Queen. Ivan granted the English merchants a complete monopoly of all the Russian trade and granted her a license to trade in Persia duty free.<sup>9</sup> The letter also requested a defensive and offensive alliance ("league") against the whole world. He also asked her to send into Russia mariners and warlike munitions. Finally, and quite importantly, Ivan asked her to promise to receive himself and his wife in the event they should be driven out of Muscovy by a rebellion. "And thus this tyrant whom no man could trust, seemed to be distrustful even of himself."<sup>10</sup> The agreement between England and Muscovy was supplemented by Elizabeth sending a full-fledged ambassador, Thomas Randolph.<sup>11</sup> Jenkinson's personal influence with the Tsar remained high as shown by the necessity that he personally return to Muscovy in 1571-72 in order to repair a breach between the English merchants and Ivan. His success was a testimony to his abilities as a persuasive and adroit diplomat.

Thomas Randolph, the new ambassador, was a man of extraordi-

<sup>9</sup>Camden, 164-165; Rowse, 170.

<sup>10</sup>Camden, 164-165.

<sup>11</sup>Rowse, 171; for more details concerning Randolph's mission the following was most helpful: Great Britain, Public Record Office, Calendar of State Papers and Letters Relating to English Affairs preserved principally in the Archives of Simancas, ed. Martin A. S. Hume (London, 1892-94), II, 43-44.

nary abilities<sup>12</sup> and not without his own influence. He left for Muscovy in 1568 "with good equipment paid for it is suspected by the Muscovy Company."<sup>13</sup> Two English merchants accompanied him with the intention of proceeding on to Persia in order to determine how best trade with that country might be conducted.<sup>14</sup> In the following year, 1569, he returned with a Muscovite ambassador, and they were received with great discharges of artillery. No doubt it was on this visit that the articles for a league of friendship between Ivan and Elizabeth were concluded. There were three articles. It will also be recalled that Ivan had asked Elizabeth to send to Muscovy some English mariners. One of these articles attempted to satisfy the Tsar's wish by providing that certain handicraftsmen and artificers would be permitted to go to Muscovy as long as they were not "lawfully imprisoned by bond or otherwise in some special service within England." It was also agreed that the Russian and English merchants could transport their merchandise to and from their respective lands.<sup>15</sup> Finally this "league" was to be mutually confirmed by both ambassadors.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>12</sup>Great Britain, Public Record Office, Calendar of State Papers Relating to English Affairs, preserved principally at Rome in the Vatican Archives and Library, ed. J. M. Rigg (London, 1926), II, mentions Randolph as "In England he is a person of consideration..."

<sup>13</sup>Simancas Papers, II, 43-44.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid.

<sup>15</sup>Since Russia had no merchant marine or navy this clause undoubtedly was more a concession to England than Russia. England, as a matter of fact, carried her trade to Russia, picked up the Muscovite merchandise and transported it to England.

<sup>16</sup>Texts, 14-17. The treaty was renewed in 1582. See also

The results of this treaty were immediate as by 1570 spices from the Caspian Sea had begun to arrive in England.<sup>17</sup>

Unfortunately, England's position was not always as secure during Elizabeth's reign. The newly acquired monopoly on the trade with Muscovy brought England into conflict with the Holy Roman Empire and Denmark over England's alleged military assistance to Russia in the form of arms. In the late 1550's and throughout the sixties and seventies Muscovy was embroiled in a war with Lithuania. The Holy Roman Emperor, Ferdinand I, regarded a Russian victory as a threat to his Empire's security and well-being. Consequently, Ferdinand thrice requested the "Queen and Christian Princes" to assist him in repelling the dreaded Muscovites.<sup>18</sup> The senates of the Hanse towns of Cologne and Hamburg requested that English merchants refrain from shipping large quantities of armour and materials used for cannons to the Muscovites.<sup>19</sup> Finally, in May 1561, the Queen responded to the Senate of Hamburg, saying that the allegations were only rumors and the

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Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series, of the Reigns of Edward VI, Mary, Elizabeth, 1547-1625, ed. Robert Lemon, Mary Anne Everett Green (London, 1856-1872), I, 338, July 10, 1569.

<sup>17</sup> Simancas, II, 280. The spices cost more than those of Portugal, though.

<sup>18</sup> Great Britain, Public Record Office, Calendar of State Papers, Foreign Series, of the Reign of Elizabeth, ed. Joseph Stevenson, A. J. Crosby, et al. (London, 1863-1950), I, 33-34, Dec. 17, 1558; III, 203-204, July 28, 1560; III, 503-504, Jan. 18, 1561.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., IV, April 30, 1561 for Cologne; IV, 112, April 14, 1561 for Hamburg.

culprit who began them ought to be apprehended and punished.<sup>20</sup> In June and July of the same year she issued strict orders forbidding artillery to be transported out of the realm of England.<sup>21</sup> The "rumor" did not abate, however, and in January, 1565, the ambassador of Denmark also claimed that English merchants were in violation of the treaty between Christian I and Edward IV by continuing to send arms into Muscovy. Elizabeth denied the charge once again.<sup>22</sup> Whether or not the English merchants actually did send arms into Muscovy is highly difficult to ascertain,<sup>23</sup> but the point is that the Holy Roman Empire and Denmark believed Elizabeth's realm to be guilty. It ought to be borne in mind that the queen was well aware of the chaotic situation that existed in Eastern Europe, and that, at best, her position was tenuous. On the one hand, she had to be cordial and compliant with Denmark and the Holy Roman Empire because of their power in northern Europe; on the other hand, the English Queen was committed to support Muscovy in order to retain the advantages they had acquired only a few years previously. Elizabeth's "juggling" act was rewarded

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., IV, 102, May 6, 1561.

<sup>21</sup> Domestic State Papers, 1547-1625, I, 178, June 28 and 179, July 8, 1561.

<sup>22</sup> State Papers, Foreign for Elizabeth, Jan. 6, 1565; VII, 912-8 and 913.3.

<sup>23</sup> In Ivan's concessions to Elizabeth in 1566 the Tsar asked for munitions. It is not entirely out of the question that Elizabeth may have overplayed her hand and sent the munitions to him. This is, of course, pure speculation and cannot be substantiated concretely.

in 1569 when, as we just saw in another connection, Ivan granted certain trading rights to the Muscovite Merchants at the insistence of the able English envoy, Thomas Randolph.

Nevertheless, the English and Danish governments continued to be at loggerheads over the Muscovite trade. In November 1580 the Danish ambassador told Elizabeth he could not guarantee the navigation of English ships to Russia as before because of war with Muscovy.<sup>24</sup> The following year saw a direct confrontation over the issue. Some English ships en route to Muscovy were turned back when they encountered the resistance of eleven ships and three armed galleys of Denmark.<sup>25</sup> In the same year the King of Denmark once again asked the English government to stay her trade with Muscovy until a treaty between the two could be arranged, that King using the treaty between Henry VI and Christriene (1449) as the basis for his demands.<sup>26</sup> The issue reached fever pitch when the King of Denmark in April 1583 wanted the Muscovy Company to pay him dues if they wished to continue their trade with Russia as formerly. Otherwise, the King said he would be compelled to use force. In response to this declaration, the Privy Council advised the Company to pay part of the dues.<sup>27</sup> It would seem England was not ready to risk war over the trade at

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<sup>24</sup> Simancas, III, 65.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., III, 386-87.

<sup>26</sup> Foreign State Papers for Elizabeth, 1582, XVI, 551.

<sup>27</sup> Simancas, III, 463.

this time.

So far as can be determined there was no cessation of Russo-English trade during these crises, but it is interesting to note that between 1575 and 1581 there were also no letters exchanged between Ivan and Elizabeth.<sup>28</sup> Many possibilities, however, could account for this lack of communication. Distances were great and Elizabeth very possibly had more important matters which occupied her time. There is also the possibility that Denmark, as shown above, controlled part of the Northern routes and prevented the passage of the English.

Russia's trade was highly valued and worth every effort to retain. As will be dealt with in Part II, English travellers and merchants to Muscovy immediately recognized her immense wealth and possibilities. Russian exports to England were primarily furs, wax, hemp, coarse linen and caviar. The fur trade especially was rich because of the abundance and variety of the furs available, principally the sable, which commanded a price anywhere from fifteen to two hundred rubles.<sup>29</sup> "Black-Fox skins is known amongst all Northern Merchants for the richest Fur in the world and is here found in great store, bearing price as in

<sup>28</sup> Inna Ivanovna Liubimenko, "A Suggestion for the Publication of the Correspondence of Queen Elizabeth with the Russian Czars," Royal Historical Society Transactions (London, 1915), IX, 112.

<sup>29</sup> See especially Lewis Roberts, The Merchants Mappe of Commerce (London, 1638), 252. Roberts' book will be discussed in Part II.

largeness and growth, 5 to 200 Rubbles apiece.<sup>30</sup> Roberts goes on to list eleven additional furs (Red and White Foxes, Sable Rands, etc.). The flax and hemp trade was especially valuable for its use in making cords and as a product which the English transported into many parts of Europe.<sup>31</sup> The English being maritime-conscious, of course, demanded a great deal of cord for their ships, and Russia was one of the most logical markets for obtaining hemp and flax, the two essential elements in making this provision. As early as 1575 Michael Lock, an agent in Russia, noted that "shipmasts, timber, hempe, cables and ropes for ships" were the natural commodities of northern Muscovy.<sup>32</sup>

The discovery of the Muscovite trade was also significant because it also corresponded with what Professor Bindoff calls a "timber famine." During the 1550's England experienced a great demand for timber due to her expanding navy and merchant marine, the desperate need for new and larger houses, the smelting of iron, and for other necessary implements. This demand for timber soon outran England's dwindling supply.<sup>33</sup> Tudor England thus needed timber and Muscovy's plentiful supply, in part, helped satisfy this need. The timber trade continued to remain impor-

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 252.

<sup>31</sup> Pierre D'Avity, Estates, Empires and Principalities of the World (London, 1615), trans. Edward Grimestone, 1688.

<sup>32</sup> Texts, 18-19.

<sup>33</sup> Bindoff, 5.

tant even into the Stuart era because the famine did not abate. To emphasize the impact of the crisis in the Parliament of 1610, for example, the 14 Articles of Reformation recommended by his Majesty stated in rather unequivocal language:

7. The destruction and decay of timber and woods is general throughout the whole kingdom, wherefore it is more than time to provide for the preserving and increase thereof, for otherwise neither the navy nor buildings can be maintained and continued, nor provision of fuel be had for either for poor or rich. 34

Despite the obvious value of these objects, one might wonder why English merchants were willing to travel such great distances to such a backward country which had a naturally cold climate. One of the reasons was the great river system of this kingdom. Everyone who ventured there and later wrote an account remarked that all the major trading cities were located on easily accessible rivers. One of the most important reasons why this river system was so valuable was because it served as a route to Persia, where diamonds, pearls, rubies, silks and drugs were available:

...and in the southe parts there is no traffyke of merchandize but only as Awstracan,<sup>35</sup> which is there of exceeding great importance for the commodities of Persia, which are silks of all sorts, and many druggs and other good commodities. 36

<sup>34</sup> Proceedings of Parliament 1610, ed. Elizabeth Read Foster (New Haven, 1966), II (House of Commons), 281.

<sup>35</sup> Astrakhan, located on the coast of the Caspian Sea, was taken by Ivan in <sup>1556</sup> from the Crimean Tatars. This certainly facilitated the English expansion into Persia and the East.

<sup>36</sup> Texts, 18. The speaker is Locke, an Englishman in Muscovy in 1575.

John Cartwright, a little later, in The Preachers Travels (1611) outlined the route: a merchant could travel the Volga water system to the Caspian Sea, cross over, and from there enter Persia. This was much the same direction Jenkinson had taken some forty years earlier. Cartwright's description of the Caspian is important because it displays the acute mind of the English merchant who, in this uncertain land, had to take all details into account:

A Sea that is very commodious and profitable being in length two hundred leagues, and in breadth an hundred and fiftie, without any issue to other Sea...This Sea is fresh water in many places, and in other places, as salt as the maine Ocean. <sup>37</sup>

The English gave the Persians, Cartwright said, tin, copper, and cloths of various sorts.<sup>38</sup>

Of course, there were other reasons for trading with Muscovy. The Muscovy Company enjoyed a virtual monopoly and had a natural outlet for her woolen trade. The Russian winters were long and extremely cold. In exchange for the flax, hemp, and timber the Muscovite merchants gladly accepted woolen articles. "The naturall commodities of England are most acceptable commodities to Russia and Moschovia whiche are wollen clothies and carseys and cottons..."<sup>39</sup> We ought to remember that during the sixteenth century the Hanse declined sharply and England stood ready to replace its trade with that league. The gradual transition from

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<sup>37</sup> John Cartwright, The Preachers Travels (1611), 54.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., 54.

<sup>39</sup> Texts, 19. Locke is the speaker.

Mediterranean-oriented trade to Atlantic may also have influenced her bias towards Muscovy.

Although the trade was rich and appears to have flourished, the Muscovy Company itself suffered several setbacks. Compared to various of the other trading firms, she was not particularly rich. As late as October 1572, a Muscovy Company alderman by the name of Durkett wrote Lord Burghley that "Though the Muscovy Company is now very poor they hope of good success hereafter, when they will not be unthankful to his lordship."<sup>40</sup> The Company at this time even experienced trouble paying its debts and obtaining the money owed it. From 1582 to 1590, for instance, the Company owed the Russian merchants for purchases of wax. Evidently the Company was not too hasty in paying this debt! In October 1582 the Muscovy merchants wrote Burgley that they wanted both to sell their wax and to save some of it. They then requested a reasonable price and asked for a speedy payment for the previous year and that year itself.<sup>41</sup> But the Muscovy Company had even more serious and basic problems.

The Company itself was corrupt and this led to a cessation of the English privileges in Muscovy. Anthony Jenkinson, it will be recalled, had to be sent to Russia in 1571-72 to repair the breach. His personal influence averted what could have become a catastrophe.<sup>42</sup> In May 1572, Ivan wrote to Elizabeth that he had

<sup>40</sup> Foreign State Papers for Elizabeth, X, 192, Oct. 18, 1572.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., XVI, 373, Oct. 5, 1582.

<sup>42</sup> Rowse, 171.

restored to the English merchants their rights of free trade throughout his domains at her request.<sup>43</sup> When the "evil demeanour" did not cease Elizabeth commanded her governor in Muscovy, Daniel Sylvester, to tell the merchants to reform themselves immediately.<sup>44</sup> The problem reached a point of genuine crisis in 1584, when Ivan "the Terrible" died and was succeeded by his son Fedor (1584-1598). The new Tsar complained that the English ambassador, Jerome Bowes, had invented several untruths against the Russian nobles and that the English merchants violated the stipulations of the agreements between Russia and England. He cited that the English transported goods other than their own and that they brought non-Englishmen with them under the guise of being Englishmen. Fedor pointed out the case of John Chapell of Lubeck, who was brought to Yaroslavsky and Kazan under the pretense of being an Englishman. "When an envoy shall come from you," he declared, "we will thoroughly make known to him the unseemingly living and treachery of your merchants here, such as is not heard of on any prince's country." The Tsar then resolved to discontinue the English monopoly because of the corruptness of the English merchants and, he continued, if England were allowed to continue her monopoly Russia would lose much profit she would otherwise gain by commerce with a diversity of clients.

Whosoever or out of what country soever any cometh here,  
have leave and license to trade merchandise. Your mer-

<sup>43</sup> Foreign State Papers for Elizabeth, X, 99, May 1, 1572.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., X, 122, May 1572.

chants would reap all the profit themselves alone and not permit any other to come, and so it would be a hindrance to our kingdom. By God's help, we can make utterance of all our commodities at pleasure, and our realm can well spare those of your merchants.<sup>45</sup>

The result of this message was the mission of Giles Fletcher the Elder in 1589, which attempted to appease the Tsar and regain lost privileges. Fletcher was partially successful in accomplishing this task. Fedor announced to the Queen that while he could not grant all their former rights because of the past problems encountered with her merchants and subjects, he did, however, desire to remain in the same brotherly spirit as his father, Ivan, had shown her. He therefore granted letters of privilege to the English merchants, but with new clauses to be added later. The merchants were now licensed to pass through all of Kazan and beyond the Caspian into Persia--"which is not permitted for any other nation in our kingdoms." All merchants other than the English were to pay full customs duties and were not free to trade outside Moscow--"no not one mile beyond the Musco in other countries." In exchange he asked for the Queen to open the trade to all her subjects and merchants by expressing hope that in the future her merchants would not be as devious as in the past.<sup>46</sup> Fletcher's mission was highly successful in regaining much that had been lost. In 1591, the governors of the Muscovy Company wrote Elizabeth asking her to answer the letters of Fedor and

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., XX, 54-56, Sept. 1585.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., XXIII, 246-247, April 1589.

Boris Godunov, the power behind the throne. They reported that the Tsar was well disposed toward the Company and that it would be best if she would answer the letters personally, so that the Emperor would not be suspicious that his letters were being concealed from her.<sup>47</sup> Fletcher's mission was also important because after he returned to England he authored his impressions of Muscovy in Of the Russe Commonwealth (1591), which will be discussed at some length in Part II.

The relatively friendly relations between Russia and England depended to a great extent upon Elizabeth's diplomatic tact in dealing with the Tsars. It is known that Ivan IV had offered to alter the Queen's maiden status through matrimony;<sup>48</sup> this proposal was made despite the fact that he still had a wife living. A marriage between Ivan "the Terrible" and Queen Elizabeth was, of course, impossible. Nevertheless, the situation proved to be quite a predicament for the Queen. If she should bluntly refuse, the Muscovy Company could lose its trade. The situation demanded shrewdness and adroitness. On May 18, 1570, Elizabeth answered Ivan that if by chance he should be driven from his kingdom due to a conspiracy or some "outward hostillite" she would "with such honors and courtesies receive and intreate your highness..." She furthermore told him he would be permitted to practice his Chris-

<sup>47</sup> Domestic Papers, 1547-1625, III, 122, Nov. 16, 1591.

<sup>48</sup> For example see Samuel Purchas, Purchas his Pilgrimage, etc. (London, 1626), 966. The author says Ivan wanted to be a "Suter vnto her [Elizabeth] for himselfee."

tian religion in her realm. Elizabeth's hesitation and tact were displayed, however, when she declared that "this is our secret lettre whereunto none are privie besides our selfe, but our most secreite Counsell..."<sup>49</sup> Undoubtedly she did not want the other sovereigns to get wind of this agreement lest they should cast a dim view upon England and create diplomatic turmoil. Her tactics do not seem to have borne full fruit because Ivan's determination for a marriage alliance did not stop. In 1574 the Tsar became angry (which was not an unaccustomed feature of his personality) accusing Elizabeth of transmitting his marriage proposal to her council rather than handling the matter personally.<sup>50</sup> It is highly significant to realize that despite his anger this Tsar did nothing as drastic as Fedor was to do. He continued to hope for an Anglo-Russian military alliance and even, at one point, had asked the English sovereign to receive him and his wife into England in the event they were driven from their kingdom.

Elizabeth's answers were purposely ambiguous for two reasons. First, and most obvious, it was smart diplomacy. By so doing she held the Tsar constantly at bay because, as Michael Lock shrewdly observed, Ivan desired England's commodities and admired her just and peaceful government plus "the naturall virtue of the Queens Majestie." Evidently Ivan valued the trade with England as much

<sup>49</sup> Texts, 17-18.

<sup>50</sup> Foreign State Papers for Elizabeth, X, 543, August 20, 1574, 1525.

as England reciprocated. Unlike Fedor in 1589, Ivan never resorted to drastic measures. As a matter of fact, England's favorable position was upheld and constantly reassured.<sup>51</sup> Ivan certainly was annoyed, as was pointed out in recounting the marriage proposal above. Secondly, at the time Ivan requested permission to come to England in case of a rebellion in Muscovy, Elizabeth was experiencing serious dynastic difficulties with Mary, Queen of Scots, which certainly took precedent over Anglo-Russian affairs. When Ivan died Elizabeth must have breathed a heavy sigh of relief.

Sweden certainly must have been aware of the potential value of the English trade with Muscovy and other points east when, just five years after the treaty of 1555 between Mary and Ivan, the Swedish ambassador to England suggested a marriage between his King and Elizabeth. One of the advantages of such a union, the ambassador pointed out, would be an increase in trade with Muscovy.<sup>52</sup> The English were equally aware of Sweden's potential in the Baltic as Elizabeth, in a letter to Tsar Fedor in August 1590, stressed the fact that when Sweden had interfered with the Anglo-Muscovy traffic, she sent warships to settle the matter. She pointed out one instance in particular in which English ships

<sup>51</sup>This author feels compelled to mention that Liubimenko contends that Ivan had a way of forcing Elizabeth's hand by withdrawing her merchants' privileges. The State Papers and Royal Proclamations do not substantiate her thesis. For her comments, see pp. 117-118.

<sup>52</sup>Foreign State Papers of Elizabeth, II, 500, April 3, 1560.

had defeated a fleet of Swedes with 150 prisoners taken and brought before the Muscovite emperor. "By this means the Swethian ships durst not come forth, and as long as our ships used those seas, the passage was cleared and great traffique was at the Narve by all nations in quiet time."<sup>53</sup> Of course, this letter also was intended to entice Fedor to give back the English merchants their former rights. Nevertheless, it also served to show Elizabeth's concern for Sweden.

In summary, relations between England and Muscovy were established and set on good footing during the reigns of Edward VI and Mary I, through the judicious use of able and competent ambassadors, Anthony Jenkinson and Thomas Randolph. Though shaky at times, Elizabeth furthered the relationship by tactful diplomacy. For the most part she had relied upon her own personal devices and on her particular understanding of international politics, together with the use of men of talent. Thomas Randolph continued to serve England after Mary's death. Giles Fletcher the Elder (1549?-1611) was a man of unusual abilities. He was a civilian, an ambassador and a minor poet. By sixteenth century standards he was well educated, having attended Eton, obtaining his degrees of Bachelor of Arts (1569) and Master of Arts (1573) from King's College, Cambridge, and, in 1581, earning his LL.D. As with many of the prominent and well-educated of his day,

<sup>53</sup> Texts, 21.

Fletcher served in the Parliament of November 1585, representing Winchelsea. The fact that he was a member of parliament demonstrates that Elizabeth sought to use Parliament to establish harmony in government and as a rallying point so she could gather the best minds conveniently together. In the Parliament of 1584, for example, Francis Bacon, Robert Cecil, the explorers Drake and Raleigh, and the poet, Fulke Greville, were seated. It was this company which Fletcher was associated with in 1585. Besides his brilliant mission to Muscovy, Fletcher was also sent to Scotland and Germany on missions for the government.

The cause of the great voyages of the 1550's had been for financial, not political, reasons. The relations between Elizabeth and Ivan continued on strictly a commercial basis while the tsars, on the other hand, were more interested in concluding a political alliance. The Queen held out the bait, allowed the Tsars to grant valuable commercial advantages to her merchants, and then retrieved the lure. The bait was a political alliance which was more of a mirage than a reality. We must conclude that this cautiousness was only part of Elizabeth's broader conservative foreign policy which she exercised toward all her European contacts.

The trade with Muscovy was valuable and fulfilled certain needs, but it would be false to conclude that the Muscovy trade was rich. The rise in prices contributed to the financial problems of the Muscovy Company. In order to sustain the commerce the government had to deal with Denmark, the Holy Roman Empire,

and the great Baltic power, Sweden. By the time of the Queen's death in 1603 England was well established as one of the world's great commercial powers. Since the Hanse had declined and, for all intents and purposes, even more had decayed, the English merchants secured the northern route and had established trade on the Baltic (the Eastland Company) in Muscovy, in the Far East (East India Company), and in Turkey and Asia Minor (Levant Company). Each of these companies had a monopoly interest in one specialized area with which foreign trade was an integral part.

## CHAPTER III

### RUSSO-ENGLISH RELATIONS, 1603-1640

It is not our conquests but our commerce, it is not our swords, but our sails, that first spread the English name in Barbary, and thence came to Turkey, Armenia, Muscovy, Arabia, Persia, India, China and over and about the world.

--A seventeenth century writer<sup>1</sup>

When the historian investigates the diplomatic and commercial relations between England and Russia in the interval 1603 to 1640, he is immediately confronted with the question: was the former relationship hindered by the inauguration of two new dynasties, the Stuarts (1603) in England and the Romanovs (1613) in Russia? The problem is perplexing and difficult to solve because two parallel developments occurred. During these thirty-seven years the trade with Muscovy continued and was greatly valued, both for its prestige and lucrativeness. Yet, at the same time a decline of England's position in Muscovy occurred. The reasons for this decline are intertwined with the entire history of Europe in the first half of the seventeenth century.

In 1604 there was some question as to the future of the

<sup>1</sup>Quoted by Lockyer, 146-147.

Muscovy Company. Would it be dissolved? In June of the same year a memorial by merchants who traded in Muscovy was sent to Parliament requesting that the Company should be continued and that trade should not be free for all merchants.<sup>2</sup> At the end of that month Nicolo Molin, the Venetian ambassador to England, wrote home that he felt the Muscovy Company would not be dissolved.<sup>3</sup> His suspicions proved correct. In this report concerning the situation in England in 1608, Molin gave what may have been one of the essential reasons why the Company was not disbanded. England's wealth depended on the future of her trade, which was controlled by means of companies, and one of the more important of these companies was the Muscovy.<sup>4</sup> This Muscovy trade was indeed highly respected. In 1614 the Company added the whale monopoly in Greenland and the North Sea to its hemp, flax, and fur trade.

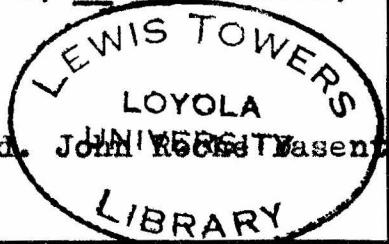
...it hath pleased his Highnesse this day to signifie unto them by the Lords of his Privie Councell that hee doth gratisly approve of this interprise, and doth allow them to maynteyne his Highnesse right and possession of the coast of Greenland, and other places in the North Sea, together with fishing, and to defend themselves against all persons whomsoever by all lawful and just moves. 5

<sup>2</sup> State Papers Domestic, 1547-1625, VIII, 117, June 6(?), 1604.

<sup>3</sup> Great Britain, Public Record Office, Calendar of State Papers and Manuscripts... Existing in the Archives and Collections of Venice, ed. Allen B. Hinds, Horatio F. Brown, et al. (London, 1864-1940), X, 164, June 30, 1604.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., X, 503-504, 1607.

<sup>5</sup> Acts of the Privy Council of England, ed. John Nichols (London, 1921), I, 419-420.



All other companies were forbidden, on the pain of forfeiture, to import whalefins into England,<sup>6</sup> a monopoly reaffirmed once more by James in 1619 and again, once, by Charles in 1636.<sup>7</sup> This monopoly proved to be a mixed blessing as we will see shortly.

Whether the new Romanov dynasty would continue the friendly policy of its predecessors was answered almost immediately. The new Tsar, Michael (1613-1645), confirmed the former liberties of the English merchants and forbade all others from trading in Cherny Island, Greenland and any other islands of its discovery.<sup>8</sup> For Michael's part it was a smart and pragmatic move. When he came to the throne Russia was in the throes of terrible turmoil and confusion. The Poles had just been evicted from the capital itself, and the new regime's first objectives were to restore peace and order. The "Time of Troubles" had finally ended. Certainly the Tsar did not want to disrupt things further by altering Muscovy's favorable trade position. Therefore, the confirmation of 1613 was reconfirmed in April 1614.<sup>9</sup>

That the Muscovy trade was highly valued was proven in various ways. Girolamo Lando, the Venetian Ambassador, observed in 1622 that England was fruitful with regard to natural resources and that she possessed fleets of thousands of ships, together

<sup>6</sup> Bibliotheca Lindesiana (Oxford, 1910), I, 35, Sept. 11, 1614.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., I, May 18, 1619; 207, May 16, 1636.

<sup>8</sup> Calendar of Domestic Papers, IX, 178, March 30, 1613.

<sup>9</sup> Venetian Papers, ed. Allen B. Hinds, XIII, 110, April 12, 1614.

with the prerequisite materials for constructing and arming of them. All England lacked was pitch, flax, tow, and rope, which they imported from Muscovy and Danzig.<sup>10</sup> The early Stuart kings and their merchants, however, had recognized the potential importance of the Muscovy trade sooner. It will be recalled from the last chapter that the Muscovy Company traded woolen products to the Russians in return for flax, hemp, furs, timber, and tar. In late 1614 James issued a proclamation according to which woolen yarn was not to be exported. It is significant, therefore, that he wisely added, "the toleration given to the Eastland, Barbary and Russian Companies will be continued."<sup>11</sup> The government also sought to encourage commerce with Muscovy in ways other than granting monopolies. The long and weary journey from England to Russia might have discouraged many sailors from enlisting their services with the Muscovy Company. In 1625 all merchants, except those who traded in Muscovy and the East Indies, were forbidden to offer higher wages to induce sailors to sign on for a voyage.

The extent to which James' regime would go in order to preserve good relations with Muscovy was well demonstrated by John Merrick's mission in 1617.<sup>12</sup> At that time Russia and Sweden

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 423-459, Sept. 21, 1622.

<sup>11</sup> Bib. Lind., I, 136, Nov. 9, 1614.

<sup>12</sup> In 1617 a Russian embassy arrived in England. The account is presented in Memoirs of the Court of King James the First, II, by Lucy Aikin (London, 1822). Sir John Ferrit gives the account. The nature of the business is not noted specifically but it undoubtedly had something to do with the Merrick mission since Merrick returned in the same exact year. This account is valuable for other purposes and will be analyzed in Part II, Chapter IV.

(Gustavus Adolphus), traditional territorial rivals, were engaged in a bitter war, and owing to Sweden's advantageous position in the Baltic, the Eastland and Muscovy Companies were currently threatened. James deemed the situation sufficiently serious to send John Merrick to try to settle the dispute. On June 21, 1614,

A passe for John Merrick, knight, ambassador from his Majestie unto the Emperor of Russia, to repair thither with servants and troyne and such necessary provisions as he shall carye with him, without lett or interruption<sup>13</sup>

was issued. He left England in 1614 with John Beecher as secretary. By November 1617, he had achieved his purpose and had returned home.<sup>14</sup> Michael, the Tsar, was well pleased with Merrick's work and indicated this to James.<sup>15</sup> The significance of the mission had ramifications beyond just the Muscovy Company's investment. This was poignantly pointed out by Sir Dudley Digges in his pamphlet, The Defence of Trade in a Letter to Sir T. Smith (1615). Sir Thomas Smith to whom the letter was addressed was the first governor of the East India Company and, as a matter of fact, Digges himself was a shareholder in that Company. It is not surprising, therefore, that he should make a vital connection between Merrick's purpose in Muscovy and the protection (or possible loss) of the new route to India. Hence he wrote:

<sup>13</sup> Acts of Pr. Council, I, 470.

<sup>14</sup> Domestic Papers, IX, 236, June 1, 1614; 239-240, June 30, 1614; and 494, Nov. 8, 1617; also Acts of the Pr. Council, III, 213, March 31, 1617.

<sup>15</sup> Inna Liubimenko, "The Correspondence of the First Stuarts with the First Romanovs," Transactions of the Royal Historical Society, I, 80-81. The letter was dated September 1616.

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in reporting this incident to the Doge and Senate, commented that it would be of great consequence to the treasured English Muscovy and Baltic trade.<sup>19</sup> By 1627 the Spanish had already been in the Thirty Years' War for some time: once again, Contarini, the Venetian ambassador, observed that the Spanish could prevent all trade between Danzig, Poland, and Muscovy. The evidence, however, indicates that Anglo-Muscovite commerce was little affected by the Thirty Years' War. Other than the one incident with Denmark, trade seems to have continued uninterrupted.

Thus far the picture we have painted is bright. The Muscovy and Eastland trade appears to have flourished. The government lent its full support to these two companies by granting them monopolies in their respective areas and on one occasion the King, through his Muscovy ambassador, even helped to settle a war between Russia and Sweden. But evidence also indicates that, even if on the surface all appeared calm and well, below there were forces which contributed to the eventual decline of the Muscovy trade.

This eventual decline of the Muscovy Company's monopoly was due to many factors stemming primarily from economic problems which were interconnected with seventeenth century political events. Among the chief problems which confronted the Company were those of pirates and interlopers, the severe competition of

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<sup>19</sup> Venetian Papers, 281-282, XX, number 347.

the Dutch, and its continual indebtedness. One must not think these problems were unique to the Muscovy Company. On the contrary, all the companies suffered because of the generally unstable financial system of the time and because of crediting difficulties; there was in England no banking system, and the Bank of England was not established until 1696.

For one thing, the Muscovy Company was unable to settle its debts. On October 19, 1621, as one example, an Order-in-Council declared that the newly arrived goods from Russia were liable to seizure for the debts of the Muscovy Company. It seems that many of the new proprietors of the Company had joined with the assurance of immunity from past debts which had been given by the Council, an assurance granted in order to prevent the complete decay of the Muscovy trade.<sup>20</sup> In November it was reported that both the Muscovy and East Indian Companies were unable to pay their debts;<sup>21</sup> in December Sir William Halliday and five other members of the Muscovy Company reported to James that the Company's debt was now £24,000.<sup>22</sup> They further proposed that the past debts owing to the old company ought to be defrayed by those who had incurred them, and that the remainder ought to be levied on the stock of the Company. In December 1622, the Company was ordered to pay a third of their debt owing to two women, and all default-

<sup>20</sup> Domestic Papers, X, 300, Oct. 19, 1621.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., X, 308, Nov. 10, 1621.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., X, 322, Dec. 17, 1621.

ers were to be committed to prison if payment were not forthcoming.<sup>23</sup> Some of the old debts of the Muscovy Company were paid off by 1624 when John Brown of London provided payment of £290.13s.Od.<sup>24</sup>

The Muscovy Company also had other types of financial problems. For example, her expenses were great. They were forced, through circumstances and their constant indebtedness, to make loans at interest and were further troubled with fires. Sir Thomas Barrington, a member of the Parliament of 1621, clearly cited the issue as:

Theay have been enforced to take money at interest, and are by fyer in Russia hindered, and by the Flemins so much that except theay make restitution nothing can be donn for their free trading un ante. <sup>25</sup>

John Pym (1584-1643), also a member of that Parliament who sat for Cone and later played a great role in the reign of Charles I, similarly noted these difficulties and substantiated their claims by stating that the charge of ambassadors cost the Muscovy Company £10,000, another £10,000 was lost by fire, "whereby they lost 35,000<sup>l</sup> in their old ioynt stock. And they were driven to borrow 25,000<sup>l</sup> at interest."<sup>26</sup> The situation deteriorated to such an extent that on April 24, 1621, the Muscovy Company petitioned Parliament requesting free trade rather than the joint stock

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., X. 468, Dec. 18, 1622.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., XI, 276, June 17, 1624.

<sup>25</sup> Commons Debates, ed. Wallace Notestein, Francis Helen Relf, Heartley Simpson (New Haven, 1935), III, 48.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., IV, 230-231 (Pym).

company. That company complained that the joint stock method lost too much money and restricted the trade to only four or five families whereas "if wares were in many hands they would be better sold and at easier price." Further, they claimed that the Turkish Company flourished since its joint stock was rescinded and free trade established.<sup>27</sup> The younger merchants complained that they were absorbing losses on account of the joint stock while the governors of the Company "suffer none to be employed into Moscovia."<sup>28</sup> It was also observed by Pym and Barrington that one of the serious reasons for these financial problems was the trouble England was having with interlopers and pirates.<sup>29</sup>

Pirates and interlopers were nothing new to English commerce. In the Parliament of 1610 the King had issued in rather strong words the following article in his 14 Articles of reformation recommended by his Majesty:

8. It is doubtful whether the laws and statutes which be now in force do provide sufficient remedy against such as within the realm are maintainers and relievers of pirates and receivers of goods robbed and stolen by pirates. And reason thereof, as well the pirates as such accessories and receivers, are greatly encouraged to commit such heinous crimes. His Majesty therefore is much grieved and offended to see such defects in his laws, for thereby the justice of the kingdom is generally much scandalized throughout all parts of the world where the English nation or name is known or heard of. This is an inconvenience and

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<sup>27</sup> Ibid., III, 73-74.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., IV, 230-231, and 211.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., III, 48; IV, 254, 230-231.

grevience for which some good and severe law ought to be speedily provided. <sup>30</sup>

This particular document is especially significant because it demonstrates beyond any question the seriousness of pirating. In 1622 the problem became acute and the Russian Tsar declared that English pirates on the coast of Russia were to be apprehended and punished as if "the robbery had been don upon his own subjects."<sup>31</sup>

The problem of interloping was certainly as grievous a dilemma for the Muscovy Company as was pirating. As we have already seen the Company enjoyed a valuable trade monopoly in Russia. On March 27, 1614, the Company complained that interlopers had passed into Russia and other ports with the intention of practicing trade there.<sup>32</sup> This illegal travel did not abate and once again, in the following year, 1615, it was brought to the attention of Sir Thomas Smith, Sir Thomas Lowe, and a few others that the interlopers and pirates were interfering with both the Muscovy and East India Companies' trade. The effect was that all suspects were to be examined, bound over, and brought before the Privy Council for punishment.<sup>33</sup> Even with this law interloping and pirating continued and seems to have reached a point of exasperation for the members of the companies in 1617. In one letter of early that year, nine of the companies lodged complaints against

<sup>30</sup> Foster, II, 281.

<sup>31</sup> Privy Council, II, 180-181.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., I, 398-399.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., II, 48-49.

and requested the punishment of specifically named and, allegedly guilty, individuals, and the Muscovy Company accused two men, Richard Wish and William Stone.

There are a couple of recorded cases, however, in which the Muscovy Company lost its claim. One occurred in October 1617 when the Company accused Nicholas Gatenhie and Robert Caldcale of Kingston of interloping. They were ordered to appear before Sir Thomas Lake, the King's principal secretary of state, Sir Fulke Greville, chancellor of the Exchequer, and Sir Edward Coke. The two were dismissed "with lycnese to depart home without further trouble."<sup>34</sup> The other case, more significant and interesting, involved the Greenland privileges. In 1618 Sir James Cunningham had obtained a patent to fish for whales in Greenland. Naturally the Muscovite merchants protested because this constituted an encroachment on the monopoly James had awarded them in 1614. The Company appears to have been willing, for one reason or another, to compromise with Cunningham, but he refused their offer "to receive him into their society." He contended he did not want to submit to their rules and regulations. When he refused to join the Company, which in effect would have legally constituted a loss for the Company, Cunningham was ordered to desist from his trading and shipping in Greenland and the North Seas.<sup>35</sup> This case is significant for several reasons. It shows what very pos-

<sup>34</sup> Acts of the Privy Council, III, 344, 346, (Oct. 12, 14, 1617.)

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., IV, 70-72 (March 15, 1616).

sibly was a trend because there had been an earlier case in which the circumstances were quite similar. In this instance, however, the merchants accepted admittance into the Muscovy Company and were allowed to send out shipping "not exceeding the proportion of 300 tonnes to fish whale at the said Trinity Island and not otherwise or elsewhere," provided they did not bring into England any whale fins which would be sold to the detriment of the Muscovy Company.<sup>36</sup> Perhaps, the Company decided that it was to its best advantage to try to include these merchants rather than fight them in the courts and possibly weaken its monopoly in the event they should lose. Also, it is curious that Cunningham should have refused to join the Company, thus nullifying any right he had in the Greenland trade. One very plausible reason for his refusal to accept their invitation was the bad financial situation of the Muscovy Company. It was in debt, and he may not have wanted to accept such obligations.

But it was not only financial troubles which plagued the merchants. The English did not always acquit themselves satisfactorily in their diplomatic relations with the new Romanov dynasty. One of the old survivals of the Elizabethan era returned to haunt the Stuarts. The Romanovs faced a perpetual Polish problem and, like Ivan IV, desired a political alliance with England. Naturally James and Charles did not want to politically ally with weak Russia in opposition to powerful Sweden and Poland. During

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., IV, 45-46 (1618).

the seventeenth century Sweden was the strongest country in the Baltic region, while Poland remained in a state of flux--that is, in a state of decline, but nevertheless a country not to be neglected. That James did loan the Tsar money for his war against Poland is evidenced by the fact that in 1620 John Merrick was again sent to Russia to recover two to three hundred thousand crowns which had been lent to the Tsar for his war.<sup>37</sup> But a treaty between James and Michael was never consummated, not so much because the English King followed Elizabeth's rigid example in concluding only commercial and not political attachments with Russia, but due rather to the ineptness of his ambassador in 1623.<sup>38</sup> Charles faced a similar problem during his reign. In July 1633, the Poles requested that English arms should not be transported to Russia.<sup>39</sup> And like all the monarchs previously, he did not form a political alliance with Russia.

Because of the significant repercussions it was to have, perhaps the most crucial single event which caused friction between Russia and England was the episode of Sir Dudley Digges (1583-1639). He was a man of some importance in his day, being a judge and the son of Thomas Digges of Digges Court, Barbam, Kent. He was graduated from University College, Oxford, in 1604

<sup>37</sup> Venetian Papers, XVI, 298-300, July 2, 1620.

<sup>38</sup> This is a complex problem which will be dealt with later in connection with another matter.

<sup>39</sup> Venetian Papers, XXIII, 123, July 8, 1633.

and in 1610 and 1614 represented Tewkesbury in Parliament. The area in which Digges achieved most of his reputation was as a share-holder in the East India Company, which had been formed in 1600. As we have previously seen in connection with the Merrick mission, Digges was also an author, having written The Defense of Trade in 1615. Probably because of these outstanding qualifications James made Digges his Ambassador to Muscovy in 1618 with the special mission of giving the Tsar a loan estimated at about two hundred thousand crowns in money and merchandise.<sup>40</sup> Obviously, the mission was important for several reasons. First, Digges was to secure not only privileges advantageous for the English merchants, but he also was to secure a monopoly to the utter exclusion of the Dutch,<sup>41</sup> and as we will see shortly, the Dutch provided the English with many headaches during these early years. Secondly, the mission failed because Digges was unable to land. Russia, Digges claimed, was overrun with Poles, and he therefore returned to England with the money.<sup>42</sup> The failure of the ambassador to arrange the loan and obtain the privileges meant a greater expense for the East India Company because now it had to convey its goods via the Persian Gulf and was not able to transit by

<sup>40</sup> See Venetian Papers, XV, 235, June 14, 1618; also State Papers, Domestic, IX, April 29, 1618; and XV, Oct. 14, 1618.

<sup>41</sup> Venetian Papers, XV, 235, June 14, 1618. In a letter to Parliament in 1621 Digges had this to say: "The King had care in my embassage that the King of Poland should not swallow Muscovy, for then he would have had Sweden and Denmark. That we must resolve to do something or else we shall be subject to all the world's censure." Commons Debates, II, 445.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., XV, 339-341, Oct. 26, 1618.

the easier Muscovy route.<sup>43</sup> We have already seen that in 1621 the East India Company was in serious financial trouble. The failure of the Digges mission undoubtedly contributed to the company's burden. But whether the mission was a failure or not, it did at least represent an attempt on the part of the King of England to come to the aid of the Tsar of All the Russias at a time when that sovereign was experiencing grave military and political difficulties.

One of the main reasons necessitating the Digges mission was to secure a monopoly which would exclude the Dutch, who had been in Muscovy for some time, but did not enjoy nearly the same position as the English. By the Twelve Years' Truce in 1609 the Dutch, for all intents and purposes, became free of Spanish control, a freedom which released the Dutch to rival the English in commerce. One of the areas of intense mutual interest was Muscovy because both were maritime powers which depended on a good supply of naval stores. In 1614 the Duke of Muscovy requested of England £50,000 which, if the King refused, would cause the Duke to consequently stay all English traffic and "not suffer them to trade anye more into his domains." The clincher was that the Dutch offered £60,000, ten thousand pounds more than was originally requested but carrying the proviso that the Tsar would give them a monopoly.<sup>44</sup> The Dutch, in the following year, sent two

<sup>43</sup> Domestic Papers, IX, 587, Oct. 25, 1618.

<sup>44</sup> Commons Debates, VII, 653 (Appendix C).

ambassadors to arrange an agreement between the Tsar and the King of Sweden regarding trade.<sup>45</sup> Thus far the Anglo-Dutch rivalry had not reached a direct confrontation between the two parties. This situation continued until, in July 1618, the Dutch sent Issac Massa to present the Muscovites with arms, provided the Tsar would grant them the same privileges as the English, including free passage to Persia. This offer must have been tempting to the Tsar because the Muscovite ambassador had just left England very displeased that the English had refused arms to Russia.<sup>46</sup> It certainly appears obvious by these acts that the Dutch were annoyed, to say the least, with being shut out of Muscovy and, especially as future events were to prove, they were willing to try and attempt to rectify the situation. The English merchants felt the rivalry. At one point it was even reported that the Dutch ships from Muscovy were more opulent than the already rich English fleet.<sup>47</sup> The situation reached an explosive pitch, though, when the Dutch intruded in Greenland and "rifled" English ships there to the value of £22,000 in goods and £40,000 in damage.<sup>48</sup> The King moderated the situation but still demanded that restitution should be made for all goods within three months and satisfaction for all damages within three years. Yet James sti-

<sup>45</sup> Venetian Papers, XIII, 142-143, July 4, 1614.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., XV, 255, July 10, 1618.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., XXII.

<sup>48</sup> Commons Debates, IV, 230-231.

pulated that the Muscovy Company should be amiable toward the Dutch in Muscovy for the next three years in light of the recently negotiated Anglo-Dutch treaty--"...all differences touching that fishing should be suspended."<sup>49</sup> Nevertheless, the rivalry continued and appears to have even increased in intensity. A letter to the agent in Russia, four years after the King had asked the Muscovy Company to be amiable toward the Dutch, states:

...and generally we require you to endeavour to procure the confirmation of the Companie's privileges to all intents and purposes, in useful and able manner as formally they had and to use your best diligences for the suspension of all interlopers from Hamburgh, Holland or other places. <sup>50</sup>

In January 1625, by order of Council, the English merchants were granted permission to stop any Dutch vessel trading in Greenland until the debt of £22,000 was paid.<sup>51</sup> The English ambassador was instructed to treat with the Prince of Orange "effectively" and to advise him of the serious gravity of the matter.<sup>52</sup>

The main complaint, as is plain to see, was that the Dutch had not compensated the English for their intrusion into Greenland. At this point it might be well for us to ask if the English had any legal right to request this compensation. In other words, was the monopoly given the Muscovy Company in 1614 by the

<sup>49</sup> Acts of the Privy Council, V, 124-125, Feb. 4, 1620.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., VII, June 12, 1624.

<sup>51</sup> Domestic Papers, XI, 447, in two orders on Jan. 13, 1625; also see Acts of the Privy Council, VII, 428-429, Jan. 13, 1625.

<sup>52</sup> Acts of the Privy Council, VII, 438-439, Jan. 22, 1625.

King of England legally binding on the Dutch, or for that matter, on any other country? In the seventeenth century there was no genuine international law as we conceive of it today and, hence, much of this depended upon the strength of the parties involved, in this case, England and the Dutch. The answers to these problems therefore must be sought in the actions (not diplomatic and legal arguments) of the two contenders. The Dutch obviously would answer in the negative and the English in the affirmative. Most likely this situation accounts for the last clause of the Privy Council's Act: "...and to defend themselves against all persons whomsoever by lawful and just moves."

While the Anglo-Dutch controversy was raging, in 1623 James attempted to negotiate a "League of Perpetual Amity and Alliance" with the Tsar. In November 1623 Christopher Cocks had in his possession a signed treaty to be given to the Russian Tsar but for some reason or other he did not present it.<sup>53</sup> The alliance, if it had been consummated, would have been a drastic departure from the foreign policy as formulated by Queen Elizabeth and continued for most of James' reign. There were four provisions in the treaty: (1) neither of the two contractors was to aid the

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<sup>53</sup> State Papers, Domestic, X, records that on April 21, 1623, Secretary Conway recommended Cocks to the Muscovy Company for employment as their agent in Russia. This recommendation was repeated nine days later. Liubimenko, 85, goes further and gives some details of this treaty. The actual treaty was found, however, by this author and will be dealt with at great length. The fact that no treaty was consummated is borne out by the Venetian and Domestic Papers for the reign of James. No mention is made regarding a treaty in these documents.

other's enemy with ammunition or other such provisions; (2) enemy soldiers were not to be conveyed through the other party's domain; (3) if a war were to take place "hee that shall suspect such warn shall advertise his confederate therof in good tyme"; and (4) in case of a war the other contractor was to be allowed to "buy upp all manner of needful provisions for the warres, and victualls, armor, munition, ordinance, artillerie,..." and should be allowed to transport this away without interruption.<sup>54</sup>

In analyzing the King's attempt to form a League there are strong indications James may have felt that a war might be coming and, hence, the vital need for naval supplies and allies. It, furthermore, is curious that James should send the signed document in the year 1623, exactly three years after he had asked the Muscovy Company to be "amiable" toward their Dutch competitors in Russia. Also the provisions of the treaty are primarily of a military nature which was a sharp departure from the traditional policy of negotiating only commercial agreements. There are strong indications that the King was aiming this treaty directly at the Dutch, especially in view of the incident in 1618 in Greenland and the ramifications it was to have. We have already seen that Ivan wanted a military alliance but Elizabeth hoodwinked him out of it. Now, however, the shoe was on the other foot with England having to face a strong competition. James' concession to agree to a military treaty was perhaps an attempt

<sup>54</sup>Texts, 23.

to exclude the Dutch once and for all with one swift blow. He must have realized that the Muscovites were susceptible to such an overture in view of the Tsar having often asked him for help against his enemies, the Poles. The failure of the Digges mission to reach Moscow because the Poles blocked the way was just one vivid example. We see, therefore, that both James and Michael were amenable, but Cocks, the ambassador, did not deliver his discharge and, from all available evidence, Charles, James' successor in 1625, did not pursue the issue any further.

Actually, Charles' relations with Russia were a prelude to what was to become a definite reality during the Civil War and Cromwellian Days. Grain was scarce throughout Europe, and especially after 1630 as England then had nine years of grain scarcity. On October 10, 1629, the King asked the Tsar for 100,000 quarters of grain but received only 30,000 (March 4, 1631). By the 1640's Charles' letters of recommendation at the Russian court were discredited largely because the King had given these letters without the prior knowledge and consent of the Muscovy Company and "Often to persons of bad reputation..." Russia was also an exporter of tar used in the manufacture of rope-walks. When Charles asked permission (March 25, 1636) for Englishmen to export from Russia 3,000 to 4,000 barrels of tar custom free annually for seven years the Tsar's answer (January 1638) reflected the sad state of English affairs in Muscovy: the Dutch had been given the trade and England could buy tar only at Arkangelsk and

Kolmogory.<sup>55</sup>

Thus, we see that the trade between England and Russia continued during the early Stuarts but, as indicated above, found a powerful rival ready to "steal" this trade in the event the English should let their guard down. The Muscovy Company did seem to weather all her problems, in one way or another, until the crowning blow came in 1640 with the Civil War and, after it, the Cromwellian government. From 1640 to 1650 a depression, which had started earlier, continued, and the Civil War greatly interrupted trade, the most serious hindrance being Charles' attempt to sever all supplies from London because of its predominance in the English commercial world. Heavy taxes only further irritated the sore. The Parliamentarians' trade policy, on the other hand, seems to have been to suppress monopolies as they existed in England herself but to encourage those companies which had monopolistic rights abroad. In order to win this support of Parliament these companies were compelled out of necessity to make considerable contributions toward the pursuance of the Civil War.<sup>56</sup> It was during this period of domestic strife and turmoil that the Dutch captured much of the Muscovite trade and reduced the Muscovy Company to the status of being only one of the many traders

<sup>55</sup> Liubimenko, 87-89. If one should desire to further investigate the topic he will encounter great difficulty because in the Moscow fire of 1666 nearly all the Muscovy Company's papers were burned.

<sup>56</sup> Oxford History of England, I, 332-333.

competing for Russia's affections as contrasted to the previous period when England enjoyed a virtual monopoly. Already the handwriting was on the wall. From 1643 to 1645 there was a complete interruption of correspondence between Charles and the Tsar. In 1648, by the Treaty of Munster , the Dutch officially obtained their freedom. The nadir of the decline was reached in 1649 when Charles I was executed, and, as a direct consequence, Alexis (1645-1676) banished all English merchants from Russia.<sup>57</sup> When the Restoration came about, correspondence was again resumed, but by that time it was too late. All this does not mean that England's position had completely deteriorated. On the contrary, she retained a great deal of influence as shown by Peter the Great's interest in her shipyards on his "great embassage" in 1696, but her monopoly had been eclipsed by the Dutch.

It also seems fair to conclude that between the accession of James I and the Civil War commerce between Russia and England continued much on the same path as in the sixteenth century, but that there still existed certain problems which remained unsolved. James, like Elizabeth, wisely attempted to solve these problems by the judicious use of able ambassadors. For instance, John Merrick's mission represents a high point in that it established a solid relationship between London and Moscow, but in rapid succession the failure of the Digges mission and Cock's not presenting the treaty to the Tsar were the beginning points of the

<sup>57</sup> Liubimenko, 78.

decline, only to be seriously aggravated by the regime of Charles I. The Civil War and subsequent events were the determining factors in this decay and loss of the English monopoly in Russia.

## PART II

### CHAPTER IV

#### EARLY ENGLISH CONCEPTS OF MUSCOVY, 1553-1640

...the most rythe prynce of treasour that lyveth  
this day on earth, except the Turk.

--Michael Lock, an Agent in Russia in 1575

The Chancellor expedition, besides initiating commercial intercourse between England and Muscovy, widened the horizons of the reading public. Here is a country previously unknown to the English. What was it like? What was its form of rule? What was its value to England? These were only a few of the many questions asked concerning distant Muscovy.

The first to describe the new land was naturally Richard Chancellor. Being a seaman, much of his narrative dwelt on the rivers and cities of this newly discovered kingdom, but the whole great expanse of Muscovy deeply impressed him. His description was crude but so was the Russia of the sixteenth century. And yet, with a parochial outlook, Chancellor's frame of reference was naturally London: "The Mosco is great: I take the whole town to be greater than London with suburbs; but it is very rude, and standeth without all order."<sup>1</sup> He was quick to notice that the

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<sup>1</sup>John Pinkerton, A General Collection of the Best and Most

Mosco houses were built of timber which was dangerous in case of fire, and English writers hereafter continued to point this out as a means of indicating the primitive conditions of Muscovy.

Englishmen had to wait for about forty years before the first book dealing exclusively with Russia was published. Giles Fletcher, the Elder, wrote Of the Russe Commonwealth (1590) as a result of his successful mission to Muscovy in 1588-89. The readers of this book were probably first startled by Fletcher's attempt to be specific. For example, in his survey of the "great length and breath" of Russe, the author relates that from north to south it was about 4,260 versts and from east to west 4,400 versts.<sup>2</sup> Of the Russe Commonwealth contained something for virtually all members of England's reading public. They discovered that hemp, flax, salt, hide, wax, and furs were among the leading commodities of Russe. Fletcher appears to have been well acquainted with Russe because he indicates among his facts that Mosco, the greatest of the towns and its capital, received its name from the river running through it.<sup>3</sup> Continuing, Fletcher greatly expanded upon Chancellor's treatment of the use of wood for streets and buildings, most likely one reason for his attention to this detail being the Muscovy Company's losses due to fire. Perhaps

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Interesting Voyages, etc. (London, 1808), I, 16-17. This work is a collection of primary source material.

<sup>2</sup>Giles Fletcher the Elder, Of the Russe Commonwealth (London, 1591), 3. One verst equals 0.6641 miles.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 14.

the author's most notable contribution was his description of the government of Russe and the gradation of the nobility. The "Publike Assembly" was the "highest court of publike consultation of state";<sup>4</sup> it was composed of the Emperor, the nobility and some clergy. Fletcher readily understood that this body was not representative as a whole. The burgers and "the people" were not included because their duty was to obey and not "know of publike matters before they are concluded."<sup>5</sup> A keen awareness as to where the real source of power rested was demonstrated when the author observed that the Emperor was absolute and the government "plaine tyrranicalle": "Wherein there is none that hath any authoritie or publike urisdiction that goeth by decent, or is held by charter, but all at the appoynment and pleasure of the Emperour..."<sup>6</sup> He divided the nobility into three groups: the Vdelney Knazey, Boiaren and Voyanodey. Two of these groups he discussed. The Vdelney Knazey were the chief nobles and privileged dukes while the Voyanodey were nobles who had been generals in the army of the Tsar. It is significant to point out that he employed Russe terms and not their equivalent in English. By the time of the publication of the Russe Commonwealth, the English had been in Muscovy for about forty years and had become acquainted with this unusual foreign tongue.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 22.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 21.

The author caught the power struggle at its core when he wrote that the nobility's power was held in check by the Tsar through the use of certain select men called "Oppressini."<sup>7</sup> The Zemskey, that is, the body of nobles which the Tsar and his select men (the oppressini) struggled against, were constantly assaulted by the oppressini using varying means. As a matter of fact, these select men had a great deal of leeway as to what form their opposition could take:

Wherein he provided that the Oppressini for number and qualitie of value, money, armourie, &c.: farre exceeded the other of the Zemskey side, whom he put (as it were) from under his protection so that if any of them were spoiled or killed by those of the Oppressini (which he accounted of his own part) there was no amends to bee sought by way of publike justice, or by complaint to the Emperor. <sup>8</sup>

The result of this struggle was an enormous amount of disorder, hatred and tyranny.

One of the very interesting accounts of Muscovy was that of Sir Anthony Shirley's travels first to Italy, and on to Cyprus, Antioch, Persia and, finally, Russia. His travels occurred sometime between 1598 and 1603. Before visiting Muscovy Sir Anthony went to Persia, which was an unusual entrance route into Russia in itself. His eye analyzed the Persians thusly:

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<sup>7</sup>The "Opressini" indicated here was the Opreshchinia which Ivan used to keep the nobles in check. They had extraordinary powers and some authorities have gone so far as to refer to them as Russia's first secret police.

<sup>8</sup>Fletcher, 25. The Zemsky Sobor was a council of nobles who advised the Tsar.

<sup>9</sup>Elizabethan Journals, 277.

Of the cusoms of the Persians noteth that their merchandise and commodities are silks, both raw and otherwise, of all suits and colours, spice, drugs, pearls and other kinds precious gems, together with carpets of divers kinds ....They are [however] ignorant in all kinds of liberal and learned sciences, except it be in certain things pertaining to houses' furniture and some kinds of carpeting and silk work wherein they excell. 9

We see here something new in that Shirley realized full well the economic value of Persia but at the same time he was able to note its backward qualities as well. From Persia he made his way into Muscovy via her backdoor, sailing the Caspian for two months and after many additional weeks finally arriving in Moscow. While at the capital he was sent for and granted an audience by the Tsar. Sir Anthony's sojourn, however, met with misfortune because in his company here was a "Portingal friar," who had travelled from Persia with him. This "lewd whoremongering knave" alleged that Shirley was a spy and had travelled through Russia only for his own profit "and not of Persia and Christendom as he pretended." Consequently, Sir Anthony and his entourage were imprisoned. We should remember that the English had not always acquitted themselves very well in Muscovy and it was only natural for the Tsar to think the worst. The friar restated his accusation once again in front of examiners and Shirley, naturally angry, "gave the fat friar such a sound box on the face that down he falls as if he had been struck with a thunderbolt." Shirley's travels were interrupted in Muscovy for six months after which he gladly departed through St. Nicholas.<sup>10</sup> Evidently not all Englishmen enjoyed

<sup>10</sup> Elizabethan Journals, 277-278.

their stay in Russia as Chancellor had.

A few years after Fletcher's volume and Sir Anthony Shirley's travels two more significant works dealing with Russia appeared. Sir Thomas Smith's account of his Voiage and Entertainment in Rushia (1605) was the first. One reason for the book's importance was its author. Sir Thomas Smith (1558-1625) was an influential merchant and governor of the East India Company. It will be recalled that Digges had even addressed his book (1615) to Smith. When the East India Company was formed in November 1600 he became its first governor. In 1599 he had been chosen one of the sheriffs of London and, on May 13, 1603, he was knighted. Smith was made a special ambassador to the Tsar of Russia in June 1603 from which assignment, like Fletcher's, issued his book. He was once again elected governor of the East India Company in 1603, a post he continued to hold, with but one interruption, until June 1621, at which time the Company's trade had been developed and established. By the time of his death he had become wealthy, though much of his fortune was given away for charitable purposes.

On June 12, 1604, Smith set sail for the new land with, as we have said, a mission to act as an "ambassage from his Excellent Majesty to the Emperor of Rushia, &c.", and was at sea forty days and nights. Sir Thomas' description of his voyage proved valuable to the reader because he not only described the country but, in a genuine literary style, took the reader with him on his trip. By July 22 they had entered the Dvina river, and had come

within one mile of Tharch-angell. They anchored and were met by a gentleman who extended the Tsar's greetings for "peace and amity." Smith then relates that after meeting another embassy: "we passed along our journey, which was as pleasant and delightful, whether you consider the admirable straight pine, tall cedar or byne woods..."<sup>11</sup> Shortly afterwards he met the Russian Emperor and described the royal scene. The Tsar was seated in a chair of gold which was embroidered with "Persyan stuffe," his crown was of gold, and he had a collar of rich stone and pearls. The entertainment was pleasant and of high quality. At one point the Tsar even struck his breast and exclaimed, "My deere Sister Queen Elizabeth whom I loved as mine own hart." Elizabeth very evidently lived in the memory of the Russians. And the book was not without tragedy. The author cited that on leaving Rushia his party heard of the sudden death of the Tsar. It was Smith's assumption that the Tsar had been poisoned and that the whole affair was "as it selfe, verye straunge."

Not all the literature was merely travelogue. The other work dealing with Russia specifically was Henry Brereton's pamphlet, "Newes of the Present Miseries of Rushia" (1614). For the first time an Englishman made an attempt to write a historical account of an incident in Russia. Brereton's work dealt with a war between Sigismond of Poland, Charles of Sweden, and Dmetrius of Muscovy. He described Dmetrius as an excellent prince and

<sup>11</sup>Sir Thomas Smith, Sir Thomas Smithes Voiage and Entertainment in Rushia (1605), no pagination.

"otherwise a most absolute Prince, noble in mind and of kingly presence."<sup>12</sup> The author told his readers how the Muscovite prince lost Smolensk, retreated and later, with the help of the Tartars, regained the city and Castle of Mosco. Although many of the enemy were put to the sword, the Poles were not thrown out of the country.<sup>13</sup> Brereton looked upon Russia as a country in great turmoil and bloodshed with Tartars, Poles and Russians each vying for control.

If an inquisitive Englishman wanted to further expand his knowledge of Muscovy beyond the books just discussed, he would have to consult sources which treated all lands of the then-known world. One of the more comprehensive of such works was Giovanni Botero's Relations of the Most Famous Kingdoms, published in 1608, in which the author deals with twenty-six kingdoms, extending from the well-known, such as France and Spain, to the lesser known, Japan, for instance. Botero's section on Moscouia dwelt on the usual topics of government, geography, and Crimme Tartars. Relations was not without its distinct contributions, however. The author concerned himself to some extent with the Russian soldier, even calling him a gentleman at one point, and the author went to considerable trouble to give the exact number of men composing the army. One of his wisest observations was that Russia was partly European and partly Asian. As to the size of Muscovy,

<sup>12</sup>Henry Brereton, "Newes of the Present Miseries of Rushia: Occasioned by the Late Warre" (1614), 2.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., 55-56.

Botero agreed with Chancellor that Russia was "far greater and larger than the shires of England, though not so well peopled."<sup>14</sup> Russia, he said, had much "fruitful and pleasant soil" which lay between Mosco and Smolensk and along the Volga between Astrakhan and Kazan.

Among the most informative of the travel works was Lewis Roberts' The Merchants Mappe of Commerce (1638). Roberts concentrated primarily on the trade value of Russia and only incidentally on political and historical matters relating to Russia. His frame of mind was natural when one considers the author's background and field of interest. By profession Roberts, born in 1596, was a merchant and economic writer. Among his other works were Warre-fare epitomized (1640) and The Treasure in Traffike, or a Discourse of Forraigne Trade, &c. (1641). He was employed by the East India Company in 1617 and, eventually, became a director. During his lifetime Roberts also saw service with the Levant Company. He died in 1640.

Much that Roberts discussed in The Merchants Mappe of Commerce is more germane to Part I of this paper because trade was the basis for Russo-English diplomatic relations, but we deem it more desirable to cite it here. The following information should give the reader some idea of the book's approach and orientation. Exchange values of money and weights were listed in order that the merchant would know in what quantities to buy and for what

<sup>14</sup> Giovanni Botero, Relations of the Most Famous Kingdoms (1608), 199.

price. For example, Roberts mentioned that ten kopecks equalled a greven, which was the English equivalent of twelve pence sterling; three pood equalled £112. The commodities and merchandise of Moscovia were treated next. The most precious of the commodities and merchandise were "rich furrs," already discussed in detail elsewhere.

Not all the accounts of Russia were concerned with trade. William Camden's famous Annales published in 1625 included Russia's relations with England and it is partly through his scholarship and the Discoveries of Richard Hackluyt that present-day historians have the story of Chancellor's voyage and his discovery of Muscovy. Since it is all but impossible to obtain the complete correspondence between Elizabeth and Ivan IV, Camden's work must be relied upon as an alternative source. From his scholarship the English learned that Anthony Jenkinson was the first Englishman to cross the Caspian into "the country of the Bactrians."<sup>15</sup> Jenkinson brought a message from the Russian Emperor to the effect that Ivan wanted a defensive and offensive alliance "against all the world."<sup>16</sup> The contribution of Camden's Annales as regards Russia was that it integrated Russia into the history of England for possibly the first time, and, henceforth, Muscovy was looked upon by historians as one of England's many trading partners in the east.

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<sup>15</sup> Camden, 164-165.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 165.

The year following the publication of Camden's Annales, Samuel Purchas' Pilgrimage went into its fourth edition, a book which was surprisingly accurate when one considers that the English for the most part had only vague impressions of what and where Russia was. Besides this outstanding characteristic, the author himself stands out as an exception. Purchas was born in 1575 and obtained what was by seventeenth century standards a good education, graduating from St. John's College, Cambridge, then taking holy orders, and gradually rising through the ranks. In 1601 Samuel was the curate of Purleigh in Essex. Thirteen years later he was appointed chaplain to George Abbot, the Archbishop of Canterbury. From 1614 to his death, in 1626, Purchas was rector of St. Martin's of Ludgate. Considering his religious background and that his interests were not geared toward the commercial life, his Pilgrimage was well done as regards Muscovy.

It has been previously cited that practically all the authors remarked about Muscovy's use of timber for house and street construction. Purchas vividly demonstrated how this use of timber could begin a dangerous fire. In 1571 the Tartars, in an attempt to make good their claim to Kazan and Astrakhan, invaded the city of Mosco. His description of the conflagration which resulted must stand as one of the foremost when he says that the Tartars came and "fired the Suburbs which being of wood burned with such rage, that in foure houres spacie consumed the greater part of the citie, being thirtie miles or more in compasse."<sup>17</sup>

<sup>17</sup>Samuel Purchas, Purchas his Pilgrimage, etc. (London, 1626) 422.

Eight thousand or more people perished in the process. The Tartar invaders he described thus: "They are all Horse-men carrying nothing but a Bow, a sheafe of Arrows, and a Fauchion Sword: they are expert Riders, and shout readily backwardness as forwars."<sup>18</sup> One of the unusual parts of Pilgrimage was its consideration of the Muscovy language. Purchas informed his public that because he had a smattering of Greek he was able to attain "the ready knowledge of their vulgar speech, the Sclauonian Tongue."<sup>19</sup> Obviously he realized that the Russian language was a derivative of earlier Byzantine-Greek influence. In general Purchas concluded Russia to be a land of immense cruelty, disorder, and chaos. Aside from the interesting fire of 1571, the author also recounts various of the cruelties perpetrated by Tsar Ivan IV in order to acquire land. For example, in Novgorod 1,000 gunners of the Tsar's Guard "without respect ravished the women and maides, ribbed and spoyled all that were within: murthered young and old, burned household stufte and merchandise..."<sup>20</sup> Another example of Ivan's cruelty was the murder of his own son, Alexis. Purchas correctly added that the next son and heir, Fedor, was weak and lacked the requisite ability for running an efficient government. The history of Russia from 1584 to 1598 bears witness to this observation.

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<sup>18</sup> Purchas, 422.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 973.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., 977.

Iocennes Boemus and Edward Brerewood also made observations concerning Muscovy. In his The Manners, Lawes, and Customes of All Nations (1611) Boemus concluded that:

This nation is generally addicted to venery and drunkenesse for to be drunke they hold a glory vnto them, and esteeme of lust and lusciousnesse as of a thing lawfull, and commendable, so as the marriage bed be not defiled. Vsury is also very common and vsuall, and not held to be deceit in any one, not so much as in the Clergie. <sup>21</sup>

The Tsar's clothing and that of the nobles he described as being a combination of all colors except black. Five linen cassocks or shirts were worn with a gold and red silk trim. The author oddly observed that a woman which has had two husbands was thought to be chaste, but one married three times was condemned as "lewd and lasciuious." Regarding the Russian tongue, Boemus said that the Muscovites had "a speech peculiar themselves," but whether or not it was Scythian he could not be sure. He noted that their letters were similar to those of the Greek characters.

Edward Brerewood, a professor of astronomy at Gresham College, wrote Envires touching the diversity of Langvages, and Religion, through the Chiefe parts of the World (1622) in which he obviously realized the Greek influence on Russian orthodoxy. As a matter of fact the Muscovites were converted to Christianity by the Greeks, he told his public. In his analysis of the Russian faith Brerewood designated the following articles of their faith: (1) "[Rejecting] Purgatory, but yet praying for the dead;" (2) "And Communicating in both kinds;" (3) Omitting confirmation by the

<sup>21</sup> Iocennes Boemus, The Manners, Lawes, and Customes of All Nations (London, 1611), 219.

Bishop; (4) Excluding the fourth marriage as "litterly" unlawful; (5) Refusing to communicate with the Roman Church. He further pointed out that the Metropolitan until sixty years previously was confirmed by the Patriarch of Constantinople but was now "nominated and appointed by the Prince" [i.e., Emperor of Russia].<sup>22</sup>

The impression of the Russian people which the sixteenth and seventeenth century Englishman received was quite stereotyped. Perhaps Pierre D'Avity's generalization is the best depiction: "The people for the most part are wonderfully given to whoredom and drunkenesse."<sup>23</sup> Moryson must have amused his readers when he compared European women as follows:

The Spanish women are said to be painted, the Italians somewhat lesse painted, the French seldom painted, and sometimes the Germmaine Virgins (never that I observed except those of Prussen have perhaps borrowed this vice of the Muscovites their neithbors).<sup>24</sup>

There was only one exception to this otherwise unfavorable judgment and even here there was not complete agreement. The Russians were also a religious people. D'Avity said that if a Muscovite passed a cross or monastery he would dismount his horse and kneel down to make the sign of the cross.<sup>25</sup> In his Essays

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<sup>22</sup> Edward Brerewood, Enqvires Tovching the diversity of, etc. (London, 1622), 136-137.

<sup>23</sup> Pierre D'Avity, Estates, Empires, and Principalities of the World (London, 1615), trans. Edward Grimestone, 691.

<sup>24</sup> Fynes Moryson, An Itinaray written by E. Moryson, Gent. (no date given), Part III, 49.

<sup>25</sup> D'Avity, 698.

Francis Bacon, the noted scholar, philosopher, and scientist, made the off-handed comment that "there be Monks in Russia, for Penance, that will sit a whole Night in a Vessell of Water, till they be Ingaged with hard Ice."<sup>26</sup> Thomas Randolph, Elizabeth's able ambassador to Muscovy, took issue with even this description when he wrote home in 1568 that "He has visited the monks of St. Nicholas, who are more in drink than in virtue, full of superstition, and in his judgement very hypocrites."<sup>27</sup> Randolph's view of Russia was entirely negative. The ambassador reported to London that Ivan was a very cruel Tsar who caused a number of nobles to be beheaded and their remains laid in the streets for all to behold. He said he intended to be home as soon as possible so as to escape "out of his [Ivan's] country, where heads go so fast to the pot."<sup>28</sup> Despite this possible religious qualification, it is quite evident that the civilized English looked upon their Russian counterparts as drunkards, whores, and barbarians living in a chaotic and unsettled land ruled by a "plaine Tyranicall" autocrat, the Tsar.

Attempting to assess how well known Russia was to the English public is difficult because many of the works of the period either did not mention Muscovy or, if they did, it was only in

<sup>26</sup> Francis Bacon, Essays (London, 1625), 233.

<sup>27</sup> Cal. St. Papers, Foreign for Reign of Elizabeth, VIII, 2412, August 12, 1568.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 2414.

passing. Here, for instance, it is necessary to point out that Fletcher's Of the Russe Commonwealth was suppressed because of certain passages which offended the Tsar. The Muscovy Company tenaciously opposed the book, not due to any untruths it contained but in order to appease Fedor, who had once already suspended the Company's privileges. It is only recently that the book has been given any attention. The Preachers Travels (1611) by John Cartwright describes the Caspian Sea but only in relation to its value as a route to Persian riches. Some of the later publications do not even mention Russia at all. Sir Thomas Herbert's Some Years Travils into Divers Parts of Asia and Afrique (1638) contains nothing on Muscovy but does include a section on the "Mogulls." At first this may not appear surprising, but as the reader continues his research he soon comes to realize that Herbert completely overlooked the very important Mongol influence on Russia. William Lithgow's Totall Discourse (1632) is not complete although he treats a variety of peoples, among them the Persians, Egyptians and the Turks. It is somewhat surprising that Russia is completely ignored because of the author's background as a world traveller. Lithgow, born in 1582 and educated at Lanark grammar school, began his nineteen-year journey March 7, 1610, leaving Paris for Rome. Surely he must have heard of Muscovy. One can only hazard a guess as to why he did not even once venture into Muscovy taking either the route Shirley did or the alternative, the Baltic. Perhaps he was interested in matters other than commerce, such as art. Even one of the outstanding

geographies of the period, the two-volume At'las or a Geographick Description of the World (1636) by the seventeenth century's best cartographer, Gerard Mercator, does not include a discussion of Russia, while there is included a written description of other, farther distant and more mysterious lands, such as China, Japan, and the Tartar Kingdom. What is especially intriguing is that Muscovy is physically shown in much detail on Mercator's maps; even her principal cities and rivers are indicated.

Aside from the literature of the period one other reflection of English public opinion came in 1617, the year of John Merrick's return home, when an ambassador from Russia arrived in London. It has been recorded that the ambassador gave both admiration and amusement to the King and the people of London. The Tsar, according to Sir John Finett, had sent the English crown sables, black foxes, ermines and hawks together with "...a Persian dagger and knife set with stones and pearles, two rich cloth of gold Persian horse-clothes, a Persian kettle-drum to lure hawks with, &c...."<sup>29</sup> The fur gifts were valued at £4,000 sterling. Although he did not record what the ambassador's business was, Sir John did mention that the King did meet with him to discuss something. By this description we can deduce a few conclusions. The Muscovites amused the Londoners probably because of their unusual manners, customs, and dress. Most obviously, Russian furs must have been fairly well-known in England if the

<sup>29</sup> Lucy Aikin, Memoirs of the Court of King James the First (London, 1822), II, 81.

author devoted such attention to them.

Another indication of the importance of Muscovy can be seen in the official correspondence between the Kings and the Tsars. During the reign of Elizabeth there were three Tsars (Ivan IV, Fedor, and Boris Godunov) with whom she communicated. There are ninety-eight letters in existence, sixty-five from Elizabeth to the Tsars and thirty-three from the Tsars to the Queen, with Fedor writing the most (13) and Ivan receiving the most (28).<sup>30</sup> Although the Queen's correspondence shows a decline in the later years of her reign, she still wrote more letters than the Tsars did at the same time. Generally speaking Elizabeth's letters were written in Latin but after 1570 some were in English. The Tsars' letters were in Russian, although two (April 10, 1567 and April 1, 1569) were in German. The correspondence was usually dated, the Tsars' from the year of Creation and the Queen's from the Incarnation.<sup>31</sup> Elizabeth's interest in Muscovy was especially reflected in the topics of her correspondence. She discussed mainly commercial matters, while the Tsars' interests were political. Ivan was especially adamant regarding a political alliance while Fedor, his successor, was the exception. Boris Godunov, the power behind the throne during Fedor's reign and himself Tsar for five years after the death of Fedor, reverted back to political matters. He urged a marriage between two of his chil-

<sup>30</sup> Liubimenko, "Correspondence between Elizabeth and the Tsars," 115.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., 114-115. Supposedly Creation came 5508 years before the Incarnation.

dren (a boy and a girl) with two English royalty. The English merchants encouraged Elizabeth to express her wishes to comply because they feared that if Godunov's two children wed a Dane or a Pole the English trade would be hampered. The whole thing came to no consequence, however, as Elizabeth died shortly, only to be followed by Godunov in 1605.<sup>32</sup>

By the end of the sixteenth century the friendly intercourse between Russia and England had formed a tradition. Would the coming of a new dynasty disturb this relationship? It did not. Between 1613 and 1649 a hundred and twenty-eight identifiable letters were exchanged, sixteen of James', fifty-seven of Charles I's, and two attributed to young Prince Charles. Tsar Michael wrote forty-four and Philaret, his father, nine. Hence we see that the principal correspondents were Charles I and Michael. The same topics as under Elizabeth continued. It should be mentioned that none of the letters of Charles I to Alexis were answered, and Cromwell's ambassador was not received.<sup>33</sup>

In conclusion, it might serve our interests to draw together the remaining bits and pieces by comparing and contrasting those men who had an interest in Muscovy. The most obvious conclusion is that many of the writers were actually in Russia at some time or other and, with the notable exception of Camden, few wrote

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 119.

<sup>33</sup> Liubimenko, "Correspondence between Early Stuarts and Tsars," 77-91.

from secondary sources. Fletcher, Smith, Jenkinson,<sup>34</sup> and Digges were all ambassadors to Muscovy. Being members of the East India Company, Smith, Digges, and Roberts had a special interest in Muscovy because of its value as a trade route. For the most part these writers were educated men: Fletcher held a B.A. and an M.A. from King's College, Cambridge; Digges graduated from University College, Oxford; Purchas was a graduate of St. John's College, Cambridge. Two of them, Digges and Fletcher, were members of Parliament.

Based upon all the evidence, it seems fair to conclude that those who knew anything about Muscovy were indeed a small minority and anyone who knew a great deal was most likely either a traveller or a merchant with some special interest in Russia. The general public's knowledge of Muscovy was, of necessity, limited.

<sup>34</sup> Camden, p. 164, says Jenkinson wrote A Geographicall Map of Russia.

## CHAPTER V

### SOME CONCLUSIONS

The entire history of Russo-English relations from 1553 to 1640 were, for the most part, friendly and worthwhile for each of the two participants. But, as we have seen, the English writers of the period invariably cast a dim view on Muscovy. To them, and most likely to the whole English realm, Russia was a semi-barbaric land in which misery was more the rule than the exception. We ought to ask ourselves what accounts for a comparatively civilized country like England having diplomatic intercourse with Russia, so opposite in many respects? The answer is economic, not political, since Russia's value as a military ally was negligible, especially in view of Sweden's overwhelming geographical and naval dominance in the Baltic. Also, England was cut off from the Mediterranean route to the East by two Catholic powers, Spain and Portugal, two of the very important sixteenth century maritime powers. We must realize that in the 1550's England was not the maritime threat she was to be in the eighteenth century. Once commercial intercourse with Muscovy was initiated, it continued to be consciously encouraged by the succeeding sovereigns because of the Muscovy Company's monopolistic position and the increasing need for naval stores, of which Russia had a more than

ample supply. Russia served yet another purpose, which was as a recipient of England's woolen products. Through the use of uncanny wit and tact, Elizabeth furthered and finally brought England to the culmination of this amiable relationship. James, her successor, continued in much the same vein and even at one point sought to enlarge Elizabeth's restricted foreign policy by attempting to conclude a heretofore-unheard-of military alliance with distant Muscovy. It was characteristic during these two reigns that those who wrote about Muscovy had some special interest in her, being either merchants or, as was the case with Fletcher and Jenkinson, ambassadors. This friendly relationship soon turned into an English nightmare during the reign of Charles I. The Civil War and Cromwellian government wreaked near irreparable damage. At one point the relationship was even severed. It was during this era that English predominance decayed and the Dutch rose to become her equal in the Muscovy trade. Despite a resumption of royal correspondence during the Restoration, England was never able to regain her former exclusive position. By 1696, when Peter the Great assumed the throne alone, this transformation had been completed as symbolized by Peter's "secret embassy." On that trip to Western Europe, he inspected and was greatly interested in both the Dutch and English shipyards. It is fair to conclude that while she now had to share the Russian trade with the Dutch, England nevertheless retained much influence.

relations during those years covering 1553-1640. We must now fit this era into its historical perspective. For England these eighty-seven years represent a portion of the origins of her eventual naval and trade supremacy which, once attained, would last for nearly two centuries. Contact with England, although not the first one with a Western European country, shows the beginnings of Westernization which Peter the Great brought to the fore. Thus, for each of these two countries, this interaction was just one phase of something in the future rather than a fruition.

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APPROVAL SHEET

The thesis submitted by Mr. George VanDusen has been read and approved by the director of the thesis. Furthermore, the final copies have been examined by the director and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated, and that the thesis is now given final approval with reference to content and form.

The thesis is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

George VanDusen  
Date

John D. Daniels  
Signature of Adviser