

Testimonies of affection and dispatches of intelligence: The letters of Anthony Bacon, 1558-1601.

Tosh., William Patrick

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Testimonies of affection and dispatches of intelligence:

The letters of Anthony Bacon, 1558-1601

William Patrick Tosh

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the

degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Queen Mary, University of London

2013

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Abstract

This thesis explores the affective and professional relationships that sustained the intelligence network of Anthony Bacon (1558-1601), a gentleman-traveller and spymaster for the earl of Essex. Through a series of interventions in the extensive Bacon papers in Lambeth Palace Library, I present four manuscript-based case studies that cast light on a host of relationship-paradigms particular to early modern English culture that are today poorly understood.

Chapter 1 focuses on Anthony Bacon's relationship with the Puritan Nicholas Faunt, and argues for a new understanding of the language of ardent affection between men that acknowledges the influence on such language of Reformed theology. Chapter 2 explores the correspondence of Bacon with Anthony Standen, an imprisoned Catholic spy, and suggests that the early modern prison may have been a facilitating institution in the creation of instrumental friendship between men. Chapter 3 examines the Inns of Court. I argue that the Inns' concern for the values of friendship was reflected in the widespread political patronage system that operated out of the four societies, a system that was recognised and manipulated by powerful men. In Chapter 4 I explore a context in which the influence of friendship networks was deleterious: the unstable and unhappy political secretariat of the earl of Essex. I argue that the earl's outmoded concept of ardent service was as damaging to his own household as it was to his relationship with the queen. Taken as a whole, this thesis argues for a new awareness of the place of feeling and the role of friendship in our understanding of relationships between men in the sixteenth century.

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Abbreviations

BL	British Library, London
EUL	Edinburgh University Library
GL	Daphne du Maurier, <i>Golden Lads: A Study of Anthony Bacon, Francis, and their Friends</i> (London: Victor Gollancz, 1975)
HMCS	Historical Manuscripts Commission, <i>Calendar of the Manuscripts of the Most Hon. The Marquis of Salisbury, K.G. [...] preserved at Hatfield House, Hertfordshire</i> , 24 vols (London: HMSO, 1883-1976)
HF	Lisa Jardine and Alan Stewart, <i>Hostage to Fortune: The Troubled Life of Francis Bacon, 1561-1626</i> (London: Victor Gollancz, 1998)
LL	James Spedding (ed.), <i>The Letters and Life of Francis Bacon</i> , 7 vols (London: Longman, 1861-72)
LPL	Lambeth Palace Library, London
ODNB	H.C.G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (eds), <i>Oxford Dictionary of National Biography Online Edition</i> (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), http://www.oxforddnb.com
PP	Paul E.J. Hammer, <i>The Polarisation of Elizabethan Politics: The Political Career of Robert Devereux, 2nd Earl of Essex, 1585-1597</i> (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999)
TNA	The National Archives, Kew

Personal abbreviations

AB	Anthony Bacon
ACB	Anne, Lady Bacon (née Cooke)
AS	Anthony Standen
EE	Robert Devereux, second earl of Essex
ER	Edward Reynolds
FB	Francis Bacon

NF	Nicholas Faunt
NT	Nicholas Trott
WC	William Cecil, Lord Burghley

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Anthony Standen to Anthony Bacon, 24 May 1591 (LPL MS 648 fol.33r)
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Note on transcription policy, dates and names

In quoting from manuscripts, I have silently expanded contractions, lowered superscriptions and smoothed over scribal corrections or deletions. In other respects, I have kept editorial interference to a minimum, and I have retained original spelling and punctuation (although I have modernised the fossil thorn). Where it has been necessary to insert a punctuation mark to make sense of the text, I have done so within square brackets, which is also where I keep other editorial interventions. By contrast, the transcriptions which make up the Appendix at the end of this thesis are presented in semi-diplomatic form, with compositional habits rendered visible.

Early modern printed texts are cited as seen, although I have modernised usage of the long ‘s’. In foliation and signature references, I have not placed recto or verso indications in superscript. On the rare occasions where there is a risk of confusion between roman numerals and the recto/verso contraction, I have supplied a period between the signature reference and the recto/verso indication, as follows: ‘sig.Civ.v’.

I have not attempted to regularise Old and New Style dating. Anthony Bacon and his correspondents used both; I date letters as they appear in the manuscript. The exception is the start of the year, which for Elizabethan Englishmen started on 25 March. Throughout the main text, I have silently amended dates in January, February and March to accord with modern usage, although I indicate this in my footnotes, for example ‘20 January 1596/7’.

I refer to the Bacon brothers by their first names, Anthony and Francis. For most other individuals, where a confusion over a shared family name does not arise, I use surnames only.

Introduction: The uses of friendship

In 1609, the publisher Thomas Thorpe issued a quarto volume entitled *Shakespeares Sonnets*, a collection of 154 numbered poems and the longer *A Lover's Complaint*.¹ The sonnet sequence, largely ignored by the early Jacobean reading public, became in its edited and emended form the most provocative literary-biographical artefact in English criticism thanks to its two addressees, known today as a 'fair youth' and a 'dark lady' (although the terms are not used in the poems). Who, generations of readers and scholars have wondered, were the young man and the woman to whom Shakespeare addressed his most intimate and seemingly personal words? Are the youth and 'Mr W.H.', the collection's dedicatee and 'onlie begetter', one and the same person? And – a puzzling question for any society attuned primarily to heterosexual love – why did Shakespeare address the great majority of the sonnets (126 out of 154) to the man, and those the most ardent besides?² The erotic tone of these sonnets – characterised as abnormal ('infidel' was an early assessment), conventional or arrestingly queer depending on the sexual politics of the time and the inclinations of the reader – has been unceasingly debated.³ Henry Hallam, father of the Arthur whose death would inspire Tennyson's own passionate verses *In Memoriam*, recoiled from their 'frigid conceits'; for Oscar Wilde they constituted a foundation text of homosexual desire and he

¹ *Shake-speares Sonnets. Never before Imprinted* (London: G. Eld for Thomas Thorpe, 1609).

² Additions to the compendious Shakespeare studies bibliography which devote attention to the biographical and erotic implications of the sonnets include: Joseph Pequigney, *Such Is My Love: A Study of Shakespeare's Sonnets* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985), 42-101; Jonathan Bate, *The Genius of Shakespeare* (London: Picador, 1997), 39-44, 51-3; Katherine Duncan-Jones, *Ungentle Shakespeare: Scenes From his Life* (London: Arden, 2001), 80-1, 130-33.

³ 'What a heap of wretched Infidel Stuff' is a manuscript annotation at the end of the final sonnet on a quarto copy previously held in the Rosenbach Library, Philadelphia, and now in the Bodmer Foundation Library, Geneva (cited in Katherine Duncan-Jones (ed.), *Shakespeare's Sonnets* (London: Arden, 1997), 69).

regarded professed appreciation of the sonnets as a discreet social signal: a yellow book borne as a green carnation.⁴ Hallam and Wilde read the sonnets with a post-Romantic conviction that poetic literature displayed the soul of its author; modern queer theory has brought some of those biographical urges back to the discipline, eighty years after New Criticism first did away with such personalised readings. Many of us are still reluctant entirely to discard the notion that the sonnets offer a glimpse of the real Shakespeare's affective inclinations. (Was Shakespeare gay, asked the poet Don Paterson. 'Of course he was' – just look at the sonnets.⁵) Recent critics such as John Kerrigan and Colin Burrow, who resist reading the sonnets as poeticised autobiography, have nonetheless brought the homoerotic character of the sonnets to the fore.⁶ While the verses cannot be taken as illustrative of the author's feelings or inclinations, they do at least portray a world in which a poet *might* write about his homosexual feelings for another man, in a way that was more or less allusive and minoritising. Shakespeare may or may not have shared the sentiments, but someone in his fictive world was, we feel sure, decidedly queer.⁷

⁴ Henry Hallam's view is quoted in H.E. Rollins (ed.), *A New Variorum Edition of Shakespeare: The Sonnets*, 2 vols (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott, 1944), 2, 359. For Wilde's passionate attachment to the sonnets, see his essay 'The Portrait of Mr W.H.', *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, July 1889, reprinted in *The Complete Works of Oscar Wilde* (London: Collins, 1966), 1150-1201, and Rupert Hart-Davis (ed.), *The Letters of Oscar Wilde* (New York: Harcourt, 1962), 789.

⁵ Don Paterson, *Reading Shakespeare's Sonnets: A New Commentary* (London: Faber, 2010), xiii.

⁶ John Kerrigan (ed.), *The Sonnets and a Lover's Complaint* (London: Harmondsworth, 1986); Colin Burrow (ed.), *Complete Sonnets and Poems by William Shakespeare* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).

⁷ Shakespeare scholarship, and early modern studies in general, has still not wholly accepted the implications of the revolutionary texts of the history of sexuality of the 1970s and 1980s, the combined effect of which was to do away with the 'dreary labelling' of historical persons as homosexual (David M. Halperin, *One Hundred Years of Homosexuality and other essays on Greek Love* (New York: Routledge, 1990), 7). Michel Foucault argued that until the nineteenth century, sodomy was an 'utterly confused category' of social and sexual deviances, and to speak of any sort of identity based upon sexuality before the modern era was anachronistic (*The History of Sexuality Volume I: An Introduction*, trans. Robert Hurley (London: Allen Lane, 1979)). Alan Bray similarly challenged the idea that homosexuality was an 'essentially unchanging entity', and instead offered a history of 'an aspect of sexuality whose expression has varied radically across different cultures and societies' (*Homosexuality in Renaissance England* (London: Gay Men's Press, 1982), 9). One of Bray's most incisive observations was the 'widespread

Context

This is not a thesis about Shakespeare. Nor is it, strictly speaking, a thesis about homosexuality or the place of homoeroticism in early modern England (although my concerns overlap with that field). Instead, I try to recover some of the complicated relationships that existed between men in a period whose social conventions remain in large part mysterious.⁸ The relationships I explore are not unlike that which exists between the speaker of Shakespeare's sonnets and his male addressee, whoever he is. Whether the sonnets are a poetic fiction or a testament to real feeling, they enact a richly textured affair between two men of different statuses that encompasses patronage, protection, favour, metaphysically-imagined intimacy, Petrarchan romance and frank eroticism, and we cannot reduce the relationship to anything less than this complex mixture. The ultimate objective of the sequence may have been self-advancement for its author at the hands of a powerful patron (the first line of sonnet 1 is 'From fairest creatures we desire increase'), or it may have been written to an entirely different end,

cognitive dissonance' at work in early modern culture, through which English society harboured extreme hostility to the idea of certain sexual practices that we today associate with homosexuality, but at the same time demonstrated a 'sluggish' reluctance to recognise them as prohibited in everyday situations (77). Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick was one of the first scholars to grasp the potential of the virgin ground offered by Foucault and Bray (although unlike them she was neither a historian nor an early modernist), and her study of patriarchal power and male homosocial desire showed how a society could be animated by a 'highly conflicted but intensively structured combination' of 'ideological homophobia' and 'ideological homosexuality' (*Between Men: English Literature and Male Homosocial Desire* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985), 25). Despite these insights, some literary and historical scholars still display an ontologising urge to label particular individuals, cultures and milieus as homosexual, homoerotic or in various senses 'other'.

⁸ So influential was Sedgwick's 1985 book, that the phrase 'between men' is now rarely used in a cultural-historical context without acknowledging her work. Alan Stewart duly did so in his study of humanism, friendship and sodomy, but pointed out that her model of homosocial patriarchy was designed for eighteenth- and nineteenth-century contexts: humanists of the sixteenth century did not consolidate their power through the bodies of women, but through their mastery and transmission of texts (Alan Stewart, *Close Readers: Humanism and Sodomy in Early Modern England* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), xv-xlv). My thesis further moves away from Sedgwick's model by attempting to recreate the lived experience of a group of men through their surviving correspondence, rather than through literary fictions.

whether literary, financial, personal or political. The point is that we do not know: thus far, we have found the ultimate purpose of the sonnets to be unrecoverable, an indication of the complexity and particularity of the relationship they narrate. That relationship is not, however, unique to the speaker of the sonnets and his addressee: such relationships are particular to the *time*, to sixteenth- and seventeenth-century England. This is a period whose historical narratives we understand but whose social realities we are still in the process of comprehending: our historical tradition has been established on an analysis of events and institutions with insufficient regard for the fact that the fundamental relationships on which they were built were entirely different from those with which we are familiar. Although friendship, especially between men, has recently become an active field of research for students of literary and cultural history, their insights have not always migrated to disciplines concerned with real-life, as opposed to fictive, relationships.⁹ The Renaissance idealisation of friendship, a notion that now carries with it an air of cliché, remains for modern scholars frequently a matter of literary convention. But whether early modern people lived up to such ideals or not, the demands of friendship between men set the terms for many of the transactions that

⁹ The first monograph on the cultural centrality of friendship in the English Renaissance was Laurens J. Mills, *One Soul in Bodies Twain: Friendship in Tudor Literature and Stuart Drama* (Bloomington: Principia Press, 1937). Major literary studies of the past decade include: Ullrich Langer, *Perfect Friendship: Studies in Literature and Moral Philosophy from Boccaccio to Corneille* (Geneva: Librairie Droz, 1994); Reginald Hyatte, *The Arts of Friendship: The Idealization of Friendship in Medieval and Early Renaissance Literature* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1994); Laurie Shannon, *Sovereign Amity: Figures of Friendship in Shakespearean Contexts* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002). Often, the conventionality of much early modern friendship discourse has been accepted at face value: Keith Thomas sees little relation between the elevated conception of friendship and the reality (*The Ends of Life: Roads to Fulfilment in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 198). Other scholars have focused on the social aspect of male friendship as it existed in real communities, with less concern for the flights of rhetoric that idealised friendship generated (Alexandra Shephard, *Meanings of Manhood in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003). Historians with an interest in queer sensibilities have gone further in mapping the languages of 'Renaissance friendship' on to lived affective experience: Kenneth Borris (ed.), *Same-Sex Desire in the English Renaissance: A Sourcebook of Texts, 1470-1650* (New York: Routledge, 2004) offers an excellent overview.

made up everyday life, in the public and the private sphere.¹⁰ The obligations, expectations and emotions on all sides were different from those that define friendship in the present day. When, as in the case of Shakespeare's sonnets, such early modern relationships are uncovered, they are today regarded as exceptional when they should be treated as exemplary. Much has been written about the complexity of the emotional resonances in Shakespeare's sonnets. We might rather expect to find aspects of this richness elsewhere in the records of early modern life, in a familiar letter as well as a sonnet, in the everyday exchanges between men as well as in the literary fictions that circulated amongst them.

Thesis objectives

This thesis is therefore an attempt to shed some light on the complex and unfamiliar forms of social relations between men that obtained in late sixteenth-century England – forms that are today poorly understood. I explore the affective and professional relationships that sustained the intelligence career of Anthony Bacon (1558-1601), a high-born gentleman-traveller and afterwards 'spymaster' to Robert Devereux, second earl of Essex.¹¹ Each of my four chapters focusses on a particular context or space in

¹⁰ The two were not necessarily regarded as distinct spaces in the sixteenth century, although it is no longer thought that the concept of privacy post-dates the rise of eighteenth-century domesticity (Linda A. Pollock, 'Living on the stage of the world: the concept of privacy among the elite of early modern England', in Adrian Wilson (ed.), *Rethinking social history: English society 1570-1920 and its reinterpretation* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1993), 78-96; Lena Cowen Orlin, *Locating Privacy in Tudor London* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007)).

¹¹ The language used to discuss the intelligence operations and epistolary networks of early modern political figures has been unavoidably affected by wartime and Cold War notions of espionage, an influence observable in the titles of recent studies: Alison Plowden, *The Elizabethan Secret Service* (Hemel Hempstead: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1991); Alan Haynes, *Invisible Power: The Elizabethan Secret Services 1570-1603* (Stroud: Sutton, 1992); John Bossy, *Giordano Bruno and the Embassy Affair* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991) and *Under the Molehill: An Elizabethan Spy Story* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001). The figure of a 'spymaster' has no real contemporary shape in the sixteenth century, but the term is used by Alan Haynes (*Walsingham: Elizabethan Spymaster and Statesman* (Stroud: Sutton, 2004)) and Robert Hutchinson (*Elizabeth's Spymaster: Francis Walsingham and the*

which educated Englishmen were obliged to form non kin-based relationships with other men in order to achieve their professional objectives; each chapter simultaneously traces a particular relationship between Anthony Bacon and one of his peers; each chapter also illustrates a broad theme of male friendship in early modernity.

Chapter 1 focuses on Anthony Bacon's relationship with the devout government servant Nicholas Faunt, and argues for a new understanding of the language of ardent affection between men that would acknowledge the influence on such language of Reformed theology. Chapter 2 explores Anthony Bacon's correspondence with Anthony Standen, a Catholic spy imprisoned in France, and suggests that the early modern prison could be a facilitating institution in the creation of instrumental friendship between men. Chapter 3 examines the Inns of Court. I argue that the Inns's concern for the values of friendship was reflected in the widespread political patronage system that operated out of the four legal houses, a system that was recognised and manipulated by powerful men. I take as my case study the example of Nicholas Trott, a member of Gray's Inn whose candidacy for a senior government appointment reveals the extent of the society's influence. In Chapter 4 I explore a context in which the influence of friendship networks was deleterious: the unstable and unhappy political secretariat of the earl of Essex. I read the letters of the earl's secretary Edward Reynolds to argue that Essex's outmoded concept of ardent service was as damaging to his own household as it was to his relationship with the queen. Taken as a whole, this thesis argues for a new awareness of the place of feeling and the role of friendship in our understanding of relationships between men in the sixteenth century. Such notions were not merely conventional or ideal for early modern people: they were authentically-felt social realities that impacted

Secret War that Saved England (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 2006)) and appears to have become an accepted shorthand to describe statesmen and their servants who engaged in secret diplomacy and intelligence gathering.

on the political narratives of the time. (See below, pp. 36-45, for a full explanation of arguments put forward in the four chapters).

My thesis is indebted to the work of Michel Foucault, Alan Bray and Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick to the extent that their pioneering research opened up the study of concepts previously deemed unalterable and beyond the gaze of analysis. Most significantly, they argued for the historicity and constructedness of human sexual categories, and the socially-contingent nature of the institutions developed to serve them.¹² Building on their conclusion that the sixteenth century was a time when notions of sexual subjectivity were at their most embryonic, when few if any people forged identities in which their sexuality was a constituent or determining aspect, I wish to explore the contexts and spaces of early modern culture in which profound same-sex attachment between men *was* expressible.¹³ Whether or not these bonds of attachment

¹² Foucault, *History of Sexuality*; Bray, *Homosexuality in Renaissance England* and 'Homosexuality and the Signs of Male Friendship in Elizabethan England', *History Workshop Journal* 29 (1990), 1-19; Sedgwick, *Between Men* and *The Epistemology of the Closet* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990).

¹³ The debate over whether or not sexuality is an innate or socially-constructed aspect of human identity has raged for many years, as have the arguments over the date for a possible 'genesis' of sexual identity. Kenneth Borris observed in 2004 that the controversy between 'essentialists' and 'social constructivists' now appears 'passé' (*Same-Sex Desire*, 4), but for a long time the issue held sway among classicists and medievalists in particular. The arch-social constructivist position of David M. Halperin (a leading scholar of ancient world sexuality) and the thorough-going essentialism of medievalist John Boswell (whose *Christianity, Social Tolerance and Homosexuality: Gay People in Western Europe from the Beginning of the Christian Era to the Fourteenth Century* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980) caused a storm on its publication) kept the issue alive longer in their fields than in early modern studies, where Alan Bray's equally influential book *Homosexuality in Renaissance England* took a subtly intermediate position between essentialism and social constructivism. Most scholars agree that however the understanding and articulation of human sexuality has varied across time, the modern sense of a sexual *identity* – of one's sexuality contributing meaningfully to one's *character* – emerged at some point in or after the eighteenth century, before being categorised and pathologised in the consulting-rooms of nineteenth-century Vienna and Berlin. For a vivid snapshot of the debates mid-range, see the essays in Martin Duberman, Martha Vicinus and George Chauncey, Jr., (eds), *Hidden from History: Reclaiming the Gay and Lesbian Past* (New York: New American Library, 1989). A powerful reassessment of the 'essentialist' position can be found in Mathew Kuefler (ed.), *The Boswell Thesis: Essays on Christianity, Social Tolerance and Homosexuality* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006), particularly Kuefler's introduction (1-31) and Ralph Hexter's 'John Boswell's Gay Science: Prolegomenon to a Re-Reading' (35-56). David Halperin's social constructivism reached its apogee in *How to be Gay* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2012), an exhaustive study of the cultural practices that built a (twentieth-century, white, middle-class) gay man.

comprehended erotic attraction seems to me a question beyond reach: it is at the same time highly likely and impossible to demonstrate. Presumably men who felt a sexual attraction to other men found ways to explore and articulate that attraction; perhaps they did so by hiding in the plain sight of an existing culture of homosocial intimacy.¹⁴

With a cast of five individuals whose lives receive sustained attention, my approach has elements of a prosopographical study, although I make no claims as to its wide applicability or statistical robustness. Instead, by uncovering the dynamics and structures that drove these particular sets of relationships, through close-reading of the often voluminous correspondence that survives, I want to assert the acculturated nature of these relationships, to claim for them a place in the social and political texture of the time, and to urge that affective and intimate relations among men be acknowledged as factors in the narratives of our history.

Why Anthony Bacon?

Anthony Bacon was born into one of the best-connected families in mid-Tudor England.¹⁵ His father, Sir Nicholas Bacon, was made the new queen Elizabeth's Lord

¹⁴ The current, most convincing view is that sexual orientation – whether someone is primarily erotically attracted to their own or the opposite sex – *is* an innate aspect of our physiological makeup. Homosexuality is the result partly of one's genetic heritage, and partly the effects of certain pre-natal hormones: upbringing and culture have little or no effect. The implication of this view is that the proportion of the human population who feels homosexual attraction has remained relatively constant across cultures and for many thousands of years. How societies have supported the expression of homosexual feeling has of course varied widely (Simon LeVay, *Gay, Straight and the Reason Why: The Science of Sexual Orientation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011)).

¹⁵ The only major biography of Anthony's father is Robert Tittler, *Nicholas Bacon: The Making of a Tudor Statesman* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1976). The best single study of Anne Bacon is Katherine Alice Mair, 'Anne, Lady Bacon: A Life in Letters', unpublished PhD dissertation, Queen Mary University of London, 2009, although the family's connections are well explored in Marjorie K. McIntosh, 'Sir Anthony Cooke: Tudor Humanist, Educator, and Religious Reformer', *Proceedings of the American Philological Society* 119 (1975), 233-50, and 'The Fall of a Tudor Gentle Family: The Cookes of Gidea Hall, Essex, 1579-1629', *Huntington Library Quarterly* 41:4 (1978), 279-297. The Bacon family command numerous entries in *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (hereafter *ODNB*) including: Robert Tittler, 'Bacon, Sir Nicholas (1510-1579)'; Lynne Magnusson, 'Bacon [*née* Cooke], Anne, Lady

Keeper of the Great Seal of England a few months after Anthony's birth. His mother, Anne, a scholar and translator, was the second daughter of Sir Anthony Cooke, tutor to Prince Edward in the last years of Henry VIII's reign. Anne and her siblings (four sisters, one brother) received exceptionally good schooling and were given an entrance to court society, of which the sisters made eager use. By the time Anthony was a toddler, his kin circle included Sir William Cecil (later Lord Burghley), the queen's secretary of state and her closest advisor (married to Anne's eldest sister Mildred), the diplomat and writer Thomas Hoby (married to Anne's younger sister Elizabeth, who would go on to marry Lord Russell, the heir to the earldom of Bedford) and the diplomat Henry Killigrew (married to Anne's middle sister Katherine). Anthony and his brother Francis, three years his junior, were to spend much of their lives attempting, but failing, to capitalize on these kinship connections, a fact which makes both brothers particularly suitable for a study of the friendship alliances that operated alongside more established kin-based patronage systems. The reasons for this failure are two-fold. Firstly, Anthony's most glittering social connections were through the spectacular marriages made by his aunts, the Cooke sisters. Cognatic (maternal line) relations were a complicated matter for sixteenth-century elites, as the ultimately bitter relationship between Lord Burghley and his son Robert Cecil, and Robert's cousins the Bacon brothers, was to prove. The Cooke women *entered into* the households of their husbands; it was not a given that their train of nephews was to be afforded the privileges

Bacon (c.1528-1610)'; Markku Peltonen, 'Bacon, Francis, Viscount St Alban (1561-1626)'; Alan Stewart, 'Bacon, Anthony (1558-1601)' (all accessed 23.10.13). The major biographical resources on which this thesis depends are: James Spedding (ed.), *Letters and Life of Francis Bacon*, 7 vols (London: Longman, 1861-72) (hereafter *LL*); Daphne du Maurier, *Golden Lads: A Study of Anthony Bacon, Francis, and their Friends* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1975) (hereafter *GL*); Joyce T. Freedman, 'Anthony Bacon and his World, 1558-1601', unpublished PhD dissertation, Temple University, 1979; Lisa Jardine and Alan Stewart, *Hostage to Fortune: The Troubled Life of Francis Bacon 1561-1626* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1998) (hereafter *HF*).

of their new rank.¹⁶ Secondly, Anthony and Francis were unable to draw on their status and authority as the Lord Keeper's sons as fully as they might have wished. Anthony's position as the eldest son of Sir Nicholas and Anne Bacon was complicated by the fact that he was not Sir Nicholas's eldest child. The Lord Keeper's previous family, three boys and three girls by his first wife Jane Fernley, were all established adults with spouses and estates of their own by the time Anthony came to his majority. When, in 1579, Sir Nicholas died with his will in good order but with his estate insufficient to settle as much upon Anthony and Francis as he had intended, relations between the two sets of siblings (and between Anne and her stepchildren) deteriorated. Anne, Anthony and Francis lined up against Nathaniel and Nicholas Bacon, the two eldest sons, to contest their legacies, and although an outcome was eventually mediated by Burghley, lasting damage was done and between Nathaniel Bacon and his half-brothers there appears to have been a permanent estrangement. Anthony and Francis were largely cut off from the elder Bacons, and the patrimonial wealth they represented. From the start of their adult lives, the younger Bacon brothers were conscious of the fact that the security and status into which they had been born were not the supporting pillars of their lives, but a façade that they had to strive to maintain. Enhancing their connections became a chief concern for them both. The mode Anthony chose to adopt in furthering his influence was the cultivation of relationships with other men. Eschewing, on at least two occasions, a marriage that would have brought him land and status (the first, in 1574, with Dowsabell Paget of Southampton; the second, in 1585, with the step-daughter of Henri of Navarre's chief counsellor Phillipe du Plessis-Mornay), Anthony remained a bachelor his entire life (Francis married advantageously in 1606, although

¹⁶ Alan Stewart, "Near Akin": The Trials of Friendship in *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, in Jennifer Richards and James Knowles (eds), *Shakespeare's Late Plays: New Readings* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1999), 57-71, 63-4.

the marriage was childless). A great many of the letters that survive today in the Bacon papers in Lambeth Palace Library are witnesses to his lifelong effort to construct for himself a network of friends and financial backers that was both alternative to and complementary with the web of kinfolk who as often as not failed to help the fatherless Anthony Bacon. The obligations with which Anthony tied himself to his friends were monetary, emotional and political – and usually all three, expressed in rich and seemingly indistinguishable combination. This thesis reads the letters that survive from these years and attempts to make sense of the social processes that enabled Anthony Bacon's career.

A second reason for studying Anthony Bacon concerns his present day historical reputation. If his family circumstances compelled him to make the best of his social network, those homosocial preferences have, in modern times, been taken as evidence that he was an archetypal homosexual spy, a malcontent who rejected both 'natural' allegiance to queen and country, and 'normal' attraction to women and the dynastic security of marriage.¹⁷ Such a characterisation is assisted by the legal record: in 1975 Anthony's biographer Daphne du Maurier uncovered evidence in the Archives Départementales in Montauban (where Anthony lived for five years) that he had been charged with, and apparently convicted of, sodomy with one of his household servants.¹⁸ This was, observed Alan Haynes, 'a historic first in the prodigious annals of

¹⁷ Charles Nicholl, writing for a popular audience, stated categorically that '[t]he Bacon brothers were homosexual [...] [t]heir private circle was gay, filled with dubious young dandies.' He also pictured Anthony as something out of Krafft-Ebing, with 'pinched pallor', 'thin, over-refined features' and 'the brooding energy of the invalid' (*The Reckoning: The Murder of Christopher Marlowe*, revised edn. (London: Vintage, 1992, 2002), 266). More recently, Janet Dickinson has focussed on the malign and embittered influence of the Bacon brothers as one of the key factors in the earl of Essex's mismanagement of his political career (*Court Politics and the Earl of Essex, 1589-1601* (London: Pickering and Chatto, 2012), 103, 108-9). Most vituperative is Wallace T. MacCaffrey, who terms Anthony a 'recluse', and a 'psychotic invalid' (*Elizabeth I: War and Politics 1558-1603* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), 481) – it is unclear what form of psychosis MacCaffrey means.

¹⁸ Archives Départementales, Montauban, Préfecture de Tarn-et-Garonne, France, la côte 5 E 1537, fols.176-9; *GL*, 66-8; Freedman, 'Anthony Bacon and his World', 103-10. The documents comprise an

such activity in the British secret service.¹⁹ Anthony's prosecution does not align him in any meaningful way with modern individuals such as the members of the Cambridge spy ring of the 1930s-1950s (of whom Haynes was presumably thinking), whose homosexuality was seen to be inextricably bound up with unorthodox political beliefs and treasonous activity.²⁰ But Haynes's comment suggests how reluctant scholars still are to accept the very different systems of sexual categorisation and control that operated in pre-modernity. The anachronistic idea that certain sexual habits inclined early modern men and women to form more-or-less covert social groupings is one that has proved particularly difficult to shake off, despite over thirty years of queer studies that has suggested the contrary. This has had an unhappy effect on our understanding of Anthony Bacon, retrospectively cursed to endure the socially-excluded half-life that was the experience of persecuted gay people from the nineteenth century to the present day. My aim in this thesis is to follow Alan Sinfield's recent 'intriguing thought' that 'in early modern England same-gender relations *were not terribly important*' (his emphasis).²¹ My hypothesis is that the homosocial networks that sustained Anthony and his friends were wholly integrated into the culture and society of sixteenth century Europe. If Anthony had sexual relations with men or boys, those relations were unlikely

informal testimony by two of Anthony's servants in August 1586 (a father and son pair called la Fontaine) and official depositions a year later by the la Fontaines and a younger boy, David Brysson. The depositions of November 1587 were formally noted by Béarnaise officials. A letter of September 1586 from Henri of Navarre to his counsellor Monsieur de Scorbiac, instructing him to 'show leniency' to Anthony, has been assumed to relate to this affair (BL Cotton MS Nero B.VI, fol.387; *HF*, 110). The chronology is mysterious (when was Anthony charged? Why – given that Henri apparently intervened to quash the case in 1586 – was further action taken in 1587?) but the story told is as follows: the la Fontaines alleged that Anthony had openly kissed and fondled a page called Isaac Bougades, and they were said to sleep together during the day and night. Isaac in his turn then abused the boy David, but he received no punishment when the other servants complained.

¹⁹ Haynes, *Elizabethan Secret Services*, 127.

²⁰ Christopher Andrew, *The Defence of the Realm: The Authorised History of MI5* (London: Allen Lane, 2009), 168-74.

²¹ Alan Sinfield, *Shakespeare, Authority, Sexuality: Unfinished business in cultural materialism* (London: Routledge, 2006), 59.

to have taken place in a twilit demi-monde among certain *simpatico* friends: eroticism was part and parcel of friendship and service. Relations between individuals in his circle may well have been eroticised, not least when they traversed a social boundary (between master and servant, for example). But such sexual acts did not mark their performers as deviants or criminals unless, as with Anthony's experience in Montauban, they occurred in a context of political or religious disturbance. Then, evidence of certain sexual behaviour (or rumour of such) could be used to destabilise an opponent.²² In Anthony's case, his accusation came at a time when he was suspected of involvement in a revolt by certain Montalbanais against the strict civil and religious authorities of the city.²³ Not long before, he had incurred the displeasure of one of Montauban's leading citizens, Charlotte Arbaleste, wife of du Plessis-Mornay. Not only had he declined to court her daughter, but he had joined a church cabal formed to protest against Mme du Plessis-Mornay's extravagant head-attires, seen as ungodly in the sober Calvinist community of Montauban.²⁴ Either of these circumstances is sufficient to explain a

²² In this regard I follow the example of Jonathan Goldberg, who adopted Eve Sedgwick's idea of a homosocial 'continuum of male-male relations', and pointed out that the continuum 'is capable of being sexualised, though where and how such sexualisation occurs cannot be assumed a priori' (*Sodomities: Renaissance Texts, Modern Sexualities* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992), 23). Mario DiGangi has argued that sodomy and homoeroticism functioned in both socially orderly and disorderly ways in the Renaissance, and suggests that the accusations laid against Anthony and Francis reflect anxieties around their involvement in national security and the political order, rather than any desire to punish particular sexual practices ('How queer was the Renaissance?', in Katherine O'Donnell and Michael O'Rourke (eds.), *Love, Sex, Intimacy and Friendship Between Men, 1550-1800* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 128-147). Francis Bacon faced accusations of sodomy as part of the barrage of charges flung his way when his financial mismanagement became apparent in the 1620s (Alan Stewart, 'Bribery, Buggery, and the Fall of Lord Chancellor Bacon', in Victoria Kahn and Lorna Hutson (eds), *Rhetoric and Law in Early Modern Europe* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2001), 125-142).

²³ Janine Garrisson, 'La Genève française', in Daniel Ligou (ed.), *Histoire de Montauban* (Toulouse: Privat, 1984), cited in *HF*, 109. It is probably significant that in the legal depositions, it was alleged that Isaac excused his behaviour by claiming Anthony had told him that the Calvinist divine Theodore Beza and the local Montauban minister Léonard Constans enjoyed sodomy – implying a political or confessional aspect to the scandal.

²⁴ *HF*, 102; *GL*, 61-3; Freedman, 'Anthony Bacon and his World', 126-31. For more on the Montauban sumptuary scandal, see Philip Conner, *Huguenot Heartland: Montauban and Southern French Calvinism during the Wars of Religion* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002), 84-86.

politically-motivated attack on Anthony – who was, after all, a foreigner in a beleaguered city.²⁵

My third reason for choosing Anthony Bacon as the focus of my thesis is the unusual profusion of source material that relates to his life. His rich personal archive is a result of his career as an intelligencer and advisor to the earl of Essex. In 1579 Anthony turned 21 (although by the terms of his father's will he did not come into his full estate until he was 24). Highly educated, first at home and then at Trinity College, Cambridge under the future archbishop of Canterbury John Whitgift, he was keen to travel and make a study of foreign languages and customs. The experience of his half-brother Edward, who had undertaken a continental tour through France, Germany and Italy, was more attractive than that of Francis, who had spent three years lodged with the English ambassador at Paris and studying civil law. To travel independently Anthony needed a license to leave the country, and letters of recommendation from senior English statesmen. As continental travel became more popular among elite young men in the sixteenth century, permission to depart increasingly came with a condition: well-connected travellers were expected to send home intelligence from foreign countries. From the start of his time abroad – which was to last four times longer than his initial three-year license – Anthony corresponded with his uncle, Lord Burghley, as well as the queen's Principal Secretary Sir Francis Walsingham. Their desire for information spurred his cultivation of a continental news network, and convinced the somewhat diffident young man to maintain a personal archive of his letters in

²⁵ The depositions in Montauban also suggest that discord among Anthony's household staff – in particular, antipathy between older males and younger, more favoured, boys – may have bred a jealousy that found its voice in an accusation of sodomy between master and servant. Amid all this supposition, it is perhaps relevant to point out that Anthony himself regarded his sexual drive (if such a thing was conceived of in the sixteenth century) as relatively low: writing to a Shrewsbury doctor in 1597, he told him that he had 'neuer bene troobled with any kinde of *leues veneria* [venereal disease] nor committed any act to occasion it' (AB to Mr Barker, 17 April 1597, LPL MS 661, fol.160v).

copybooks and files. More by accident than design, Anthony became a significant actor in late sixteenth-century intelligence-gathering and diplomacy, and his close involvement, on his return to England in 1591, with the earl of Essex placed him at the centre of politics, particularly foreign affairs, in the last decade of Elizabeth's reign. From 1595 Anthony was Essex's unofficial archivist, copying and filing letters to and from the earl and his secretarial staff. That his letters survive in such numbers is a testament to his own care in preserving the materials of his trade, and the assiduousness of others, notably his brother Francis, in keeping the material safe after Anthony's death. Initially, the letters were saved because they were still useful (containing as they did evidence of financial relationships and material of a politically sensitive nature), although given that few letters survive beyond 1598 it is probable that correspondence relating to the later years of the earl of Essex was destroyed in the aftermath of the 1601 rebellion.²⁶ By the time Francis bequeathed his family papers to his chaplain William Rawley, the Bacon letters were of historic interest, and it was for that reason that Anthony's archive was purchased from Rawley's executors by the cleric (later archbishop of Canterbury) Thomas Tenison, who left the collection to Lambeth Palace Library. The letters were first catalogued in 1720, and Anthony's papers were collated into the sixteen folio volumes in which they now exist (although with more recent binding).²⁷ In its size and in the breadth of its epistolary *dramatis personae*, Anthony Bacon's collection of letters is a rich source for the study of late-Elizabethan politics and culture, comparable with the letters of the clerk to the Privy Council, Robert Beale,

²⁶ Stewart, 'Bacon, Anthony', *ODNB*.

²⁷ On the creation of the Bacon letter archive see E.G.W. Bell (ed.), *Index to the Papers of Anthony Bacon (1558-1601) in Lambeth Palace Library (MSS. 647-662)* (London: Lambeth Palace Library, 1974), 3.

which survive in the British Library Lansdowne Manuscripts.²⁸ Had the archive not been purged in or after 1601, it would stand in competition with the Cecil papers in the National Archives, the British Library and Hatfield House as the authoritative record of government and politics in the 1590s.²⁹ Since the eighteenth century scholars have relied on Thomas Birch's edited transcription of many of the letters, *Memoirs of the Reign of Queen Elizabeth*, as an important repository of late-Elizabethan comment and opinion (a source which falls silent just as John Chamberlain's letters conveniently speak up).³⁰ The first scholar to make use of the Lambeth papers in a robustly biographical way was James Spedding, who published numerous letters verbatim and drew on many more.³¹ In subsequent years, the letters have furnished material for biographical studies of Francis, Anthony and the earl of Essex.³² My approach differs in that my focus is on the relationships that Anthony maintained with mid-ranking men – the secretaries and followers who supported the political careers of their higher-profile patrons. Anthony's letters to his kin, financial backers, informants, servants and

²⁸ Patricia Brewerton, 'Paper Trails: Re-reading Robert Beale as Clerk to the Elizabethan Privy Council', unpublished PhD dissertation, University of London, 1998; Mark Taviner, 'Robert Beale and the Elizabethan Polity', unpublished PhD dissertation, University of St Andrews, 2000.

²⁹ See the history of the Cecil Papers in Historical Manuscripts Commission, *Calendar of the Manuscripts of the Most Hon. The Marquis of Salisbury, K.G. [...] preserved at Hatfield House, Hertfordshire*, 24 vols (London: HMSO, 1883-1976) (hereafter *HMCS*), 1, iii-vii, for an account of the processes by which some of the family's documents were absorbed into the newly-created State Paper Office (the forerunner of the Public Records Office and the National Archives) after Robert Cecil's death in 1612.

³⁰ Thomas Birch, *Memoirs of the Reign of Queen Elizabeth, From the Year 1581 till her Death, in which the Secret Intrigues of her Court, and the Conduct of her Favourite, Robert Earl of Essex, both at Home and Abroad, are particularly illustrated. From the original papers of his intimate friend, Anthony Bacon Esquire, and other manuscripts never before published*, 2 vols (London: A Millar, 1754); Norman Egbert McClure (ed.), *The Letters of John Chamberlain*, 2 vols (Philadelphia: The American Philosophical Society, 1939).

³¹ James Spedding, Robert Leslie Ellis and Douglas Denon Heath (eds.), *The Works of Francis Bacon*, 7 vols (London: Longman, 1857-9); *LL*.

³² In addition to *GL* and *HF*, major modern works that have drawn on the Lambeth papers or Birch's *Memoirs* include: MacCaffrey, *Elizabeth I: War and Politics*; Catherine Drinker Bowen, *Francis Bacon: The Temper of a Man* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1993); Paul E.J. Hammer, *The Polarisation of Elizabethan Politics: The Political Career of Robert Devereux, 2nd Earl of Essex, 1585-1597* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999) (hereafter *PP*).

colleagues offer an especially clear window onto the lattice of relationships between men that constituted so much public and private activity in early modern England.³³

Methodologies 1: Reading the familiar letter

The richness of the material contained in Anthony Bacon's papers should prompt caution as well as excitement. As Alan Stewart observed in a recent essay, much as we would like archival letters of the sixteenth- and seventeenth-centuries to offer an 'unmediated glimpse' into the affairs of historical people, the reality tends to be more mundane: surviving manuscript letters seldom offer much beyond accounts of financial affairs, gossip and discussion of when previous letters were sent and received.³⁴ Letters are 'guttled' by biographers and historians for their rare flashes of personal revelation, a process of selective quotation that goes some way to obscuring the essential narrative dullness of the original source material.³⁵ The scarcity of introspection in early modern letters and diaries (genres that Rudolph Decker has called 'ego-documents') also raises questions about the nature of selfhood and interiority in the period: to what extent were letters capable of expressing any subjective emotional experience? To what extent can 'the self' be regarded as a fixed identity in the centuries before modern industrial capitalism, and the psychological insights that came with it?³⁶ One answer to this

³³ Alan Bray specifically warned against treating the letters of the Essex circle as 'transparent windows through which we can now observe the past.' I hope he would have forgiven me if I make use of the metaphor to follow his instructions that we instead use the letters to explore the 'remaining traces left by the practices of friendship' (*The Friend* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 55).

³⁴ Alan Stewart, 'Early modern lives in facsimile', *Textual Practice* 23:2 (2009), 289-305, 290.

³⁵ Carolyn Steedman, *Dust* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001), 68. Arlette Farge has also remarked on the monotonous uniformity of much archive material (*The Allure of the Archives*, trans. Thomas Scott-Railton (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013), 12).

³⁶ Rudolph M. Decker, 'Ego-documents in the Netherlands, 1500-1814', *Dutch Crossing* 39 (1989), 61-72; Andrew Hadfield, 'Does Shakespeare's life matter?', *Textual Practice* 23:2 (2009), 181-199, 181.

interpretative challenge, as James Daybell suggests, is to read early modern letters with an awareness of their particular historical specificity in terms of form and genre. The confessional transformations of the sixteenth century generated habits of deep religious introspection and soul-searching which, despite religion's emphasis on the individual's subservience to God, 'could be a powerfully individualizing force.' At the same time, the textual form of the letter – still evolving as a technology in an age of increasing literacy and popular print – was 'capable of expressing heightened perceptions of individuality.'³⁷ I discuss in greater detail the confluence of the religious imperatives of self-examination, and the formal demands of a familiar letter to a friend, in Chapter 1 (see below, pp. 37-9 and pp. 46-96), but it seems reasonable to observe here that if processes of psychological and spiritual transformation were underway during the sixteenth century, they were sufficiently far advanced by the 1580s and 1590s to make the familiar letter a means of self-expression, at least of certain aspects of the self.

Recent work on the material letter has opened up a pathway through the rebarbative conventions of early modern correspondence. As late as 2005, Gary Schneider could remark that scholarship had not found a space for the study of letters 'in and of themselves.'³⁸ The same cannot be said today. Building on the insights of Harold Love, Arthur Marotti, Henry Woudhuysen and Peter Beal, who have transformed the study of literary manuscripts through a new concern for their physical materiality, a hybrid discipline has in its turn arisen that focusses on the 'material aspects and attending social practices' of letter-writing.³⁹ Studies have enabled us to

³⁷ James Daybell, 'Women's letters, literature and conscience in sixteenth-century England', in Harold E. Braun and Edward Vallance (eds), *The Renaissance Conscience* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), 82-99, 85.

³⁸ Gary Schneider, *The Culture of Epistolarity: Vernacular Letters and Letter-Writing in Early Modern England, 1500-1700* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2005), 286.

³⁹ James Daybell and Peter Hinds, 'Introduction: Material Matters', in Daybell and Hinds (eds), *Material Readings of Early Modern Culture: Texts and Social Practices, 1580-1730* (Basingstoke: Palgrave

interpret the significance and meaning of epistolary habits. More importantly, it has been argued that the very aspects of the archival letter that seemed to discourage its interpretation as revelatory of the self of the author – conventionality, strictness of structure, consistency in content and tone – can in fact be read as mechanisms of self-expression. In recent years, scholars have investigated the use of epistolary politeness as a way of encoding (and sustaining) social relationships;⁴⁰ the conscious manipulation of space on the page (especially the flattering deployment of blank space) to denote the writer's relationship with the recipient;⁴¹ and other practices, such as the use of abbreviation and the folding and sealing of the finished letter, that bore meaning for men and women at the time.⁴² Sara Jayne Steen and Susan E. Whyman have argued that early modern letter-writers were fully alert to the semiotic import of factors such as these – Whyman has suggested that 'epistolary literacy' be reimagined as a cultural

Macmillan, 2010), 1-20, 1. The originating texts of the material turn in manuscript studies include: Donald F. McKenzie, 'Speech-Manuscript-Print', *Library Chronicle of the University of Texas* 20:1-2 (1990), 86-109; Harold Love, *Scribal Publication in Seventeenth-Century England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993); Arthur F. Marotti, *Manuscript, Print, and the English Renaissance Lyric* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995); H.R. Woudhuysen, *Sir Philip Sidney and the Circulation of Manuscripts 1558-1640* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996); Peter Beal, *In Praise of Scribes: Manuscripts and their Makers in Seventeenth-Century England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998). Major works on the material letter influenced by this approach include: Alan Stewart and Heather Wolfe (eds), *Letterwriting in Renaissance England* (Washington D.C.: Folger Shakespeare Library, 2004); Alan Stewart, *Shakespeare's Letters* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008); Rayne Allinson, *A Monarchy of Letters: Royal Correspondence and English Diplomacy in the Reign of Elizabeth I* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012); James Daybell, *The Material Letter in Early Modern England: Manuscript Letters and the Culture and Practices of Letter-Writing, 1512-1635* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012).

⁴⁰ Lynne Magnusson, *Shakespeare and Social Dialogue: Dramatic Language and Elizabethan Letters* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

⁴¹ A.R. Braunmuller, 'Accounting for Absence: The Transcription of Space', in W. Speed Hill (ed.), *New Ways of Looking at Old Texts: Papers of the Renaissance English Text Society, 1985-1991* (Binghampton: Medieval and Renaissance Text Studies, 1993), 47-56; Jonathan Gibson, 'Significant space in manuscript letters', *The Seventeenth Century* 12:1 (1997), 1-9.

⁴² Sue Walker, 'The Manners on the Page: Prescription and Practice in the Visual Organisation of Correspondence', *Huntington Library Quarterly* 66:3/4 (2003), 302-29.

category that incorporates an understanding of the textual, material, spatial and visual skills that sending or receiving a letter demanded.⁴³

Such work runs counter to the notion that early modern letters are not reflective of the particular concerns of the authorial subject – indeed, letters are now seen to carry the potential for an efflorescence of meaning across a wide variety of modes and forms that we are only beginning to understand. I engage most closely with current trends in the study of the material letter in Chapter 2 (see below, pp. 39-41 and pp. 97-150), but throughout this thesis, I am alert to the seams of meaning that run at and below the surface of letters. My objective is to study the language of friendship, service and loyalty in a single late sixteenth-century letter corpus. Following Alan Stewart, I recognise the conventionality in many of the sentiments expressed in the letters, but I take seriously the attitudes such conventions imply, and the implications they suggest. Often my attention is fixed on the starts and the ends of the letters I read, the ‘personal’ matter that has routinely been ignored, or excised when letters are presented in edited form (Thomas Birch printed many letters to and from Anthony Bacon verbatim in *Memoirs of the Reign of Queen Elizabeth* – but omitted all material not obviously pertinent to matters of state). My aim is not to fetishise the salutations and subscriptions of a circle of long-dead friends, still less to carve a ‘human interest’ story from the dry documents of political history, but to point out that if, as Schneider said, the familiar letter was *the* mode of communication, *tout court*, for early modern elite people, then the historical record will by necessity be a tangle of the ‘personal’ and the ‘political’.⁴⁴

⁴³ Sara Jayne Steen, ‘Reading Beyond the Words: Material Letters and the Process of Interpretation’, *Quidditas* 22 (2001), 55-69; and Susan E. Whyman, ‘Advice to Letter-Writers: Evidence from Four Generations of Evelyns’, in Frances Harris and Michael Hunter (eds), *John Evelyn and his Milieu* (London: British Library, 2003), 25-66.

⁴⁴ Schneider, *Culture of Epistolarity*, 13. Unavoidably, my interventions in the Anthony Bacon Papers produce a story in which voices speak more loudly, colourfully or cogently than they would if left unexcerpted in their sources. On such extractions are cultural history and life-writing built. As Andrew Hadfield remarks, the craft of biography depends on the production, preservation and recovery of

Letters to friends were the means by which government business was carried out.

‘Official’ missives were also epistles sent between relatives. The ‘state papers’ are the letters of the Cecil family. Separating the wheat of political discourse from the chaff of personal concerns risks misrepresenting the nature of early modern correspondence, and misunderstanding the nature of social, cultural and political exchange. At the very least, the ‘personal’ material that early modern people thought fit to include alongside the ‘political’ content in their daily correspondence deserves scholarly attention. Such a principle has, of course, been a guiding force in recent reappraisals of women’s correspondence, with the result that we now have a much more nuanced picture of the role of female political agency in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. My aim has been to apply the same sort of sensitivity to correspondence between men.⁴⁵

It has long been recognised that the rhetorics of affect served a political purpose in sixteenth-century statecraft, particularly in the reign of Elizabeth when court politics were reconceived along gendered lines.⁴⁶ The unmarried queen had to resolve the potential challenge to male authority that a female monarch presented. The conventions of courtly love provided a way to express female mastery: the executive power she wielded in her role as head of the government could be re-conceived as erotic attraction,

revealing personal ephemera: ‘the history of biography and the history of gossip are intertwined’ (*Edmund Spenser: A Life* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 4).

⁴⁵ James Daybell (ed.), *Early Modern Women’s Letter-Writing, 1450-1700* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001); Jane Couchman and Anne Crabb (eds), *Women’s Letters Across Europe, 1400-1700: Form and Persuasion* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005); Joanna Moody (ed.), ‘Women’s Letter Writing’, *Women’s Writing* (special edition) 13:1 (2006); James Daybell, *Women Letters Writers in Tudor England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006). A recent exemplar of the new approach to women’s letter-writing is Nadine Akkerman (ed.), *The Letters of Elizabeth Stuart, Queen of Bohemia*, 3 vols (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011-15), a magisterial on-going project which rescues Elizabeth of Bohemia from her reputation as spendthrift refugee princess, and re-situates her as a crucial political actor in seventeenth-century continental and English affairs.

⁴⁶ David Loades, *Tudor Queens of England* (London: Continuum, 2009), 222-25; Helen Hackett, *Virgin Mother, Maiden Queen: Elizabeth I and the Cult of the Virgin Mary* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1994), 78-80.

and her gifts of patronage and favour re-imagined as romantic gestures in a game of seduction and resistance. All of Elizabeth's senior servants – with the possible exception of Burghley – participated in the game of courtly love. As late as 1602, Robert Cecil wrote a poem commemorating an incident in which the queen, discovering an image of her secretary in a locket, pinned the jewel to her shoe and then her sleeve. Predictably, Cecil – self-characterised in his verses as 'a servant of Diana' – declared that he would be willing to die at the feet of his 'Angelicke Queen.'⁴⁷ These conventions have not aged well. Many historians – typically men – recoil from the flattery and transparency inherent in so much Elizabethan political discourse, and regard the continuation of Elizabeth's amorous theatrics into her fifth, sixth and seventh decades as distasteful, if not actively offensive.⁴⁸ The exceptional example of a ruling queen has also drawn attention from the ubiquity of languages of intense affect in other aspects of political and public life, and made us too quick to dismiss all such examples as 'merely' conventional. The habit, that persisted for much of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, of stripping from printed manuscripts all content deemed 'personal' or extraneous to matters of state has also created the misleading impression that ardent expressions of affections were confined to particularly stylised contexts: letters addressed to the queen herself; poetic literature; epistles written in a consciously classical style; discourses explicitly focussed on the institution of friendship.⁴⁹ In my

⁴⁷ Pauline Croft, 'Can a Bureaucrat be a Favourite? Robert Cecil and the Strategies of Power', in J.H. Elliott and L.W.B. Brockliss (eds), *The World of the Favourite* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999), 81-95, 82-3; Dickinson, *Court Politics*, 26. For more on the gendered politics of Elizabeth's reign, see Susan Doran, *Monarchy and Matrimony: The Courtships of Elizabeth I* (London: Routledge, 1989) and Natalie Mears, *Queenship and Political Discourse in the Elizabethan Realms* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

⁴⁸ *PP*, 56; John Guy, 'Introduction. The 1590s: The second reign of Elizabeth I?', in Guy (ed.), *The Reign of Elizabeth I: Court and culture in the last decade* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 1-19, 3-4, 6.

⁴⁹ Eric St John Brooks, *Sir Christopher Hatton: Queen Elizabeth's Favourite* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1946); Steven W. May, *The Elizabethan Courtier Poets: The Poems and their Contexts* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1991); Lisa Jardine, *Erasmus, Man of Letters: The Construction of*

study of Anthony Bacon's correspondence, I show that intense emotional expression in letters by men was not simply a convention or a rhetorical mode. Sometimes it served an overt purpose, by signifying a social bond or a shared obligation. Sometimes men wrote about their intensely affectionate feelings for other men as a way of signalling a religious or political sympathy. And sometimes they did it because they felt very strongly for each other, and we do damage to the historical heritage of their relations if we dismiss out of hand the possibility of authentic feeling.

Methodologies 2: Studies of epistolarity, and the attractions of the archive

It is a common habit for authors of synoptic epistolary surveys to remark on the unfeasibly large size of their evidential field. James Daybell's *The Material Letter in Early Modern England* draws on 10,000 manuscript letters (an 'overwhelming mass of material', as Henry Woudhuysen observed in a *TLS* review).⁵⁰ Gary Schneider explained at the start of *The Culture of Epistolarity* that the early modern letter had not hitherto been afforded intensive study precisely *because* there were so many extant examples.⁵¹ Cedric C. Brown regarded 'mischievous delimitation' as the only way to handle the vast range of textual matter available to him in his study of the material letter.⁵² In scholarship defined more broadly, the implications of digitised and fully-accessible archives are still being considered, and disciplines which have not previously

Charisma in Print (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993); Albrecht Classen and Marilyn Sandige (eds), *Friendship in the Middle Ages and Early Modern Age: Explorations of a Fundamental Ethical Discourse* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2010).

⁵⁰ H.R. Woudhuysen, 'Both Sides', *The Times Literary Supplement*, 14 December 2012.

⁵¹ Schneider, *Culture of Epistolarity*, 13.

⁵² Cedric C. Brown, 'Losing and Regaining the Material Meanings of Epistolary and Gift Texts', in Daybell and Hinds (eds), *Material Readings of Early Modern Culture*, 23-46, 23. Arlette Farge describes her archive of Parisian police records as 'excessive and overwhelming, like a spring tide, an avalanche, or a flood.' Wading through it, she feels 'immersed in something vast, oceanic' (*Allure of the Archives*, 4).

been concerned with quantitative analysis are becoming familiar with cumbersome data sets and bodies of evidence too massive for human consideration.⁵³ In the light of these developments, my focus on a single body of archival material, which lies un-digitised in its repository, might be considered eccentric. It might even be considered romantic, a manifestation of the ‘cult of the archive’ (that shoddy burlesque of the stater ‘archival turn’ of the 1980s and 1990s).⁵⁴ My motivating questions emerge out of, and complement, the methodologies inspired by the era of ‘big data’ in which there is simply ‘too much to know’: what does it mean to confine my research to – or rather, to define my research by – a single major archive?⁵⁵ What sorts of intellectual enquiry does such archival exploration permit other than ‘straight’ biography? Life-writing, traditionally understood, is a form which the Anthony Bacon Papers both enable and frustrate. The letters support a cast of characters that is broad in scale, but sparse in detail. The collection ends abruptly (as I note above, few documents survive after 1598). Existing biographies of Anthony Bacon acknowledge the difficulty of telling his story from birth to death; Paul Hammer has similarly struggled to produce a study of the earl of Essex’s last years with the richness of his first book, *The Polarisation of Elizabethan Politics*, which relied on the Lambeth Palace Library papers to tell the story of the earl’s political career up to 1597.⁵⁶ Rather than attempt to find a way round the limitations of the collection, my investigation has been stimulated by the particular qualities of the

⁵³ See, for example, www.SixDegreesOfFrancisBacon.com, an attempt by Christopher Warren and a team at Carnegie Mellon University to digitally reconstruct Francis’s social network using data mined from *ODNB*. The computer technology harnessed by Warren allows him to map many thousands of individuals and millions of possible relationships (accessed 18.12.13).

⁵⁴ Steedman, *Dust*, x; Ludmilla Jordanova, *History in Practice* (London: Arnold, 2000), 186-9.

⁵⁵ ‘Too much to know’ recalls Ann M. Blair, *Too Much to Know: Managing Scholarly Information before the Modern Age* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010). Her concern is the development of data management systems in pre- and early modernity, but she briefly discusses our present day battle with data over-load in the introduction (2-3).

⁵⁶ *GL*, 258-9; *HF*, 252-3.

archive itself: in following the trails of letters between Anthony and his correspondents, I have sunk boreholes into the large bulk of material in Lambeth Palace Library to see what comes out (my own ‘mischievous delimitation’). It is an approach that makes a virtue of the diffuseness of the collection by choosing to focus on the point when the lives of four individuals intersected with that of Anthony Bacon. These men – Nicholas Faunt, Anthony Standen, Nicholas Trott and Edward Reynolds – are minor figures in Elizabethan historiography. Each has a claim to historical note, but each is a largely forgotten bit-part actor in the drama of the 1580s and 1590s. Their relationships with Anthony occasioned the generation, and fortuitous preservation, of a sizeable body of epistolary material, which while in no way a comprehensive record of their lives, serves to illuminate a particular period in time. As Roger Kuin has observed, ‘chatty personal missives’ from the sixteenth century are rare: paper was expensive, methods of dispatch were uncertain, and letters tended to have an overt purpose, whether informational or literary.⁵⁷ The letters I study are not precisely ‘chatty’, but they are expansive – more so than many surviving manuscript letters. The correspondence between Anthony and Faunt, Standen, Trott and Reynolds totals hundreds of manuscript leaves and well over 150,000 words. Close reading this cache of material has given me tangible biographical data about the lives of the men concerned, a host of new insights into the way these men understood and articulated their friendships with one another, and many suggestive lines of future enquiry.

In 1966 Anthony Esler admitted that ‘[o]ne of the most difficult tasks of the historian has always been the analysis of human nature – as it existed in past ages. The cultural gap between humanity today and yesterday is much greater than we like to

⁵⁷ Roger Kuin (ed.), *The Correspondence of Sir Philip Sidney*, 2 vols (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 1, xii.

admit.’ In his study of the ‘aspiring mind’ of the Elizabethan younger generation – among whom Esler counted Anthony Bacon – he sought to comprehend the ‘motives and attitudes, desires, fears, and passionately felt personal goals’ of a whole section of society, to explore that portion of ‘no-man’s-land where the life of the mind and the life of society meet and interact.’⁵⁸ My aim is not so ambitious. I do not attempt a generational analysis, or even a general analysis of the twenty year period my thesis spans (Anthony Bacon’s lifetime encompassed the Elizabethan years, although his letters only survive in any quantity from 1579-1598). Instead, by focussing on a small number of individuals, and teasing out a set of experiences and attitudes, I want to suggest that some of our received opinions about the place of friendship and intimacy between men in late-sixteenth century England need to be re-thought.

The structure of the thesis: Themes in early modern male friendship and service

In their focus on different individuals and contexts, the four chapters of this thesis illuminate four broad themes in early modern male friendship and friendly service: intimacy, instrumentality, institutionality and instability. Each chapter opens with an abstract of its argument, a brief account of its context where necessary (historical, and with relation to Anthony Bacon, biographical) and a description of the archive (most often, a section of the Lambeth Palace Library Bacon papers) upon which it is based.

⁵⁸ Anthony Esler, *The Aspiring Mind of the Elizabethan Younger Generation* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1966), ix-x.

Chapter 1. Intimacy: Nicholas Faunt, faith and the consolations of friendship

My first chapter reads the correspondence between Nicholas Faunt, secretary to Sir Francis Walsingham, and Anthony Bacon in the early 1580s, when the latter was at the start of his residence in France. I show how Faunt, struggling with a religious despair, sought to create with Anthony an intimate friendship in the humanist-classical mould. Conscious of a social divide, Faunt attempted to assert their shared identity as committed Protestants to create an equalising space which effaced their different social statuses. In so doing, Faunt spoke a language of friendship that incorporated the idealising and romantic rhetoric of classical *amicitia perfecta*, and the passive language of ecstasy in which the godly articulated their devotion to Christ's cause. The result was a potent discourse of masculine love that served to console Faunt during his difficult and lonely spiritual crisis.

The prompt for this chapter (one of the prompts for the thesis as a whole) is the response to Alan Bray's posthumously-published monograph *The Friend*, and in particular the reflections on his work by Laura Gowing, Michael Hunter and Miri Rubin in their edited collection *Love, Friendship and Faith in Europe 1300-1800*. Recognising that Bray's unfinished project demanded a 'new and promising history of emotion,' they admitted that the 'affectional transactions' that underlay relationships between men in pre-modernity were hard to excavate.⁵⁹ But the first attempts were, by the start of the twenty-first century, being made. Bray's later work constituted an 'archaeology' of expressions of intimacy and obligation between men that stretched from the time of the Crusades to the nineteenth century, and if his final book was motivated by an explicit agenda – the recognition by the Roman Catholic Church of same-sex partnerships – he

⁵⁹ Laura Gowing, Michael Hunter and Miri Rubin, 'Introduction', in Gowing, Hunter and Rubin (eds), *Love, Friendship and Faith in Europe, 1300-1800* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 1-14, 3-4.

was nonetheless in the vanguard of what David Halperin called ‘the return of affect’: the attempt by historians of gender, sexuality and emotion to understand the ties of feeling that bound men together in the institutions of early modern ‘ubiquitous homosociality’.⁶⁰ This move represented an attempt to combine into one field of view the period’s passionate commitment to the ideals of intimate male friendship (and the powerful rhetorics of love it generated), and the place in early modern culture of queer desire – something that Goran Stanivukovic reminds us can be expressed in various ways. The role of the scholar is not, Stanivukovic suggests, to ransack the archives with the peculiarly voyeuristic aim of ‘finding new homoerotic scenarios’, but to explore how a culture that celebrated physical and emotional intimacies between men (embracing, kissing, bed-sharing) also found room for the erotic intention that they sometimes signified.⁶¹ In this the new historians of affect differ from Bray, whose objective in *The Friend* was to de-eroticise the friendly connections he observed and situate the language of love between men in the sixteenth century in a wholly instrumental context, in which the visible appearance of friendship was itself a ‘kind of currency to turn to the beneficiary’s advantage.’⁶²

My chapter contributes to this conversation. My aim is not to use Faunt’s correspondence to draw inferences about his sexuality (as I have suggested, the term itself is contentious when applied to the sixteenth century) or his erotic inclinations, however ardent his language in letters to Anthony. But nor do I see Faunt’s letters

⁶⁰ Valerie Traub, ‘Friendship’s Loss: Alan Bray’s Making of History’, in Gowing et al. (eds), *Love, Friendship and Faith*, 15-42, 17; David M. Halperin, ‘Among Men: History, Sexuality and the Return of Affect’, in Katherine O’Donnell and Michael O’Rourke, *Love, Sex, Intimacy, and Friendship Between Men, 1550-1800* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 1-11; Cynthia B. Herrup, *A House in Gross Disorder: Sex, Law, and the 2nd Earl of Castlehaven* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 30.

⁶¹ Goran Stanivukovic, ‘Beyond Sodomy: What Is Still Queer About Early Modern Queer Studies?’, in Vin Nardizzi, Stephen Guy-Bray and Will Stockton (eds), *Queer Renaissance Historiography: Backward Gaze* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009), 41-65, 45 and 42.

⁶² Bray, *The Friend*, 54.

merely as tokens of a valuable alliance, in which the rich language of intimate affection cloaks their purpose as engines of personal advancement. Instead I want to explain the ‘affectional transactions’ that made up their friendship in what seems to me their own terms, and to explore the contemporary literary, cultural and religious models that determined the friendship’s shape.

Chapter 2. Instrumentality: The prison, liberty, and writing friendship in the space in between

In Chapter 2, I read the letters between the imprisoned Catholic exile Anthony Standen and Anthony Bacon as testaments to the act of making friends as early modern men usually understood the concept. The friendship constructed between the two men in the city of Bordeaux in 1590 did not exist at the pitch of emotional fervour with which Faunt conducted his friendship with Anthony Bacon, but it was perhaps more typical of the sort of instrumental alliances with which men would have been familiar. The context of a foreign prison is a particularly appropriate one to examine the construction of an instrumental friendship: expatriates abroad were dependent on mutual favours to an even more apparent degree than men at home, and the prison (a location that was far more familiar to educated men of the sixteenth century than it is to their equivalents today) was similarly able to foster an economy of favour and friendship among those within its walls, and between the imprisoned and their friends at liberty. From the point of view of intelligence agents, the prison in fact offered a bounteous source of information, and acted as a facilitating institution in the creation of valuable professional friendships.

The concerns of this chapter arise from Lorna Hutson’s observation that, whatever claims might have been made by writers at the time, early modern friendship

was ‘evidently an economic dependency as well as an affective bond.’⁶³ Hutson responds to what seems to be a hierarchizing of friendship in early modernity: between instrumental friendship based on mutual advantage, and the ‘pure’ form of friendship – reclaimed from classical antiquity and championed by humanist scholars – that depended on mutual sympathy and shared virtue. Both models, and both meanings, co-existed at the time. In didactic contexts, early modern writers often observed that their own time was too corrupt to sustain perfect friendship, and examples from classical antiquity (and the Biblical precedent of David and Jonathan) were favoured models. Most people could only hope to experience the worldlier pleasures of everyday friendly affection, but the (perhaps unreachable) ideal of Aristotelian perfect friendship remained omnipresent in literature and culture.⁶⁴ This dyadic split has had an effect on friendship scholarship, with disproportionate focus being directed at the theorised ideal of friendship, rather than its everyday practice. This chapter attempts to understand the means through which a more instrumental, less elevated, friendship might have been constructed.

Following on from my analysis of Faunt’s letters in Chapter 1, which demonstrated that the seemingly-conventional language of sixteenth-century humanist friendship could serve an emotional purpose even as it advertised a valuable alliance, I turn my attention to a relationship that was apparently much more opportunistic and instrumental: an alliance between two men working in intelligence with congruent professional aims. The prison correspondence of Anthony Standen and Anthony Bacon allows us to see an instrumental friendship between two educated, literate men at the moment of conception, and I trace the convoluted way in which the men asserted their

⁶³ Lorna Hutson, *The Usurer’s Daughter: Male Friendship and Fictions of Women in Sixteenth-Century England* (London: Routledge, 1994), 3.

⁶⁴ Langer, *Perfect Friendship*, 14; Hyatte, *Arts of Friendship*, 3-4.

obligations and indebtednesses in the letters that passed between them. I show that it was the textual form of the letter itself that was the most articulate chronicler of their friendship, as they shared in the composition of intelligence letters to their patrons as well as in Anthony Bacon's family missives to his mother. I also engage with recent research on the textuality of the early modern prison (particularly the work of Ruth Ahnert and Thomas S. Freeman) to suggest that the architectural makeup and social composition of the prison served to promote the formation of mutually-advantageous friendships.⁶⁵

Chapter 3. Institutionalism: Nicholas Trott, the Inns of Court and the uses of friendship

This chapter continues my examination of institutions that facilitated the construction and maintenance of friendship in early modern English contexts. I present the example of Nicholas Trott, friend and financial backer of the Bacon brothers and resident member of Gray's Inn, one of London's four Inns of Court. Through Trott's campaign to win the position of secretary to the queen's Council in the North, conducted along the lines of patronage that emanated from Gray's Inn, I explore an institution where friendly connections between men were of central importance. The Inns of Court built their institutional identity around the idea that alliances between (and among) unrelated men might determine a man's future professional success. Chapter 3 forms the argumentative heart of my thesis, as I shed light on an ill-understood context in which

⁶⁵ Ruth Ahnert, *The Rise of Prison Literature in the Sixteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013); Thomas S. Freeman, 'The Rise of Prison Literature', *Huntington Library Quarterly* 72:2 (2009), 133-46, and the other essays in this special edition.

masculine friendship and mutual obligation operated alongside more familiar patronage and alliance systems.

My analysis of the Inns of Court builds on the work of Philip J. Finkelpearl and Arthur J. Marotti, who opened up the study of the Inns (in their case, the Middle Temple of John Marston and John Donne) as locations of literary production and exchange.⁶⁶ While their research enriched our understanding of the cultural world of the early modern Inns of Court, it has encouraged subsequent scholars to confine their attention to Innsmen who were either members of literary coteries, or the idle rich – the Inns are often considered to have been ‘finishing schools’ (with all the elitism and lack of rigour the phrase implies) where young gentry made friends with the right sort of people. My study of Nicholas Trott’s letters suggests another way to interpret the rich sociability of the Inns of Court. I argue that their social networks were extensive and institutionalised, and supported the ambitions of their middle-class (and middle-aged) lawyer members, who sought to enrich themselves with government posts in law courts and state offices. Such a well-established set of ‘alumni networks’ based on the four London Inns of Court was attractive to powerful politicians, and I demonstrate that leading statesmen including Lord Burghley and the earl of Essex took steps to cultivate their alliances at these institutions. In so doing I do not disregard the literary and cultural aspects of life at the Inns, but I show how their festive ceremonies contributed to their promotion of friendship (in both a chivalric and a classical-humanist mode) as an institutional value.

⁶⁶ Philip J. Finkelpearl, *John Marston of the Middle Temple: An Elizabethan Dramatist in his Social Setting* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969); Arthur F. Marotti, *John Donne: Coterie Poet* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1986), 25-95.

In furthering this argument, I draw on Catherine Patterson's working definition of patronage as a relation between those who *had* and those who *needed*.⁶⁷ In the traditional view of early modern patronage systems, a surplus of potential clients (memorably characterised by Wallace MacCaffrey as the 'jostling crowd of lesser gentry') appeal to their superior patrons for support and employment.⁶⁸ I conclude Chapter 3 by arguing that this 'bottom-up' model is challenged at the Inns of Court, where powerful men exerted a 'top-down' influence over the communities of legal men in an effort to extend their nationwide network of sympathetic office-holders and clients.

Chapter 4. Instability: Service, love and jealousy in the Essex Circle

In Chapter 4, I return to consider again the language of friendship and intimate service in the late sixteenth century. If my analysis of Nicholas Faunt's correspondence with Anthony Bacon in Chapter 1 showed how the powerful language of masculine love could be put to personal and emotional use, my focus here on the letters of Edward Reynolds, secretary to the earl of Essex, serves a different end. In this chapter I argue that men like Reynolds and Anthony Bacon regarded their service to Essex, and their loyalty to each other, in an intensely personal, highly emotive way. This language with which they articulated these ties served, as Alan Bray suggested, to both demonstrate and cement their allegiance to a lordly protector.⁶⁹ But such a language co-existed and

⁶⁷ Catherine Patterson, *Urban Patronage in Early Modern England: Corporate Boroughs, the Landed Elite, and the Crown, 1580-1640* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999), 15.

⁶⁸ Wallace MacCaffrey, 'Place and Patronage in Elizabethan Politics', in S.T. Bindoff, J. Hurstfield and C.H. Williams (eds), *Elizabethan Government and Society: Essays presented to Sir John Neale* (London: Athelone Press, 1961), 95-126, 101. Mark Curtis studied a similarly excluded gentry constituency in his 'The Alienated Intellectuals of Early Stuart England', *Past & Present* 23 (1962), 25-43.

⁶⁹ Bray, *The Friend*, 157-169.

clashed with other forms of service and friendship in the 1590s, which revolved around developing ideas of self-advancement and meritocracy. I chart the points of contact between Reynolds's conception of lordly service, and the newer, pragmatic mode demonstrated by members of the Essex circle such as Henry Wotton and the disgraced junior secretary Godfrey Aleyn. I argue that the instability this conflict generated was a foreboding prelude to Essex's mistaken belief in his own chivalric attraction, which was to have such dire consequences when he launched his revolt in 1601.

In recent years, scholarly attention on the rise and fall of the earl of Essex has come to focus on the anachronistic aspects of his ideology and world-view. Keith Thomas was too blunt when he called the earl a 'dinosaur' for his belief in baronial government, but Essex's attachment to out-moded notions of aristocratic *virtù* and feudal honour set him against the prevailing trends of autocratic, centralised monarchical government.⁷⁰ In my final chapter, I build upon this idea. I argue that in addition to Essex's old-fashioned sense of his own political influence, he also inculcated among his followers an increasingly dated view of service, and an inflexible conception of the ties of friendship that bound men serving the same lord. However else one characterises friendship in the early modern period, it was a protean institution, and the social tensions its evolution produced are visible, as Lorna Hutson, Alan Stewart and Lisa Jardine argue, in the literary fictions of the time.⁷¹ This chapter analyses an occasion when conflicting modes of friendship collided, and suggests that the collision

⁷⁰ Keith Thomas, *The Ends of Life: Roads to Fulfilment in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 61-2. Major new studies of Essex which examine his political ideology include Alexandra Gajda, *The Earl of Essex and Late Elizabethan Political Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012) and Dickinson, *Court Politics*.

⁷¹ Hutson, *Usurer's Daughter*; Alan Stewart, *Close Readers*; Lisa Jardine, 'Companionate Marriage versus male friendship: anxiety for the lineal family in Jacobean drama', in Susan D. Amussen and Mark A. Kishlansky (eds), *Political culture and cultural politics in early modern England: Essays presented to David Underdown* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995), 234-54.

damaged the unity and stability of the earl of Essex's household at a crucial time in his political career. This is a reading which adds to and develops the view that the later part of the 1590s saw an irreparable split between the Cecil and the Essex 'factions': there *was* a division between the leading magnates at Court, and it partly grew out of the profound differences in the two sides's conception of service, duty and friendship.

Chapter 1

Intimacy: Nicholas Faunt, faith and the consolations of friendship

Abstract

My first chapter reads the correspondence between Nicholas Faunt, secretary to Sir Francis Walsingham, and Anthony Bacon in the early 1580s. I show how Faunt, struggling with a religious despair, sought to create with Anthony an intimate friendship in the humanist-classical mould. Conscious of a social divide, Faunt attempted to assert their shared identity as committed Protestants to create an equalising space which obscured their different social statuses. In so doing, Faunt spoke a language of friendship that incorporated the idealising and romantic rhetoric of classical *amicitia perfecta*, and the passive language of ecstasy in which the godly articulated their devotion to Christ's cause. The result was a potent discourse of masculine love that served to console Faunt during his difficult and lonely spiritual crisis.

Archive

Faunt's correspondence with Anthony Bacon forms a corpus of 53 letters, written from spring 1581 until summer 1596 and stored in LPL MSS 647-650, 653 and 658. The great majority of the letters were written between 1581 and 1584, in the years before Anthony settled in Montauban. During this period, Faunt was Anthony's most dedicated correspondent, and a sizeable fraction of the letters in MS 647 are from him. The correspondence across the collection is lop-sided: no letters whatsoever survive from Anthony to Faunt.

In February 1583, in a long and affectionate letter to Anthony Bacon, then resident in France, Nicholas Faunt, servant to the queen's Principal Secretary Sir Francis Walsingham, admitted to 'fynding a singular pleasure to my selfe thus to scribble vnto you whatsoever it be, seing I am depryved of the comfort of your presence.' It was an appropriately Erasmian sentiment for a man engaged in a familiar letter-exchange, echoing the dictum in *De conscribendis epistolis* that a letter is a kind of 'mutual

conversation between absent friends.¹ But Faunt went very much further. The letter constituted a declaration of love for his absent friend, in which he dedicated to him alone ‘the free possession of my whole mynde and most secreat thoughtes.’ He promised to ‘close my hand with yours’ in witness of his devotion, and vowed to ‘retayne euer with mee’ Anthony’s most recent letter ‘for my often and sweet remembraunce of you,’ until his return home would permit ‘more free possessing of eche other.’² It was an ardent and exclusive statement of affection that used the language of revered male friendship. These conventions – manifestations of the early modern ‘culture of epistolarity’ and the freighted notion of Renaissance friendship – are well-understood. My purpose in this chapter is to explore how the conventions operated in practice.

Throughout the early 1580s, Faunt and Anthony exchanged letters of a personal and professional nature: both were intimately involved in intelligence matters, and Faunt was in addition an invaluable mediator for Anthony in family and financial affairs. Although the surviving correspondence is entirely on Faunt’s side, we can infer a certain amount about Anthony’s letters from Faunt’s acknowledgement of their reception and content (where I have referred directly to Anthony’s words, it is because they appear as quotations in the items that do survive). The letters are a rich source for historians of diplomacy and continental affairs – as they were perceived by Englishmen – in the last decades of Elizabeth’s rule. Book One of Thomas Birch’s *Memoirs of the Reign of Queen Elizabeth*, covering the period before the rise of the earl of Essex, is

¹ Desiderius Erasmus, *De conscribendis epistolis* (1522) in J.K. Sowards (ed.) and Charles Fantazzi (trans.), *Collected Works of Erasmus. Literary and Educational Writings 3: De conscribendis epistolis, Formula, De civilitate* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985), 1-255, 20; Jardine, *Erasmus, Man of Letters*, 150.

² NF to AB, 22 February 1582/3, LPL MS 647, fols.121r and 119r-v. A portion of this letter appears in the Appendix as Letter 1.

mostly a transcription of Faunt's letters.³ However, Birch paid no attention to the significant amount of letter-space Faunt devoted to discussing and analysing his relationship with Anthony, as well as his own personal and spiritual affairs. This chapter seeks to put his self-examination and reflection in context. Faunt wrote at a time when letters were seldom considered to be instruments of self-reflection, and the acknowledged purpose of his letters was a professional one: he wrote to provide Anthony with news of a private and a political nature, and to receive his instructions for personal services he might perform at home.⁴ But the secondary purpose of his letters, especially between the years 1582 and 1584, was to create, unilaterally and at a distance, a friendship with Anthony in the classical mode, an esteemed form of male intimacy and one for which both Faunt and Anthony's educations would have prepared them. In the development of this epistolary relationship, two distinct influences are visible: the heritage of classical male friendship, re-energised by humanism and celebrated by writers both learned and popular; and the developing theology of Reformed Protestantism, with its increasing focus on spiritual self-examination and a recognition of the soul's propensity to question, despair and seek reassurance. I will argue that Faunt's intense language of affection and loyalty can be explained as the convergence of these strands. The rhetoric of intense male friendship has not before been studied in conjunction with the language of Puritan theology. As we will see, the imperatives of both modes combined to produce a language of considerable emotional expressiveness, and, for Faunt, a consoling space that mitigated his religious despair.

In the remainder of this introduction, I provide an outline of Nicholas Faunt's background and career in the years before he met Anthony. Following this, Section 1 of

³ Birch, *Memoirs*, 1, 1-73.

⁴ Alan Stewart, *Shakespeare's Letters*, 2-6 and 'Early modern lives in facsimile'.

the chapter explains the basis of their friendship: their involvement in intelligence-gathering, their shared piety and cultural heritage, and the mutual advantage they stood to gain from the relationship. Section 2 reveals the development and intensification of their friendship in the year after Faunt returned from his continental tour. Section 3 is a critical reading of the language Faunt used in the letter of February 1583 quoted above, highlighting his reliance on rhetorical modes drawn from idealised classical friendship and Reformed theology. I conclude with an argument that Faunt's letters to Anthony from this period can be read as an early form of spiritual journal or autobiography, as exercises in practical divinity in epistolary form a decade before such habits have been held typical.

Faunt was a few years older than Anthony, and a degree or two lower on the social scale. Born in 1553 or 1554, he was the son of a Canterbury gentleman called John Faunt. His career has been of historical and literary interest primarily as a point of comparison with a more famous son of Canterbury, Christopher Marlowe, who followed the same path from the King's School to Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, a few years later. Faunt's progression from the provinces to the senior ranks of government service has been offered as a model for Marlowe's entry into the world of Elizabethan espionage; it has even been suggested that Faunt recruited Marlowe, perhaps on a talent-spotting mission to his old college.⁵ It is possible that Faunt was present in Paris in August 1572, while still a student, and witnessed the St Bartholomew's Day massacre – he may be the Faunt who gave an account of the atrocities shortly afterwards. While this tallies convincingly with Faunt's committed anti-Catholic stance, there is no evidence that the man who bore witness to the bloodshed was Nicholas, rather than the unrelated

⁵ Carole Levin, 'Faunt, Nicholas (1553/4-1608)', *ODNB* (accessed 25.06.13); P.W. Hasler (ed.), *The History of Parliament: The House of Commons 1558-1603*, 3 vols (London: HMSO, 1981), 2, 109-110; Constance Brown Kuriyama, *Christopher Marlowe: A Renaissance Life* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2002), 72; Nicholl, *The Reckoning*, 143.

William Faunt, then a correspondent of Lord Burghley, and Faunt made no surviving mention of having been there. But he was certainly in Sir Francis Walsingham's service by 1577, and probably accompanied the Principal Secretary on his mission to the Low Countries in 1578.⁶ Faunt's first independent mission took him to Paris in 1580, the start of a continental tour that would last nearly two years. It was here that he met Anthony. With his impressive social connections and ancestry, Anthony was an attractive figure to Faunt; for Anthony, Faunt provided a very useful source of information at a time when his domestic patrons were growing restless at the quality of his intelligence. The men spent a number of months together in Paris before Faunt left for Strasbourg, and Anthony made for the university town of Bourges in the heartland of France. Other than a meeting in Geneva in November 1581, the two men would not meet face to face for more than a decade, when Anthony returned to England in 1592 (Faunt, on Lady Bacon's instructions, was waiting to meet him at Dover and escort him to London).⁷ Their relationship, which for Faunt was to become very precious, was conducted for the first twelve years almost wholly by letter.

Section 1: Protestants Abroad

This section excavates the letters that survive in Lambeth Palace Library to reveal the basis on which the two men built their friendship, one that was sufficiently strong to drive a decade-long epistolary exchange between two countries. I explain the purpose of Faunt's continental travel, and suggest that his access to valuable political intelligence and his close association with Sir Francis Walsingham made him an appealing figure to

⁶ In 1582, Faunt referred to his 'three yearers seruice' and 'two yeares trauaile abroade' (NF to AB, 15 April 1582, LPL MS 647, fol.125r); Haynes, *Elizabethan Secret Services*, 125-6; Haynes, *Walsingham*, 66. For William Faunt's report of the assassination of Admiral Coligny, which triggered the bloodshed on St Bartholomew's Day, see his letter of 22 August 1572, TNA SP 70/124, fols.133-34.

⁷ ACB to AB, 3 February 1591/2, LPL MS 653, fol.343r.

Anthony, to whom Faunt was in turn attracted for reasons of political, cultural and religious sympathy (as well as a degree of self-interest, given Anthony's heritage and glittering connections).

Faunt had probably been in Paris for about half a year when he set off in January 1581 for a tour through the religiously-mixed statelets of Germany, the fringes of the Empire and over the Dolomites into Italy. One purpose of his journey was research into the state of European affairs for Sir Francis Walsingham. From Paris, he made his way via Strasbourg to the Elector Palatine's court at Heidelberg and 'all the cheefe townes on the Rhyne,' and thence to the Reformed city of Frankfurt. Here he turned south, travelling to Nuremburg, Augsburg (then called Augusta), and the courts of the duke of Bavaria at Landshut and the archduke of Austria at Innsbruck. Both William V and Ferdinand II were supporters of the Counter Reformation, and Faunt made a study of their dominions.⁸ He later reminded Anthony that 'the Duke of *Bauaria*' and 'the house of *Austria*' were among the 'cheefe Patrones' of the Jesuits, constructing for their use 'many newe retraytes' and 'rich monasteryes.'⁹ On his arrival in Venice, he dispatched a series of letters back to England reporting his findings, the tone of which must have been sombre: the prospect of a wave of German-trained seminary priests entering England was an alarming one, the monastery at Rheims already serving as a locus for English Catholic resistance.¹⁰

Research was not the only reason for his trip. Faunt was charged with conducting to Padua and back a young Englishman named Edward Knightley, second son of the Northamptonshire landowner and religious patron Sir Richard Knightley.

⁸ NF to AB, 26 May 1581, LPL MS 647, fol.113r.

⁹ NF to AB, 22 February 1582/3, LPL MS 647, fol.120v.

¹⁰ Faunt's reports for Walsingham do not survive, but he told Anthony on 26 May that he had 'many lettres to dispatch at this present for England' (LPL MS 647, fol.113r).

Extremely rich and passionately committed to further reformation of the Church of England, Sir Richard was to be poorly served by his sons, who later contrived to spend their way through a large portion of their father's estates.¹¹ In 1581, however, Edward was still being groomed for public life. Like Anthony's brother Francis, he had been placed in the household of the English ambassador at Paris where he would have been exposed to the practice of statecraft and given the opportunity to perfect his French; like many other English gentlemen he enrolled in a course of civil law at the University of Padua, taking the opportunity at the same time to travel to Tuscany 'where the best language is' and acquire a smattering of Italian.¹² Essential for an eye-opening but hazardous enterprise of this sort was a chaperon entirely immovable in his religion to forestall any spiritual backsliding on the part of the young traveller – Fulke Greville later remarked that it was a 'vulgar scandal of *Trauellers* that few returne more religious than they went out.'¹³ Faunt was the ideal person to shield Edward Knightley from the corruptions of Catholicism and steer him towards the profitable aspects of educational travel (while Faunt spent several months in Venice, Edward was kept securely at Padua, the metropolis's quieter client-city).¹⁴ With the exception of the sensual enticements of the city itself, the Veneto and the surrounding country was as safe as Italy got. Faunt told Anthony that 'the State of Venise is more secure for all straungers, then any part of

¹¹ William Joseph Sheils, 'Knightley, Sir Richard (1533-1615)', *ODNB* (accessed 25.06.13); Patrick Collinson, *English Puritanism* (London: Historical Association, 1983), 28-9.

¹² NF to AB, 8 July 1581, LPL MS 647, fol.110r; Jonathan Woolfson, *Padua and the Tudors: English Students in Italy, 1485-1603* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998). For Francis's placement in Sir Amias Paulet's embassy see *LL*, 1, 6-8 and *HF*, 43-66.

¹³ Fulke Greville, *Certaine Learned and Elegant Workes* (London: E.P for Henry Sayle, 1633), sig.Rr4r. The letter from which this opinion is taken – addressed to Greville Varney, dated 20 November 1609 – has also been ascribed to Francis Bacon and Thomas Bodley (Sara Warneke, *Images of the Educational Traveller in Early Modern England* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1995), 64).

¹⁴ Edward Chaney identified pleasure and profit as the 'twin poles' around which the European debate on the advantages and disadvantages of foreign travel revolved ('Quo Vadis? Travel as education and the impact of Italy in the sixteenth century', in Peter Cunningham and Colin Brock (eds), *International Currents in Educational Ideas and Practices* (London: History of Education Society, 1988), 1-28, 1).

Ffraunce' thanks to the wisdom and discretion of its cultured citizens: the Venetian 'will neuer vrge any man to speake of his Relligion, though he knowe him of the contrary to his; but rather seeke to shonne that kind of discourse with a straunger: I speake of the best sort, and with th'other there is no conuersation.'¹⁵

Faunt remained in Italy for more than five months, waiting in 'this great heat' for Edward Knightley to have his fill of Padua and finding little news worthy the reporting to either Anthony or Walsingham.¹⁶ The 'store of Englishe' resident or studying in Padua were worth noting, however. Faunt recorded at least ten, not including Edward Knightley: Masters Spencer, Guicciardin, Tooley, Middleton, Bruninge, Randall and Kirton, Arthur Throckmorton (son of the former ambassador to France Sir Nicholas Throckmorton), Edward Unton (brother of the future ambassador to France Sir Henry Unton) and Henry Neville (himself later ambassador to France) and 'I knowe not who besides.'¹⁷ These men had experience of foreign countries, knowledge of international affairs and many intended to continue their journeys further afield. Faunt was not on a recruitment tour as such, but he was evidently attentive to new

¹⁵ NF to AB, 8 July 1581, LPL MS 647, fol.110r. Venice was the perennial exception to English suspicion of Italy. Sir Philip Sidney praised its 'good lawes and customes' which contrasted with the 'tyrannous oppression and servile yielding' in the rest of the peninsula. His friend Hubert Languet, however, ascribed the orderly life of the Venetians to the fact that they were 'simple to the point of dullness,' unlike the crafty Ligurians or Florentines (Kuin (ed.), *Correspondence of Sir Philip Sidney*, 1, 155 and 2, 881). In any case, these opinions were increasingly irrelevant as travel through Italy was becoming dangerous for Protestant Englishmen; shortly after Faunt and Knightley left Italy, the Spanish and Papal-controlled regions instituted a crackdown on foreign heretics that led to widespread flight – by the following year, many of the men Faunt had met at Padua were in Augsburg or Paris (NF to AB, 1 August 1582, LPL MS 647, fol.130v).

¹⁶ NF to AB, 3 August 1581, LPL MS 647, fol.114v. Although Faunt anticipated staying in Italy until March, the deteriorating security of Italy for Protestant travellers compelled them to leave Padua by September, and they were in Geneva by November of that year (NF to AB, 16 September 1581, LPL MS 647, fol.116r and 'Memorandum', 23 November 1581, LPL MS 647, fol.65r).

¹⁷ NF to AB, 8 July 1581, LPL MS 647, fol.110r.

sources of intelligence and he admitted to Anthony when discussing the English at Padua that ‘wee meane to giue some of them place.’¹⁸

A friendship with Faunt was appealing to Anthony in several ways. Faunt was happy to share his ‘experience [...] for the travayle of *Germany*’ and Italy, both regions Anthony intended to visit.¹⁹ In his capacity as Walsingham’s secretary, agent and potential talent-spotter, he helped to cement a relationship with the Principal Secretary, with whom Anthony had been in correspondence since arriving in France.²⁰ Perhaps most importantly, Faunt was a source of information. Anthony had received word that his uncle Lord Burghley was dissatisfied with the quality of news he was sending home – provision of which was a condition of his license to travel. The Lord Treasurer wrote on 1 August 1580: ‘By your forme of lettres I see you very circumspect in aduertising of the affaires there whereof all the world doth take knowledge.’²¹ Anthony could take advantage of the fact that the leading counsellors around Elizabeth – Burghley, Leicester, and Walsingham being the three with whom he was in contact – maintained separate intelligence services and guarded jealously the information their agents provided. Faunt was willing, as a sign of their friendship, to provide Anthony with intelligence gathered in the course of his duties for Walsingham; this content could then be relayed to Lord Burghley. Debates about the ethics of diplomacy and espionage – current since the fourteenth century in Italy – had yet to resolve the extent of an agent’s

¹⁸ Faunt may or may not have undertaken ‘recruitment’ trips to his old Cambridge college, but it seems from this comment that he *was* on the look-out in Italy.

¹⁹ NF to AB, 26 May 1581, LPL MS 647, fol.113r.

²⁰ On 19 August 1580 Walsingham had written to Anthony thanking him for ‘the favors and curtesies which this bearer my seruauant telleth me he hath receaued at your handes, which he is ready to requite with his best seruice and I with any pleasure I maye do you, thinckinge me selfe also greatlie behouldinge vnto you for your ofte writinge to me, which I pray you to continue, and to make me partaker of such newes as you shall learne in these partes.’ The servant to whom Walsingham referred was probably Faunt (LPL MS 647, fol.54r).

²¹ WC to AB, 1 August 1580, EUL Laing MS III.193, fol.139v (copy).

moral duty to his country, his master and his sovereign. In such an environment, intelligence circulated within networks of operatives who might or might not be working for the same ‘side’. Of course, intelligencers passed information upwards from the field to the council chamber. But they shared it, bartered it, and sold it too. Faunt, in other respects scrupulous about matters of loyalty and security, made a habit of including Anthony in the circulation of news, a custom that began at the very start of their friendship.²²

Despite his friend’s ‘desire to be satisfied in any thinge I knowe or may learne by such acquayntaunce as I have here,’ Faunt had little reliable intelligence to report from his travels around Germany and Italy.²³ From Venice, he was able to inform him that archduchess Maria of Austria, wife of the emperor and sister of Philip II, was expected to pass through the city en route to Portugal, where it was said she would rule as regent for her brother (a regency that did not in fact take place); that Juan de la Cerda, duke of Medinaceli, was shortly to become governor of Milan; and that the Venetian government was preparing to receive an Ottoman embassy with extraordinary pomp.²⁴ It was when Faunt returned to Paris, at the start of 1582, that he began to provide Anthony with a stream of ‘flying newes’ and intelligence from the diplomatic ‘courrier out of England.’²⁵ Faunt’s role at the embassy at this time is not clear. Perhaps he was intended to act as Walsingham’s eyes and ears, a clandestine mission that would certainly account for his unpopularity with Sir Henry Cobham, the resident

²² Haynes, *Elizabethan Secret Services*, xi, xv, 125; Keith Hamilton and Richard Langhorne, *The Practice of Diplomacy: Its Evolution, Theory and Administration* (London: Routledge, 1995), 29; Bossy, *Under the Molehill*, 144.

²³ NF to AB, 26 May 1581, LPL MS 647, fol.113r.

²⁴ NF to AB, 3 August 1581, LPL MS 647, fol.114v.

²⁵ NF to AB, 1 March and 8 February 1581/2, LPL MS 647, fols.106r and 104r.

ambassador.²⁶ Alternatively, he may simply have been cooling his heels. His charge, Edward Knightley, returned to London in company with Robert Sidney in February, ‘carry[ing] away with him all our prouision’ and leaving Faunt unequipped to make any independent journey without money from home.²⁷ He complained to Anthony that ‘I live here as priuat a life as any may do not hearing or herkening after any publicke or weighty matters but only languishe in attending out of England what shall come of mee,’ but his apathy did not prevent him from gathering and relating a significant amount of news.²⁸ Some of it related to the activities of the English at Paris: he reported on arrivals such as ‘two of the Erle of Shrewsbury his sonnes’ (probably Edward and Henry Talbot), as well as established embassy figures such as the cryptographer Thomas Phelippes, of whose pride and self-confidence Faunt strongly disapproved.²⁹ Other news concerned the French crown and the situation in zones of conflict in which the English had an interest: La Rochelle and the Huguenot south, the Low Countries, and Spain. Most significantly, Faunt reported news from home: he told Anthony the erroneous rumour that Sir Amias Paulet had been made second Principal Secretary, an appointment that would have boded well for the godly Faunt; he triumphed in the collapse of the Anjou marriage, ‘pray[ing] god that Monsieur returne not agayne into England’; and he reported on disturbances in Ireland, where Gerald FitzGerald, earl of Desmond, and James Eustace, viscount Baltinglass, and their men still evaded capture

²⁶ Faunt was perplexed by Cobham’s hostility, which he could only interpret as part of his ongoing feud with Walsingham: ‘if hertofore he cared litle for mee and such as belonge to my Master, nowe he is become so stout and straunge towards all especially such in whome he may in any respect conceave ialousie [...] he hath bene at oddes with all the honest gentlemen my Master favoureth, even to have chassed them awaye; and in vs that yet remayne he hath vs in suspicion, and vseth vs after straunge sort’ (NF to AB, 4 February 1581/2, LPL MS 647, fol.102r).

²⁷ NF to AB, 8 February 1581/2, LPL MS 647, fol.104r.

²⁸ NF to AB, 1 March 1581/2, LPL MS 647, fol.106r.

²⁹ NF to AB, 4 February and 1 March 1581/2, LPL MS 647, fols.102r and 106r.

after their rebellion in 1579.³⁰ Anthony, in his turn, performed some useful services for Faunt. Based in the early months of 1582 in the major merchant city of Lyon, a communications entrepôt for the south, he was able to forward correspondence from the Paris embassy to Englishmen in Italy, as mail sent by the usual means was subject to interception.³¹

In addition to these practical advantages, the friendship was grounded in a shared piety. For Faunt, this was to remain the cornerstone of his affection for Anthony, a gentleman whose parents enjoyed reputations for exceptional religious virtue: Anne Bacon (née Cooke), translator into English of John Jewel's *Apology in Defence of the Church of England* and Bernardino Ochino's sermons, and indefatigable patron of nonconformist preachers; and the late Sir Nicholas Bacon, one of the chief architects of the return to Reformed faith under Elizabeth.³² Faunt was always in some awe of Lady Bacon, a 'holly Matrone' raised up by the Lord for the 'comfort of his poore afflicted Church,' and regarded Anthony as similarly 'blessed [...] above many your brethren,' an agent of Reformation the 'principall ende' of whose course of travel was 'to do some good vnto the Church of God.'³³ The extent of Anthony's piety is harder to establish, although if his mother's rebukes are anything to go by, he and his brother Francis became increasingly lax in their devotions as they got older.³⁴ What seems clear is that

³⁰ NF to AB, 1 March and 4 February 1581/2, LPL MS 647, fols.106r-v and 102r.

³¹ NF to AB, 4 February 1581/2, LPL MS 647, fol.102v. For the dangers faced by couriers on diplomatic post routes, see E. John B. Allen, *Post and Courier Service in the Diplomacy of Early Modern Europe* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1972), 24, 27.

³² Alan Stewart, 'The Voices of Anne Cooke, Lady Anne and Lady Bacon', in Danielle Clarke and Elizabeth Clarke (eds), *This Double Voice': Gendered Writing in Early Modern England* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2000), 88-102; Patrick Collinson, 'Sir Nicholas Bacon and the Elizabethan *via media*', *Historical Journal* 23 (1980), 255-73, reprinted in *Godly People: Essays on English Protestantism and Puritanism* (London: Hambledon Press, 1983), 135-153.

³³ NF to AB, 12 March 1583/4 and 15 March 1582/3, LPL MS 647 fols.145r and 128v.

³⁴ Lady Bacon's first concern on her son's return to England in 1592 was to establish that Anthony and his household 'use prayor twyse a day having ben where Reformation is,' an obligation in which Francis was 'to negligent' (ACB to AB, 3 February 1591/2, LPL MS 653, fol.343r). The baleful influence on his

as a young man he was considerably more sensitive to his religious obligations than he was to become. Writing to Walsingham at the start of 1581, from Bourges, he expressed his discomfort at the religious tenor of the town and explained that he planned to remove to Geneva, one of the well-springs of the Reformed church. Walsingham approved:

Sir, Understanding by your lettres the smale contentment you take in your being at Burges a place very corrupt as you report aswell in respect of relligion as in conuersation of ciuill lyfe, and therefore of a desire you haue to remoue and transplant your self to Geneua as the better soyle for both the former respectes I cannot but greatly like of your determination therein agreeable as I take it to your naturall disposition and aunswearable to the good opinion that is conceaued of you. The daunger in truth is great that we are subiect vnto by lyuing in the company of the worsers sort: In naturall bodyes euill ayres are auoyded and infectione shunned of them that haue any regard to their health: therwise by reason of the sympathye that is between our bodyes the one wold easely corrupt and the other wold be as easely corrupted by the other.³⁵

Faunt, idling in Padua in August 1581, also anticipated Geneva as a tonic after the miasmatic religious atmosphere of Italy, where ‘we do lyve in some payne till wee be ridd therof so sone as conveniently wee maye. And rather then it shold any wayes infecte vs; we will not sticke to come in Poste presently thither.’³⁶ Faunt and Knightley arrived in

lifestyle and piety of Anthony’s personal servants was a continuing anxiety (ACB to AB, 17 April [1593], LPL MS 653, fol.318r), and when Anthony moved to a house in Bishopsgate Street she was shocked that he ‘did not Fyrst consider of the ministry as most of all nedefull,’ having been brought word that the local minister was ignorant (ACB to AB, [May n.d.] 1594, LPL MS 650, fol.187r). Lady Bacon was also chagrined at Anthony’s willingness to fraternise with Catholics, as well as his ungrateful rejection of her religious counsel (Mair, ‘Lady Bacon’, 117-123, 133; Freedman, ‘Anthony Bacon and his World’, 431-450).

³⁵ Francis Walsingham to AB, 25 March 1581, LPL MS 647, fol.111r.

³⁶ NF to AB, 3 August 1581, LPL MS 647, fol.114v.

Geneva around November 1581, probably staying, like Anthony, with the leading Reformed divine Theodore Beza, or with his next-door neighbour, the French theologian Charles Perrot.³⁷ Faunt felt an emotional attachment to Geneva that was common to educated Protestants in the sixteenth century, a reverence that avoided veneration (a papist habit) through its intellectualised expression. For him, Geneva was the place ‘where it maye be our myndes have especially remained, howsoever the heat of our youth hath transported our bodyes into many contrary places.’³⁸ Faunt’s keen affection for Anthony would have been greatly enhanced by the respect paid towards him by Beza, John Calvin’s spiritual successor and by 1581 the most significant figure in the Reformed church. As Anthony remembered fifteen years later, when defending himself against accusations of religious inconstancy, it had pleased at that time ‘late father Beza [...] to dedicate his meditations [*Christian Meditations upon Eight Psalms of the Prophet David*] to my Mother for my sake.’³⁹ These religious convictions influenced their political outlook: Faunt was wholly committed to his master Walsingham’s Melanchthonic aims of neutralising Spain – ‘the military arm of the Pope and the Catholic church,’ as Roger Kuin terms it.⁴⁰

As a cultural and intellectual corollary to their religious sympathies, Faunt and Anthony shared a background in humanist training that encouraged them to forge an epistolary friendship that would be sustained through the exchange of artful familiar

³⁷ Graeme Murdock, *Beyond Calvin: The Intellectual, Political and Cultural World of Europe’s Reformed Churches, c.1540-1620* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 106.

³⁸ NF to AB, 3 August 1581, LPL MS 647, fol.114v; Philip Benedict, *Christ’s Churches Purely Reformed: A Social History of Calvinism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), 242-46; Anthony Milton, ‘Puritanism and the continental Reformed churches’, in John Coffey and Paul C.H. Lim (eds), *The Cambridge Companion to Puritanism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 109-26.

³⁹ AB to Essex, n.d. September 1596, LPL MS 659, fol.24r. In this letter to his patron the earl of Essex, Anthony relayed a conversation he had had with his aunt, the dowager Lady Russell. Beza’s *Meditations* were published as *Chrestiennes meditations sur huict pseumes du prophete David* (Geneva: Jacques Berion, 1581). See Mair, ‘Lady Bacon’, 204-209, for a discussion of the implications of this dedication.

⁴⁰ Kuin (ed.), *Correspondence of Sir Philip Sidney*, 1, xiii.

letters. Both were products of the University of Cambridge, where Anthony's college Trinity and Faunt's college Corpus Christi offered daily lectures on the *libri humanitatis*, especially the works of Cicero and Terence, and whose libraries were well-stocked in the books on which the lecturers discoursed.⁴¹ In the 1580s, they were both young enough to regard the maintenance of such a friendship as an exercise in self-improvement – an exchange between educated men taking place in the exotic environment of continental Europe, which gave them the opportunity to put into practice the literary arts they had studied at university by emulating the epistolary conventions of classical antiquity. A foreign tour was an opportunity for education, and regarded as an effective way to equip a gentleman for public service. As Sir Philip Sidney wrote to his younger brother Robert in about 1579, 'your purpose is (being a gentleman borne) to furnishe your selfe with the knowledge of suche thynges as may be serviceable to your Country and fit for your calling [...] [by] enforminge your mynde with those things, which are most notable in those places you come to,' a view shared by many Englishmen who wrote approvingly about the *ars apodemica* or the 'art of travelling' in the sixteenth century. William Bourne in *The Treasure for Traueilers* (1578) wrote that well-born tourists were 'very necessary members in the common weale [...] and are able to profyt theyr owne Countries in diuers respectes.'⁴² A friendship conducted by letter with a suitable correspondent was another way to draw

⁴¹ Howard Jones, *Master Tully: Cicero in Tudor England* (Nieukoop: De Graaf, 1998), 220-228; M.R. James, *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Manuscripts in the Library of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge* (Cambridge: 1917); P. Gaskell, 'An early inventory of Trinity College books', *Transactions of the Cambridge Bibliographical Society* 8.3 (1983), 334-341.

⁴² Philip Sidney to Robert Sidney, n.d. [1579?], Bodleian Tanner MS 169, fols.60v-62, cited in Kuin (ed.), *Correspondence of Sir Philip Sidney*, 2, 887-88; William Bourne, *A booke called the Treasure for traueilers* (London: Thomas Woodcocke, 1578), sig.**iiir-v. See also Thomas Palmer, *An Essay of the Meanes how to make our Trauailles, into forraine Countries, the more profitable and honourable* (London: H.L. for Mathew Lowne, 1606), sig.B1r and Warneke, *Images of the Educational Traveller*, 45. The earl of Essex was to offer advice on similar lines to the young Roger Manners, earl of Rutland, in a series of letters in the mid-1590s (Paul Hammer, 'Letters of travel advice from the earl of Essex to the earl of Rutland: some comments', *Philological Quarterly* 74 (1995), 317-25).

educational merit from an expensive tour. Philip Sidney and the older Frenchman Hubert Languet sustained an epistolary friendship in the 1570s that allowed them to demonstrate the elegance and style of their Latin in letters that echoed classical models. Chief among these models was Cicero – Tully, to Renaissance readers.⁴³ His *Letters to Friends* and *Letters to Atticus* (rediscovered in the fourteenth century by Petrarch, and copied and printed hundreds of times over the next two centuries) were used to teach Latin in schoolrooms, and the style and wit of his letters were emulated by correspondents later in life. The key was to play cleverly on the original phrases and ideas, and to draw on Cicero’s philosophic and political approach, rather than slavishly imitate his sentences, which was an exercise for schoolboys or the more dull-witted university students.⁴⁴ Languet himself was to warn Sidney of ‘falling into the school of thought of those who believe that the greatest good lies in imitation of Cicero, and waste their lives on it,’ a piece of advice Sidney passed on to his brother in an attack on ‘Ciceronianism the chiefe abuse of Oxford’.⁴⁵ But a subtle and intellectually-aware emulation of Cicero was commendable (Languet approved Sidney’s study of ‘the volumes of Cicero’ in January 1574), as much for the content as for the style.⁴⁶ It was through *imitatio* that a man mastered *oratio*, but it was also through his study of the classics that he learnt *inventio*, the logical basis for arguments as well as for stylish expression. Cicero, whose dialogue-essay *De Amicitia* was one of the founding texts of the early modern obsession with the obligations and privileges of friendship, was the

⁴³ Edward Berry, *The Making of Sir Philip Sidney* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998), 33-48; Alan Stewart, *Philip Sidney: A Double Life* (London: Chatto and Windus, 2000), 103-111; Kuin (ed.), *Correspondence of Sir Philip Sidney*, 1, xii-xiii.

⁴⁴ Jones, *Master Tully*, 267-70; Harold S. Wilson (ed.) and Clarence A. Forbes (trans.), *Gabriel Harvey’s Ciceronianus* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1945), 25-30.

⁴⁵ Kuin (ed.), *Correspondence of Sir Philip Sidney*, 1, 78.

⁴⁶ Kuin (ed.), *Correspondence of Sir Philip Sidney*, 1, 92; Robert E. Stillman, *Philip Sidney and the Poetics of Renaissance Cosmopolitanism* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), 56-7.

ideal writer to crib when composing a letter to an intimate friend. The tone of Sidney and Languet's letters is frequently teasing, but the duties of friendship are taken seriously: Languet pointed out that the 'law' of friendship (a notion lifted from *De Amicitia*) entitled him 'to joke with you freely, to admonish you, accuse you, expostulate with you, and write to you whatever comes into my mind.'⁴⁷ This was the sort of epistolary intimacy with which Faunt, writing in the vernacular, invested his correspondence with Anthony. The neoclassicism of his letters was to become more pronounced once he had returned to England, and I will come back to Faunt's ostentatious appeals to the principles of classical *amicitia* in greater detail below, but in the early letters there are indications that he was consciously adhering to the expected epistolary style.

One Ciceronian touch was Faunt's professed desire to write even in the absence of a good reason. In his letters to Atticus Cicero frequently used the lack of anything to say in a letter as a means of underscoring his affection for its recipient, with whom communication was pleasurable whatever the occasion: 'I have really nothing to write about,' he wrote to Atticus, 'so let me just keep up my old-established habit of not letting anyone go your way without a letter'; 'although I have nothing to write to you, I shall write all the same because I feel that I am talking to you.'⁴⁸ For Faunt, writing at a time when the composition, dispatch and safekeeping of a letter, especially in a foreign country and across frontiers, was no straightforward matter, use of courtesies like these

⁴⁷ Kuin (ed.), *Correspondence of Sir Philip Sidney*, 1, 77. Cicero's 'first law of friendship' includes in its rubric 'dare to give true advice with all frankness; in friendship let the influence of friends who are wise counsellors be paramount, and let that influence be employed in advising, not only with frankness, but, if the occasion demands, even with sternness, and let the advice be followed when given' (Cicero, *Laelius De Amicitia*, in William Armistead Falconer (ed. and trans.), *Cicero: De Senectute, De Amicitia, De Divinatione* (Loeb Classical Library) (London: William Heinemann, 1922), 103-211, 155-7).

⁴⁸ D.R. Shackleton Bailey (trans. and ed.), *Cicero's Letters to Atticus* (London: Penguin, 1978), 274, 506; Peter White, *Cicero in Letters: Epistolary Relations of the Late Republic* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 77.

was even more marked. Beginning a letter from Padua, he explained that his letters were ‘like to continewe barren and voyde of all subiect worthy your hearing: yet I may not omit when occasion is offred, to do my dutye vnto you.’⁴⁹ Several months later, writing from Paris, he confessed that ‘I have nowe lesse to wryte then before: Howbeit to leave you voyde of occasion to condemne me of negligence, I send you what I have.’⁵⁰

Roman Jakobson explained that such ritualised statements perform a ‘phatic function’, procedural exchanges which serve to establish or prolong a communication.⁵¹

Renaissance correspondents would have recognised them as subtle, perhaps unconscious, echoes of the style of the master of the *ars epistolaria*, deployed to situate a letter (and its author) within a cultured and Latinate milieu.

Faunt also used the letters as an opportunity for wit, not a mode in which he felt wholly comfortable but one commended by Cicero.⁵² When Anthony requested that he be kept informed of affairs in Italy and elsewhere, Faunt responded in ‘sport’ that it was excessively courteous of him to have asked so politely, when a command would not have been inappropriate. Faunt wrote that such behaviour was

A straunge kinde of punishment which you vse towards such vndutifull persons as I am: but you deale with mee as some Creditours do with their desperate Debtors: who ether leeing their bondes and assuraunce otherwise, or seing them out of their reache: are content to intertayne such careless companions with newe promises wherby they may

⁴⁹ NF to AB, 8 July 1581, LPL MS 647, fol.110r.

⁵⁰ NF to AB, 4 February 1581/2, LPL MS 647, fol.102.r.

⁵¹ Roman Jakobson, ‘Linguistics and Poetics’, in Krystyna Pomorska and Stephen Rudy (eds), *Language in Literature* (Cambridge: Belknap, 1987), 62-94, 68.

⁵² Cicero commended ‘familiar and jocular’ letters as one of the two sorts of communications that gave him the greatest pleasure (D.R. Shackleton Bailey (ed. and trans.), *Cicero: Letters to Friends*, 3 vols (Loeb Classical Library) (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001), 1, 234-37; White, *Cicero in Letters*, 22. Erasmus, following Cicero, advised including a joke ‘in every class of [letter] [...] whenever the subject-matter permits’ (*De conscribendis epistolis*, 245).

be forced to confesse the old debtes, and thervpon take better hold & have some hope to be satisfied [...] I am one of that crewe in some respects but I pray you pardon mee, if you find me not so foolishe as some of them bee: who sometymes for kindness sake will confesse more then all: and thinking to be loosed from the former fall into the second and more stronger bondes; and for the hast they had to shewe them selves thankfull without discretion, have afterwards leisure to repent without remedye.⁵³

He included another ‘pretie iest’ when in Paris with ‘no matter worthy the setting downe’, a bawdy anecdote about a pilgrimage by the childless king and queen: giving alms to a local poor woman, the queen informed her that she was going to Chartres ‘for a Sonne or a child.’ ‘O Lord said th’old woman Madame, I am sory for your paynes; for said shee, the Preist of *Chartres* that was wont to make children is dead long sithence; and did you neuer heare of it?’⁵⁴

It was in Faunt’s interests to situate the correspondence within this sort of cultured Ciceronianism. Such a context tactfully obscured any potential benefits, social or professional, that might inhere in the relationship – on either side. Faunt made it clear that he regarded the intelligence services he was keen to perform for Anthony as gentlemanly favours in an exchange of mutual obligation and indebtedness (the world of debt and credit to which he referred in the conceit discussed above). His labours did not, he was keen to stress, make him a hired man, and nor did they imply that he sought advantage beyond those naturally belonging to friendship.⁵⁵ This equable ideal

⁵³ NF to AB, 3 August 1581, LPL MS 647, fol.114r.

⁵⁴ NF to AB, 4 February 1581/2, LPL MS 647, fol.102v.

⁵⁵ Lisa Jardine and William Sherman explored the textual services performed by gentlemen – especially those travelling on the continent – under the name of friendship in ‘Pragmatic Readers: knowledge transactions and scholarly services in late Elizabethan England’ (in Anthony Fletcher and Peter Roberts (eds), *Religion, Culture, and Society in Early Modern Britain: Essays in honour of Patrick Collinson* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 102-24). Lorna Hutson has suggested that such textual services be seen as part of the new sixteenth-century ‘economy of friendship’, in which friendship’s

mitigated the social distance between the two, a difference in class that was not matched by their respective power and influence. Nicholas Faunt, although from a humbler background than Anthony, was rather better connected to the public sphere; for all Anthony's gentle status and enviable family ties, he struggled to make the best of his connections for his own benefit, let alone somebody else's. Keeping sight of Cicero helped to establish the friendship on terms that rendered these differences irrelevant, because according to his philosophy honourable friendships between men were most noble when entered into by those 'least in need of another's help; and by those most generous and most given to acts of kindness.'⁵⁶ Faunt was comfortable performing friendly services for Anthony on the understanding that he did not *need* the thanks or advantage that came with it, whether or not he received such benefits.

By the time he left Paris for London in March 1582, the groundwork had been laid for an epistolary relationship of considerable intimacy, and one in which Faunt's involvement in Anthony's personal affairs was set to grow. It was a friendship that was useful and pleasant to both men. They were near in age, and similar in outlook, education and religious conviction. The social inequality required a small amount of rhetorical management on Faunt's part, but the two were not so socially distant as to make the relationship suspect. Writing to Anthony shortly before his departure from France, Faunt was more than happy to undertake 'the dealing in your priuat affayres there according to such Instructions as you purposed to haue giuen mee,' and agreed to become his friend's factotum and personal representative back in London:

instrumentality was perceived to rest precisely on its ability to generate profitable bonds through the power of persuasive rhetoric (*Usurer's Daughter*, 52-85).

⁵⁶ Cicero, *De Amicitia*, 163.

I hope you will assure your selfe that whatsoever you will commaund mee shalbe to my power most faithfully & dilligently accomplished: And in what estate soeuer I shall lyve I doubt not but to have both leysure and meanes to attend thervnto, as I shold do in any matters that may most concerne my selfe. Nowe for the conveyance of lettres to you & the procuring of them from your frendes you cannot looke for so much at my handes as I meane to perfourm, being so well acquaynted with the discommodity you have found in wanting the seasonable aduertisementes you looked for from your frendes, and with the meanes to convey vnto you whersoever I shall heare you remayne. And for my priuat wryting if you find me so negligent as I have been from hence, by reason that I cold not vntill nowe heare out of England: I wilbe content to be reckened amongst them that you have tried in your absence more liberall in promises, then effectes.⁵⁷

If Anthony was already contemplating an extended stay on the continent, he may have recognised the usefulness of a man like Faunt to represent his interests at home – and it would hardly have escaped his notice that his deep piety would make a favourable impression on his mother. Faunt’s reference to those ‘more liberall in promises, then effectes’ also implies that Anthony did not feel he was being adequately supported in England. Faunt was as good as his word, and his first friendly service on his return was to deliver Anthony’s regards to his mother, and obtain her consent for his continued residence abroad (which he won by suggesting that should she die with Anthony abroad illegally, the estate of Gorhambury would pass from her line to that of her stepchildren, Sir Nicholas Bacon’s first family – an outcome she wished to avoid at all costs).⁵⁸ Faunt now established himself as Anthony’s voice of home, as he settled into Court service and a busy life in the household of the Principal Secretary. As I explain in the following

⁵⁷ NF to AB, 12 March 1581/2, LPL MS 647, fol.108r.

⁵⁸ NF to AB, 15 April 1582, LPL MS 647, fol.125r-v.

section, various factors combined to maintain his relationship with Anthony in a position of great significance: for at least the first eighteen months after his return home, he was the figure to whom Faunt felt most emotionally bound, despite a patchy record of response on Anthony's side.

Section 2: Faunt at home

Their physical distance, and the fact that Faunt was now destined for service in Walsingham's household office, did not initially cause a diminution in his feelings for Anthony. In fact, in the first eighteen months after his return to England, Faunt felt his interests more closely enmeshed with his friend's than ever, as he collaborated with him on a project to collate, summarise and digest as much information about the European political scene as possible. This was an ambitious objective that depended on communication between London and France – not always reliable – in which Faunt provided Anthony with data and analyses from home, Anthony sent news from the ground in France, and Francis Bacon made use of both in putting together discourses on European affairs that drew together key facts about the political, military and financial conditions of various states.⁵⁹ One such discourse, 'Notes on the State of Christendom', probably written in the spring or summer of 1582 and drawing on Faunt and Anthony's continental experience, survives in a single manuscript copy in Francis's hand, with Anthony's italic insertions: if these additions are original, it suggests an unusual international group authorship, in which the manuscript travelled during its composition between the south of France and London.⁶⁰ Other discourses may have been in preparation in the early months of 1583, when letters passed frequently between

⁵⁹ *LL*, 1, 16-30; *HF*, 84-87.

⁶⁰ BL Harley MS 7021, fols.1-10.

Anthony and Faunt (at least seven were exchanged between January and May).⁶¹ These documents, intended for senior policy-making statesmen such as Walsingham, Burghley, Hatton and Leicester, increased Anthony's reputation as an intelligencer and promoted the Bacon name among the powerful men in Elizabeth's government.⁶² The benefit Faunt derived was of a different nature. He was conscious that they lived in a precarious time, in which the millenarian triumph of the true religion might yet be preceded by disaster:

wee of this age are fallen into those perillous latter tymes which are forwarned vs in Scripture wherin th'ennemye rageth the more extreemly because he seeth his kingdome daily declynyng and euen almost vtterly ruined: The cheefe instrument he vseth is th' Antichrist as motive to all th'other Princes he keepeth yet in bondage, who by them only is presently supported as is knowen to all the world. And particularly [...] beholde howe on euery syde they combyne them selues together for the subuerting of the churche of God [...] [T]he professed Ennemyes of Relligion are wont nowe in all partes to colour their hidden treacheries. Nowe this matter being of very great importance to all the reformed partes of Christendome hath occasioned some of the rarest iudgment & insight in the present course of this age to looke deeply into the consequence therof.⁶³

⁶¹ NF to AB (extant): 22 February (LPL MS 647 fols.119-122r), 15 March (fols.128-29), 6 May (fols.150-152v), 31 May (fols.154-155v). AB to NF (inferred): 20 January (carried by Anthony's friend Edward Selwyn, acknowledged in letter of 22 February), n.d April (carried by a merchant of Yarmouth, acknowledged in letter of 6 May), n.d. May (carried by 'one King seruaunt to Master Gifford,' acknowledged in letter of 31 May).

⁶² Haynes, *Elizabethan Secret Services*, 14. For a detailed analysis of the patronage alliances that the provision of valuable intelligence made possible, see Robyn Adams, "'Both diligent and secret': the intelligence letters of William Herle", unpublished PhD dissertation, Queen Mary, University of London, 2004.

⁶³ NF to AB, 22 February 1582/3, LPL MS 647, fol.120r.

Faunt's determination that 'the mouth of th'aduersarye be stopped, and the Tyrantes of the earth compelled to giue testimony of the Lordes truth' drove his conviction that he and Anthony were engaged in a project of international and ecclesiastical significance, and fed his belief in the value of 'look[ing] deeply into the consequence' of things.⁶⁴ From the start their relationship had involved the exchange of news and intelligence, and now Faunt was established in England, with a role at Court and in the Principal Secretary's office, his access to political intelligence widened considerably. His letters to Anthony are compendia of useful details about the English political scene and affairs abroad, which allowed Anthony to understand developments at home. That he made use of the letters is testified by the presence of Anthony's numerous additions. They are underlined and annotated, with marginal headings that imposed order on the enthusiastic streams of news. These 'navigational tools' indexed the content and facilitated speedy and precise consultation.⁶⁵ Alongside a paragraph in a letter of May 1583 detailing an English envoy's visit to Dunkirk to investigate a possible treaty negotiated by Anjou between France and the States General, Anthony inscribed 'Monsr' (Monsieur, the name by which Anjou was habitually known); information on Scotland is labelled 'Stewarte'; news that the earl of Ormond had been made governor of Munster is headed 'Irelande.'

On occasion Faunt's concentration lapsed: glossing over the Dunkirk affair, Faunt

⁶⁴ NF to AB, 1 December 1582, LPL MS 647, fol.132r. Peter Lake suggests that for radical Protestants, the antichristian nature of popery 'provided the central organising principle for a whole view of the world' ('The Significance of the Elizabethan Identification of the Pope as Antichrist', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 31 (1980), 161-78, 161) – the godly, a select group of the hyper-pious, were 'Christ's shock troops in the struggle against Antichrist' ('William Bradshaw, Antichrist, and the Community of the Godly', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 36 (1985), 570-89, 580). Patrick Collinson has argued something similar in his study of Robert Beale and 'other Elizabethans', who shared 'what may seem to us a simplistic, black and white view of the world as locked in a kind of Huntingtonian war of civilisations, with the king of Spain cast as 'the only author and continuer of all this mischief' ('Servants and Citizens: Robert Beale and other Elizabethans', *Historical Research* 79 (2006), 488-511, reprinted in *This England: Essays on the English Nation and Commonwealth in the Sixteenth Century* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2011), 98-121, 110).

⁶⁵ The term, as applied to early modern intelligence documents, is Robyn Adams's: 'Signs of Intelligence: William Herle's Report on the Dutch Situation, 1573', *Lives and Letters* 1 (2009), <http://journal.xmera.org/lives-and-letters-volume-1-no-1-spring-2009>, 13 (accessed 25.06.13).

assured him that ‘th’enclosed extract out of a Letter from one who is thought the best iudgment in those partes’ would provide a full explanation. Anthony was not impressed. ‘Who?’ he wrote in the margin.⁶⁶

Inclusion of copies, other people’s letters and briefing documents was routine, so much so that Faunt apologised for his ‘present pouerty & light carriage’ when he sent only a letter from himself.⁶⁷ When at the start of 1583 Anthony asked to be particularly informed of the ‘present state of forraine partes,’ Faunt promised to ‘infourme [him] of the general disposition and likelihood of thinges’ in order that he might be able to ‘better iudge of the particular actions that fall out & thervppon frame [...] a more probable discourse.’⁶⁸ One way in which Faunt chose to facilitate this sort of information provision was through the appropriation of documents meant for others, a surprising habit given that he subsequently reproved Walsingham, in a celebrated essay on the role of Principal Secretary, for the office’s ‘want of secrecie’ under his management.⁶⁹ In February 1583 he sent Anthony a sizeable package of material, and in the covering letter urged

pervsing of the coppies enclosed (which as it happely fell out I had ready lying by mee as you find them, thoughe in deed they were meant to another by direction therin, giuen mee by one whom I will content with the like at better leysure) wherby you shall by comparing them together with that I wryte besydes be hable to see into the principall

⁶⁶ NF to AB, 6 May 1583, LPL MS 647, fols.150r-151v.

⁶⁷ NF to AB, 15 March 1582/3, LPL MS 647, fol.128r.

⁶⁸ NF to AB, 22 February 1582/3, LPL MS 647, fol.120r-v.

⁶⁹ Charles Hughes (ed.), ‘Nicholas Faunt’s “Discourse Touching the Office of Principal Secretary of Estate, &c”, 1592’, *The English Historical Review* 20.79 (1905), 499-508, 500. Hughes’s edition is based upon a copy of the discourse dated 1610 (after Faunt’s death), Bodleian Library, Oxford, Tanner MS 80, fols.91-94.

matters of consequence that are nowe sett abroche, and vppon which the rest of the States in Christendom do at this present cast their eyes.⁷⁰

The copies Faunt mentioned comprised at least three separate briefing documents covering ‘th’enterprise that hath late bene attempted by th’Archbishoppe of Coleyne’ who had recently converted to Calvinism, ‘some effects that followe the late altercation in the Lowe Countryes,’ and a ‘little discourse lately receaued of the greatness of the house of *Austria*.’ Anthony transcribed much of this material into his own notebooks: one that survives in Edinburgh University Library includes a ‘discours concerning the greatnes of the howse of the house of Austria’, ‘an aduise towching the present state of the Lowe Countrys and the B. of Coleyne’, and ‘the state of the affayres in the Lowe Countreys towching the Late Accidentes happened in Antwerpe.’⁷¹ Material like this, provided by Faunt, absorbed and amended by Anthony, and then sent back to England to either Faunt or Francis Bacon, formed the basis for the discourses co-written by the three and circulated in manuscript among their political patrons, and kept the professional connection between the two friends very much alive.

The pleasure Faunt felt in performing friendly services for Anthony was based, as I have argued, on an understanding that he neither expected nor desired any material reward for his actions – or rather that such benefit as he did accrue was not regarded by others as the prime reason for the friendship. It was important that he was seen to act ‘vppon no base respecte or for insinuation: but only of good affection [...] and for the

⁷⁰ NF to AB, 22 February 1582/3, LPL MS 647, fol.120v-121r.

⁷¹ EUL Laing MS III.193, fols.133v-134r. Anthony reciprocated with foreign news as well as material of a more reflective nature – Faunt thanked him on 31 May 1583 for ‘the large relation you have made mee of th’occurrentes then written from you at *Marseilles* as also for your enclosed Sonnettes and description of that people’ (LPL MS 647, fol.154r).

best considerations.⁷² He had made an early and very favourable impression on Lady Bacon, who was content to deal with him as one privately acquainted with Anthony's 'mynde and cheefest purposes'.⁷³ Her assessment of Faunt ten years later was nothing short of effusive, and shows that she regarded him as just such a disinterested and loyal friend:

I thanke god Mr Faunt was willing so to do [meet Anthony at Dover] and was very glad because he is not only an honest gentleman in civill Behavior, but one that Feareth God in dede, and is wyse with all having experience of owr state, and is able to advyse you both veri wisely and Frendly For he loveth yowr self and needeth not your L [=love?] as others have and yet dissemble with you: he doth me pleasure in this, For I could not have Fownd Another so very mete For yow and me in all the best and most necessary respects. use him therafter goode sonne and make much of such and of their godly and sownde Frendly counsel.⁷⁴

His reception by Francis was cooler. The younger Bacon brother did not warm to Faunt: from the first, the two men had 'no great talke' when they met, for all that Faunt had news of Anthony.⁷⁵ A united front of Lady Bacon and Francis was enough to make Faunt stumble over his words: when he met the two of them at the lecture at the Temple church in November 1583, he managed to tell her ladyship that it had been over three

⁷² NF to AB, 31 May 1583, fol.155r.

⁷³ NF to AB, 15 April 1582, LPL MS 647, fol.125r. Faunt called routinely on Lady Bacon in London and at Gorhambury, and was proud to share what he knew of Anthony's well-being with his mother. She received rather fewer updates than he did and spent 'long tyme in talke with mee touching your selfe' (NF to AB, 3 March 1583/4, LPL MS 647, fol.143r).

⁷⁴ ACB to AB, 3 February 1591/2, LPL MS 653, fol.343r.

⁷⁵ NF to AB, 15 April 1582, LPL MS 647, fol.125v. Faunt made frequent reference to the brevity of his exchanges with Francis: he 'neuer stayed much' with him; 'whenever we talke but three words together, two and a halfe of them conteyne a most hartly wishe for your spedy returne' (NF to AB, 8 May 1582 and 6 May 1583, LPL MS 647, fols.127v and 150r).

years since he had left France, ‘greatly forgetting my selfe seing in truth it is not yet two yeares; but the errour grewe that I thought it more then three & twenty.’⁷⁶ His relationship with the younger Bacon was strictly professional, and Francis resented the fact that Faunt chivvied him for letters to his brother.⁷⁷ At times he made Faunt’s status as middle-man clear. Calling on him at Gray’s Inn in May 1583, Faunt was

answared by his seruaunt that he was not at leysure to speake with mee; and therefore you must excuse mee if I cannot tell you howe your mother and other frendes do at this present [...] I was asked where you were and what I heard lately from you: but I cold saye litle that he knewe not, nether was I so simple to say all to a boy at the doore his Master being within: which hath at other tymes bene vused towards mee by your Brother.

Discourtesy such as this distressed him, and ‘made mee sometymes to doubt that he [Francis] greatly mistaketh mee’ as an ‘insinuator’ or parasitical social climber.⁷⁸ These mixed messages from Anthony’s family made Faunt all the more determined to assert the honourable origin and virtuous intent of the friendship.

Faunt’s main reason for taking pains to continue his epistolary intimacy with Anthony was the comfort and reassurance he obtained from the correspondence. He had returned to a country and a Court that was in some ways depressingly unchanged and in others noticeably more debased than the culture he had left in 1580. Expecting a longer posting in Paris, he was surprised to be recalled so suddenly, and feared that with the retirement from day-to-day service of Laurence Tomson, Walsingham’s erudite personal

⁷⁶ NF to AB, 20 November 1583, LPL MS 647, fol.162r.

⁷⁷ Faunt ‘put [Francis] in mynde of his lettres’ on various occasions in April and May 1582 (NF to AB, 8 May 1582, LPL MS 647, fol.127r).

⁷⁸ NF to AB, 31 May 1583, LPL MS 647, fol.155r; *LL*, 1, 31.

secretary, he would be expected to take up a more hands-on role in the Principal Secretary's office.⁷⁹ The prospect of a life of attendance at Court filled him with despair, and although he declared to Anthony that 'to serue as I did I shall not brooke,' he found himself obliged, after his precipitate return, to 'loyter like a seruing man' about his master. Faunt felt himself ill-suited to the 'toyles and continewall disorder in Dyett, [the] watching and infinite other miseryes of such Cort seruice,' and it was particularly bitter that his 'two yeaes trauaile abroade consumed all that litle I had without benefitting my selfe any one waye.'⁸⁰ He had succeeded simply in retarding his progress and yet remained

more vnprouided of a staye in the world then before I came from th'Vniversitye [...] [W]hen I consider that euen the flower and strength of my youth is thus passed and see many heretofore myne inferiours and much less vnprouided then my selfe at the first of any staye of living in the world nowe to be aduanced before mee I cannot but wishe I had bene better advised then so to tye my selfe as I am to the stake: from whence while through hope I look to be somewhat cleanly loosed, I feare I shall in th'ende dye no other where or more at ease then yet I feele.⁸¹

Faunt was morbidly pessimistic about his prospects from the moment he arrived home, and he had barely taken up his old duties before he had 'cast of[f] all hope' of finding congenial service. His letters to Anthony gave him an opportunity to 'reacken upp my priuat discontentmentes'⁸² with a rhetorical appeal to unspeakability: 'I beseech you

⁷⁹ NF to AB, 12 March 1581/2, LPL MS 647, fol.108r; Haynes, *Walsingham*, 129; Conyers Read, *Mr Secretary Walsingham and the Policy of Queen Elizabeth*, 3 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1925), 2, 261.

⁸⁰ NF to AB, 15 April 1582, LPL MS 647, fol.126r.

⁸¹ NF to AB, 6 May 1583, LPL MS 647, fol.152v.

⁸² NF to AB, 31 May 1583, LPL MS 647, fol.155r.

pardon me, if in this matter my passion be so vehement that I cannot make a full point: My torment inwardly is greater then I can expresse'; 'let it suffice that you may knowe by these fewe scribbled lynes, that I am almost at my wittes end [...] Thus I send you here a madd mans lettre rather than otherwise; and being presently ouercome with melancholy & distraction of mynde I am forced to breake of[f].'⁸³ For the first few months after his recall, Faunt's chief wish was to return straightaway to France and seek comfort in Anthony's presence.

One of the things Faunt found most difficult in his readjustment to Court life was the irreligion he perceived among the courtiers. Having 'lately lived in more civill and better disposed company' among the divines of Geneva, he found the habits of the court profoundly distasteful, 'where is so litle godlynes and exercise of religion, so dissolut manners and corrupt conuersation generally, which I find to be worse then when I knewe the place first; so generall is the defection fortold by th'Apostle in these latter dayes.'⁸⁴ Faunt had returned to an England that was attacked by reformers of manners as corrupt and ungodly (Stephen Gosson's *The Schoole of Abuse* (1579) and *Playes Confuted in Five Actions* (1582), and Philip Stubbes's *The Anatomie of Abuses* (1583) date from this time), and increasingly subject to presbyterian agitation from thinkers such as Thomas Cartwright, Walter Travers (whose lectures Faunt attended at the Temple Church) and John Field.⁸⁵ It caused Faunt a great deal of pain that the further reformation he had been privileged to experience in Geneva was still regarded as an extreme position in his home country. In fact, the early 1580s was to be the zenith for establishment Reformist thinking: with the earls of Bedford, Huntingdon and Leicester

⁸³ NF to AB, 15 April and 8 May 1582, LPL MS 647, fols.126r and 127r.

⁸⁴ NF to AB, 15 April and 1 August 1582, LPL MS 647, fols.126r and 130v.

⁸⁵ NF to AB, 13 April 1584, LPL MS 647, fol.183r.

and Sir Francis Walsingham still alive, the movement was extremely well-protected.⁸⁶ The period saw a boom in publications by and about John Calvin (six to eight English translations of his works were published each year from 1578 to 1581), and Faunt was to sit in the radical 1584 Parliament as the member for Boroughbridge in a house that contained many of his godly allies: the Privy Council secretary Robert Beale, Faunt's old colleague Laurence Tomson, and Edward Knightley's brother Valentine.⁸⁷ Josias Nichols, a Reformed minister, later referred nostalgically to the decade under Archbishop Grindal as a 'golden time, ful of godlie fruit, great honour to the Ghospell, greate loue and kinde fellowship among all the Ministers,' a view that owes more to the repression of anti-episcopal reformers in the late 1580s and 90s than it does to the reality of the time.⁸⁸ With John Whitgift's accession to the see of Canterbury in 1583 the reform movement faced increasing hostility, and Faunt was candid to the point of indiscretion when he wrote to Anthony in 1584 of the new archbishop's 'rage and insolency' against 'the best & zealouset Ministers at this daye.' 'Can there be,' asked Faunt,

any more euident token of the miserable calamitye approaching then to see the true Teachers and Pastors thus turmoyled by those especially that wold seeme to be the Pillars of the Church who having the Marke of the Beast it is impossible they shold knowe the necessitye of that sweet sounde of the Ghospell [...] And therefore drowned

⁸⁶ For the 1580s as England's period of greatest presbyterian activism, see Jacqueline Eales, 'A Road to Revolution: The Continuity of Puritanism, 1559-1642,' in Christopher Durston and Jacqueline Eales (eds), *The Culture of English Puritanism, 1560-1700* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1996), 184-209; Michael P. Winship, 'Weak Christians, Backsliders, and Carnal Gospellers: Assurance of Salvation and the Pastoral Origins of Puritan Practical Divinity in the 1580s', *Church History* 70 (2001), 462-81; David R. Como, 'Radical Puritanism, c.1558-1600', in Coffey and Lim (eds), *Cambridge Companion to Puritanism*, 241-58.

⁸⁷ Benedict, *Christ's Churches*, 245; Patrick Collinson, *The Elizabethan Puritan Movement* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1967), 278.

⁸⁸ Josias Nichols, *The Plea of the Innocent* ([London]: no printers information, 1602), sig.C2r.

in ambition and ouer great aboundaunce of outward thinges they be such as nether will enter them selues nor suffer others to enter in at that streight and narrowe passage.

Writing to Anthony, a member of a famously devout family, satisfied Faunt's determination to play a part in the international progression towards full reformation, an objective he imagined to be wholly shared by his friend ('I am the rather moved to vnfold vnto you these greatest miseries of our State for that I knowe you have a part in the mutuall participacion therof').⁸⁹ The fact that Anthony was a former pupil and present correspondent of Faunt's enemy Whitgift, and that he was becoming increasingly pragmatic in his own religious outlook, were things Faunt chose to ignore.⁹⁰

Faunt suffered from bouts of despair throughout his life. As late as 1596, well after Anthony's return from exile and when Faunt himself had taken up a lucrative post as Clerk of the Signet, he wrote to his friend that 'I shold thinke my condicion nowe to be worse then euer.'⁹¹ Throughout 1582 and 1583, although his mood periodically lifted as far as rueful acceptance ('this is home when all is done [...] I am a continuall Cortier'), he was for the most part very seriously unhappy.⁹² Stymied in his professional service, appalled by the irreligion with which he was surrounded, and depressed by the

⁸⁹ NF to AB, 12 March 1583/4, LPL MS 647, fol.145r. For the effect on the Reformed opposition movement of Whitgift's policy of subscription, see Collinson, *Elizabethan Puritan Movement*, 243-88; Benedict, *Christ's Churches*, 250-54; Nicholas Tyacke, 'Popular Puritan mentality in late Elizabethan England' in his *Aspects of English Protestantism, c.1530-1700* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001), 90-110 (reprinted from P. Clark, A.G.R. Smith and N. Tyacke (eds), *The English Commonwealth 1547-1640: Essays in Politics and Society presented to Joel Hurstfield* (Leicester: Continuum, 1979), 77-92).

⁹⁰ Anthony and Francis had lodged with Whitgift, then Master of Trinity College, when they went up to Cambridge in 1573 (*HF*, 34-37; *GL*, 31). Whitgift wrote a reassuring letter to his pupil when Anthony became embroiled in a political and sectarian dispute in Bordeaux (John Whitgift to AB, 10 May 1585, LPL MS 647, fol.194r).

⁹¹ NF to AB, 10 August 1596, LPL MS 658, fol.232r.

⁹² NF to AB, 1 August 1582, LPL MS 647, fol.130r-v.

progress of the continued reformation of the Church of England, for much of the time after his return to England he languished ‘betweene hope and despayre, irresolute and uncertaine what extremitye I shalbe driuen vnto; for I see no one motion from any part tending to my good.’ Most distressing was the spiritual anxiety that his depression triggered. He wrote tellingly to Anthony of his reliance on his own assurance of salvation, the essential inward mark of the elect:

And if my refuge were not vnto th’Allmightie whom it pleaseth thus to humble mee, and but that I rest assured his purpose herin will prove for the best in th’ende, I shold have bene ere this wholly oppressed with the consideracion of of myne estate: but his only will be fulfilled, and when it pleaseth him he will giue the redresse.⁹³

Faunt worked hard to retain a grip on the assurance of his election, but as his fortunes failed to improve it became more difficult to convince himself that his unhappy condition was a test of his faith, rather than an indication of his reprobate status. Shortly after writing the lines above, his ‘misery daily increasing’, he claimed that he was ‘not able to open my greefes they are so great and infinit when I once begin to thinke of my selfe.’⁹⁴ The following year, he confessed that his private miseries ‘maketh mee sometymes to faynt in my course & wold in deede wholly discourage mee, if I had not recourse to the comfortes a Christian shold have in these cases.’ Among the more orthodox comforts of which Faunt made use, ‘the often remembraunce’ he received of Anthony did ‘much recreate my tyred spirites.’⁹⁵

⁹³ NF to AB, 15 April 1582, LPL MS 647, fol.126v.

⁹⁴ NF to AB, 8 May 1582, LPL MS 647, fol.127r.

⁹⁵ NF to AB, 15 March 1582/3, LPL MS 647, fol.129v.

Section 3: The Letter of 22 February 1583

By the start of 1583, the discrepancy in the correspondence between the two men had become noticeable. Writing at the start of December 1582, Faunt pointed out that ‘I thinke this cannot be so little as the xiith I have written vnto you since my returne to this place, in which tyme I have receaved only two from you the last bearing the date about the 28th of March.’⁹⁶ None of his London letters, in which he had unfolded his anxieties so unhesitatingly, had yet been acknowledged (Faunt had arrived back in England in the middle of March, with his first letter to Anthony following about three weeks later). The uncertainty of delivery might account for his silence, and there was no guarantee that the letters Faunt sent by way of merchants in Lyon arrived at their destination, especially as Anthony’s location was often unknown – a letter in August 1582 was directed ‘A Montpellier Tholouse ou la part ou il sera’ (‘or wherever he might be’).⁹⁷ But neither Beza nor any of their colleagues in Geneva had had word in months, a much more serious lapse and one that was harder to explain by the miscarriage of letters. Explanation arrived when Faunt finally received from Marseilles a ‘sweete and frendly Letter’ dated 20 January 1583. Anthony had suffered a long and severe illness, from which he was now recovered. He acknowledged the intimacies Faunt had entrusted to him, and appears to have made explicit reference to their friendship, honouring him as a close friend with all the privileges and rights afforded such a position. This was the prompt for Faunt’s letter of 22 February with which I started this chapter.⁹⁸ In it, he admitted his profound and singular affection for Anthony which, because it was ‘aright sincere and vnfayned’

⁹⁶ NF to AB, 1 December 1582, LPL MS 647, fol.132r.

⁹⁷ NF to AB, 1 August 1582, LPL MS 647, fol.130r-v (address leaf, fol.131v).

⁹⁸ NF to AB, 22 February 1582/3, LPL MS 647, fols.119-122r. Further references to this letter will be identified by foliation only.

cannot be giuen in the highest measure but to one only: Nowe though I had longe ago propounded in my mynde your selfe to be the same one only yet still fearing to be thought ouer presumptious and bold in this behalfe I have deferred the signifying therof vnto you vntill vppon some further experience you might see what especially moved mee to make so singular a choyce for so unworthy a gyfte, as is the free possession of my whole mynde and most secreat thoughtes.⁹⁹

Faunt framed his hesitation in confessing his ‘presumptious’ feelings as the fault of his own incapacity to demonstrate ‘by some further experience’ his merit as a friend, but it is clear that he had taken Anthony’s letter as a sign that such a declaration would be welcome:

your late Letter hath giuen the finall conclusion and removed all difficulties and doubtes on my part which yet were neuer other then the inequalitie of our conditions and my unhablenes to supply that defecte residing in mee alone ether by industrye or any other effectes of my good will. Nowe finding that you stand very litle vppon such termes [...] I see not therefore any further impediment (th’other being removed throughe the freenes of your good perswasion of mee testified aswell hertofore as in this your said lettre) why I shold not close my hand with yours in wittnes of our perfecte and sincere vnion and band.¹⁰⁰

He revealed that he was spiritually and intellectually ‘peculiarly devoted vnto’ Anthony, and celebrated his ‘cheefe and inward authoritie’ over him as the ‘principall knott of our

⁹⁹ Fol.119r.

¹⁰⁰ Fol.119v.

amitie.’¹⁰¹ He persisted in his declarations of service and loyalty, promising to ‘perfourme that you nowe demaund at my hands, as wherin I may at any other tyme stande you in steed sooner then my other consideracions whatsoeuer,’ but explicitly rejected the notion that the pair maintained any sort of credit or debt relationship.¹⁰² Thanking Anthony for his gracious ‘acceptacion’ of his letters, Faunt took the opportunity to remark that ‘betweene faithfull frendes [...] where the giuers mynde & good meaning is aright interpreted,’ the gift itself (in other words, the pleasure of the correspondence) ‘goeth for gros payment.’¹⁰³ The letter marked a change in his language. In the months afterwards, Faunt took occasion whenever he could to remind Anthony that his ‘affection on your behalf can hardly abide any kind of limitacion [...] which truly (be it spoken in Italian termes as more significative, yet with a simple English meaning) is *suiscerata* and *smisurata affato*’ (‘heartfelt’ – literally, ‘eviscerated’ – and ‘entirely immeasurable’).¹⁰⁴ When Anthony made ‘comparison of our well grounded friendship with that we find to have bene betweene *Tully* and *Atticus*,’ Faunt was delighted beyond words: ‘what comfort and contentment I received then and yet retayne with mee I shold have much to do if I wold expresse vnto you effectually.’¹⁰⁵

The comparison was significant. It lifted the nature of their relationship from the estimable field of friendships in general, to the heights of the virtuous friendship *par excellence*: from a certain (particularly flattering) angle, the correspondence between Faunt, entangled in the politics of home, and Anthony, living in self-imposed exile in a

¹⁰¹ Fol.119r-v.

¹⁰² Fol.119v.

¹⁰³ Fol.120r.

¹⁰⁴ NF to AB, 15 March 1582, LPL MS 647, fols.128r and 129v. ‘Good’ or ‘sincere affection’ was Faunt’s usual term for the relationship the pair maintained: 6 May 1582, LPL MS 647, fol.150r; 31 May 1582, LPL MS 647, fol.155r; 6 August 1582, LPL MS 647, fol.158r; 12 February 1583/4, LPL MS 647, fol.138r.

¹⁰⁵ NF to AB, 31 May 1583, LPL MS 647, fol.155r.

southern climate, might be taken for an Elizabethan version of the famous friendship between the politician Cicero and his expatriate friend Atticus (Titus Pomponius, so nicknamed for his love of all things Greek). But whether Anthony intended the reference to be taken literally (and it is probable that he did not), it implied his acquiescence in the process of redefinition that Faunt's February letter had instigated: their friendship was now something superior, precious, *ideal*. Virtuous friendships between men were a central part of cultured Renaissance life, more often idealised than practiced but no less revered for that. As I have already noted, classical discourses on friendship – including Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* (books 8 and 9), parts of Cicero's *De Officiis* and especially his *De Amicitia* – performed a double duty as texts for grammar exercises and models for rhetorical and philosophical imitation in schoolrooms, and Greek and Roman theories of friendship informed thinkers whose work set the intellectual tone for much of the century.¹⁰⁶ But while the theory was culturally omnipresent, practical examples of such virtuous friendships were scarce. For Cicero, friendship of the 'pure and faultless kind' was rare, and sustained only by good and virtuous men. They were intense affairs, demanding 'accord in all things, human and divine,' and harmony of 'opinions and inclinations in everything without exception.' Such friendships should only be formed 'after strength and stability have been reached in mind and age,' and after a thorough appraisal of a potential friend's merits. The possessor of a true friend 'looks, as it were, upon a sort of image of himself' – further, he *is*, 'as it were, another self,' an idea that drew on the Aristotelian conceit that friends

¹⁰⁶ Michael Pakaluk (ed. and trans.), *Aristotle: Nicomachean Ethics. Books VIII and IX* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998); Walter Miller (ed. and trans.), *Cicero: De Officiis* (Loeb Classical Library) (London: William Heinemann, 1913). The queen's tutor Roger Ascham perfected the young John Whitney's Latin by setting him to translate and then re-compose *De Amicitia* when the two men shared a bedchamber in Anthony Denny's house in Cheshunt, an occasion recalled in *The Scholemaster* (Stewart, *Close Readers*, 122-160). For more on Cicero's place in Tudor schoolrooms, see Jones, *Master Tully*, 153-90.

shared ‘one soul in two bodies.’¹⁰⁷ One of the first books printed in England was John Tiptoft’s translation of *De Amicitia*, published by William Caxton in 1481, and Sir Thomas Elyot in *The Boke Named the Gouvernor* (1531) repeated the assertion that ‘a frende is properly named of Philosophers the other I,’ as did Erasmus in his *Adagia* of 1536.¹⁰⁸ The wide currency of ideas such as these is suggested by their spread from philosophical works to commonplace books, from *The Garden of Wysdom* at the start of the sixteenth century to George Wither’s *A Collection of Emblemes* a century later, which celebrated friendship with an image of hands clasped around a crowned heart, flanked by a design of conjoined rings (a quasi-marital image that resembles Faunt’s pledge to ‘close my hand with yours in wittnes of our perfecte and sincere vnion and band’).¹⁰⁹ The belief that friendship between men represented the apogee of human intercourse permitted a language in which the usual Renaissance reverence for temperance and moderation was disregarded.¹¹⁰ Michel de Montaigne, later to become

¹⁰⁷ Cicero, *De Amicitia*, 127, 131, 133, 171, 183, 193. Aristotle remarked that ‘a friend is another self’ (a proverbial statement even in the fourth century BC) in chapter 4, book 9 of the *Nicomachean Ethics* (Pakaluk (trans. and ed.), 29). Widely ascribed to him was the thought that a pair of friends had ‘one soul [...] abiding in two bodies’, a remark recorded by Diogenes Laertius many centuries after Aristotle’s death. Laertius’s collection of famous philosophical precepts was well-known in its Latin and Greek versions; the first English translation was *The Lives, Opinions, and Remarkable Sayings of the Most Famous Ancient Philosophers. Written in Greek, by Diogenes Laertius [...] Made English by Several Hands*, 2 vols (London: R. Bentley, W. Hensman, J. Taylor and T. Chapman, 1696) (Aristotle’s famous formulation is sig.Y8v).

¹⁰⁸ Sir Thomas Elyot, *The Boke Named the Gouverneur* (London: Thomas Berthelet, 1531) includes a lengthy discourse on friendship, as well as the exemplary story of Titus and Gysippus drawn from Boccaccio (book 2, chapters 11 and 12) (Donald W. Rude (ed.), *A Critical Edition of Sir Thomas Elyot’s The Boke Named the Governour* (New York: Garland, 1992), 149-169, 152); ‘the friend is another self’ is the second adage in Desiderius Erasmus, *Adages*, in *Collected Works of Erasmus*, ongoing, R.A.B. Mynors (ed.) and Margaret Mann Phillips (trans.) (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982). Erasmus’s *Adages* were translated and incorporated into Richard Taverner’s *The garden of Wysdom* (London: Richard Bankes for John Harvy, 1539), and Nicholas Udall’s *Apophthegmes* (London: Richard Grafton, 1542).

¹⁰⁹ Aristotle’s ‘one soule [...] in two bodyes’ was cited by Taverner, *Garden of Wysdom*, sig.F1v, and George Wither, *A Collection of Emblemes, Ancient and Moderne* (London: Augustine Mathews, 1634), sig.Ii3r. An enthusiast for Ciceronian *amicitia* at the end of the sixteenth century was Walter Dorke, who included a list of 20 precepts necessary for virtuous friendship culled from his discourse in *A tipe or figure of friendship*, 2nd edn. (London: Thomas Orwin and Henry Kirkham, 1589), sig.A4r-v

¹¹⁰ Gregory Chaplin has suggested that male friendship was regarded in the early modern period as a ‘companionate relationship’ commensurate, alternative and in some circumstances superior to marriage

known to Anthony Bacon, wrote in his essay ‘On Friendship’, first published in France in 1580, that the ‘perfect amity’ which he had enjoyed with his friend Etienne de la Boëtie was ‘indivisible’: ‘each man doth so wholly give himself unto his friend, that he hath nothing else to divide elsewhere: moreover he is grieved that he is not double, triple, or quadruple, and hath not many soules, or sundry wils, that he might conferre them all upon his subject.’ The friendship seized his will and ‘brought it to plunge and loose it selfe in his’ [Boëtie’s].¹¹¹

To imagine his relationship with Anthony in this mode gave Faunt enormous pleasure and acted as a brake on his accelerating misery. It allowed him to cast their acquaintance as a journey from simple friends to exemplars of virtuous friendship. Faunt made conscious reference to the Ciceronian qualities of their friendship: the uniqueness of their bond (his ardent affection can be given ‘but to one only’), the time that had been required to ripen the connection (‘though I had longe ago propounded in my mynde your selfe to be the same one only’), and the scrupulous care that had gone into Faunt’s ‘singular [...] choyce’ of Anthony as the recipient of his gift of ‘the free possession of my whole mynde and most secreat thoughts.’¹¹² It further blurred the social differences between them – Faunt was placed to all practical purposes on the same level as Anthony, the ‘impediment’ of their inequality being removed by the discovery that he stood ‘very litle vppon such termes.’¹¹³ Faunt continued to gesture towards their different statuses even as he acted in ways that rendered those differences

(“‘One flesh, one heart, one soul’”: Renaissance Friendship and Miltonic Marriage’, *Modern Philology* 99:2 (2001), 266-292).

¹¹¹ Michel de Montaigne, ‘On Friendship’, in John Florio (ed. and trans.), *Essayes written in French by Michael Lord of Montaigne*, 2nd edn. (London: Melch. Bradwood for Edward Blount and William Barret, 1613), sig.I5r-v; cf. M.A. Screech (ed. and trans.), *The Complete Essays* (London: Penguin, 1991), 215, 212. First printed in Bordeaux in 1580, Montaigne’s *Essais* received widespread acclaim. It is possible that Faunt read them during his time in Paris in early 1582.

¹¹² Fol.119r.

¹¹³ Fol.119v.

moot – in May he apologised for burdening Anthony with his private discontents, seeing ‘that these matters are fittest to be imparted to myne equalles,’ but in the same sentence explained ‘howe great an ease it is to th’afflicted mynde when his greefes be vnfolded into the bosom of an assured frend’ and promised to go into his concerns in greater detail and in ‘playner termes’ when the two of them met in person.¹¹⁴

Furthermore, the notion that friends in the classical mode shared ‘one soul in two bodies’ gave a new dimension to their religious connection. As brothers in Christ, and members of the elect, they were constituent members of one spiritual body and shared in each other’s feelings. Writing of the ‘greatnes of that Visitacion [Anthony’s sickness] wherewith it pleased the Lord to trye your faith and patience,’ Faunt explained the joy and relief his recovery had bred in his well-wishers at home:

So that as you will confesse our good Lord hath therein extended an exceeding measure of his mercie towards you and on your behalfe to all your godly and faithfull frendes; amonge whom I[,] being the meanest and in truth nothing worthy of your name but only in respect of a Spirituall conviction wherby as a feeling member of that mysticall body I cannot but participate in th’effectes of so straight a vinom[,] do therefore with your selfe therby as otherwise at all tymes most humblie thanke the divine Maiestie for this his most mercifull deliuerance of you and [...] do most especially praise and magnify his goodness in that he hath thus spared or rather reserued you in his mercifull prouidence for an Instrument hereafter.¹¹⁵

Here again Faunt was careful to place himself in a socially inferior position (‘I being the meanest and in truth nothing worthy of your name’) while simultaneously creating for

¹¹⁴ NF to AB, 31 May 1583, LPL MS 647, fol.155r.

¹¹⁵ Fol.119r.

himself a space of equality and intimacy in the context of their shared privilege as members of the elect ('as a feeling member of that misticall body'). Thanks to his 'spirituall conuiction', Faunt enjoyed a power of empathy for Anthony's suffering that verged on the clairvoyant:

And for myne owne when I look into the nature of those distastes and the long tyme they held you, I find that your owne and others relation of the extremetie you were brought vnto is nothing to th'impression I have conceaved in my mynde of the manifold tormentes your poore body hath endured the lest of which sicknesses might in reason have greatly weakned a stronger complexion then your owne.¹¹⁶

Faunt drew comfort from Anthony's trials because they proved that even the heroes of the Reformed church could be scourged by God, as 'it is his manner so to deale with his dearest children only for their good.' Indeed, such torment was necessary chastisement delivered by the Lord 'in his fatherly and tender care of your welldoing [...] though throughe so great corruption & dullnes of nature wee cannot so soone consider therof accordingly.'¹¹⁷ All of this applied equally, as he realised, to Faunt himself, 'fainting' under the burden of his unhappiness as he struggled in a venal and godless Court, and the thought that Anthony had undergone a similarly testing experience was consoling.¹¹⁸ The equalising effect of spiritual election was an essential factor in helping Faunt leap the social divide and assert the special nature of his friendship with Anthony – helped by the fact that the exceptionalism of election could be understood in terms that aligned

¹¹⁶ Fol.119r.

¹¹⁷ Fol.119r.

¹¹⁸ NF to AB, 15 March 1582/3, LPL MS 647, fol.129v.

such an elite group with the truly virtuous, that rare breed of men qualified to undertake pure friendship. Their ‘perfect and sincere vnion and band’ was framed

by the power of the Lord working by his holly Spirite: As by many testimonies I most euidently perceave and acknowledge that this our especiall affecting one of another was wrought first by the same Spirit, hath for that only cause bene more firmly grounded and shall the more happely continewe to both our comfortes so long as wee shall lyve together: which God graunt may be effected when and so farre forth as shall make most for the advaancement of his glorye and the weale of his Church.¹¹⁹

The ‘operation of godes holly Spirit’ was the ‘fountayne and wellspring’ of their affection for each other – an ungainsayable source that lent a teleological purpose to their friendship and foreclosed any objection on Anthony’s part to Faunt’s candid and copious letters: God was ‘th’ Authour of this our sounde and well grounded amitye,’ and ‘it hath pleased the Lord to make you a meanes of myne comfort.’¹²⁰

As in much else in Faunt’s life, his religious faith explained the peculiar intensity he brought to his relationship with Anthony. Reformed Protestantism equipped him with a language that was well fitted to expressing the emotions of his heart. It was Theodore Beza who made the link between self-examination and an assurance of faith, and inspired a strain of Reformed theology that required believers to search their souls for evidence of the Holy Spirit’s presence, a presence that made itself known in both physiological and emotional ways: William Perkins, in his *A Treatise Tending unto a*

¹¹⁹ Fol.119v.

¹²⁰ Fol.119v and NF to AB, 31 May 1583, LPL MS 647, fol.155r-v. Thomas Wood, father to Ambrose (later a servant in Francis Bacon’s household), adopted a similar tactic in admonitory letters to his friends, subscribing his letters ‘this yow knowe is the expresse commandement of Christ’ (Patrick Collinson, ‘Letters of Thomas Wood, Puritan, 1566-1577’, *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research*, Special Supplement 5 (1960), reprinted in *Godly People*, 45-107, 50).

Declaration, Whether a man be in the Estate of Damnation, or the Estate of Grace

(1589), explained that a believer who was brought low by God, and made to confront his own sinful state before being granted assurance of salvation, would be ‘smitten with feare and trembling,’ a sorrow so intense that ‘if it continue and increase to some great measure, hath certaine Symptomes in the bodie, as burning heate, rowling in the intrals, a pining and fainting of the solide parts.’¹²¹ Being in touch with one’s bodily and emotional feelings was a religious duty, and this had an effect on the tone and register with which one articulated those feelings – as Charles Lloyd Cohen puts it, ‘to be a Puritan meant living a life distinctively ardent.’¹²² Sermons (if delivered by a skilful preacher) were received in a pitch of emotional fervour; prayers were offered with sighs and groans.¹²³ Michael Warner argued in a different context that religion ‘makes available a language of ecstasy,’ and for zealous Protestants in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries it also made available a language of passivity and subjection that in certain devotional contexts could present the male *dévo*t not as a man, but as a bride or lover of Christ: a believer’s distance from God could be construed as a wife’s yearning for her husband; the reassurance of Christ’s love was imagined as the bodily

¹²¹ Theodore Beza, *Quaestionum et responsionum Christianarum libellous* (1571), translated by Arthur Golding, *A booke of Christian Questions and Answers, Wherein are set foorth the cheef points of the Christian religion in maner of an abridgment* (London: William How for Abraham Veale, 1572); William Perkins, *A Treatise Tending unto a Declaration, Whether a man be in the Estate of Damnation, or the Estate of Grace*, 2nd edn. (London: Mrs Orwin for John Porter and John Legate, 1595), sig.D4v; Charles Lloyd Cohen, *God’s Caress: The Psychology of Puritan Religious Experience* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 10-11.

¹²² Cohen, *God’s Caress*, 4. Puritan spirituality of the next century has also been described as a tradition that ‘welcomes the power of feeling [...] delights in the amorous and sensory [...] demands the full responsiveness of emotional and sentient beings’ (N.H. Keeble, *The Literary Culture of Nonconformity* (Leicester: University of Leicester Press, 1987), 213). Other studies, which focus mostly on seventeenth-century New England, include David Leverenz, *The Language of Puritan Feeling: An Exploration in Literature, Psychology and Social History* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1980) and Edmund Leites, *The Puritan Conscience and Modern Sexuality* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986).

¹²³ John Craig, ‘The growth of English Puritanism’ (34-47) and Alexandra Walsham, ‘The godly and popular culture’ (277-293) in Coffey and Lim (eds), *Cambridge Companion to Puritanism*, 44 and 286.

comfort of a male lover's presence.¹²⁴ Samuel Rogers, a young minister in the 1630s, wrote of his desire for God with imagery drawn from the Song of Solomon: 'why standest thou afar off[f], oh my deare god, why hidest thou thy selfe from mee; my heart is yet fixed, grieves for my loosenes, folly; I will come unto thee, oh my first husband, oh hugge me in thyne armes, and I shall be safe.'¹²⁵ Susan Hardman Moore explains the paradox of divines who were 'patriarchs at home, but brides of Christ in spirit' as the means by which Reformed theology mitigated the distance and remoteness of its God, 'an arbitrary judge who divided the saved from the damned on unfathomable grounds.' Marriage – the union of the powerless with the powerful – was a vivid metaphor for the pious soul's yielding to God.¹²⁶ It was this tradition of transvestism of the soul that allowed Faunt to frame his devotion to Anthony in the quasi-marital terms of a hand-fasting. To return again to an already-quoted sentence, Faunt promised to 'close my hand with yours in wittnes of our perfecte and sincere vnion and band,' a troth-plighting that cemented the 'knott of our amitie.'¹²⁷ The subservience that such a bond implied sat awkwardly with the absolute equality of interest demanded by classical friendship, a mismatch that Faunt took pains to smooth over. On the one hand he promised to

¹²⁴ Michael Warner, 'Tongues Untied: Memories of a Pentecostal Boyhood', in *Village Voice Literary Supplement*, February 1993 (reprinted in Donald Morton (ed.), *The Material Queer: A LesBiGay Cultural Studies Reader* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1996), 39-45). Richard Rambuss, who cites Warner, has argued that devotion can be understood as a 'form of desire' (*Closet Devotions* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1998), 1).

¹²⁵ Diary of Samuel Rogers, cited in Tom Webster, "'Kiss me with the kisses of his mouth": gender inversion and Canticles in godly spirituality', in Tom Betteridge (ed.), *Sodomy in early modern Europe* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002), 148-163, 152.

¹²⁶ Susan Hardman Moore, 'Sexing the soul: gender and the rhetoric of Puritan piety', in R.N. Swanson (ed.), *Gender and Christian Religion* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1998), 175-186, 182.

¹²⁷ For Elizabethan hand-fasting ceremonies and other forms of betrothal and troth-plighting, see Henry Swinburne, *A Treatise of Spousals or Matrimonial Contracts* (c.1600) (London: S. Roycroft for Robert Clavell, 1686), sigs.Dd2r-Ee2v ('Of contracting spousals by signs' – particularly rings); Ann Jennalie Cook, *Making a Match: Courtship in Shakespeare and his Society* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), 151-57.

perfourme that you nowe demaund at my handes, as wherin I may at any other tyme stande you in steed sooner then my other consideracions whatsoever: as giuing allwayes myne obedience in this behalfe to the cheefe and inward authoritie you have to dispose of mee and all myne actions.

But he sidestepped the implications of absolute obedience to Anthony's 'inward authority' by inviting a reciprocal declaration of affection from his friend. His own abject devotion was something

I only remember vnto you to th'end you may see howe willingly I wold testifye vnto you the sinceritie of my hart by such poore meanes as you shall accept at my handes without refusing neuerthelesse or not thankfully accepting from you such demonstracion as you shall make of your like affected mynde towardes mee.¹²⁸

That Anthony was reluctant to afford him demonstration of his 'lyke affected mynde' was an instability at the heart of Faunt's ambitious conception of friendship. Neither the conventions of Ciceronian *amicitia* nor the levelling effect of spiritual election could quite bridge the social divide between them, a troubling fact made more complicated by Faunt's rhetoric of contingent passivity – contingent on a reciprocity that never came (although Anthony was struck by Faunt's declarations: he copied many of the most ardent sections of the February 22 letter into his notebook).¹²⁹ It was not long before Faunt came to realise that their 'wonted and sincere affection' was 'a matter of as great

¹²⁸ Fol.119v.

¹²⁹ EUL Laing MS III.193, fol.136r-v.

difficulty as importaunce, especially considering th'inequalitye of our condicions and the contrary course held by all the world besydes.'¹³⁰

Conclusion

The perfect union Faunt celebrated in his letter of February 1583 did not in fact last very long. Anthony was simply too irregular a correspondent to sustain such an intense relationship. Although Faunt wrote to Anthony at length on at least 26 known occasions, and probably more, in the two years after his return to England, Anthony wrote to Faunt only seven identifiable times.¹³¹ Affecting frustration with a favoured correspondent for his perceived neglect was a familiar pose in cultured letter exchanges. For Hubert Languet and Philip Sidney, it was part of the enjoyment and drama of an epistolary relationship to accuse each other of cruel disregard in elegant, self-pitying clauses inspired by classical models. To Languet's claim that 'I would write to you oftener if I was not led to conclude from your stubborn silence either that our letters are unwelcome to you, or that you care little for them,' Sidney replied: 'I wonder what possessed you so miserably to torture him who loves you more than himself [...] I would never have thought that our friendship [...] could have got to the point where one of us accuses the other of wickedness.'¹³² Faunt's reproofs as Anthony's letters became scant were less

¹³⁰ NF to AB, 6 August 1583, LPL MS 647, fol.158r.

¹³¹ On 1 December 1582 Faunt told Anthony he had sent him twelve letters since his return to England (NF to AB, LPL MS 647, fol.132r). Fourteen further letters survive from the period between December 1582 and April 1584: LPL MS 647 fols.119-122r, 128-129v, 136r-v, 138-139v, 143r, 145-146r, 150-152v, 154-155v, 157-158v, 162-163r, 166r-v, 181r, 183r, 185r-v. Anthony's letters are lost but their reception was acknowledged by Faunt on 8 May 1582 (fol.127r), 22 February 1583 (fol.119r), 6 May 1583 (fol.150r), 31 May 1583 (fol.154r), 17 December 1583 (fol.166r), 12 February 1584 (fol.138r), 28 February 1584 (fol.136r).

¹³² Kuin (ed.), *Correspondence of Sir Philip Sidney*, 1, 641, 657. Cicero had to defend himself against charges of slackness on numerous occasions: 'about letter dispatches, you find fault with me unjustly,' he wrote to Atticus in November 68. 'I shall not give you any further reason to complain of me as a casual correspondent. Mind on your side that with so much time on your hands you keep pace with me in this respect' (Baily (ed. and trans.), *Letters to Atticus*, 31-33).

literary. In December 1583, three months since he had received any word, he wrote bluntly that ‘you allott mee but two lettres in a yeare in requytail of the many you receaved of me [...] Your last was of the 8th of September and I have seene since of October and Nouember from you to others.’¹³³ In his letter of January 1583 Anthony had encouraged Faunt ‘as I love you and as I wishe your health to wryte often,’ but with the exception of an uncharacteristic flurry of letters in the spring of 1583, his own habit was to allow months to elapse between writing.¹³⁴ This infrequency, and the ongoing risk that Faunt’s letters might miscarry or be intercepted, cooled (although it did not entirely extinguish) his expansive affection and his self-confessions. He made even fewer references to his emotional wellbeing after April 1585, when he married the daughter of a London merchant called Archer, a young woman ‘that feareth God and is desirous above all thinges to growe forward in knowledge.’ A godly wife who ‘can bear my poore estate as contendedly as my selfe’ offered much comfort, and ‘some release of the many discontentmentes and greeves I found in my continuall attendaunce at Court.’¹³⁵

The intelligence-sharing operation that the two men had created also waned. By spring 1584, Anthony had settled near the principality of Béarn in the south-west of France, an autonomous kingdom ruled by the Protestant Henri of Navarre who, after the sickly Anjou (Elizabeth’s erstwhile suitor), was heir to the throne of France. Navarre was under intense pressure to convert to Catholicism and looked to England for support. Elizabeth and her ministers had awoken to the fact that Anthony could provide a

¹³³ NF to AB, 1 December 1583, LPL MS 647, fol.166r.

¹³⁴ Faunt made reference to Anthony’s words of January 1583 when he wrote during one of his friend’s periods of silence, recalling ‘that chardge you have layd vpon mee in the lettres Master Selwin brought mee [...] but particularly in these words (*as I love you and as I wishe your health to wryte often, and to communicate vnto you friendly and freely such thinges & special Instructions &c*)’ (6 August 1583, LPL MS 647, fol.158r).

¹³⁵ NF to AB, 16 April and 6 October 1585, LPL MS 647, fols.190r and 201v.

discreet and secure passage for letters to Navarre. The new ambassador in Paris, Sir Edward Stafford, had pointed out that there was ‘none properer’ than Anthony, ‘who is already in those parts,’ to act as a go-between.¹³⁶ As early as October 1583, the earl of Leicester had thanked Anthony for his help in forwarding letters from another significant French public figure, the duc de Montmorency, constable of France, relaying the queen’s pleasure that she ‘may have so good a man as you to send and receyve lettres by.’¹³⁷ By March, he had become irreplaceable: Faunt was surprised to be given the exact wording by his master Sir Francis Walsingham (‘we commonly receive but his generall instructions for the draught of a letter’) for a letter to Anthony in which his work in France was particularly commended and the words of the queen precisely recorded: the ‘great care and diligence you haue performed in that behalfe sheweth whose sonne you are as also that her Highnes is right glad to fynd by so good and tymelie experience that she hath a gentleman of your quality so towardly able to doe her seruice.’¹³⁸ Anthony’s intelligence now went directly to the Privy Council, and the quantity of domestic news in Faunt’s increasingly infrequent letters dropped considerably. Instead he concerned himself with family and financial affairs, and the problem of Anthony’s growing alienation from home.¹³⁹ Faunt had not anticipated that his friend’s absence would be so long. Lobbying Lady Bacon for her consent for Anthony’s new license in 1582, Faunt did not expect him ‘resolutely to staye the whole

¹³⁶ Sir Edward Stafford to Walsingham, 2 May 1584, *HMCS*, 3, 28.

¹³⁷ Leicester to AB, 10 October 1583, LPL MS 647, fol.160r.

¹³⁸ NF to AB, 2 March 1583/4, LPL MS 647, fol.143r; Walsingham to AB, 1 March 1584, EUL MS Laing III.193, fol.135r (copy).

¹³⁹ This was partly a security issue: passage to Anthony was so unreliable that Faunt was wary of committing too much material to the road. But it is a noticeable change after March 1584 that he stopped making references to material sent with his letters, and ceased to include national and international news in the body of his letters (whether these letters in fact came unaccompanied by such material is not known). For matters financial, see 16 April 1585, LPL MS 647, fol.189v; 31 December 1586, LPL MS 647, fol.219r-v; 21 February 1586/7, LPL MS 647, fol.222r. For family affairs, see fol.189v.

ty me of a newe Licence' and as the months passed with no sign that he planned to return, Faunt cautioned him in strong terms against continuing his 'voluntary banishment': 'the tymes are not as hertofore for the best disposed travaylors [...] they are not the best thought of where they wold be, that take any delight to absent them selues in forrayne partes, especially such as are of qualitey and are knowen to have no other cause then their priuat contentment.'¹⁴⁰ By the second half of the 1580s, Faunt could refer to the 'manifest wronges you do by staying there both to your selfe, your ffirendes, the Church of God, yea your Prince and Countrey,' and Walsingham might command that 'all delayes and excuses set aparte you do make your repaire home hither with as much expedition as you can,' to no effect: Anthony remained in France until February 1592, more than twelve years after he had first set out on his course of travel.¹⁴¹

The months immediately after Faunt's return to England in 1582 were therefore a particularly intense period in his epistolary friendship with Anthony. Their professional intelligence connection was its height, strengthened by Faunt's role as Anthony's personal man on the ground. Faunt regarded their time apart as a bridge between the time they had spent together in Paris and Geneva, and the pleasure he anticipated in his company on his return. Most importantly for the purposes of understanding Faunt's language in his early letters, he was frequently miserably unhappy and devoid of support. Lacking the reassurance of family devotion that would come with his marriage, he had to cope with the spiritual depravity he perceived at Court by himself.¹⁴² Well-versed in Reformed theology, Faunt recognised his depression

¹⁴⁰ NF to AB, 15 April 1582, LPL MS 647, fol.125v; 17 December 1583, fol.166r-v.

¹⁴¹ NF to AB, 3 June 1586, LPL MS 647, fol.213r; Walsingham to AB, 10 November 1588, LPL MS 647, fol.228r.

¹⁴² Although Faunt made frequent reference to his isolation and loneliness at this time (LPL MS 647, fols.126r, 127r, 130v), Conyers Read points out that a significant proportion of the university-educated men involved in foreign diplomacy were Reformed or radical Protestants who looked to Walsingham or

as a stage in his spiritual regeneration. But his awareness that it was necessary for God ‘thus to humble mee’ as part of his on-going journey towards assurance did not make his intermittent despair any easier to withstand.¹⁴³ Like the Essex minister Richard Rogers, who also ‘languished long [...] to see such vnsetlednesse in my life’ in the early 1580s, Faunt spent time in the ‘deadly dumpes’ of religious anxiety.¹⁴⁴ As the decade progressed, the doubtful would be able to find reassurance in the early works of what came to be called practical divinity, the vigorous set of private and group religious exercises intended to ‘stablish and settle’ Reformed Christians in their religion.¹⁴⁵ Rogers and other divines such as William Perkins theorised the experiences of despair and anguish common to the godly, and offered straightforward guides to working through those feelings. God’s children, worn down by their awareness of sin, would be helped by having set ‘before their eies in a glasse, the infinite, secret and deceitfull corruptions of the heart,’ and then being shown the path to assurance and peace.¹⁴⁶ For Faunt, undergoing his psychological testing in the years before such resources were available, his letters to Anthony were in themselves exercises in piety, spiritual confessions of anguish and doubt that did not necessarily require an answer (and seldom

Leicester for preferment (Read, *Mr Secretary Walsingham*, 2, 259-61, cited in Collinson, *Elizabethan Puritan Movement*, 166-67). Such an institutional aspect did not remove the need for domestic and community-based religious support, a key aspect of Reformed piety (Tom Webster, ‘Early Stuart Puritanism’, in Coffey and Lim (eds), *Cambridge Companion to Puritanism*, 48-66, 53; Benedict, *Christ’s Churches*, 490-532, 511).

¹⁴³ NF to AB, 15 April 1582, LPL MS 647, fol.126v.

¹⁴⁴ Richard Rogers, *Seven Treatises, containing svch direction as is gathered ovt of the Holie Scriptvres, leading and guiding to true happines, both in this life, and in the life to come: and may be called the practice of Christianitie* (London: Felix Kyngston for Thomas Man and Robert Dexter, 1603), sigs.Ddd2v and T5r; Winship, ‘Weak Christians’, 462-3.

¹⁴⁵ Richard Rogers, *Certaine sermons preached and penned by Richard Rogers* (London: Felix Kingston for Thomas Man, 1612), sig.A1r (title page).

¹⁴⁶ Rogers, *Seven Treatises*, sig.A5r. For the development of Reformed ‘practical piety’, see Christopher Hill, *Society & Puritanism in Pre-Revolutionary England* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1964; Pimlico, 2003), 382-416; Winship, ‘Weak Christians’; Cohen, *God’s Caress*, 75-110; Charles E. Hambrick-Stowe, ‘Practical divinity and spirituality’, in Coffey and Lim (eds), *Cambridge Companion to Puritanism*, 191-205.

received one). In this, Faunt's letters are the predecessors of the spiritual journals that the next generation of pious laity were exhorted to keep. But they were also 'testimonies of affection', expressed in the cultured terms of classical-humanist friendship with all the ardour that the esteemed institution permitted.¹⁴⁷ Faunt used the terms of valorised male friendship to create a language in which spiritual self-confession and emotional need were articulable within the conventions of early modern relationships. Poised at the intersection of these two traditions, Faunt's letters at the height of his friendship with Anthony throbbed with a spiritual and affectionate passion, producing a discourse on masculine love that was startlingly ardent.

And what of Anthony? As we will see in the next chapter, the relationships he pursued in France were not concerned with the potent language of affect spoken by Faunt. For Anthony, maintaining his position in a foreign country without the support of his family (and with the intermittent permission of the English government) was no easy task, and demanded the on-going cultivation of useful friends. If Ciceronian *amicitia perfecta* was the idealised image of male friendship in the sixteenth century, shrewdly-judged instrumental friendship was its earthier form, and it is to that institution – pragmatic, mutually-beneficial and essentially unromantic – that we now turn.

¹⁴⁷ 'Testimonies of affection' comes from NF to AB, 6 August 1583, LPL MS 647, fol.158r.

Chapter 2

Instrumentality: The prison, liberty and writing friendship in the space in between

Abstract

This chapter reads the letters between the imprisoned Catholic exile Anthony Standen and Anthony Bacon as testaments to the act of forging an instrumental friendship in the late sixteenth century. Approaching the language of friendship from a different angle to that of the previous chapter, I argue that the prison correspondence shows the ease with which a relation of mutual obligation and shared advantage could be dressed with a rhetoric of intimacy and affection. I further suggest that as well as being an environment conducive to the intelligencing activities in which both men were engaged, the early modern prison could be a specifically facilitating institution for the formation of friendships based on favour, support and reciprocal assistance.

Context

In 1584, Anthony settled in the Huguenot stronghold of Montauban, in the south-west of France, where he discharged an unofficial duty as the queen's representative to the Protestant Henri of Navarre (although his diplomatic role was never made entirely clear to his family, who continued to clamour for his return). Anthony's security was severely shaken in 1586 when, during a turbulent period of food shortages and political tension, he and one of his servants were publicly charged with sodomy: only the intervention of Navarre prevented punishment being meted out. Anthony's life in Montauban was thereafter less comfortable, and his dented credit made it difficult for him to raise the funds necessary for passage home. Only in 1590, with his health steadily worsening, was he able to begin the slow journey back to England, and he made for Bordeaux.

Archive

Correspondence with Anthony Standen forms one of the most sizeable corpora in the Bacon papers. Standen wrote regularly, and when he returned to England he frequently acted as Anthony's eyes and ears at Court: his letters from the mid-1590s are vivid snapshots of Elizabeth's final decade. 46 letters survive

from his period of imprisonment in Bordeaux in 1590-1, 34 of them to Anthony (none of Anthony's survive before spring 1593). 22 other letters, written between Standen's release and his return to England, have also been closely examined (LPL MSS 648 and 649). Four letters from Anthony Bacon to his uncle Lord Burghley, leadenly composed in French and written by an amanuensis, survive in the State Papers and have also been incorporated into this account (TNA SP 78/23 and 78/24).

In August 1590 a stranger entered Bordeaux. For the city officials, wary of new arrivals at a time of instability, he was difficult to place. Tall and with sandy hair, he did not look like a local, although he spoke French without a foreign accent. Dockside rumour had it that he had recently left the port of Ferrol in Galicia, where the naval forces of Philip II were said to be gathering. But he did not look like a Spaniard either, despite his fashionable black clothes and distinctively Spanish hat. The man admitted to little other than his name, which he said was André Sandal. Sandal's cover did not last long.

Within days, he had been recognised by a French diplomat called Pierre de Segusson, sieur de Longlée, who for eight years had been ambassador to the Spanish court in Madrid. De Longlée demanded the arrest of the so-called Sandal, otherwise known as Andrea Santal, Pompeo Pellegrini and Antonio Standin, Spanish spy of indeterminate origin and enemy of France. Sandal – in fact an English Catholic exile whose real name was Anthony Standen – remained in prison for the next fourteen months.¹

¹ Standen described the circumstances of his arrest in a letter to Lord Burghley in June 1591 (AS to WC, 12 June 1591, TNA SP 78/24, fols.206-208v). Standen's fluency in French is attested to by the fact that he passed as a native during a later voyage as far as northern Spain (AS to AB, 9 December 1591, LPL MS 648, fol.132v). His inconveniently Spanish attire comes from an early letter, when he asked for a new hat to replace his 'scallop sh[e]ll after the spanishe iett' which is not 'currant for these stretes' (AS to AB, undated spring 1591, LPL MS 648, fol.143v). Details of his informant are from Albert Mousset (ed.), *Dépêches diplomatiques de M. de Longlée, résident de France en Espagne (1582-1590)* (Paris: Plon-Nourrit, 1912) and Allen, *Post and Courier Service*, 30 and 49. Biographical accounts of Standen's life include: Kathleen M. Lea, 'Sir Anthony Standen and some Anglo-Italian Letters', *English Historical Review* 48 (1932), 461-477 (which includes a physical description taken from a letter to Lord Burghley in 1591); G. Ashe, 'An Elizabethan adventurer: the career of Sir Antony [*sic*] Standen', *The Month* new series 8 (1952), 81-92; Leo Hicks, 'The Embassy of Sir Anthony Standen in 1603, Part I', *Recusant History* 5:3 (1959), 91-127; Paul E.J. Hammer, 'Standen, Sir Anthony', *ODNB* (accessed 13.04.11); Paul E.J. Hammer, 'An Elizabethan Spy Who Came in from the Cold: the Return of Anthony Standen to England in 1593', *Bulletins of the Institute of Historical Research* 65 (1992), 277-295. See also

His activities in prison, and specifically the friendship he forged with Anthony Bacon, form the focus of this chapter. The circumstances of this meeting have attracted virtually no concentrated attention, but it was of crucial importance to both men.² Standen was to become one of Anthony's most loyal lieutenants, his devotion assured by the value of the friendship: it was this relationship that enabled Standen to return to England and re-enter the intelligence service as a follower first of Lord Burghley and subsequently the earl of Essex; his position at the heart of Essex's political secretariat – with its close ties to the Stuart court – gave him privileged access to the Scottish government in the closing years of Elizabeth's reign. Standen would make much of these links (and his tie to James's mother, Mary queen of Scots) when the new king came south in 1603. More importantly for my purposes, the acquaintance constructed between Standen and Anthony in 1591 reveals something about the nature of instrumental friendships between men, and the ease with which a mutually-beneficial relationship (what we might think of today as a 'professional' acquaintanceship) could come to be draped in an affective language of loyalty and favour. This is not to suggest that such language was inauthentically applied: in the sixteenth century, relations of utility as well as emotional bonds were expressed in the highly personalised terms of intimate friendship. In the first section of this chapter, I reveal the previously unknown history between Anthony Bacon and Anthony Standen, a connection that predated their meeting in Bordeaux. I argue that this existing relationship provided a firm basis of shared obligation onto which the two men quickly built an advantageous friendship. In

Freedman, 'Anthony Bacon and his World', 143-67; and *PP*, chapter 5 (152-198), which investigates Standen's position within the Essex circle in the later part of the decade. *GL* offers a novelistic and often inaccurate portrait of Standen, and mistakenly identifies him as a Scot (78). *HF* provides a brief but accurate overview of the meeting in Bordeaux (125-129).

² The prison period is dispatched in a paragraph by Leo Hicks ('The Embassy of Sir Anthony Standen', 100) and a sentence by Kathleen Lea: 'Anthony Bacon procured his release in October' ('Sir Anthony Standen and some Anglo-Italian Letters', 466).

the second section, I consider the context of the early modern prison. Standen's jail was more than a picaresque setting in the story of their meeting. It was a space which permitted and to some extent promoted the sorts of intelligence-driven epistolary activities that both men conducted. Standen's incarceration was, from Anthony's point of view, one of the most useful things about him: with the right sort of external support, his prison was able to become an intelligence *atelier* connected to Anthony's own lodging via letters carried by his servants and pages. During the months of Standen's imprisonment, they established a successful cottage-industry which produced collaboratively-written informational dispatches for their patrons in England. In the third and last section I argue that the architectural characteristics and social composition of Standen's prison created an atmosphere of loquacious sociability that runs counter to our notion of a restrictive and repressive carceral environment. Early modern prisons offered a promiscuity of social intercourse that was not necessarily available in the free world, a liberty that offered obvious attractions to men engaged in intelligence work. The unfettered sociability of the prison could also pose risks, and I end by suggesting that inmates had to develop strategies to identify 'true-hearted' friends amid the *mêlée*, 'masculine sweet hearts' who were prepared to honour the ties of friendship and stand by a fellow in need.³ The prison therefore emerges as a facilitating institution for early modern friendship, a place which both tested and sustained the principles of good fellowship.

Section 1: Prison meeting

The misfortune Anthony Standen suffered in Bordeaux was not entirely undeserved. He was a Spanish spy – and had been with varying degrees of commitment for almost

³ G.[effray] M.[inshall], *Essayes and Characters of a Prison and Prisoners* (London: Mathew Walbancke, 1618), sig.D2v.

twenty years – but he was also an agent for the English. Most of his life had been spent managing such conflicting loyalties.⁴ Born into a Catholic family in Surrey, Standen gave up a position in Elizabeth's court to follow the Lennox family to Scotland on the betrothal of Lord Darnley to Mary Stuart (a 'youthful forfayte' on his part not forgiven by Elizabeth until many years later, if at all).⁵ Standen was not to return to England for over a quarter of a century – writing to his brother Edmund in 1592, he reflected that his 'maner of life [...] hath bene in perpetuall motion and so conformable to our Englishe prouerbe of the *Rowlinge stone*: If I should tell you howe I haue passed these 28 yeares it woud seem matter of some admiration.'⁶ Sent abroad to report the birth of prince James to Mary's Guise relations in 1566, Standen found himself stranded in France by the assassination of Darnley and the coup against the queen of Scots. He attached himself to Mary's continental allies before drifting into more directly treasonous service under Philip II of Spain in 1572, and the grand duke of Tuscany in 1578. From at least 1582 he was also in correspondence with Sir Francis Walsingham, a connection that stiffened into official employment in 1587 after the execution of the queen of Scots and the deaths of the duke and duchess of Tuscany: under orders from Walsingham, Standen travelled to Spain and Portugal in spring 1588, whence he provided detailed information about the 'puissant and myghtie Army so longe a preparinge whiche in the ende is in redynes.'⁷ This valuable intelligence in the run-up to the Armada was rewarded with an

⁴ Evidence for Standen's early career comes largely from accounts he wrote for King James as part of his attempt to win preferment ('Sir Anthony Standen's discourse of the murder of Rizzio', *HMCS*, 16, 15; 'Petition of Sir Anthony Standen, and Anthony Standen his brother, to the King, for arrears of pensions granted them by the late Queen of Scots', TNA SP 14/1, fol.234r). Written with specific self-aggrandizing intent, these narratives should be read with scepticism. Kathleen Lea and Leo Hicks have both attempted to reconcile Standen's story with extant archival evidence.

⁵ AS to WC, 12 June 1591, TNA SP 78/24, fol.206v.

⁶ AS to Edmund Standen, 30 September 1592, LPL MS 648, fol.266v (copy).

⁷ 'BC' to 'Giacopo Mannuci' [AS to Francis Walsingham], 30 April 1588, BL Harley MS 295, fol.194r. Walsingham's mind may have turned to Standen when he received a briefing document in 1586 laying out the ideal specifications for intelligencers in Spain: 'he that shalbe appointed in this *Action*, is to be no straunger borne, nor an English man ioyned in consanguynitie with Spanishe blood [...] [but one] who

English pension, a wage he sought to supplement in April 1590 by joining a band of émigré Englishmen in Madrid in the employment of the Spanish state. Commissioned for service in the royal army destined for Brittany, Standen made use of his time while waiting to embark at Ferrol in journeying to Bordeaux, ostensibly to gather information for his Spanish masters on the strength of support for the Catholic League in southern France, but in fact to write to Walsingham with greater freedom. It was there that Monsieur de Longlée recognised him from his time at the Spanish court, denounced him to the authorities, and secured his arrest. Shortly thereafter Standen learnt that his employer and protector Francis Walsingham – the only person who could vouch for his service to the English state and persuade the French to release him – had died four months previously. With no help forthcoming from Spain, and no means of contacting England, Standen's prison debts mounted and his conditions of incarceration became increasingly wretched.

It was during this period of extreme privation that Anthony Bacon arrived in Bordeaux. The city was a stop-over on his journey home after nearly twelve years abroad. Walsingham's death had changed his circumstances too. The late Principal Secretary had taken a greater professional interest in Anthony than his uncle the Lord Treasurer, and without Walsingham's patronage it was by no means clear that he could continue his extended residence on the continent. It was time for him to heed the demands of his mother and brother, leave France and rebuild his fractured relationships with his family. He was in no great rush to return, however. Hampered by ill-health and happy to blame his deferred departure on contrary winds and a tardy wine-fleet, Anthony caused a further delay by involving himself in a dispute between the English merchant community and the rebellious town of Blaye, which had revolted from Henri

wholy depend[s] vppon preferment and credit at his retorne according to loyall service' (BL Harley MS 295, fol.165r).

IV's rule to the League.⁸ At some point in the early part of 1591 he heard about an incarcerated Englishman who was 'publissed [...] for [a] Spanysse instrument', and he made discreet enquiries.⁹ It is unclear which man made the first attempt at communication, but contact was made and in the early spring he received a relieved note from Standen assuring him that 'I am the same yow presumed me to be' and urging him to visit.¹⁰ By the first week of April 1591 they were in regular contact, and an enthusiastic correspondence was soon established between the two men.

If Anthony Bacon made the initial approach, it may be because he guessed that behind the *nom d'espion* of André Sandal was the Anthony Standen he already knew. They had never met, but had been aware of each other's activities for many years. Almost a decade previously, when Anthony was contemplating a trip to Italy, he had asked Standen for help, and the latter had 'broken the yse and sounded the fforde' with his then patron the duke of Florence in order to obtain safe conduct through the peninsula as far south as Naples. He also agreed to act as tour guide for the duration of the expedition.¹¹ It is not clear how they had come to hear of each other, but Standen was well known to English travellers. Perhaps he had been recommended to Anthony by Arthur Throckmorton in Lyons at the start of 1582 (Throckmorton was on his way home from Florence, where Standen acted as a sort of unofficial – and renegade – representative of the English nation).¹² Anthony never actually made his intended trip. By the time he had been granted a passport by the French crown, the rumours emerging from Italy of English suffering under the banner of the Inquisition had put him off, and

⁸ AB to WC, 29 January 1591, TNA SP 78/23, fol.41r; Maurice Wilkinson, 'The English on the Gironde in 1592-3', *English Historical Review* 31 (1916), 279-91; *HF*, 125-26.

⁹ AS to WC, 12 June 1591, TNA SP 78/24, fol.206v.

¹⁰ AS to AB, n.d. spring 1591, LPL MS 649, fol.479r.

¹¹ AS to AB, n.d. spring 1591, LPL MS 649, fol.479r.

¹² *HF*, 84.

he headed instead for the south of France.¹³ But the introduction had not been wasted. Soon afterwards his companion Edward Selwyn risked an Italian journey, and enjoyed – under Standen’s protection – a ‘longe staye in Pisa and peregrynation through Tuscany.’¹⁴

Anthony’s timely arrival in Bordeaux allowed the two men to embark on a relationship whose structures of reciprocal assistance had been set in place by the Italian affair nine years earlier. Desperate for help and degraded by imprisonment, Standen nevertheless took care to interpret Anthony’s provision of aid as the discharging of a debt of honour. The latter’s ‘courteous acknowledginge and favourable offers’ were the ‘frute’ Standen reaped thanks to his earlier ‘dewtifull endeavours’ on his behalf, as well as the services he had extended to Selwyn ‘for your sake.’ The issue of Edward Selwyn was sensitive: in passing through Bordeaux earlier that year, Selwyn had failed to respond to a plea for help from Standen. Unconscious of his obligations (Standen had signed the letter with one of his many aliases) Selwyn had sailed home to England leaving his Italian host unaided. Standen was gracious enough to ascribe this lapse to ignorance rather than discourtesy, but the implication was clear. Had Selwyn been able to carry word of his incarceration home, he would certainly have been released sooner.¹⁵

It was in Standen’s interest to draw attention to Anthony’s duty of care. He was about to ask for a lot in return. In the seven months of his imprisonment, he had fallen deeply into debt. Early modern prisons were private institutions, and prisoners were expected to pay for all services and privileges.¹⁶ Without money, Standen was

¹³ NF to AB, 12 March 1581/2, LPL MS 647, fol.108v.

¹⁴ AS to AB, 8 April 1591, LPL MS 648, fol.27v. This letter appears in the Appendix as Letter 2.

¹⁵ AS to Edward Selwyn, 13 June 1591, LPL MS 648, fol.45r (copy).

¹⁶ In 1597, the standard rate for accommodation at the Fleet prison in London ranged from 10s to 30s per week, depending on the level of comfort a prisoner could afford (Augustus Jessopp (ed.), *The Oeconomy*

dependent on loans from the keeper of the prison for his food and board, and he had no means to pay for additional luxuries like clothing and writing paper – or the various bribes to porters and doormen necessary for the unmolested passage of letters.

Anthony's arrival changed that, and Standen was quick to take advantage of his new well-wisher by requesting some 'very good and fyne lynen' to replace the single spare shirt with which he had been imprisoned, and – anticipating release – street clothes that had a less conspicuously Spanish cut.¹⁷ Their prior connection enabled Standen to make these bald demands with only a token apology for his 'brasen face', and provided a context for him to float the more serious matter of his prison debt:

The 60 crownes I owe my hoste here is that most pynchethe me, which yf I coulde by any waye fynde meanes to borowe vntill I had answere from Spayne woulde be no smale good turne for me att this instant, but havinge in this towne neyther acqayntance nor credyt I maye hope lyttle that waye, and content myselfe with the ambition I haue of your good opinion and lykinge of the humble affection of your lowelie frende and humble servant.¹⁸

From the outset, Standen made little distinction between Anthony's ability to relieve his immediate material deprivations, and his willingness to pay off more serious liabilities. When he later complained of his 'myserable estate in dett here 60 crownes and without sherte or a whole tatter to my backe' he was doing the same thing, collapsing the distinction between his beggarly prison conditions and his crippling prison debt.¹⁹ His

of the Fleete: An Apologeticall Answere of Alexander Harris (late Warden there) unto XIX Articles sett forth against him by the Prisoners (London: Camden Society, 1879), 82).

¹⁷ AS to AB, n.d. spring 1591, LPL MS 648, fol.143v.

¹⁸ AS to AB, n.d. spring 1591, LPL MS 649, fol.479v.

¹⁹ AS to AB, 8 April 1591, LPL MS 648, fol.27r.

new friend was in a position to alleviate the former with his provision of clothes and supplies, and from the beginning of their re-acquaintance Standen saw in him the means to a resolution of the latter (although it transpired that his resources were not as substantial as Standen had hoped).²⁰ In his prison letters he framed his loyalty to Anthony at least partly in financial terms: when in September the prison keeper advised that he should appeal to the court of parlement to defray his charges, Standen responded to this sensible suggestion that he ‘coulede do nothinge ether in this or any other matter without your consent as a Cavalier to whome I had commytted all my actions and my person also.’²¹

Anthony’s arrival in Bordeaux was a piece of good luck for Standen, cut off as he was from his protectors and regarded as a Spanish spy by the French. It was perhaps more fortuitous than has been recognised – not only was Anthony his countryman, and willing to play the good Samaritan, but he also happened to be in Standen’s debt.²² Before they became friends, indeed before they met, the two men existed in a network of allegiance and loyalty that served the needs of Englishmen working overseas. Standen made the threads of this web clear when he wrote to Edward Selwyn:

I finde Mr Bacon no lesse fauourable to me than I was desirous to serue youe at your beyng in Toskane, which yf I did not accordyn[g] to your merite, yet did I my pour possibilitie, which I can assure you stode you in more stede then euer I intende to vaunt of, wherin I nede not to complayne hauinge founde suche gratitude at the

²⁰ Standen made reference to his prison debts on 25 June (LPL MS 648, fol.41r), 13 July (fol.54r), 27 July (fol.56r) and 24 September (fol.84r).

²¹ AS to AB, 23 September 1591, LPL MS 648, fol.80r-v.

²² Leo Hicks uses the phrase ‘good Samaritan’ to refer to Anthony (‘The Embassy of Sir Anthony Standen’, 100). Others have drawn attention to the ‘heaven-sent’ opportunity he presented (Hammer, ‘An Elizabethan Spy’, 280; *GL*, 78), but it has not generally been noted that the two men had a previous history.

handes of this honest natured gentilman, who by his infinite courtesies shewethe in me the likinge he hath of the affectyon I bere youe & of the preparatife by me made for his way into Italie yf his resolution of comminge thyther had continued.²³

The considerable periods of time both men had spent abroad had not been effected without favours from others. By drawing attention to the services he had performed for Selwyn, and the preparations he had undertaken (albeit unnecessarily) for Anthony's Italian voyage, Standen was situating himself within this continental social network that relied on reciprocal favours and mutual support.

As it turned out, Standen had overestimated the extent of Anthony's financial resources. Although he could provide personal effects and material comforts, it would take another seven months before sufficient funds were raised to pay off Standen's more serious debts.²⁴ But Standen stood to benefit from the connection in another, more valuable way. With his close family connections to the English government and his own experience of working as an informer for Walsingham, Anthony was an ideal person to facilitate Standen's re-integration into the intelligence service and help him renew his English pension. Given the highly personalised nature of Elizabeth's court, Standen could not be sure that evidence of his loyalty to Walsingham would migrate to the hands of whoever took over the role of Principal Secretary. Until the post was filled, the Lord Treasurer was *de facto* head of national security, and the member of the Privy Council

²³ AS to Edward Selwyn, 13 June 1591, LPL MS 646, fol.45r (copy).

²⁴ It is by no means clear that Anthony was responsible for raising the money, although he wrote to his uncle to ask for 200 crowns – rather more than three times Standen's stated prison debt: 'Les despens qu'il a faictz en prison montent desia plus de deux centz escus' (AB to WC, 15 June, TNA SP 78/24, fol.229r). At the beginning of October Standen was in contact with a man named Bullart who offered to pay his expenses (AS to AB, 2[?] or 11[?] October 1591, LPL MS 648, fol.103r); it may have been as soon as the following day that he was released. Some funds may nonetheless have come from the highest level in England: Standen later thanked Burghley for 'yowr honores favourable offices' and 'her Maiesties gracious inclynation' in helping to secure his release (AS to WC, 14 November 1591, LPL MS 648, fol.112r (copy)).

with ultimate responsibility for English agents working overseas. Standen may not have been aware of Burghley's distaste for the business of secret intelligence, a dislike that manifested itself when his lordship cut the funding of dozens of Walsingham's informants, but he was certainly aware that his new friendship with the Lord Treasurer's nephew gave him the best chance of regaining his position on the crown's pay-roll.²⁵ By winning Anthony's trust, he increased the likelihood that any appeal he sent to Lord Burghley would be viewed with favour. As soon as contact was established Standen set out to tempt Anthony with promise of high-level intelligence, and reassure him that despite appearances he was not a Spanish spy. In what is probably his first substantial communication, Standen entreated him

when yowr helthe and force shall permyt yow will take the payne to do that whiche my dewtie woulde I should begyn yf my retention forbyd me not [i.e., visit him in prison] that I may display before you my secretest intents and so see and as ytt were towche with yowr fingar howe sinisterly I suffer this punisshment.²⁶

He repeated this combination of professed innocence and promised secrets in his first dated letter on 7 April:

Her Hyghnes knoweth me to be a Catholick whiche I haue ever professed, so doth her Maiestie knowe that I am her subiect and sworne servant, whiche to my power I haue contynually made profession of as Sir ffraunces will knowe [...] This my letter and the rest of my conference with yow I must commytt to yowr secrecie as matter that

²⁵ Hammer, 'An Elizabethan Spy', 288.

²⁶ AS to AB, n.d. spring 1591, LPL MS 649, fol.479r-v.

concernethe more Her Highnes service then myne owne safetie althoughe the last purporteth me mutche.²⁷

These assurances worked. By the beginning of May the men evidently had some sort of understanding: Standen began sending notes and memos reporting daily business in the town hall, and by June he was ready to write the Lord Treasurer a long and ardent declaration of loyalty; Anthony smoothed the way by assuring his uncle Lord Burghley that ‘I love him [Standen] as a loyal Englishman and a true servant and subject of her Majesty.’²⁸ But Standen may not initially have realised how useful he was to his new friend: Anthony was prepared to make as much use as he could of Standen’s assets and connections. His twelve-year absence abroad had soured relations with his mother, uncle and even his brother Francis. His standing in France had been fatally compromised by the accusation that he had engaged in sodomy with a household servant – a charge that he did everything in his power to keep from following him to England. Failing health severely limited his freedom of movement, and made a return home medically necessary as well as professionally advisable. But he faced an uncertain future in England. His Hertfordshire estates of Gorhambury and Redbourne were less profitable than they might be, and Francis’s stalled career hovered as an unwelcome example of what to expect in the competitive and factious court.²⁹ Viewed as a potential intelligence asset, Standen was a prize. Fluent in French, Italian and Spanish, a pensioner of the king of Spain and an intimate of the English and Irish Catholics attached to the court in Madrid, his value as a double-agent allied to Anthony was

²⁷ AS to AB, 7 April 1591, LPL MS 648, fol.27r-v.

²⁸ ‘Je l’ayme comme loyal Anglois et bon seruiteur et subiect de sa Maieste’ (AB to WC, 15 June 1591, TNA SP 78/24, fol.228v).

²⁹ *HF*, 121-139; *GL*, 76.

immense. In a letter to his uncle, Anthony explained that Standen would be able to ‘serve her Majesty and his country a great deal, if he wants to use faithfully and opportunely the friendship and trust which he has acquired in Spain and in France among the Hispanicised French.’³⁰ Standen too clearly anticipated remaining on the continent with his very real identity as a Catholic exile as ‘cover’. In his letter to Burghley on 12 June, he urged the lord treasurer to make arrangements for his release, but to do so ‘in sutch warye sorte, as yt maye not appere to Spayne that I receyve my favour from yow’. On the issue of his return, his refusal was diplomatic but firm: not only would his appearance in England damage his reputation among the English Catholic diaspora, but he rated himself unsuited to ‘domesticall affayres’ and inclined instead ‘to that parte whiche by my experience abroad I haue made some habyt in, wherin I fynde myselfe more apte to do her Highnes service.’³¹ Informants working abroad needed someone at home to receive their intelligence and liaise with other branches of government, and in the uncertain period following Walsingham’s death, Anthony Bacon – who would soon be home – was an obvious choice as Standen’s ‘handler’. There is no question that by the autumn Standen and Anthony regarded their partnership as one of mutual professional benefit. In September Standen wrote to Selwyn relaying a conversation he had had with another Englishman in Bordeaux, in which he had insisted that ‘whatsoever I pretended in England I did not meane to sett any other a wourke then Mr B[acon] [...] so long as yt liked him to take the paynes & to vouchsafe me his protection.’ If ‘setting a wourke’ was what Standen assumed Anthony would do with his own ‘secretest intents’, the existence of which he had announced in

³⁰ ‘Tel home peut beaucoup servir a sa Maieste et la patrie, au cas qu’il voulut employer fidellement et opportunement l’amitie et creance quil s’est acquise en Espagne et en France parmi les francois espagnolizes’ (AB to WC, 15 June 1591, TNA SP 78/24, fol.228r).

³¹ AS to WC, 12 June 1591, TNA SP 78/24, fol.207r-v.

his first letters, it suggests that this collaboration was mooted at the earliest point in their relationship.³²

The two men were quick to make friends because they recognised the future value of the acquaintance, but they were also aware that they had met in a strategically important city at a time of increasing international tension. Bordeaux, with its long-established wine trading ties to England, was the gateway to southern France where support for the pro-English Henri IV (crowned in 1589) was strongest. It was within relatively easy reach of Spanish border towns where agents and English merchants gathered intelligence about enemy naval activity at the bases of Santander and Ferrol, a crucial task since the English had no resident diplomatic representation in Spain. News of troop movements in the Bay of Biscay was particularly precious to English councillors: the naval force massing at Ferrol to which Standen had been assigned had slipped out of port in September 1590 to resupply the Spanish bridgehead at Blavet in Brittany, an ominous development to those who anticipated another Spanish invasion attempt after the loss of the Grand Armada.³³ As we will see, Standen enjoyed privileged access to city politics from his prison cell, and Anthony was on friendly terms with Marshal Matignon, the mayor of Bordeaux and governor of the province of Guyenne. Standen also maintained an unparalleled network of contacts in Spain and elsewhere which, although lying dormant since his arrest, could be reactivated with the help of Anthony's letter-bearers and messengers. In addition to potential career opportunities, their new friendship gave the men the chance to pool their resources and

³² AS to Edward Selwyn, 5 September 1591, LPL MS 648, fol.87v (copy).

³³ Mack P. Holt, *The French Wars of Religion, 1562-1629*, 2nd edn. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995, 2005), 140-1; R.B. Wernham, *After the Armada: Elizabethan England and the Struggle for Western Europe 1588-1595* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984), 295-6; Paul E.J. Hammer, *Elizabeth's Wars: War, Government and Society in Tudor England, 1544-1604* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 177; Alan David Francis, *The Wine Trade* (London: A&C Black, 1972), 25-46; Thomas Brennan, *Burgundy to Champagne: The Wine Trade in Early Modern France* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997), 79-81.

improve the quality of intelligence they fed back to England. It also exposed Anthony to a new range of contacts and informants, a benefit that was not without danger. A letter from Standen on 27 July captures some of these dynamics:

Right worshipfull I sende yow here the letter for Mr Darell to whome I haue wrytten that yow amonges other favours haue accommodate[d] me wythe yowr servant William for this iorney whome I haue expressly sent vnto hym to knowe an answere of two other letters I had before wrytten vnto hym, and consideringe the dyffycultie of the wayes, he that ys commynge in them maye brynge me his resolute answere, whiche I haue prayed hym to performe and not to dowte of the bearer by whome I entreate hym to sende me to 50 crownes.³⁴

The letter is revealing partly for its representation of the receipt and dispatch service that Anthony was able to provide. In this instance, his servant William was seconded to Standen's management to carry a letter to a Mr Darrell, mentioned elsewhere as an 'olde acquayntance' dwelling in Agen.³⁵ A reliable bearer could be trusted not only to chase up unanswered letters, but to return with substantial amounts of money: Standen wanted William to deliver his request to Darrell for fifty crowns, a sum almost equal to his entire prison debt (there is no evidence this plea was successful). The letter also reveals another friendly service Anthony performed for Standen. He did not just provide the communication infrastructure necessary for Standen to reconnect with his network of acquaintances. He lent Standen his name, reputation and financial credit as an English gentleman of high birth, guaranteeing the probity of messengers who might speak for his imprisoned and indebted compatriot. He displayed remarkable ease of

³⁴ AS to AB, 27 July 1591, LPL 648, fol.56r.

³⁵ AS to AB, n.d 1591, LPL MS 648 fol.142r.

mind at this co-option of his standing and servant. The ‘Mr Darrell’ of Agen from whom Standen wanted to extract money was in fact a senior member of the English Catholic leadership. Thomas Darrell was an early émigré from Elizabeth’s Protestant England, departing for the Spanish Netherlands in 1562 after refusing at Oxford to take the oath of supremacy. Ordained a priest in the Catholic faith, he was co-founder of the English College at Douai, chaplain to the bishop of Gascony and dean of Agen.³⁶

Attaching one’s name to a transaction involving a high-ranking Catholic was not free of risk: Anthony had already incurred his uncle’s displeasure (and his mother’s apoplectic rage) by interceding for the bishop of Cahors on behalf of two imprisoned seminary priests.³⁷ His willingness to facilitate Standen’s communication with Darrell suggests he harboured a certain ideological blindness when offered the prospect of an enhanced list of contacts. While helping Standen, Anthony was also adopting his network of impressively well-connected people, whether loyal to the crown or (perceived) traitor. Thomas Darrell became his own correspondent after this introduction: two years later, the dean wrote to him (now back in England) with the less-than innocuous offer of hospitality to any young scholars looking to improve their French.³⁸

The productive friendship constructed between the two men in 1591 had a dense under-girding of mutual advantage. Their initial re-acquaintance was fuelled by a prior history and Standen’s past services, but both men came swiftly to realise the rich potential of an ongoing professional relationship. This was, from an early modern perspective, an exemplary friendship of the useful, instrumental sort. If Francis Bacon later defined friendship in a high-minded fashion as only that relation ‘when a man can

³⁶ Peter Holmes, ‘Darrell, Thomas (b. 1538/9)’, *ODNB* (accessed 18.09.11).

³⁷ *HF*, 111-113.

³⁸ Thomas Darrell to AB, 20 March 1593, LPL MS 649, fol.93r, and the same to the same, 20 June 1593, fol.198r.

say to himselfe, I love this man without respect of utility,' his brother understood the term more capaciously.³⁹ The anxiety observable in Nicholas Faunt's earnest cultivation of a 'perfect' friendship with the well-connected Anthony is entirely absent in the correspondence with Standen. They were conscious of, and comfortable with, their pronounced differences in status and religion: it was clear to both of them that their friendship comprised, and was demonstrated through, their shared professional objectives. As Standen wrote in September,

Itt lyketh yow still to contynewe your good lykyng of me, as by ympartyng affayres that so nere do concerne yow, yow maketh sufficient shewe[;] yow can not do ytt to any that with more zeale and fydelytie will yelde yow the counterchange, and with more affection wyll serue yow, wherof I beseche yow be perswaded.⁴⁰

The speed with which they slipped into this easy and friendly reciprocity has been misinterpreted as sort of whirlwind romance. Paul Hammer explained that a 'special friendship' was forged through their 'shared experience of sickness and chronic indebtedness', while Lisa Jardine and Alan Stewart suggest Standen 'won Anthony over immediately'.⁴¹ Charm came later, for all that Anthony trumpeted his sympathetic response to a compatriot weighed down with 'extreme misery and distress', reduced in their conferences to 'frequent protestations and regrets accompanied by tears.'⁴² In the first instance, the two men worked together to their shared advantage and we can see in

³⁹ Francis Bacon, 'Of Friendship', in the revised second edition of his essays published in 1612 (the essay on friendship was wholly re-written in 1625) (Michael Kiernan (ed.), *The Oxford Francis Bacon XV: The Essayes, or Counsells, Civill and Morall* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985, 2000), 80 (note) and 226-7).

⁴⁰ AS to AB, 1 September 1591, LPL MS 648, fol.94r.

⁴¹ Hammer, 'An Elizabethan Spy', 280; *HF*, 126.

⁴² '[L]'extreme priuereté et destresse [...] ses frequente protestations et regretz accompagnes de larmes', AB to WC, 15 June 1591, TNA SP 78/24, fol.228v.

Standen's prison letters an instrumental friendship at the moment of conception. In the next section, I show how the men exploited their new connection to set up a close working relationship that made use of Standen's particular circumstances in his prison cell. His imprisonment was a frustrating experience for a man who saw himself as a free-wheeling 'rowlinge stone', but his incarceration nevertheless gave him the opportunity to establish a sophisticated dual-office intelligence operation with his new friend.

Section 2: Writing inside, writing outside

Reporting his delivery from misfortune to Lord Burghley in early June, Standen made the whole process of Anthony's intercession sound very simple, albeit one delayed by 'hys sycknes [...] whiche lasted some fyve monethes.' Presenting his friend's involvement as an act of altruism, Standen explained that 'lyke hymselfe he dyd not only adminyster succour to my extreme myserye but dyd also procuer aboute my enlargement' after he 'came to visyt me in this pryson.'⁴³ Anthony said something similar in his own letter to Burghley, when he explained that he had not wished to involve himself 'without first having spoken to him, which has been impossible for me until recently because of my sickness.'⁴⁴ It is this version of the story that has been generally accepted. Leo Hicks assumed a personal visit was necessary for Anthony to convince himself of the truth of Standen's account.⁴⁵ Others, as we have seen, have implied that the connection between the two men was prompted by an initial mutual attraction. But Standen made no mention to Burghley of their prior acquaintanceship, or

⁴³ AS to WC, 12 June 1591, TNA SP 78/24, fol.206v.

⁴⁴ '[...] sans au prealable auoir parle a luy mesme le qui m'a este impossible que depuis peu de temps en ca a cause de ma maladie' (AB to WC, 15 June 1591, TNA SP 78/24, fol.228r).

⁴⁵ Hicks, 'The Embassy of Sir Anthony Standen', 100.

the services he had performed on Anthony's behalf, and indeed their past history has so far escaped notice. Standen's judicious elisions – it is likely he wanted to play down his activities as a servant of a foreign power – have obscured the highly pragmatic nature of their initial relationship, and the manner in which their close connection was formed. Despite establishing contact in the first week of April 1591, they did not in fact meet face-to-face until the end of May, by which time Anthony was already entirely committed to Standen's cause. This failure to meet was not through want of trying. From the start of their correspondence, Standen demonstrated his desire to converse 'by mouthe [...] att yowr nexte walkinge abroad', but Anthony's ill-health stopped him leaving the house.⁴⁶ By 24 May, they were still unable to effect a personal interview: so keen was Standen to meet that he had appealed to Marshal Matignon for permission to leave the prison under escort and visit Anthony at his lodging. The request was overruled by the city jurats (magistrates), who said instead that Bacon 'might comme to the prison.' Standen was unimpressed by this disingenuousness, concluding that the prospect of a meeting had fallen victim to city politics: 'To be short I see ytt is but a stratageme as the Marshall hath a buget [pocket] full, and my dowte ys [...] that the Norman [Matignon] hath sayde one to yow and an other to them [the jurats].'⁴⁷ Frustrating as they were, these practical obstructions had not prevented them from forming a robust alliance that Standen was forthright in celebrating: by 8 May, he paid tribute to their bond which was 'sufficient to cheyne' him to his friend.⁴⁸ For nearly two months, in fact, the relationship was conducted wholly by letter. Given their previous connection and the future potential of the friendship, Anthony was more than willing to commit himself to his new acquaintance without the reassurance of a face-to-face

⁴⁶ AS to AB, 8 April 1591, LPL MS 648, fol.27r.

⁴⁷ AS to AB, 24 May 1591, LPL MS 648, fol.34v.

⁴⁸ AS to AB, 8 May 1591, LPL MS 648, fol.31r.

interview. Within days of first contact, he had made arrangements to have writing materials delivered to Standen, who returned the favour by covering the sheets of paper – from the same high-quality stock Anthony used in other correspondence – with such news and intelligence as he could gather from his cell, memoranda which he sent back to be filed away in Anthony’s own collection of intelligence reports.⁴⁹ When, finally, they were able to converse in person in late May or early June, it seems likely that among the first topics of discussion was the best rhetorical strategy for Standen to adopt when writing his appeal to Lord Burghley, which he composed – possibly with Anthony’s assistance – some days later.⁵⁰

Once Anthony had recovered sufficient strength to call on Standen, their relationship could encompass ‘enterviewe[s] and speeches together’ as well as frequently-exchanged notes carried by Anthony’s servants or by his companion Thomas Lawson, an English Catholic who had recently returned to France from his own imprisonment in England.⁵¹ Something about the traffic of foreigners into and out of Standen’s cell discomfited the prison authorities, and in late June it was decided to disrupt his conferences by ‘keyynge the doore agaynst yow [Anthony] and other my frendes’.⁵² The bar was short-lived, especially after Standen engaged a Bordeaux lawyer to lobby the court of parlement on his behalf, but the prison officials struck again in July, preventing entry to English visitors. Standen suggested the simple expedient of using Anthony’s French servants as messengers, but the threat of these unexplained

⁴⁹ Twelve holograph letters from Standen to Anthony bear the same watermark as paper used for copies of letters either in Bacon’s hand or written under his instruction. Compare the Standen holograph letters in LPL MS 648 fols. 25, 27, 39, 41, 43, 47, 48, 54, 56, 58, 66 and 649 fol.479 with the copies in MS 648 fols. 37-38, 45, 64, 130.

⁵⁰ See below, pp. 129-32, for an extended discussion of this issue.

⁵¹ AS to AB, 31 August 1591, LPL MS 648, fol.75r. For Lawson, see fols. 31r and 98r and *GL*, 85.

⁵² AS to AB, n.d. June 1591, LPL MS 648, fol.39r and 25 June 1591, fol.41r.

restrictions was only removed when the president of the parlement ruled that his ‘punishment was grievous ynoughe by this long durance, and that ytt was owte of all reason to denye accesse to my frendes whiche come to visit and comfort me.’⁵³

The president’s liberal views come as something of a surprise. The idea that it is in principle wrong to deny a prisoner access to his supporters strikes us as the very opposite of effective carceral practice: such isolation is the point of a modern jail. The same view did not obtain in the sixteenth century. Standen’s visitors were not regarded as undesirable *per se*. The obstructions placed in his way had their origin in a specific set of anxieties around his perceived identity and intentions. Thanks to the chatter of English traders, the city authorities discovered that Anthony’s mother had forbidden any merchants from engaging in business with her son, for fear that his acquaintance with Standen – a Catholic exile – marked an intention to ‘slypp away to Rome’ or throw in his lot with the League. The ‘skyttishe and doweftfull’ officials did what they could to frustrate these plans – until it became clear that the rumour was groundless. The ‘clowdye procedinges’ against Standen and Anthony were not reflective of a general belief in prison security as such.⁵⁴ Indeed, the varied responses of the city officials suggest that Standen instead had fallen victim to the fractured urban politics of early modern France: with authority in Bordeaux shared among the jurats, the regional court of parlement and the royally-appointed officials including the governor of the province, it was not immediately clear to Standen who was responsible for his two bouts of enforced isolation. In June, the merchant jurats had assured him that they had nothing ‘to do with me nether dyd [...] any of them empeche ether yow [Anthony] or any other

⁵³ AS to AB, 21 July 1591, LPL MS 648, fol.63r and 29 July 1591, fol.58r.

⁵⁴ Lady Bacon’s efforts to frustrate her son’s activities are vividly described in a letter from AS to Edward Selwyn (5 September 1591, LPL MS 648 fols.86-87 (copy)), and with rather more respect in AS to AB, 31 August 1591, LPL MS 648, fol.75r. Anthony seemed never to be under any illusions but that the ‘hatred and malice of certain individuals’ (‘la haine et malice de quelques particuliers’) was to blame (AB to WC, 30 June 1591, TNA SP 78/24, fol.302r).

to visyt me’, but nor were they in a position to illuminate Standen further. ‘What motyve this hath byn or what strategeme ytt is is I vnderstand not’, he confessed.⁵⁵

In truth, the nature of Standen’s imprisonment varied from conditions that might accord with our idea of a dungeon, to a relatively civilised mode of living characterised as carceral only by the denial of liberty. Devoid of light, the means to write and any facility for washing or repairing his clothes, Standen’s privations before Anthony’s intervention were certainly hard. Although Anthony could not do much about the inherent discomforts of restraint – by the start of summer, conditions in Standen’s sweltering cell were intolerable, ‘this *beau printemps* mak[ing] me envye those that posses lybertie my prison nowe being lothesome’ – his provision of clothes, writing materials and other personal effects rendered Standen’s imprisonment not much more onerous than Anthony’s own confinement to the sickroom.⁵⁶ One significant point in favour of Standen’s accommodation was its location in an establishment known as the *maison commune* or town house, a municipal facility shared by the city authorities. Other prisons existed in Bordeaux – in the middle of his unexplained isolation, Standen pondered requesting a transfer to ‘the Conciergerie the prison of the Parlayment [...] althoughe the prison ys nothinge so commodious’ – but as a foreigner imprisoned for political reasons he was detained by the holders of executive and legislative power in the province.⁵⁷ This did not mean, however, that his restraint was necessarily more strict or supervised. In accordance with institutions of all kinds in the early modern period,

⁵⁵ AS to AB, n.d. June 1591, LPL MS 648, fol.39r. For the sometimes difficult relationship between the various branches of French urban government, see Janine Garrisson, *A History of Sixteenth-Century France, 1483-1598: Renaissance, Reformation and Rebellion*, trans. Richard Rex (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1991), 33.

⁵⁶ AS to AB, n.d. spring 1591, LPL MS 648, fol.144r. That Standen did not suffer long-term ill effects from his 14-month imprisonment is suggested by the fact that two days after his release, he took horse to Blaye, more than 30km downriver, to treat with the rebelling mayor (AS to AB, 15 October, 1591, LPL MS 648, fol.106r).

⁵⁷ AS to AB, 25 June 1591, LPL MS 648, fol.41r.

money (or at least credit) determined the degree of comfort and freedom enjoyed by the inmates of a prison.⁵⁸ Anthony's help meant more than hope of release: it meant a very real improvement in Standen's manner of living. As he admitted to Burghley, he was 'bounde to good Mr Bacon for his sundrye favours & confortes in this my depe necessity', and when the door was barred against his English visitors in the summer Standen was thrown into a panic that his only source of support might be cut off.⁵⁹ He wrote that he was 'voyde of reliefe but by yowr meanes' and expressed utter bewilderment that he should be used so harshly *despite* his ability to pay for reasonable treatment. He was in 'anguysse of mynde about these procedinges' and admitted to uncharacteristic despair: 'pardon me good Syr for I am owte of square and knowe not what I wryte.'⁶⁰ Far more typical of his prison experience was the lifestyle he enjoyed for most of the time he benefited from Anthony's help: free access to messengers and visitors, personal supplies of paper and ink, the ability to mingle with other prisoners and respectful treatment from prison staff – all guaranteed by Anthony's purse.

The productive freedoms Standen enjoyed thanks to Anthony's patronage are reflected in the nature and quality of the letters he composed during this period. Written from what Standen termed his 'miserable prison', they are nonetheless remarkably

⁵⁸ For conditions and practices in early modern prisons, see Ahnert, *Rise of Prison Literature*, 8-28; Freeman, 'Rise of Prison Literature'; Deborah E. Harkness, *The Jewel House: Elizabethan London and the Scientific Revolution* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), 181-210; Norman Johnston, *Forms of Restraint: A History of Prison Architecture* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2000); Edward Douglas Pendry, *Elizabethan Prisons and Prisons Scenes. Salzburg Studies in English Literature: Elizabethan and Renaissance Studies* 17, 2 vols. (Salzburg: Universität Salzburg, 1974), vol. 2. Studies in English of prison culture on the continent are few, and include Monika Fludernik and Greta Olson (eds), *In the Grip of the Law: Trials, Prisons and the Space Between* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2004) and Pieter Spierenburg, *The Prison Experience: Disciplinary Institutions and Their Inmates in Early Modern Europe* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2007).

⁵⁹ AS to WC, 12 June 1591, TNA 78/24, fol.207v.

⁶⁰ AS to AB, 25 June 1591, LPL MS 648, fol.41r.

elegant documents.⁶¹ He made lavish use of paper, almost always using a full folio sheet, even if he only covered half a leaf. He was assiduous in adhering to the epistolary conventions that governed letters to a superior or patron: wide, straight margins and as much blank paper-space between the main letter-text and the salutation and subscription as the contents of the letter allowed.⁶² He rarely blotted a line: his ink was smooth and his pens well-sharpened. His letters were written in repose, on a flat surface and with a well-supplied writing desk. Some idea of this neatness can be gained from Fig. 1 at the end of this chapter (see p. 149), which shows an example of a letter from Standen to Anthony in May. All this required equipment – not just paper, ink and pens, but a penknife, a rule, an inkwell or inkhorn, a pounce-box or sander, and occasionally sealing wax and thread (although his letters to Anthony were usually sent unsealed). It could only have been provided by Bacon's means.⁶³

In comparison, the letters of an agent who wrote from prison without the kind of support enjoyed by Standen are contrastingly scrappy. Those from William Herle to William Cecil (newly ennobled as Lord Burghley) written in the Marshalsea in 1571, have been examined by Robyn Adams, who found them to be in the sort of condition that 'betrays their provenance, hastily written on cheap, illicitly procured paper and then stuffed into damp corners to evade scrutiny.' Adams drew attention to the dense paragraphs of crabbed writing, the written-over margins and the absence of appropriate salutation or subscription (see Fig. 2, p. 150).⁶⁴ I do not mean to suggest that Herle's

⁶¹ 'Miserable prison' comes from AS to AB, 8 April 1591, LPL MS 648, fol.27v, but similar sentiments are scattered through the corpus of letters.

⁶² Jonathan Gibson, 'Significant Space'; Daybell, *Material Letter in Early Modern England*, 98.

⁶³ For an exhaustive study of the essential tools of early modern letter-writing, see Michael Finlay, *Western Writing Implements in the Age of the Quill Pen* (Wetheral: Plains Books, 1990), esp. 8-39, 59-62.

⁶⁴ Robyn Adams, "'The Service I am Here for': William Herle in the Marshalsea Prison, 1571", *Huntington Library Quarterly* 72:2 (2009), 217-238, 217-18.

letters are what prison letters ‘should’ look like. His were written in a certain context, Standen’s another – and we have seen that prior to Anthony’s help he was ‘deprived of all meanes to wryte or to haue intelligence.’⁶⁵ But the handsome documents Standen was able to produce with the right external support suggest something more than success against the odds in writing and dispatching letters under conditions of duress. They point to an opportunity to perform extended and concentrated acts of textual composition in a prison environment.

In fact, thanks to the blunt workings of both early modern capitalism and sixteenth-century sectarian politics, prison populations across the continent had become very much more literate, composed of a higher proportion of educated debtors and recusants than ever before. People imprisoned for their religious belief or financial insolvency were minded to read, write and communicate with fellow prisoners and the outside world.⁶⁶ By the end of the sixteenth century prisons had come to be regarded as wholly unexceptional sites of textual production. In an account of incarceration in London’s Wood Street Counter, *The Comptor’s Common-wealth*, published some years after Standen’s trouble in Bordeaux, William Fennor claimed he was motivated to write down his thoughts on prison life when he spied by chance ‘a standish and a sheet of vndefiled paper’ in a corner of the cell. This amenity was regarded by Fennor as unremarkable, and he did not scruple to make use of it.⁶⁷ He had, perhaps, been led to expect such facilities from a previous generation of prison writers. Earlier works had explored the notion that imprisonment offered a chance to read, write and reflect. John

⁶⁵ AS to WC, 12 June 1591, TNA 78/24, fol.206v.

⁶⁶ Ahnert, *Rise of Prison Literature*, 2-3.

⁶⁷ William Fennor, *The Compters Common-wealth* (London: Edward Griffin for George Gibbes, 1617), sig.C1r. A standish, or ink-stand, was a patent device for holding inkpots, pens, pounce and sometimes a candle, designed to sit upon a desk or table (Peter Beal, *A Dictionary of Manuscript Terminology 1450-2000* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 203-4; Finlay, *Western Writing Implements*, 35-9).

Harrington, imprisoned in the Tower of London in 1549 for his part in Thomas Seymour's attempted coup, 'gave himself' over to learning French, 'hauyng both skilful prisoners to enstruct me, and therto plenty of books to learne the language.' The text upon which he tested his new acquisition was, fittingly, a French translation of Cicero's *De Amicitia*, and he caused his work to be 'conferred with the latine auctor, and so by the knowen wel lerned to be corrected': so full were London's prisons at that time with cultured Latinists and their libraries, that Harrington could subject his text to peer-review without leaving his cell.⁶⁸ Another prisoner, the 'Gentleman' in Thomas Savile's philosophical dialogue *The Prisoners Conference*, insisted that it was 'no disgrace at all' for men to spend time locked up, presenting the experience instead as a chance for them to develop godly patience, silence and meekness, to study 'the things which in their libertie they could not learne.'⁶⁹

One effect of the universalising of imprisonment in the early modern period – it became a misfortune that anyone with non-conformist religious views or an inclination to live beyond one's means might suffer – was that prisoners were keen to argue that incarceration did not carry an automatic taint of shame. Using the enforced idleness to work on a literary production was an elegant way of manifesting civility while in a debased situation, as well as asserting innocence – calm writerly habits implied a clear conscience. When in the 1560s a physician called William Bulleyn found himself in prison twice – first for murder, then for debt – he regarded his detention as the ideal

⁶⁸ John Harrington (trans. and ed.), *Booke of freendship of Marcus Tullie Cicero* (London: Tho. Berthelette, 1550), sigs.A2v and A4r. The French edition Harrington used was Jean Collin (trans. and ed.), *Le Livire de Amytié de Ciceron* (Paris, 1537).

⁶⁹ [Thomas Savile], *The Prisoners Conference. Handled by way of a Dialogue, between a Knight and a Gentleman, being abridged of their liberty* (London: William Jaggard, 1605) (facsimile edition, *The English Experience* 486, Amsterdam: Theatrum Orbis Terrarum Ltd, 1974), sigs. A3v and B1v. The notion that prison confers some special quality of artistic insight or technique survives into the present day as an apocryphal story about Picasso: when asked to subscribe to a fund to help free Soviet writers from the gulag, he refused. They write better in prison, the painter claimed (Robert McCrum, 'Writers in prison: when having an opinion becomes a crime', *The Observer*, 19 December 2010).

time to finish his medical encyclopaedia, *Bullein's Bulwarke*. As he told his readers, 'being in this prison, me thought I had not only convenient time, but also a quiet conscience to travail'.⁷⁰ A young law student called Geffray Minshall was similarly moved when he ended up in the Kings Bench in 1617. Although it was impracticable to continue his legal studies, his idleness compelled him instead to 'gather a handful of essays' and he published the result – *Essayes and Characters of a Prison and Prisoners* – a few months later.⁷¹ When seventeenth-century wits (who were themselves frequently not unfamiliar with the inside of a cell) characterised London's prisons as universities or academies of roguery, they were not simply drawing on street-jests or canting slang: there was a real sense that prisons housed textual and literary activity of all kinds.⁷²

One of the main reasons for this, recorded most fully in England, was the widespread imprisonment of religious dissenters, begun on a large scale by Mary I (John Foxe piously claimed that so many Protestants were locked up that 'almost all the prisones in England were become ryghte Christian Scholes') and copied by Elizabeth from the 1580s.⁷³ The entry of literate, committed theologians into general-use prisons brought about a concomitant intellectualising of the prison environment, and the creation of networks of communication and exchange among imprisoned co-religionists. Thomas Freeman and Ruth Ahnert have revealed the extent of the scribal networks established by Protestant inmates under Mary, and the anti-Catholic repression

⁷⁰ William Bulleyn, *Bulleins Bulwarke of Defence against all Sicknes, Sornes, and Woundes* (London: John Kyngston, 1562), sig.Ciiir.

⁷¹ Minshall, *Essayes and Characters*, sig.A3r.

⁷² Pendry explains that it was a 'standing joke' that prison was a school for felons and debtors. Thomas Middleton used it at least three times, in *Michaelmas Term*, *The Phoenix* and *The Roaring Girle* (*Elizabethan Prisons*, 271).

⁷³ John Foxe, *Actes and Monuments*, 1563, sig.3D1r (*The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online* or TAMO (HRI Online Publications, Sheffield, 2011), <http://www.johnfoxe.org> (accessed 14.11.13), and cited in Pendry, *Elizabethan Prisons*, 270).

in the latter half of Elizabeth's reign saw similar practices developed by imprisoned recusants.⁷⁴ In 1583, John Aylmer, Bishop of London, complained that the Catholics imprisoned in the Marshalsea had contrived to 'saye Masse with in the prison, and intise the yowthe of London vnto them'. They lived, Aylmer noted in exasperation, 'as it weare in a Colledge of Caitifes.'⁷⁵ It was not just prisoners held in the same institution who were able to recreate some semblance of collegiate unity. When the leading Jesuit Edmund Campion was executed in December 1581, he left behind a catalogue of the books he had kept in his Tower cell, with instructions for their delivery to a variety of legatees. The books may or may not have been bestowed as he wished, but the fact that he anticipated that '150 Iesus psalters' would be placed into the hands of one 'Mr Brunnell prisoner in the Marshelsye', along with bequests to at least five other imprisoned Catholics, tells us that Campion regarded himself as a member of an inter-prison religious community, identified and sustained in part at least by the exchange of books.⁷⁶ Nor were high-status inmates the only prisoners to exploit the textual possibilities of prison. The scandal of preaching, writing and evangelising Catholic prisoners was an ongoing one throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in England, but nothing shocked the authorities so much as the inmate of New Prison who in 1610 was found to have set up a printing-press in his chamber for the publication of Catholic tracts.⁷⁷

It is not my intention here to draw explicit parallels between the style of imprisonment experienced by Standen and the nature of prisons as revealed by English

⁷⁴ Thomas S. Freeman, 'Publish and perish: the scribal culture of the Marian Martyrs', in Julia Crick and Alexandra Walsham (eds), *The Uses of Script and Print, 1300-1700* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 235-254; Ahnert, *Rise of Prison Literature*, chs. 2, 3 and 4.

⁷⁵ John Aylmer, Bishop of London, to WC, 5 December 1583, BL MS Lansdowne 38, fol.212r.

⁷⁶ BL MS Lansdowne 33, fol.152r.

⁷⁷ Pendry, *Elizabethan Prisons*, 30-31.

writers and prisoners of the period. But these examples suggest that the perception of prison as a place where writing could take place was common and unremarkable. Whether this belief was shared by the governors of Standen's Bordeaux jail is another matter, but his involvement in textual production of various sorts while under their supervision renders the question moot: there is no question that Standen recognised and exploited the opportunities for writing and communication his prison afforded him. Indeed, it may be the case that the practices of prison writing were a familiar theme by the 1590s: the two major Christian churches had by this point well-established martyrological narratives that celebrated the textual activities of their imprisoned brethren. Standen the imprisoned Catholic, and Anthony the son of leading Protestant reformers, might well have been ruefully aware that their activities echoed those of both the Marian martyrs and English Catholic prisoners.

Certainly Standen was not the only inmate to read and write in his prison. As early as May, he asked Anthony to forward mail for a 'close prisoner a poore Scottishe youthe', and in September he smuggled out a seditious book belonging to another captive on Anthony's instructions – without the consent of its owner.⁷⁸ Writing of various sorts also circulated inside the prison. In April or May Standen lent 'a pece of a descent of owr englisse and of the skottishe kynges' that he had composed to one Phillip Conier to copy, who then left without returning the original.⁷⁹ The identity of Conier is unclear – he may have been an inmate, visitor or keeper – but the politically-freighted acts of writing, duplicating and distributing a genealogical analysis of Tudor and Stuart dynasties suggest that Standen was aware of the opportunities available to him in a foreign jail. Reflecting on the succession was a criminal offence under English

⁷⁸ AS to AB, 24 May 1591, LPL MS 648, fol.33r and 27 September, fol.90r.

⁷⁹ AS to AB, n.d. spring 1591, LPL MS 648, fol.142r.

law; within his French cell Standen could speculate with impunity. The examples of a trafficked letter, a shared book and a seditious genealogy point to the existence of an information economy within his jail, and one that offered its own form of intellectual liberty. The Bordeaux prison did not perhaps support a textual culture to the same degree as those sustained inside English jails that contained communities of confined recusants, but we see in Standen's letters evidence of an identifiable network nonetheless.

It was such textual structures that Anthony and Standen were able to exploit when they started communicating, and then working together, in the spring and summer of 1591 – and the dozens of carefully-written letters that survive are the most compelling evidence for a prevailing textual culture in Standen's jail. We have already seen that numerous factors including Anthony's lameness and the intermittent embargo on visitors conspired to make the initial friendship between the two men almost entirely epistolary. This state of affairs was not permanent, but their letters remained the main medium through which the relationship was articulated, not least because they carried the intelligence material which constituted the primary reason for that relationship. Anthony was the conduit through which Standen's writings passed, and the means by which he effected the transfer of information from within the prison to the outside world. Standen's letters were carried by Anthony's servants; Anthony's own letters to Lord Burghley incorporated content provided by Standen: as he wrote to his uncle, 'I know, my Lord, of no other events [...] that are worthy to be written, except those which I have received in the past few days from the poor gentleman-prisoner.'⁸⁰ Beyond this, and to the inestimable benefit of a study of this nature, he granted Standen's letters

⁸⁰ 'D'autres occurrences [...] ie nen scay point Mon Seigneur qui meritent l'escire sinon celles que i'ay receues ces iours passes du pauvre Gentilhomme prisonnier' (AB to AC, 20 June 1591, TNA SP 78/24, fol.239r).

a degree of archival permanence, saving not only those addressed to him but preserving as copies in either his own hand or that of a servant communications with Burghley, Selwyn and two recipients in France, an English merchant named Bringborne and a nun called Jeanne de Charnoq (whom Standen thanked for her kind provision of some ‘exquisite nutmeg’ – a thoughtful gift intended to palliate the smell of his airless prison).⁸¹ It is possible that among Anthony’s other favours he also provided a sort of scribal support service, keeping copies of important documents secure while Standen was locked inside or, subsequently, on the road. Standen later recalled that his peripatetic lifestyle made keeping track of his belongings difficult: ‘by my tossing to and fro in the maner I lyve I myght be deprived of [...] many thinges I lefte behinde me.’⁸² As the example of Philip Cornier shows, paperwork may not have been safe from curious or light-fingered fellow inmates, and Thomas Freeman has explained that such copying services had precedents amongst communities of imprisoned co-religionists.⁸³ Standen certainly recycled his own letters. When in June he wished to persuade the court of parlement to lift the restrictions that had been placed on his visiting rights, he copied out ‘the same letter I sent [...] to my lorde Tresorer and adioyned somme other halfe lefe aboute their vsage of myne in Spayne in not sekinge to delyuer me.’⁸⁴

Another reason for Anthony’s record-keeping is suggested by a letter to Burghley written in late November after Standen’s release. This letter exists in the Lambeth papers only as a much-amended draft in Standen’s hand. It may or may not have been sent to its intended recipient; no witness survives in the National Archives or

⁸¹ AS to Jeanne de Charnoq, 27 August 1591, LPL MS 648, fol.77r (copy); AS to Bringbourne, 6 August 1591, fol.74r (copy).

⁸² AS to AB, 8 September 1592, LPL MS 648, fol.246r (partly ciphered).

⁸³ Freeman, ‘Publish and Perish’, 241-43.

⁸⁴ AS to AB, 28 June 1591, LPL MS 648, fol.48r.

Hatfield House. Most of the editorial interventions are by Standen, but a description of a violent assault upon two of Anthony's French servants by a group of 'hauty [...] youths[,] brokers sons of this towne' has been crossed through and re-written as an insert in Anthony's writing. The inserted account, still in Standen's voice, underscores the brutality of the attack and casts its judicial resolution as an opportunity for Marshal Matignon to extend the hand of friendship to Burghley, uncle to the wronged victim (or rather, employer of the victims). The revised version is both more vivid and tactically ambitious, figuring as it does a three-way alliance among Standen and Anthony, the Marshall and the government in Bordeaux, and Burghley and the English authorities against disorder perpetrated by 'lewde french marchantes and factious Englishe factours.' It seems likely that the insert in Anthony's hand represents his contribution to the Burghley letter, a stylistic tweaking to present in a more favourable light his involvement in Bordeaux city affairs.⁸⁵

Another, earlier letter from Standen to Burghley is to be found in both the Lambeth papers and the National Archives, an archival duplication that raises questions about the processes of its composition. This is a letter I have quoted before, dated 12 June according to the National Archives (TNA) witness, containing a passionate defence of Standen's past actions and a profession of loyalty to queen and country. I have already suggested that this letter may have benefited from Anthony's involvement. It is certainly the case that the letter was composed only after the two men had met face-to-face, nearly two months after their first contact. The witness now held in TNA (SP 78/24 fols. 206-208) is in Standen's hand and unquestionably reached its intended recipient: parts of the text are underlined and the margins annotated by the Lord Treasurer. But the letter also exists among the Lambeth papers (LPL) (MS 648 fols. 37-

⁸⁵ AS to WC, 30 November 1591, LPL MS 648, fols.120-124r. The half-sheet insert, written on the recto only, is fol.123.

38), in a hand that is probably Anthony's, endorsed 'Copie of Mr Santals Lettre to my Lord Tresorier 8 Iune'. LPL is not however a straight-forward copy of the TNA 'original' – not least because it bears a date some four days earlier than the letter sent to Lord Burghley (LPL is endorsed June 8, but subscribed June 7; TNA is endorsed and subscribed June 12). There are constant minor variations of style and syntax between the two, with no obvious line of descent. There are also a number of substantive differences in content.

Some of the variations suggest that TNA – written in Standen's hand – represents more accurately his viewpoint and experiences. Describing the manner of his arrest in Bordeaux at the hands of de Longlée the French diplomat, TNA relates:

I was dyscouered by one Monsieur de Longlie sometymes Agent in Spayne for this crowne, to whome in that Court (from whence a lyttle before he had byn lycensed) I was so well knowne as that acquayntance of myne *with* hym purchased my ymprisonment.⁸⁶

LPL offers the more truncated 'I was discovered by one Monsieur du Longley sometymes Agent in Spayne for this crowne, to him I was so well known as he caused me to be Imprisonnd.'⁸⁷ In persuading Lord Burghley that Standen should remain on the continent, TNA states 'yf I should appere att home onles ytt were very secretlye I shoulde for ever be discarded amonges our people here abrode', a convincing argument for maintaining Standen's cover amongst the English Catholic exiles that does not appear in LPL.⁸⁸ TNA also bears a postscript that is not in LPL:

⁸⁶ AS to WC, 12 June 1591, TNA SP 78/24, fol.206v.

⁸⁷ AS to WC, 7 June 1591, LPL MS 648, fol.37r (copy?).

⁸⁸ AS to WC, 12 June 1591, TNA SP 78/24, fol.207r-v.

I haue sythens my ymprisonment thryce wrytten to Spayne about my relefe, but they gyve me no answeere a token they dysavowe me for the present: to drawe them on the last tyme I gave them an advise of the grete Armada the Quenes Maiestie sett owte by sea, and of an other by lande for Brytanye.⁸⁹

But if LPL does not state explicitly that Spain has ‘disavowed’ Standen, or that he has fed the Spanish misinformation about England’s military activities, it does suggest, unlike TNA, that Standen’s reputation amongst the Spanish-inclined emigrants was tarnished by a lingering loyalty to the English crown:

[I intend to] continew as hertofore in faythfull service & devotion to her Maiestie in whatsoeuer shall conerne her highnes & safetie & of her Realme [...] not fynding in my Catholike creede any auctorytie to warrant treachery against either of them which opinyon as I haue in these 26 yeares absence maynteined, so by owr nation abroad (& namely by those of the Spanishe humuor) I haue been obserued & condemned.⁹⁰

LPL is also more forthright in ascribing Standen’s return to Spain in August 1590 to Walsingham’s orders. While TNA simply explains that the ‘resolution’ ‘proceeded’ from letters he found in Florence, LPL goes further to stress that it was the Principal Secretary’s overt instruction:

The yeare 88 which was the tyme that huge Armada went & perished I was by his [Walsingham’s] order at the Court & at Lisbon where I had the vewe of all & by the

⁸⁹ AS to WC, 12 June 1591, TNA SP 78/24, fol.207v.

⁹⁰ AS to WC, 7 June 1591, LPL MS 648, fol. 37v (copy?).

way of Italy gaue aduice of the whole and of their desseignes. Which by his lettres I founde in fflorence seemed most gratfull to her Maiestie thence proceded the perswasion he vsed with me to procure this last tyme my returne againe to Spayne which accordingly I did put in execution the troubles before alledged falling fourth as I haue layed downe which is the meere trouth.⁹¹

It is not possible to ascertain from the two extant witnesses which is the authorial original. The question itself may be irrelevant. The substantive variations between TNA and LPL permit the possibility that the witnesses represent stages in a compositional process that may to some extent have been shared: in such circumstances, LPL can be seen as Anthony's 'draft', although we cannot know if he contributed minor emendations or major lines of argument. Nor is it possible to state for certain that LPL is in Anthony's hand-writing, but this again may be irrelevant. Many of Bacon's own letters were written by a secretary: his letters to Lord Burghley in January and June 1591 for example are written, in French, by scribes, and signed by Anthony.⁹²

Standen did place straightforward drafts of his letters into Anthony's hands for safekeeping, but even in these cases the nature of the papers allows for the possibility of his editorial involvement. Writing to Lord Burghley in early November, a month after his release, Standen subjected his first draft to heavy emendations which survive in an autograph copy in the Lambeth papers (LPL MS 648 fols. 112-116). These revisions are carried into the autograph fair copy received by Burghley and held in TNA (SP 78/26 fols.172-175). The emendations in the Lambeth witness are all in Standen's hand, but the scattered and deconstructed nature of the draft – although the fair copy is a unified

⁹¹ AS to WC, 7 June 1591, LPL MS 648, fol.37v (copy?).

⁹² AB to WC, 29 January 1591, TNA SP 78/23, fol.41r; 15 June 1591, TNA SP 78/24, fols.228r-v; 20 June 1591, fol.239r; 30 June 1591, fol.303r.

document, the foul papers in LPL exist as four separate leaves, individually endorsed and headed – raises the possibility that the letter was divided up to allow for sectional, piecemeal revision, perhaps by both men independently.

Evidence of authorial collaboration between Standen and Anthony is to be found elsewhere. When in September Standen wrote to Edward Selwyn, he sent a draft of the letter to Anthony with a covering note, ‘prayinge yow to deface and put downe what yow shall iudge to be eyther wantynge or superfluous.’⁹³ A copy of the finished letter, not in Standen’s hand, survives in the Lambeth papers. The voice is Standen’s alone: if Anthony made any alterations to the draft, they were absorbed silently.⁹⁴ The exchange was not one-way. Standen read and commented on Anthony’s letters too – including those to his family, who were of course crucial in ensuring the successful re-integration of both men into the English intelligence system. Standen commended a letter to Lady Bacon, also in September, for the ‘pythynes [pithiness] of the matter [and] the decent termes’, reading over the letter ‘more then ones [...] to my grete contentment’ and offering an adage on female wisdom he ascribed to the queen of Scots that one hopes never found its way into any document intended for Anthony’s scholarly mother: one should never, advised Standen, ‘tell a woman she is learned and wise, only that she is less foolish than the rest, for all women incline to folly.’⁹⁵

Such instances of overt co-authorship and the presence within Anthony’s papers of letters written by Standen but destined for others point to a culture sustained by the two men of shared epistolary ownership: with congruent professional objectives, they collaborated on letters that furthered their ambitions. This collaboration might, as we

⁹³ AS to AB, 5 September 1591, LPL MS 648, fol.96r.

⁹⁴ AS to Edward Selwyn, 5 September 1591, LPL MS 648, fols.86-87v (copy).

⁹⁵ ‘[N]e dittes iamais que c’est vne femme aduisee et sage, mais dittes qu’elle est moyns folle que les autres, car toutes en tiennent de la follie,’ AS to AB, 1 September 1591, LPL MS 648, fol.94r.

have seen, be disguised in the final draft of a letter, or it might be visible as a manifestation of their partnership. Having written to William Waad, one of the clerks of the Privy Council, Standen entreated Anthony ‘to gyve him [Waad] the letter edge to wryte also some fewe wourdes vnto hym.’ The finished letter in this case would bear evidence of textual (if not spatial) intimacy: Standen and Anthony contributed to the shared space of the page, constructing a joint message even if the words themselves were individually subscribed. The instruction also suggests how Standen handed over his letters for dispatch: unsealed, and therefore readable, copyable and amendable. We are not, I think, to imagine this as anything other than consensual. On occasion, the transfer of a letter to Anthony was itself a stage in the compositional process.⁹⁶

Scholars of epistolary culture in the sixteenth century increasingly regard it as an age in which neither the composition nor the reception of letters was necessarily private: a letter might be written out as a fair copy by a scribe, or indeed conceived by a secretary on the very general instructions of the signatory (who may or may not have actually signed the finished letter); the letter, when received, might be read silently in the presence of the bearer, read aloud to a circle of listeners, or shared amongst a social network for the news it contained or the testamentary signs of intimacy and favour it carried. The act of writing a letter could be a complex and collaborative process, for the uneducated as well as the elite (while the former might require the help of experts to write or read a letter, the latter might choose to employ their services as a sign of prestige).⁹⁷

This developing understanding of early modern epistolarity overlaps with new insights into the literary culture of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century prisons. Literary

⁹⁶ AS to AB, 28 June 1591, LPL MS 648, fol.48r.

⁹⁷ Daybell, *Material Letter in Early Modern England*, 9-10, 12.

works by elite figures such as Thomas Wyatt, John Harington and Walter Raleigh have long been read with an awareness that their authors laboured under the constraints of (relatively comfortable) political imprisonment.⁹⁸ More recent scholarship has offered a broader view, examining material by obscure prisoners or those whose prison writings tended towards the non-literary. Ruth Ahnert has analysed prison graffiti, and marginal inscription in texts that accompanied Edward Seymour and Jane Grey to their prisons, suggesting that prisoners were able to use writing to assert themselves or their cause and create a community despite the restrictions of imprisonment.⁹⁹ Molly Murray, in her study of lesser-known prison poets, has shown that the early modern prison writer ‘was not always – or even usually – a solitary figure, and his turn to pen and ink did not always mean defying the rules of his captivity. Instead, he was part of a culture that was both highly social and profoundly, if unsystematically, textual.’ Her study of London’s prison culture reveals a vibrantly irregular world that she identifies as an important site of textual production, one that ‘ought to be considered alongside the court and the university’ as a place of significant literary activity.¹⁰⁰ Deborah E. Harkness suggests something similar in her examination of Clement Draper’s prison notebooks, noting that Draper managed to sustain a ‘lively intellectual community’ of natural philosophers during his thirteen year imprisonment for debt. With little else to do, he ‘began a

⁹⁸ Arthur F. Marotti, *Manuscript, Print and the English Renaissance Lyric* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995), 1-10 and 82-112. On Wyatt: H. A. Mason, *Sir Thomas Wyatt A Literary Portrait* (Bristol: Bristol Classical Press, 1986). On Harington: Ruth Hughey, *John Harington of Stepney: Tudor Gentleman. His Life and Works* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1971). On Raleigh: Margaret Irwin, *That Great Lucifer: A Portrait of Sir Walter Raleigh* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1962).

⁹⁹ Ruth Ahnert, ‘Writing in the Tower of London during the Reformation, ca. 1530-1558’, *Huntington Library Quarterly* 72:2 (2009), 168-192; Ahnert, *Rise of Prison Literature*, 33-59.

¹⁰⁰ Molly Murray, ‘Measured Sentences: Forming Literature in the Early Modern Prison’, *Huntington Library Quarterly* 72:2 (2009), 147-167, 150 and 157.

programme of reading and writing, discussed his intellectual interests with members of the prison community, and even conducted experiments.’¹⁰¹

The idea of prison as a place of writing has become a familiar one, and we no longer start with surprise at the list of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century writers (typically dramatists) who spent time in prison: Lyly, Tourneur, Jonson, Chapman, Dekker, Marston and so on. What marks the textual activity of Standen and Anthony as unusual is the degree to which the two writers were able to ignore the restrictions imposed by confinement – and we should remember that Anthony too was routinely ‘imprisoned’ in his lodgings by gout and other illnesses – and conduct a shared textual project seemingly in despite of the physical barriers between them. They exploited the collaborative capacity of the early modern letter and the textual opportunities available in the early modern prison. They managed to work together to write letters that pertained to both of them, their friendship inscribing itself in letters that were mutually conceived, drafted by one, edited by the other, and copied and filed by Anthony. Their letters, then, did not just pass through the prison wall. They were composed and edited in the virtual textual space between them. Anthony Standen was not an attractive figure to Anthony Bacon simply because of his political knowledge and connections: his enforced residence in the prison of Bordeaux’s *maison commune* was in itself an opportunity to establish the kind of writerly association that would serve their interests with their patrons back home. As I will show in the next and final section, Standen’s prison did not just provide a writing space. It was also in itself a source for information and intelligence of many kinds.

¹⁰¹ Harkness, *Jewel House*, 191.

Section 3: ‘This little cell where he is lodged, I mean the universe’

I have argued that the prison, long recognised as a site of textual production, could also permit a degree of collaborative textual intimacy that crossed its enclosing walls.

Standen’s incarceration was not, despite the frustrations, a hindrance to the working relationship he established with Anthony. Indeed in certain respects, his imprisonment was actively beneficial to the creation of a partnership based on the gathering and transacting of intelligence. In this section I suggest that his prison was a busy, loquacious and productive space that gave him privileged access to political discourse of various kinds. I conclude by arguing that notwithstanding the special features of Standen’s prison within the political headquarters of the city of Bordeaux, prisons had proverbial currency as sites of unfettered social interaction, potentially disorderly spaces in which choosing trustworthy friends was of prime importance.

Despite the obvious limitations it placed on one’s freedom of movement, being held in an early modern prison was not the isolating experience modern incarceration tends to be.¹⁰² For all Standen’s discomfort, he was able to pass on an astonishing amount of up-to-date intelligence relating to affairs in Bordeaux, Guyenne and the country at large. As Anthony told Lord Burghley in June, ‘even locked up as he is, nothing happens to the advantage of Spain or the League of which he is not immediately aware.’¹⁰³ The past fruits of his ‘practice and conversation abroad’ yielded valuable data such as a list of English pensioners in Spain, but of far more immediate relevance

¹⁰² Scholars have coined the term ‘antipanopticon’ to describe the early modern prison, asserting its fundamental difference from the Benthamite ideal penitentiary of modern times (Michael Collins, ‘The Antipanopticon of Etheridge Knight’, *Publications of the Modern Library Association of America* 123 (2008), 580-97; Murray, ‘Measured Sentences’, 152; Ahnert, *Rise of Prison Literature*, 10).

¹⁰³ ‘Tout inferme qu’il est rien ne se passe pour l’aduantage de l’Espagnol et de la ligue qu’il n’en soit quant et quant aduerti’ (AB to WC, 15 June 1591, TNA SP 78/24, fol.228r).

was news of current events.¹⁰⁴ Standen provided information about the rebellious town of Blaye, where the mayor Jean Paul d'Esparbey de Lussan was obstructing English shipping on the Gironde; the movements of Marshal Matignon and his royalist forces; skirmishes against the League; the location of the king; changes to customs rates and trading practices at Rouen; and the activities of the Spanish on the France-Spain border.¹⁰⁵ He even managed to pass on intelligence of Fernando de Toledo's intended assault on Bayonne, the seriousness of which was betokened by Standen's wish that 'my Lorde your vnclē had presently this [letter] in his hande.'¹⁰⁶ The majority of the material he sent to Anthony was intended for Lord Burghley, either destined to be sent directly to the Lord Treasurer as stand-alone 'Instructions', or incorporated into Anthony's own letters to his uncle.¹⁰⁷ In contrast to the intelligence he was later able to send home when he was under cover in Spain, which frequently arrived late and stale, his dispatch to Burghley of 15 June, sent with his speculative first letter, could not have been more timely or more likely to provoke alarm: he reported that a fleet of twenty-three Spanish vessels awaited transport from the shipyards of Pasajes to a secret destination in France, probably Blavet in Brittany, where the Spanish base had lately been fortified. It was widely believed that Spain had seized Blavet as a staging-post for a proposed invasion of England. In May the queen had ordered a review of coastal defences, and the lords-lieutenant of the southern counties had mustered trained bands to beat back an anticipated amphibious landing. If the notice was a testament of

¹⁰⁴ Standen sent Anthony a list of such English pensioners in Spain as he could remember, 'my memorye extendinge no farther', at some point during his captivity (LPL MS 648, fol.144r).

¹⁰⁵ Blaye (LPL MS 648, fols. 34r, 82r-v and 102r), Matignon (fol.31r), Henri IV (fol.33r), Rouen (fol.72r), Spain (fols. 89r and 93r).

¹⁰⁶ AS to AB, 20[?] September 1591, LPL MS 648, fol.89r.

¹⁰⁷ AS, 'Instructions', 15 and 28 June 1591, LPL MS 648, fol.51r (copy). In June Standen told Anthony about a student who had been arrested for possessing a seditious pamphlet printed in Agen (AS to AB, n.d. June 1591, LPL MS 648, fol.43r), a piece of news that Anthony incorporated into his letter to Burghley (AB to WC, 20 June 1591, TNA SP 78/24, fol.239r-v).

Standen's knowledge and his value to the English state, the news was well-chosen – and arrestingly up-to-date for a man who had been incarcerated since the previous August.¹⁰⁸

We should not imagine that Standen was cut off from the busy chatter of the town just because he was in prison. He was held within a municipal building. Pages, messengers and city officials jostled with guards and inmates in accommodation that was evidently neither particularly secure nor particularly sound-proof. Prison staff did not by any measure observe confidentiality – and nor was there an assumption that they should. Standen's keeper was so free with gossip and intelligence that he referred to him as 'Monsieur Oracle'. The talkative guard informed Standen of a murderous assault on the city of Toulouse in June when Spanish forces with the collusion of the League beheaded numerous royalist supporters, and two months later furnished him with the latest regarding the Norman city of Rouen, soon to be besieged by a joint English-French force.¹⁰⁹ It is likely that Monsieur Oracle kept Standen up to speed with the conciliar discussions taking place elsewhere in the *maison commune*. Certainly Standen was able to report on 19 August that 'yesterdaye in the mornynge and after none these Iurates sate here thryce about the matter of Blaye and Royan', but it is also possible that such information came from the city officials directly.¹¹⁰ When in September he described an unsatisfactory meeting among 'these Iurates and townsmen' about the disruptive Monsieur de Lussan, Standen's account seems positively first-hand: de Lussan, 'euery daye encreasinge and hausynge [hoising] hys stypend', has piled demand

¹⁰⁸ AS, 'Instructions', 15 and 18 June 1591, LPL MS 648, fol.51r. Later, in March 1593, Anthony was obliged to inform Standen, undercover in northern Spain, that the queen 'wold haue me let you know that she liketh wel of your advertisements if they mought come in season adding therto that an apple in tyme was better then an apple of gould out of tyme' (AB to AS, 14 March 1592/3, LPL MS 649, fol.161r).

¹⁰⁹ 'Instructions', LPL MS 648 fol.51r; AS to AB, 16 August 1591, LPL MS 648, fol.72r.

¹¹⁰ AS to AB, 19 August 1591, LPL MS 648, fol.71r.

on demand until the council 'are in dispayre and cursse hym and Blaye and wisse the towne and hym bothe in the bottom of the sea.'¹¹¹ In his months of imprisonment Standen had made a good impression on his captors: he had won the high regard of most of the members of the court of parlement, and it seems that he had sufficient freedom of movement in his prison as to be able to intercept and converse with other officials at will.¹¹² When in May Standen wanted to obtain leave to visit Anthony in his lodgings, he used this proximity to press his case, cornering one jurat 'as this mornyng [he] entred the towne house'.¹¹³

With the exception of the brief periods of restraint imposed by the prison authorities in June and July, Standen was generally free to receive visitors. He may have been locked up, but that very loss of liberty rendered him permanently available. 'I am in a place,' he remarked drily, 'where all men may haue accesse to me.'¹¹⁴ The ready accessibility of Standen's prison was exploited by Anthony, who invited his own contacts to meet his new friend: 'I desier if ytt please yow to sende me in wrytinge the name of the Scottisse gentleman that came yesterdaye to visyt yow and me', Standen wrote in September.¹¹⁵ It was not only his own visitors who brought news. As he explained to Edward Selwyn, 'many do resorte to visit their afflicted frendes, wherby I here sundry speches.'¹¹⁶ Even an inmate who had no desire to listen to other people's conversations would have struggled to avoid eavesdropping in a cramped early modern

¹¹¹ AS to AB, 20 September 1591, LPL MS 648, fol.82r-v.

¹¹² 'Even during his misfortune he has been lucky enough to have won over the greater part of those who have been to see him, indeed his judges [and] even the principal members of this court' ('durant son malheur mesmes il a este si heureux que d'auoir gaigne la plus part de celle qui l'ont veu et frequente; voire ses iuges mesme les principaux de ceste court') (AB to WC, 15 June 1591, TNA SP 78/24, fol.228r).

¹¹³ AS to AB, 24 May 1591, LPL MS 648, fol.33r.

¹¹⁴ AS to Mr Bringbourne, 6 August 1591 (copy), LPL MS 648, fol.74r.

¹¹⁵ AS to AB, 5 September 1591, LPL MS 648, fol.96r.

¹¹⁶ AS to Edward Selwyn, 5 September 1591, LPL MS 648, fol. 86r (copy).

jail. Street gossip ran as swiftly around the prison chambers as it did around taverns. For almost everyone other than the inmates themselves, prisons were wholly permeable institutions (and we have seen that even prisoners might hope to be granted the occasional *exeat*). Local businesses provided services to those prisoners able to pay – laundresses, tapsters and kitchen-boys were as likely to throng Standen’s prison as wardens and inmates. Standen may have been fortunate that his incarceration was passed in a public building that gave him plenty of opportunities to eavesdrop and survey, but in its busy-ness his prison was not unique. The early modern urban prison was fully integrated into the economic and social life of the local community.

It was not just the ease with which prisons could be penetrated by outsiders that rendered them socially mixed spaces. I have argued that widespread imprisonment for debt and religious offences created a new sort of literate, textually-productive prisoner in the early modern period. Such factors also changed the social composition of prisons, from places holding the poor and wretched (typical of prisons in the medieval period, and today) to institutions that were to a certain degree reflective of the societies they served. It was a commonplace that all men might find themselves on the wrong side of the prison gates, and a sad fact of life that many men did – a situation that was exacerbated in the confusion of wartime France.¹¹⁷ By the end of the sixteenth century, prisons had acquired an unwelcome reputation for inclusivity. Geffray Minshall, the indebted law student, warned that ‘men of all conditions are forced in prison, as all rivers run into the sea.’ So universal was the threat of imprisonment that authors and booksellers in England responded with texts that demystified the prison experience. William Fennor’s *The Compters Common-wealth* took its generic cue from travel narratives, offering a practical guide to surviving the ‘Infernall Iland’ of the Wood

¹¹⁷ Fludernik and Olson, *In the Grip of the Law*, xxvi.

Street Counter, a place familiar to a wide constituency of unfortunates including ‘all [...] heedlesse and headlesse young Gentlemen [...] of what art or fashion soeuer.’ Fennor’s subtitle – ‘A voiage made to an Infernall Iland long since discovered by many Captaines, Seafaring-men, Gentlemen, Marchants; and other Tradesmen: [with] [...] the conditions, Natures, and qualities of the people there inhabiting, and of those that trafficke with them’ – drew its wit from the suggestion that England’s newly-thriving merchant-adventurers need not risk the high seas to circumnavigate the whole world.¹¹⁸ They would find the full panoply of life in the nearest jail. Geffray Minshall used similar cartographical imagery in his *Essayes*. Prison for him was a ‘Microcosmus, a little world of woe [...] a map of misery.’¹¹⁹ Blaise Pascal was co-opting a familiar trope when he later adopted the *cachot* (dungeon) as a symbol for earthly life, although to admittedly different philosophical ends: ‘this little cell where he is lodged – I mean the universe’.¹²⁰ Whatever his other privations, Standen was not withdrawn from the world during his fourteen months in custody.

If prisons did have a disarming foreignness for most early modern men and women, it lay in their unsettling combination of social inclusiveness and incipient disorder. The hazard in a prison that contained the whole world was that social distinctions might get lost in the squeeze. The writer and rogue Luke Hutton pointed to the levelling effect of incarceration in his surreal poem *The Black Dogge of Newgate*: ‘hether welcome are both bad and best. / Men of all sorts come for offending hether, / And being heare, heare bide they altogether.’¹²¹ In *The Counter-Scuffle*, a mock-heroic

¹¹⁸ Fennor, *Compters Common-wealth*, title-page.

¹¹⁹ Minshall, *Essayes and Characters*, sig. B2r.

¹²⁰ ‘Ce petit cachot où il se trouve logé, j’entends l’univers’, Pascal, *Pensées*, quoted in Victor Brombert, *The Romantic Prison: The French Tradition* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978), 19.

¹²¹ [Luke Hutton], *The Blacke Dogge of Newgate: both pithie and profitable for all Readers* (London: G. Simson and W. White, [1596]), sig. C2v.

ballad celebrating a food-fight during Lent at the Wood Street Counter, the author ascribed the cause of the disturbance in part to the hugger-mugger lodging of men of varying characters and humours: ‘Boyes that did vse to royst and rore’ were obliged to share accommodation with ‘men of sober dyet / Who lou’d to fill their guts in quiet’.¹²² When William Fennor joined his fellow debtors for dinner at the same prison, he was surprised that the meal was served as ‘in an ordinary’: ‘each man sate downe without respecting of persons.’¹²³

The perception that prisons inculcated a strain of egalitarianism was essentially a fantasy. Like all private institutions, users could buy certain privileges, the most needful being privacy and comfort. But the fantasy suggests the nature of the anxiety that did surround prison in the early modern mind – that among the other degradations of prison life, incarceration compelled men of all classes to share a certain lifestyle and mode of living. This was a humiliation felt more keenly by men who had further to fall. A gentleman might be forced to bunk with a ‘broken-citizen’ because he had run out of money to pay for preferential treatment. We should not be surprised that in Thomas Savile’s *The Prisoners Conference*, it is the socially-superior Knight who remains unconvinced by the Gentleman’s argument that ‘no disgrace fasteneth on any man’ who finds himself arrested. Among the white-collar prisoners held for recusancy or debt, it could only be the middling sort who stood to benefit from a mingling of the social classes.¹²⁴

As institutions enclosing a cross-section of society subjected to a certain collapsing of social distinctions, prisons provided fertile ground for an intelligencer. So

¹²² [R.S.], *The Covnter Scvffle, Whereunto is added, the Covnter-Ratt* (London: W. Stansby for R. Meighen, 1628), sigs.A3r-v.

¹²³ Fennor, *Compters Common-wealth*, sig.B4v.

¹²⁴ Savile, *Prisoners Conference*, sig.B2r-v.

too did the well-testified tendency of prisoners to talk, gossip and swap news. Both Minshall and Fennor figure the interaction of prisoners as the dialogue of merchants on the Exchange, an observation wholly borne out by Standen's comments on his intelligence transactions in Bordeaux.¹²⁵ His news came as frequently from speech as from written dispatch. Time and again in his letters, he referred to materially productive conversations: 'One toulde me yesterdaye', 'one that came from St Iohn de Luz [...] sayeth', 'I here some speche'.¹²⁶ Far from being cut off, Standen's prison was a nexus of discussion, opinion and debate, sustained partly by visitors and partly by the prisoners themselves. Like Shakespeare's Lear, who foresaw imprisonment with Cordelia as an opportunity to 'hear poor rogues / Talk of court news' and discover 'who loses and who wins; who's in, who's out', Standen could uncover a great deal in his ostensibly straitened circumstances.¹²⁷ There was, of course, a certain advantage in sharing accommodation with individuals suspected of politically-motivated criminality. In May Standen extracted what he could from a Monsieur de Cambes, nephew of de Lussan of Blaye, who had been arrested in Bordeaux without charge (but with plenty of well-founded prejudice against the de Lussan family).¹²⁸ The following month he reported that 'a Student of this towne and of the cytie of Auché was this afternone brought hyther by a Iurat for beyng founde possessed with a pamphlette imprinted in Agen agaynst this kynge', a dangerous text with which to be associated but one that his circumstances permitted Standen to note, discuss and perhaps obtain (he certainly got hold of a seditious book in September, which he sent in a 'close manner' to

¹²⁵ Minshall, *Essayes and Characters*, sig.G2r-v; Fennor, *Compters Common-wealth*, sig.C2v.

¹²⁶ LPL MS 648, fols. 96r, 51r and 82v.

¹²⁷ *King Lear*, 5.3.13-15 (Riverside Shakespeare).

¹²⁸ AS to AB, 24 May 1591, LPL MS 648, fol.33r.

Anthony).¹²⁹ To an extent, the prison environment removed the contagion from political subversives. Incarcerated already, Standen ran little further risk in talking to people who had been detained for beliefs or actions that displeased the authorities, which is not a freedom he would necessarily have enjoyed at liberty. Liaisons could be dangerous in the free world, as Standen discovered to his cost when he returned to England in 1593: accused by a Portuguese agent called Manuel de Andrada of holding long and intimate private conversations with a group of Spaniards in Calais, he was unable ever to quite shake off the suspicion of duplicity. The allegation terminated his relationship with Lord Burghley, who after an interview in which the Lord Treasurer ‘tempested’ him with charges of ‘yll and indyscrete demeanor [...] att Callayce’ appears permanently to have discarded his services.¹³⁰ Such imprudent conversations as Standen held in his Bordeaux prison remained, counter-intuitively, unregarded and unreported except by him.

The social composition and institutional organisation of prisons made them spaces in which the advantages (and hazards) of friendship were made very clear. To survive and thrive in a prison, an inmate needed support from his friends in the outside world: people to bring him food, launder his clothes, pay his bills, and carry his letters. A prisoner might request these favours of someone he had previously helped; the provider of the services was himself entitled to claim a debt of obligation from the prisoner: in the very transactions that kept early modern carceral systems going, the bonds of instrumental friendship were being forged and refreshed on a daily basis. Edward Selwyn’s failure to assist Standen when he travelled through Bordeaux despite

¹²⁹ AS to AB, 20[?] June 1591, LPL MS 648, fol.43r.

¹³⁰ *HMCS*, 4, 330 and 13 (Addenda), 483; AS to AB, 24 March 1593/4, LPL MS 650, fol. 132v.

being a former recipient of his hospitality was therefore a serious fault, a judgement which is evident from the contrition of Selwyn's letter of apology:

Sir the anger grief & shame conceaued in my self for not visiting of a prisoner of my contry [...] to whome I owe all my possible seruice hath so troubled vexed & amazed me that I coulde not well imagin howe nor what to write to you therof. Excuse yt I will not. Amend yt I can not. And yet I must needs craue pardon for yt [...] I beseeche God who can drawe light out of darknes & hath suffred me to fall into this greate fault to forgeue me that ys past & so to assist me with his grace that the shame therof may be a perpetuall warning vnto me & the grief a spurre to make me more diligent hereafter in executinge the lyke officis of charitye or priuate dutye to whom soeuer they belonge.¹³¹

When Standen was finally released on 12 October 1591, it was in part thanks to the generosity of one Bullart, who 'very honestly and ffrankly offred to paye my expences here.' It might be significant that Bullart had endured time as a 'prisoner in Spayne': perhaps Standen had played the good Samaritan for him, and he was repaying the favour in his turn.¹³²

Conclusion

A man needed his wits about him in prison. His fellow inmates – a socially diverse group – might be parasites or tricksters; the keepers – reliant on tips and bribes – might be extorters and thieves. The potential disorder and Hobbesian rapacity of the early modern jail were held at bay by the protective power of honest friendship, with those within and beyond the walls. As John Harrington explained in the preface to his

¹³¹ Edward Selwyn to AS, 10 July 1591, LPL MS 648, fol.64r (copy).

¹³² AS to AB, 2[?] or 11[?] October 1591, LPL MS 648, fol.103r (it is unclear whether this letter is endorsed '11 Octobris' or 'ii Octobris').

translation of Cicero's *De Amicitia*, imprisonment was an experience that allowed one to distinguish between the 'holow hertes' of those who failed to provide support and one's 'feithfull freendes': incarceration was, in this sense, a 'touche stone of freendship.'¹³³ Geffray Minshall warned potential inmates against indifferent or parasitical fellow prisoners, but had nothing save praise for the rare 'true harted Titus', a man 'thou maist call the masculine sweet heart.' Such a one was a boon to the prisoner: his 'bosom is alwayes bare, and hath a breast of Chrystall, that thou maist looke through his body to his heart; hee is one that will loue thee in aduersitie [...] come stormes, come calmes, come tempests, come Sun-shine, come what can come, he will be thine and sticke to thee.' These Tituses showed their worth when their friend was most in need.¹³⁴

Minshall's observation that men of all conditions are forced into prison 'as all rivers run into the sea' might owe as much to that writer's desire to universalise his own mortifying experience as to the true inclusivity of the early modern prison, but there is no doubt that prisoners represented a truer cross-section of the population at large than they do today. In their combination of diversity and restraint, prisons were zones of social promiscuity in which distinctions of degree were guaranteed only by an individual's financial resources and his access to external support. Such a characterisation – permeable, under-regulated, market-driven, discursive – casts prisons in a new light as institutions that facilitated and supported the creation of instrumental friendships. In the following chapter, I turn my attention to a group of institutions closer to the heart of English culture and society: the Inns of Court. I suggest that, like the early modern prison, the Inns relied for their success on bonds of reciprocal friendship.

¹³³ Harrington (ed. and trans.), *Booke of freendship*, sig.A2r-v.

¹³⁴ Minshall, *Essayes and Characters*, sig.D2v.

The Inns of Court brought together the ideals of classical '*amicitia perfecta*' and chivalric brotherhood, with the realities of instrumental friendship which served the interests of the individual or the group, in an institutional identity that celebrated the capacity of the 'right sort' to get ahead.

Fig. 1

Anthony Standen to Anthony Bacon, 24 May 1591 (LPL MS 648 fol.33r)

17 33

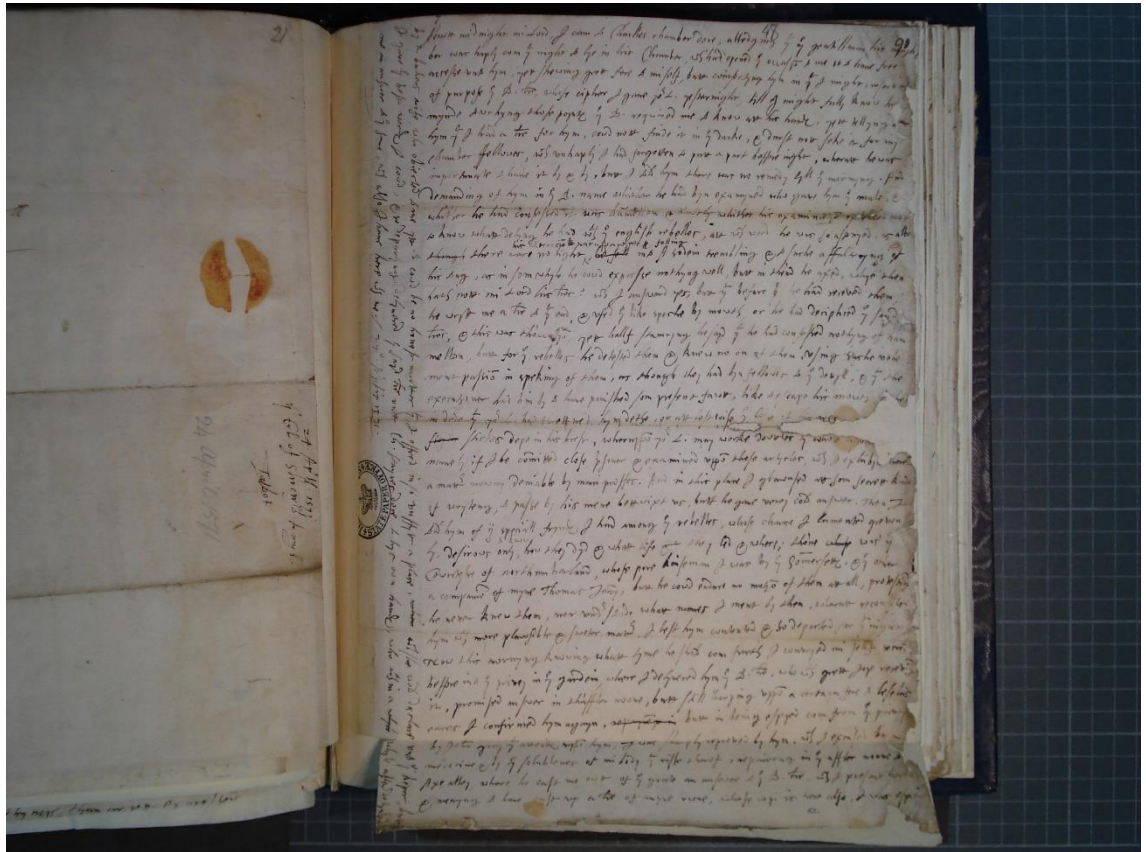
Syr: at this morninge the Jewell ffraunce entered into
 the towne house I putt hym in remembrance of the
 Manshall order gyven hym yesternyght aboute the
 p[er]mitt w[er]e gyven me to go to yo[ur] lodgings, who answered
 me that G[il]bert made his comp[er]sons participant they
 would not consent, and that you might come to the
 prison, and to be short I see yf it be a stratagem
 at the Manshall Gate a buyot full, and my doubt
 ys (wherof I maye be sure) that the Norman G[il]bert sende
 one to you and in offer to them, wherof yf you refuse
 hym on his wordes you shall distour the Rose port,
 and he will saye that you like playne dealinge.
 Yesternyght came from Blaye a messenger of Monsieur
 de Lussan called Monsieur de Cambes of Chyrenoy
 he hath stayed in Blaye six monethes w[ith] his familie
 and was gone to his house, after he had made
 reverence to the Manshall and by hym intreated to
 supper, w[er]e refused for the company he had w[ith]
 hym, and he was sett table in his house by the request
 of the waiter he and his company were apprehended
 and brought to one, the cause I cannot yett ventrate,
 but by my judgement the gentylman is, he assured me of
 Monsieur de Perons wound w[ith] a bullet throughte the
 cheek and tongue and many teeth broken, the wounde
 is not deadly but his speere not to be shortlye cured
 intelligible by reason of the tongue, yf it be for a
 house in y[er]usalem: he lies in Seville and the Kinge
 in S[an]t. Idro where he lately buried the late Kinge mostab.

your is close prisoner a your
 Countess of Montre who desired
 me to sende the enclosed to
 Mr. Craige, it maye be for some
 purpose to recommend yf to
 one of yo[ur] friends.

No protest.
 A Standen

Fig. 2

William Herle to Lord Burghley, 24 April 1571 (TNA SP 53/6 fol.48r)



Chapter 3

Institutionality: Nicholas Trott, the Inns of Court and the value of friendship

Abstract

This chapter continues my examination of institutions that facilitated the construction and maintenance of friendship in early modern English contexts. I turn to the Inns of Court, and using the example of Nicholas Trott, friend and financial backer of the Bacon brothers and resident member of Gray's Inn, I argue that the Inns sustained powerful lines of patronage – an 'old boys' network' – that tied their societies to offices of power throughout the land. The Inns of Court built their institutional identity around the idea that friendships among unrelated men might determine someone's future professional success, a belief that found representation in their cultural fictions. I also argue that the influence of the Inns of Court made them attractive 'seed beds' of support for magnates such as Lord Burghley and the earl of Essex.

Context

Anthony returned to England in February 1592, after twelve years on the continent. For the next two years, until he took a lease on a house in Bishopsgate Street, Gray's Inn functioned as his London base; his brother Francis had long been settled there (and continued to be so after Anthony had moved on). It was from here that he co-ordinated Anthony Standen's return to England in 1593, and it was as part of his brother's lawyerly circle that he entered the service of the earl of Essex. As I will demonstrate, Anthony was frequently attended by his Gray's Inn friends even when resident at his estate at Gorhambury or his brother's country house at Twickenham Park.

Archive

Trott is a relatively minor figure as far as his presence in the Bacon papers is concerned: of the men studied in this thesis, his surviving correspondence is the scantiest, totalling 32 items across LPL MSS 649 – 661 (mostly letters, with a small number of receipts, verses and miscellaneous notes). 14 letters survive between Trott and Anthony (12 written by Trott, two by Anthony), 16 from Trott to a variety of

other recipients (these are mostly autograph copies), and two from others to Trott. The Gray's Inn network illuminated in his letters is a richer resource: 55 letters either sent or received by Edward Stanhope, John Stanhope, Morgan Colman, Thomas Crewe, Robert Kemp and Henry Gosnold. Cross-referencing these names with the fully searchable *State Papers Online* yielded further items in TNA and Hatfield House.

Late in the evening on 13 June 1593, the erstwhile prisoner Anthony Standen was reunited with his friend Anthony Bacon in the Bacon family chambers at Gray's Inn. It was the location for a small piece of theatre: as a sign of Standen's new involvement with the earl of Essex, Bacon placed around his neck a golden chain, an 'earnest penny' that represented the good faith of master and servant.¹ The setting for this ceremony was apt. Like early modern prisons, the Inns of Court were institutions where male friendship intersected with political and professional patronage in powerful ways. Making – and making the best of – relationships was a key objective for men at the Inns. This was a belief that ran to the heart of Inns of Court culture and was not, as has sometimes been suggested, an aspect of Inns life that was pursued extra-curricularly. Scholars have been too quick to interpret the rich sociability of the Inns as a resource that was reserved for the use of the conspicuously well-to-do: Philip J. Finkelpearl is one of many literary and cultural historians who have regarded them as 'finishing schools' where young gentlemen, uninterested in the law, pursued instead courtly glory. Jessica Winston has recently made the apparent distinction between the law students and their less attentive colleagues clear: 'Some [...] came to study law, but many others came to make social contacts and acquire an urban sophistication that would help them advance in elite circles.'² Personal advantage was not sought merely by those young

¹ AS to EE, 14 June 1593, LPL MS 648, fol.147r (copy).

² Finkelpearl, *John Marston*, 11; Jessica Winston, 'Literary Associations of the Middle Temple,' in Richard Havery, *History of the Middle Temple* (Oxford: Hart Publishing, 2011), 147-171, 152. Other scholars who have echoed this view include Wilfrid Prest, who regarded gentlemen-students as a 'group

men who attended for reasons beyond the professional, either the elite who wanted to acquire metropolitan polish and courtly connections, or the ambitious middling sort who followed in their wake. Instead, the Inns were institutions which valorised male friendship and the loyalties it could produce among all its members, and presented opportunities for men to better themselves professionally and socially through the connections they made there. This chapter seeks to put the social networks of the Inns of Court in a new political and affective context, and suggests that the Inns were a recognised focus of patronage in the late sixteenth century.

In the first section, which briefly takes me away from Anthony Bacon and his circle, I show that the Inns were conceived as places where young men were expected to exercise newly-acquired manly independence by forming virtuous friendships, both as

apart' from career lawyers, distinguished by their 'courtly' activities (*The Inns of Court under Elizabeth I and the Early Stuarts, 1569-1640* (London: Longman, 1972), 40-41) and Margaret McGlynn who, while offering a more nuanced reading of the range of students to be found at the Inns, still regarded 'young men of good family' as the members most likely to slacken their studies while attempting to 'make useful connection for the future' (*The Royal Prerogative and the Learning of the Inns of Court* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 18). Literary and cultural histories of the Inns have inevitably concentrated on those members who were less than committed to their legal studies. A. Wigfall Green, *The Inns of Court and Early English Drama* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1931) was the first and remains the only comprehensive survey of Inns theatrical culture. Finkelpearl was an early scholar of the various literary communities sustained there, whose work was built upon by Marotti, *John Donne, 25-95*. Two PhD theses have filled gaps: Christopher Paul Baker, 'Ben Jonson and the Inns of Court: the literary milieu of *Every Man Out of His Humor*', unpublished PhD dissertation, University of North Carolina, 1974, and Brent Whitted, 'Legal play: the literary culture of the Inns of Court, 1572-1634', unpublished PhD dissertation, University of British Columbia, 2000. Anthony Arlidge, *Shakespeare and the Prince of Love: The Feast of Misrule in the Middle Temple* (London: Giles de la Mare, 2000) and John H. Baker, 'Christmas in the Inns of Court and Chancery', in Baker (ed.), *An Inner Temple Miscellany: Papers Reprinted from the Inner Temple Yearbook* (London: privately printed for the Honourable Society of the Inner Temple, 2004), 41-7, have both cast new light on literary and theatrical activity. The history of the teaching and practice of the law has been well documented by John H. Baker, *The Third University of England: The Inns of Court and the Common-Law Tradition* (London: The Selden Society, 1990) and *The Common Law Tradition: Lawyers, Books, and the Law* (London: Hambledon Press, 2000); Christopher Brooks, *Law, Politics and Society in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008); and Wilfrid Prest, *The Inns of Court and The Rise of the Barristers: A Social History of the English Bar, 1590-1640* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986). Gilles Monsarrat's chapter 'John Ford: The Early Years (1586-1620)' in Gilles Monsarrat, Brian Vickers and R.J.C. Watt, *The Collected Works of John Ford*, 3 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2012) 1, 12-38, includes some background on life at the Middle Temple. A welcome contribution to the study of the culture of the Inns as a whole is Jayne Elisabeth Archer, Elizabeth Goldring and Sarah Knight (eds), *The Intellectual and Cultural World of the Early Modern Inns of Court* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2011) which presents a series of essays on artistic, religious and political topics.

an essential prophylactic against vice and as a way of accessing the better sort of society. In the second section, I explain that these friendships also formed the basis of a man's future professional circle, and constituted the source of his reputation. By focusing on the example of Anthony Bacon's friend Nicholas Trott, who sought a position in the crown bureaucracy, I suggest that 'alumni networks' supported the ambitions of fellow members in legal and governmental appointments. These loyalties were not hidden, and in Section 3 I reveal that the Inns of Court incorporated a respect for friendship (in the classical and chivalric modes) into their institutional values and cultural fictions. Sections 4 and 5 explore how the friendly affinities that were so important to the Inns of Court could be manipulated by statesmen such as William Cecil, Lord Burghley, and I return to the Nicholas Trott narrative to reveal the involvement of Robert Devereux, earl of Essex. I conclude by suggesting that the closed world of the Inns of Court, with its institutional promotion of friendship and loyalty, managed through the influence of its members to sidestep the suspicions that were typically directed at groups of men who upheld fealty to their fellows but failed to adhere to the conventions of dynastic alliance.

Section 1: The men of the third university

The late sixteenth century was the high water mark for the Inns of Court, England's ancient seats of legal learning. Established on the fringes of the city since the fourteenth century, the four houses – The Honourable Societies of Gray's Inn, Middle Temple, Inner Temple and Lincoln's Inn – claimed a monopoly on the regulation and teaching of common law, and also exerted seigneurial control over the ten Inns of Chancery, the smaller houses that offered preparatory study for aspirant lawyers. Under the Tudors, the Inns of Court had become forcing houses for generations of men of affairs: Burghley, Sir Nicholas Bacon, Sir Francis Walsingham and Sir Christopher Hatton

learnt law there, as well as scores of writers, thinkers, jurists, parliamentarians and administrators. Admissions boomed, and in 1588 Hatton, then Lord Chancellor, was said to observe that ‘there are now more at the bar in one house than there were in all the Inns of Court when I was a young man.’³ The four societies constituted part of what Sir George Buc called in 1612 the ‘third university of England’ – by which he meant London itself, a federation of artistic academies, language schools, theological colleges and other ‘houses of learning.’⁴ But the Inns are more properly understood as graduate schools, centres of higher education attended by those who were on the cusp of independence. Most entered aged 17 or 18 after a period of study at another establishment, either a university or an Inn of Chancery. At the Inns of Court, the student (‘inner barrister’ in Inns of Court parlance) would follow his own pace of study, listening to moots (mock trials) at his society, or actual cases in Westminster Hall, and attending the bi-annual readings, festive occasions in which a senior member dissected a particular point of law for the benefit of his fellows. Even for those members not set on a career in law – and many, perhaps most, members of the Inns of Court were not professional lawyers – the usual period of residence at an Inn was three years.⁵ For the

³ Attributed by Edward Foss, *Judges of England; with Sketches of their Lives*, 9 vols (London: Longman, 1848-1864), 5, 423. The evidence supports the assertion even if the statement is unverifiable: Finkelppearl suggests a 30% expansion in admissions in the last thirty years of the sixteenth century (*John Marston*, 5).

⁴ George Buc, *The Third Vniversitie of England* (London: Augustine Mathewes for Richard Meighen, 1631), sig. 403r-v. Buc’s text was from its publication included in the various editions of John Stowe’s *Annales*, edited and continued by Edmund Howes throughout the seventeenth century

⁵ John Baker suggests that fewer than ten per cent of Inns of Court men in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries took the legal profession as a career (‘The third university 1450-1550: law school or finishing school?’ in Archer et al. (eds), *Intellectual and Cultural World*, 8-31, 9). What these non-lawyers might have done with their little legal knowledge is suggested by Abraham Fraunce in *The Lawiers Logike* (London: William How for Thomas Gubbin and T. Newman, 1588) who castigated the ‘rabulae forenses’ who ‘run [...] to the Innes of Court and hauing in seauen yeares space met with six French woordes, home they ryde lyke braue Magnificoes, and dashe their poore neighbours children quyte out of countenance, with Villen in gros, Villen regardant, and Tenant per le curtesie,’ sig. ¶4r-v. The assumption seems to have been then, and continues to be, that gentlemen who expected or aspired to be landowners required a certain amount of legal knowledge to ensure the smooth-running of their estates, although the benefit of such scant acquaintance with the law is debated.

legally-inclined, it was a much more daunting prospect: a student could spend seven years as an inner-barrister before he gained the right to practice.

For most young members, their time at the Inns of Court would see them transformed from dependent sons to men of affairs. For many, their admission was both the last stage in their education, and the point that marked the end of childhood and entry into the adult world. The Inns were figured as communities of men, as opposed to the juvenile environments of school and university. In the fifteenth century, the jurist Sir John Fortescue made a point of emphasising that the Inns were academies of legal learning for ‘students who have past their minority’, as opposed to the adolescents who attended other universities in England and Europe.⁶ It seems to have been the case that men who recalled the transition from Oxford or Cambridge to the Inns regarded it as a sort of educative breeching: a graduation from the cossetting world of the university to the manly environment of the Inns of Court.⁷ Sir Simonds D’Ewes wrote of his departure from the ‘full breasts’ of St John’s College, Cambridge – his ‘dear mother, from which I had sucked so much variety of learning’ – for the challenging world of Middle Temple. There, he was subject to ‘so many inconveniences and discontents, as all I had been sensible of at Cambridge had been mere shadows unto them.’⁸ A generation later Sir Thomas Wroth informed his nephew, destined for Inner Temple, that he had ‘sukt in but what your childish age was Capable of’ at Oxford. Now he was to

⁶ John Fortescue, *De Laudibus Legum Angliae*, S.B. Chimes (trans. and ed.) (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1942), 121. It may well have been the case that new inner-barristers of 17 or 18 were not yet physically mature men, given the later onset of puberty in the premodern world, but the Inns were at least regarded as the space in which they would enter into full manhood.

⁷ Not all members were alumni of the universities, but Prest suggests that ‘well over half’ of the men called to the bar in the period 1590-1640 had been to Oxford or Cambridge, although the majority left without taking a degree (*Rise of the Barristers*, 111).

⁸ James Orchard Halliwell (ed.), *The Autobiography and Correspondence of Sir Simonds D’Ewes, Bart., During the Reigns of James I and Charles I*, 2 vols (London: Richard Bentley, 1845), 1, 147-149. D’Ewes’s image pre-dates the adoption of the phrase ‘alma mater’ (bounteous mother).

enter ‘a Society of prudent men’, he must put on his ‘*virilem togam*, & bid farewell to all that is Childish.’⁹ Like a little boy who has left the nursery and his infant dresses behind him, the young Wroth’s arrival at the Temple was marked by a costume change: from scholar’s gown to lawyer’s robes, from clothing fit for a boy to a manly toga.

Worldly writers presented the shift from university to Inn of Court as a transition from removed, academic study to applied training. A squib by lawyers in 1615 mocked the students of Cambridge ‘Who know the world by Mappe, and never dare / If beyond Barkway ride past Ware’, and even a jurist writing in defence of legal education admitted that while university study was ‘easie, elegant, conceipted, nice and delicate’, the law was ‘hard, harsh, vnpleasant, [and] vnsavory.’¹⁰ Manly work, however idly pursued by the young men of the Inns, required a manly demeanour. Deliberate attempts by new members to distance themselves from the embarrassing associations of childhood and college-life drew mockery. The character of ‘An Innes of Court man’ in *Sir Thomas Overbury His Wife* (1632) is engaged in a determined act of self-fashioning, re-making himself in the model of the urbane gentlemen he sees on the streets of London:

Hee is distinguished from a Scholler by a paire of silk stockings, and a Beaver Hat, which makes him contemne a Scholler as much as a Scholler doth a Schoolemaster. By that hee hath heard one mooting, and seene two playes, hee thinkes as basely of the *Vniversity*, as young *Sophister* doth of the *Grammer schoole*. He talkes of the *Vniversity*, with that state, as if he were her Chancellour; findes fault with alterations,

⁹ Thomas Wroth, ‘Advice to a Templar’, Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington D.C., MS V.a.575, fol.1r. Richard Brathwait recalled transferring from the ‘bounteous bosome of this my *Nursing-Mother*’ – Oriel College, Oxford – to the sterner environs of Gray’s Inn in 1609 (*A Spirituall Spicerie: Containing Sundrie Sweet Tractates of Devotion and Piety* (London: I.H. for George Hutton, 1638), sig.S9v).

¹⁰ ‘To the Comaedians of Cambridge’, BL Sloane MS 1775, fol.71v; Fraunce, *Lawiers Logike*, sig.¶2r-v.

and the fall of *Discipline*, with an, *It was not so when I was a Student*; although that was within this halfe yeere.¹¹

The author of this stereotype situates the young Innsman, six months out of college, at the culmination of a series of graduations, each one marked by profound contempt for the stage that has come before: from school to university, from university to the Inns of Court.

Like most rites of passage, the transition to independence at the Inns could be rocky. Although at university, as a treatise of 1617 put it, ‘the Tutors eye supplies the parents’, life at the Inns was largely unsupervised.¹² Members lived in their own chambers (usually shared with a peer) or in private lodgings; no attempt was made to enforce attendance at moots; the Inns were open to foot-traffic day and night. The fact that junior members of the Inns of Court led independent lives was a cause for concern. The same treatise observed that ‘each [member] is his own master in respect of his priuate studie and gouernment.’ As the author warned, ‘where there are many pots boiling, there cannot but bee much scumme.’¹³ If the Inns were seen as institutions in which young men achieved mastery over themselves – in anticipation of their mastery over a household, which would mark their full adoption of manly authority – they faced plenty of opportunities to slip up.

The spendthrift Innsman, squandering his allowance on drink and wasting his hours at the playhouse, was a stock image in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century

¹¹ Anon., *Sir Thomas Overbury His Wife. With additions of new characters, and many other Wittie Conceits never before printed* (London: R.B. for Robert Allot, 1632), sig.K4r.

¹² Joseph Hale, *Quo Vadis? A Ivst Censvre of Travell as it is Commonly vndertaken by the Gentlemen of our Nation* (London: Edward Griffin for Nathaniel Butter, 1617), sig.B2v.

¹³ Hale, *Quo Vadis?*, sigs.B2v-B3r.

London.¹⁴ But the archetype drew on fact: future pillar of state Edward Hyde confessed to his own taste for ‘the License of those Times, which was very exorbitant’ when he was at Middle Temple in the 1620s.¹⁵ George Buc admitted that he was a frequently a ‘trewand’ while a student at Middle Temple.¹⁶ Edward Waterhous put an optimistic spin on the issue when he explained that men who ‘come hither to study the law are not tethered or limited, but give themselves a latitude of following that which is most congenial to them’.¹⁷ It was received wisdom that law students preferred plays and verse to law books: the typical Innsman

reades not *Littleton*

But *Don Quix Zot*, or els *The Knight o’th’Sun* [...]

Instead of *Perkins* pedlers French, he sayes

He better loves Ben: Johnsons booke of Playes.¹⁸

The tedium of text-books such as John Perkins’s *A Profitable Booke, Treating of the Laws of England* and Thomas Littleton’s *Treatise on Tenures* (a summary of medieval land-law) was held to be partially responsible for law students’ hunger for drama and poetry. William Fulbecke, in his guide to the study of the law, conceded that ‘the bookes of Lawe [...] are not pleasant to reade, the wordes or termes are harsh and

¹⁴ See for instance the ‘Yong Innes a Court Gentleman’ in F.[rancis] L.[enton], *Characterismi: Or Lentons Leasvres. Expressed in Essayes and Characters* (London: I.B. for Roger Michell, 1631), sigs.F4r-6r.

¹⁵ [Edward Hyde], *The Life of Edward Earl of Clarendon, Lord High Chancellor of England, and Chancellor of the University of Oxford [...] Written by Himself*, 2 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Printing House, 1760), 1, sig.A4r.

¹⁶ Buc, *Third Vniversitie*, sig.4P1v.

¹⁷ Edward Waterhous, *A Discourse and Defence of Arms and Armory* (London: T.R. for Samuel Mearne, 1660), sig.K2r-v.

¹⁸ Francis Lenton, *The Young Gallants Whirligigg: or Youths Reakes* (London: M.F. for Robert Bostocke, 1629), quoted in Finkelpearl, *John Marston*, 13-14.

obscure, the stile no whit delightfull, the methode none at all.’¹⁹ With the best will in the world, the scholarly might find applied study difficult. A mid-sixteenth-century account of life at Middle Temple admitted that:

There is none there that be compellyd to lerne, & they that are lerners for the most parte haue ther studies and places of lernyng so sett that they are myche trobled with noyse of walking and communycacion of them that be no lerners, and in the terme tyme they are so vnquyeted by Clyantes [...] that resorte to such as are attorneys & practysers that the studyentes may as quietly study in the open streetes as in ther studies [...] they haue no place to walke in and talke & conferr ther lerninges but in the [Temple] church whiche place all the terms tyme hath in it no more quyetnes then [...] [Saint] Pawles by occasion of the confluens and concourse of such as are suters in the Lawe.²⁰

In the face of such an uncongenial working environment, it is not surprising that young men at the Inns of Court were considered to be especially vulnerable to exploitation by the wicked.²¹ Idleness, ‘the verie matrix and conceptorie place of infinite mischiefes’, was a hazard.²² Sir Thomas Wroth stated in the letter of advice to his nephew that ‘[t]he greatest vnthriftynes and Prodigality is the vnprofitable and Malexpence of Tyme’ and advocated a schedule of early rising and regular bed-time.²³ Guardians and parents feared not only that students at the Inns would squander their

¹⁹ [William Fulbecke], *A Direction or Preparatiue to the Study of the Lawe* (London: Thomas Wight, 1600), sig.D4r.

²⁰ ‘Constitutionis Iurisperitorum Medii Templi London’, BL Cotton MS Vitellius C.IX, fol.231v.

²¹ Monsarrat, ‘John Ford: The Early Years’, 16-17.

²² John Ferne, *The Blazon of Gentry* (London: John Windet for Andrew Maunsell, 1586), sig.Aiiiiir.

²³ Folger MS V.a.575, fol.2r.

working days, but that they might drift into the orbit of unscrupulous citizens. One observer asked how the ‘novices’ at the Inns, ‘that are turned loose into the maine, ere they know either coast, or compasse, [can] auoid these rockes and shelues, vpon which both their estates and soules are miserably wracked?’²⁴ The lurid tone belies the fact that young Inns of Court members continued to lead largely unrestricted lives through the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, suggesting that the risks they faced were less severe than writers implied. But attempts were nevertheless made to guard against them: Sir Nicholas Bacon appointed one Richard Barker, later a Gray’s Inn bencher, as an instructor and chaperon for Anthony and Francis.²⁵

For the majority of students, however, a private tutor was impracticable. The defence against profligacy and abuse was instead to be found in the virtue of one’s companions. The cultivation of the right sort of friendship was challenging for the young Innsman: discrimination and judgement were precisely the qualities he was seen to lack, and falling in with the wrong crowd was a certain route to the sort of ruin to which he was deemed so prone. The process of selection was, however, part of the point. As Thomas Wroth reminded his nephew, choosing the society of ‘sober and Civill persons’ was a demonstration of manly self-determination and prudence – proof that the youngster was entitled to be ‘his own master.’ ‘Noscitur ex socio, qui non cognoscitur ex se’ (the unknown man is known by his companion), he wrote.²⁶ To a degree, the Inns of Court attempted to make the process easier. New arrivals were ‘bound’ to two existing members, a contracted fellowship which gave the new member access to an existing social circle.²⁷ This was merely a leg-up; responsibility for making use of such

²⁴ Hale, *Quo Vadis?*, sig.B3r.

²⁵ Prest, *Inns of Court*, 138-9.

²⁶ Folger MS V.a.575, fol.1v.

²⁷ Michelle O’Callaghan, *The English Wits: Literature and Sociability in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 10. William Dugdale describes new entrants being

connections remained with the individual. In his third-person account of his time at the Middle Temple in the 1620s, Edward Hyde, later earl of Clarendon, included a paean to friendship:

He never was so proud, or thought himself so good a Man, as when He was the Worst Man in the Company [...] He never knew one Man, of what condition soever, arrive at any Degree or Reputation in the World, who made choice or delighted in the Company or Conversation of those who, in their Qualities were inferior, or in their Parts not much superior to himself.²⁸

This highly conventional piece of wisdom follows Hyde's roguish confession of time spent indulging in 'the License of those Times', and precedes a lengthy account of the virtuous friends he went on to make. Typical the praise of friendship might be, but Hyde draws attention to the conscious choice he made as a very young man to associate with the better sort. Although Hyde joined Middle Temple from Oxford aged 17, the 'Friendships which He made with the Persons in his Profession' were marked by a differential in age and status. They were all 'eminent men, or of the most hopeful Parts; [...] all much superior to him in Age, and Experience, and entirely devoted to their Profession.'²⁹ Indeed, virtually all of the men Hyde listed by name were barristers by the time he arrived as a new member. Geoffrey Palmer (later Attorney-General) had been called to the bar in 1623, Bulstrode Whitelock joined him in the autumn of Hyde's arrival, and Richard Lane, a future Lord Keeper, was the *eminence grise* of Hyde's new

²⁷ 'bound' to existing members in *Origines Juridiciales*, 3rd edn. (London: Christopher Wilkinson, Thomas Dring and Charles Harper, 1666, 1680), sig.Dd1v.

²⁸ Hyde, *Life*, 1, sig.B4r.

²⁹ Hyde, *Life*, 1, sig.C7v.

social circle, having been called in 1611.³⁰ By his own account these senior members were attracted to Hyde's 'Gaiety of [...] Humour, and inoffensive [...] winning Behaviour', and his social position was undoubtedly enhanced by the fact that Middle Temple's treasurer, Sir Nicholas Hyde, was his uncle. But Edward Hyde, writing his memoirs in later life for the private benefit of his family, took pains to record the upwardly mobile friends he made thanks to his wit and charm, as well as the attendant discrimination against colleagues who were less elevated: 'with the rest of the Profession He had at most a formal Acquaintance, and little Familiarity.'³¹ His selectivity owed much to his own ambition, but he was not the only Templar to draw distinctions between the types of companions a man might seek at the Inns. Addressing his fellow members on the occasion of his promotion to Serjeant and departure for Serjeants' Inn, Sir James Whitelock (father of Edward Hyde's friend Bulstrode) paid tribute in carefully-modulated terms to, in turn, his '*coætani*', those bosom friends with whom he 'came hether together, and have lived together ever sithence'; to his professional peers or '*collatorales*'; and lastly to the remainder of 'the whole bodye and societie in general.'³²

Enacting social distinction was hardly unique to the Inns of Court in early modern England. But the size of the Inns – communities of several hundred discrete individuals at a time when conceptions of social scale for most people still focussed on the household – necessitated explicit management and control of one's circle of acquaintance.³³ In this, the Inns were unusual. Michelle O'Callaghan has characterised

³⁰ John Hutchinson, *A Catalogue of Notable Middle Templars, with Biographical Notices* (London: privately printed by Butterworth & Co., 1902), 140, 183, 260.

³¹ Hyde, *Life*, 1, sig.C8r.

³² John Bruce (ed.), *Liber Famelicus of Sir James Whitelocke* (London: Camden Society, 1858), 82.

³³ Prest, *Inns of Court*, 17.

the Inns as a ‘paradigmatic fraternity, combining men in an association held together by the bonds of civic brotherhood.’³⁴ But unlike their nearest corporate equivalents, the livery companies, the Inns drew on a socially heterogeneous membership that skewed to the wealthy. It was a ‘polite fiction’ that the Inns of Court were populated solely by gentlemen, and Wilfrid Prest has shown that perhaps the majority of members came from ranks below the upper gentry.³⁵ But if they were not all ‘sons of nobles’ as Fortescue claimed in the fifteenth century, members had to come from money.³⁶ The first article in an early sixteenth-century account of Middle Temple stated firmly that ‘there is no landes or reuenues longinge to [the society] wherby any lerner or student mought be holpen and encouraged to study, by meane of some yerely stypende or salary.’³⁷ Keeping a son at an Inn cost between £30 and £40 a year in entry charges, commons fees and rent, which limited membership to rich yeomen farmers, merchants, gentry and above.³⁸ Such a constituency nonetheless comprehended an extensive social range, in an age when people were finely attuned to differences in degree. The situation in the Inns was therefore complicated. As institutions, they promoted notions of professional equality and fraternity, but as social entities they drew on England’s deeply-held reverence for status. Complex social mechanics operated within the Inns to determine degrees of association and intimacy, but such questions were not resolved by an uncritical appeal to social position. While important, class hierarchy was one of several factors in an individual’s status. As Edward Hyde discovered, other things came into play, too: conversation, intellect, charm.

³⁴ O’Callaghan, *English Wits*, 3.

³⁵ Prest, *Inns of Court*, 21-28; Prest, *Rise of the Barristers*, 87-90.

³⁶ Fortescue, *De Laudibus Legum Angliae*, 119.

³⁷ ‘Constitutionis Iurisperitorum Medii Templi London’, BL Cotton MS Vitellius C.IX, fol.319r.

³⁸ Prest, *Inns of Court*, 27-28.

In this the Inns shared some characteristics with the sociable clubs that began to form in the early seventeenth century. Many of the first convivial societies had Inns of Court links if not origins.³⁹ Ben Jonson's 'Sociable Rules for the Apollo' celebrated the discriminating sociability of clubbable men:

Let none but Guests or Clubbers hither come,
 Let Dunces, Fools, sad, sordid men keep home,
 Let learned, civil, merry men b'invited,
 And modest too; Nor the Choise Ladies slighted.⁴⁰

Ladies, however choice, seldom featured in Inns of Court activities, but civil and merry men found there a congenial home. Learning, courtesy and wit were all accomplishments that could be cultivated, and they provided valuable social capital. John Manningham, a young law student whose commonplace book records a performance of Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* in Middle Temple hall in 1602, kept his journal as a repository of conversations, anecdotes, witticisms and sermons (transcriptions of and commentaries on which constitute by far the greatest part). The mix of devotion, aperçus on statecraft and bawdy humour records his programme in self-improvement that concentrated on witty conversation and informed debate. As his twentieth-century editor remarks, '[i]t seems obvious that he used the Diary partly as a training-ground to exercise his wit,' a necessary undertaking given the 'sparkling company' of 'sociable and affable young intellectuals' with whom he had to compete at

³⁹ O'Callaghan, *English Wits*, 1-3.

⁴⁰ 'Ben. Johnsons Sociable rules for the *Apollo*', in Alexander Brome, *Songs and other Poems* (London: Henry Brome, 1661), sig.C12r-v (irregular gathering of 12).

Middle Temple.⁴¹ If Manningham's diary is to be taken as a representative sample, Temple wits enjoyed word-play that ranged from up-to-the-minute anagrams ('Arbella Stuart: tu rara es et bella') to puns that were distinctly undergraduate: "'Where is your husband?'" said Mr Reeves to a girl. "He is a building," said shee. "The worse lucke for you," q[uo]t[h] hee; a bilding in Wiltsh[ire] signifies a male with one stone.⁴²

Conversational quickness was one of the accomplishments that young Inns of Court men sought to develop – Richard Brathwait, an inner-barrister at Gray's Inn a few years later, 'held it in those dayes an incomparable grace to be styled one of the *Wits*.'⁴³ In Manningham's diary we see a form of sociable and intellectual self-fashioning that is related to, but far more subtle than, the caricature of the Innsman in *Sir Thomas Overbury His Wife*, who 'will talke ends of *Latine* [...] though his best authors for't bee *Tavernes* and *Ordinaries*.'⁴⁴ In the crowded Inns of Court, where fraternal social structures ran parallel to established hierarchies of status, members had an unusual degree of choice in terms of those with whom they associated. Compared to other early modern institutions, the Inns sustained a relatively open market in friendship. Admission to an Inn was itself regarded as a token of gentlemanly status (it was of course the merchant and yeoman families in particular who had a strong investment in maintaining this illusion),⁴⁵ and once that social hurdle had been cleared, the Inns offered an environment in which status largely depended on professional seniority: a member aspired to ascend up the ranks through inner barrister, utter barrister, reader,

⁴¹ Robert Parker Sorlien (ed.), *The Diary of John Manningham of the Middle Temple 1602-1603* (Hanover: University of Rhode Island Press, 1976), 21. Anthony Arlidge has characterised the members of Middle Temple at this time as a 'college of witcrackers' (*Shakespeare and the Prince of Love*, 6).

⁴² Sorlien (ed.), *Diary*, 67-70.

⁴³ Brathwait, *Spirituall Spicerie*, sig.S12v.

⁴⁴ Anon., *Sir Thomas Overbury*, sig.K4r.

⁴⁵ O'Callaghan, *English Wits*, 13.

ancient, benchers. At each level, principles of meritocratic hierarchy (in theory) prevailed, a conjunction identified by Paul Raffield as the ‘unexpected congruity of hierarchy and fraternity.’⁴⁶ For the new inner barristers, arrival at an Inn offered an unprecedented opportunity to make new friends with a cohort of likely young men, and inevitably they took pains to ensure that they were admitted to the most promising circles by cultivating their intellectual and social skills.

Section 2: The value of friendship

I have argued that the relationships men formed at the Inns helped them stay on the straight and narrow and prevented a drift into profligacy and ruin. But they were also important to their later careers – reputations built at the Inns, and the friendships made there, were the foundations on which their future prospects depended. The Tudor state offered a number of job opportunities to legally-trained men, the details of which I discuss in greater detail in Section 4 below, but as Wallace MacCaffrey has observed, the number of positions in the government service was far outstripped by the ‘jostling crowd of lower gentry’ who competed for employment.⁴⁷ The support of influential patrons was crucial in order to achieve the ‘necessary leverage’ that would lift a candidate into a vacant office.⁴⁸ Success depended on the lobbying powers of one’s friends and patrons, and for many aspirant state servants the Inns constituted their most direct access to influential people. The Inns were geographically and culturally close to the centres of legal, legislative and executive power and members had ample

⁴⁶ Paul Raffield, ‘The Inner Temple reveals (1561-62) and the Elizabethan rhetoric of signs: legal iconography and the early modern Inns of Court’, in Archer et al. (eds), *Intellectual and Cultural World*, 32-50, 38.

⁴⁷ MacCaffrey, ‘Place and Patronage in Elizabethan Politics’, 101.

⁴⁸ Lawrence Stone, *The Crisis of the Aristocracy, 1558-1601* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965), 703.

opportunity to make connections with potential patrons.⁴⁹ But the Inns sustained patronage networks of their own, webs that extended through space and time: a shared experience at Gray's Inn, the Temple or Lincoln's Inn was a bond to which one could appeal; a man's standing at his Inn gave a patron a concrete indication of his worth.

Members who intended to undertake a legal career necessarily regarded the Inns of Court as a crucial centre of patronage and influence. Barristers and justices returning from circuits, clients from across the country attending on their counsel and suitors seeking legal advice made the Inns a national sorting-house for professional news and comment. A poem of 1628 characterised the grounds of Gray's Inn as a 'Peripatetique College-Errant of Novellists, Rumourists, Buzzists and Mythologists' dealing in 'Gazetts [and] Corantos of affayres.'⁵⁰ It was through such gossip that a man might learn of situations vacant, or of legal assistance sought. The senior members of an Inn, as a corporate body, wielded a good deal of influence in certain legal appointments. In 1584, concerned at the mismanagement of Staples Inn, their subsidiary Inn of Chancery, the benchers of Gray's Inn wrote to Lord Burghley recommending Thomas Cary, an utter-barrister of their society, as principal. Previous principals, 'being altogether choysen by the voyces of the younge gentlemen,' had lacked authority and had been unable to prevent a 'great decaye of studie.' To prevent a further slide at their feeder institution, the members of Gray's Inn stepped in to impose one of their own: a relatively junior member, but one 'of good standing & learning[,] & for his behaviour, sober and dyscrete.'⁵¹

The benchers of Gray's Inn might have been presumed to regard power of appointment at Staples Inn as a right. But members could also play a brokering role in

⁴⁹ Marotti, *Manuscript, Print, and the English Renaissance Lyric*, 30-35, 75-77.

⁵⁰ Bodleian Library, Oxford, Rawlinson Poet MS 166, fols.89-90r.

⁵¹ BL Lansdowne MS 40, fol.82r.

campaigning for positions for their fellows over which they had no direct right of influence. These interventions did not necessarily come from the ranks of benchers or ancients: Hertfordshire gentleman and Middle Templar Sir Arthur Capell (admitted 1580) wrote to Sir Robert Cecil in 1600, urging the appointment of his senior fellow member John Shurley (admitted 1565) to the post of Serjeant-at-Law.⁵² Five years earlier, a benchers at Lincoln's Inn called Anthony Irby had written to Cecil's father, Lord Burghley, in support of Thomas Hawes's application to be customer of the port of Boston.⁵³ Sometimes a suitor was able to draw attention to the common bond of Inn membership shared alike by patron, client and broker: in 1612 one Honiman wrote to Robert Cecil (by then earl of Salisbury) to recommend Henry Yelverton as attorney of the Court of Wards, referring to the connection with Gray's Inn that all three of them shared.⁵⁴ In some cases, a family connection to an Inn gave suitors access to a broker who might otherwise have been beyond their reach. In 1589 Gilbert Talbot, the son of the earl of Shrewsbury, wrote to Sir Francis Walsingham in support of Peter Ross of Middle Temple, who sought a position at York. Although not a member himself, Gilbert Talbot's family associated itself with the Society (its arms are displayed today in the hall), and it is likely that Shrewsbury had been a member there in the 1540s.⁵⁵ A similar connection probably motivated the letter written by Edward Denny, Baron Waltham, to Salisbury in 1612, soliciting him on behalf of John Lete of Gray's Inn for a place in the Exchequer. Denny praised 'by [...] report' the man's honesty and fidelity and his 'sufficiency of knowledge for the place.' The reports may have come from the various Dennys who were members of Gray's Inn at the time (four were admitted in the last

⁵² *HMCS*, 10, 394.

⁵³ TNA SP 12/253, fol.24r.

⁵⁴ *HMCS*, 21, 373.

⁵⁵ TNA SP 12/224, fol.28r; Hutchinson, *Notable Middle Templars*, 238.

years of the sixteenth century). Like the Bacons and the Yelvertons, the Dennys were a family with strong Grayan connections.⁵⁶

The most overt appeals to institutional loyalty were made when a broker was both capable of influencing an appointment, *and* a fellow member of an Inn. In such a case, a suitor's membership became itself a qualification, to be taken into account alongside knowledge, sobriety, solvency and firmness in religion. This was the situation when Anthony Bacon's friend and financial backer, Gray's Inn member Nicholas Trott, sought the position of deputy secretary to the Queen's Council in the North at York in 1595.⁵⁷ This body, representing the power of the Privy Council and the Court of the Star Chamber, exercised crown control in the remote northern counties. Its secretary was an important figure: like his opposite number on the Privy Council, he supervised all the correspondence at York and guarded the seal of the Lord President, the head of the council who enjoyed vice-regal authority. The secretaryship was a valuable office. On top of his salary of £34, the secretary could hope to clear several hundred pounds a year in perquisites and expenses. He had under him a staff of numerous clerks, registrars and examiners, from whose bribes and *douceurs* he could also claim a portion. The role of secretary had been discharged since 1587 by one Ralph Rokeby, filling the position on behalf of the office-holder Robert Beale, who was also the long-standing senior clerk of the Privy Council in London. Beale held the office as a perk: by the terms of his joint patency with Rokeby, he claimed half the salary and attendant benefits, while Rokeby performed the actual job. Beale was careful to deny rumours that the office was a goldmine, worth £1,000 per year, but even the £400 he said he earned made the role

⁵⁶ TNA SP 14/66, fol.119r.

⁵⁷ For Nicholas Trott, see *HF*, 204-208 and 'Trott, Nicholas' in Hasler (ed.), *House of Commons 1558-1603*, 3, 531. For the Council in the North, see Robert Beale's memorandum on the Council, BL Additional MS 48152, fols.205-212; Rachel R. Reid, *The King's Council in the North* (London: Longman, 1921); F.W. Brooks, *York and the Council of the North* (London: St Anthony's Press, 1954).

highly covetable.⁵⁸ When Rokeby died in 1595, the position at York was reduced to a deputy secretaryship without the benefit of a joint patency agreement, wholly subservient to Beale and dependent on his largesse for an appropriate wage. Although not as desirable as a joint patency, the deputy secretaryship was still an attractive proposition, and it came with opportunities for promotion: since 1550, three out of the four secretaries (including Rokeby) had started out as deputies before succeeding to the full position as either joint-patentees or the office-holder itself.⁵⁹ Given Beale's age and infirmity, it was possible that whoever won the deputy secretaryship would find himself with the superior job before too long. Trott promptly made it known that he was interested in the position, realising that three of the councillors in the north – Edward Stanhope, Charles Hales and Humphrey Purefoy – were Gray's Inn alumni. The members had considerable powers of influence over the Lord President of the Council, Henry Hastings, third earl of Huntingdon, whose final recommendation for the secretaryship would be sent to the queen and the Privy Council. Trott's position was consequently extremely strong, and he embarked on an intense bout of lobbying to win support for his application.

Chief among his supporters were Anthony and Francis Bacon, the latest in a line of Bacons to attend Gray's Inn and both for periods of the 1590s resident at the society.⁶⁰ Trott's relationship with the Bacon family was intimate and complex. In the

⁵⁸ Robert Beale to WC, 24 April 1595, BL Additional MS 48116, fol. 344r.

⁵⁹ Thomas Eynns was promoted from deputy to secretary in 1550, George Blythe in 1578 and Ralph Rokeby in 1589. The same would happen to John Ferne, appointed deputy in 1595, in 1604 (Reid, *King's Council in the North*, 488-9).

⁶⁰ Sir Nicholas Bacon sent all five of his sons (three by his first wife Jane; two by Anne) to Gray's Inn to follow his path in the law. Only Francis made a name for himself in the profession. For an account of life in sixteenth-century Gray's Inn, see Francis Cowper, *A Prospect of Gray's Inn*, revised edn. (London: GRAYA on behalf of Gray's Inn, 1985), and Henry Edward Duke and Bernard Campion, *The Story of Gray's Inn: An outline history of the Inn from earliest times to the present day* (London: Chiswick Press, 1950).

previous decade he had enjoyed a close friendship with Francis, collaborating with him and other Grayans on the verse tragedy *The Misfortunes of Arthur*, performed before the queen in 1588.⁶¹ Perhaps as a result of Francis's unusually fast ascendancy up the legal career ladder compared to Trott's more workaday pace, the relationship between the two men cooled in the 1590s (Francis was made a reader in the Lent term of 1587, and the rapidity of his rise is evident from Burghley's astonished marginal annotation on the record of his elevation: 'vtter barister vppon 3 yeres study [...] admitted to the high tabler wher non ar but readers').⁶² Trott remained closely connected to the Bacons through his provision of loans, both from his own family's capital and by means of his intercession with Alderman John Spencer, an extremely rich City money-lender (and later Lord Mayor). Anthony's homecoming in 1592 marked a return to the warmth of the previous years. Although Anthony was just as quick as his brother to tap Trott for funds, he was a marginally more solvent debtor and displayed a more becoming gratitude (Trott's goodwill found 'dewe correspondencie' in Anthony's affections, which had prompted him to make Trott his 'choice of [...] creditor').⁶³ Trott, at least initially, responded with open-handed generosity and Catullan expressions of devotion.⁶⁴ The northern secretaryship offered Anthony and Francis Bacon the opportunity to repay some of his loans in kind (Francis had already tried something similar when he offered to make

⁶¹ Thomas Hughes and others, *Certaine deuises and shewes presented to her Maiestie by the Gentlemen of Grayes-Inne at her Highnesse Court in Greenewich* (London: Robert Robinson, 1587 [1588]). Trott provided the prologue. Francis Bacon's contribution is assessed in Alan Stewart (ed.), *The Oxford Francis Bacon I: Early Writings 1584-1596* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2012), 65-6.

⁶² BL Lansdowne MS 51, fol.11r; *LL*, 1, 65 (although Spedding dates his elevation to 1586); Stewart (ed.), *Oxford Francis Bacon I*, xxiii.

⁶³ AB to NT, 13 March 1594, LPL MS 649, fol.85r (copy).

⁶⁴ Trott's position in Anthony's social circle was made uncompromisingly plain when he was informed that Anthony was 'of *Symachus* minde *pecuniae enim fanus accellero persoluere officioru vero vices intimis opto debere*' (I wish to accelerate paying off the interest on a loan by a true exchange of office – by owing instead to my friends) (LPL MS 649, fol.85r). This had no effect on the warmth between them: in 1593 Trott sent Anthony a birthday poem in witty imitation of Catullus (LPL MS 649, fol.462r).

Trott a joint-patentee in his reversion to the office of clerk to the Star Chamber, a plan which faltered in late 1594).⁶⁵

In addition to the efficient postal system to which Anthony had access in his role as the earl of Essex's intelligence chief (see below, Chapter 4), the brothers gave Trott an entrée to the Stanhope family, their kin by marriage.⁶⁶ He made ample use of these resources, writing to all three Grayan councillors and appealing for their backing. He scored a notable success when Edward Stanhope consented to write to his brother John – another Grayan, and holder of the important office of Master of the Queen's Posts – recommending Trott. It is this letter (a copy of which survives in Anthony's papers) that gives us an indication of the extent and power of the Grayan alumni networks. The language that Edward Stanhope uses to commend Trott indicates a conscious observation of institutional loyalty:

[A]lthoughe it maie be there be diuerse have affected the execution of the place of Secretarie to this Councell since the death of Mr Rookeby & that for my own priuate respectes of affection, alyence, or such like, I might haue bene moued to recommend some others, yet heering of late that one Mr Trott of Grayes Inn hath entred into the action to ioyn with Mr Beale to execute the same, I yeelde not onelie my assent, but my willing furderance, what in me or my frendes shall aid, to this recomendacion [...]. The gentleman is one whom for particuler respecte to my self, aboue anie others I haue no cause to looke after, but onely as a man whom I haue seene, and obserued vpon the Stage, namelie in the common course of life of other gentlemen of the Societie.⁶⁷

⁶⁵ *HF*, 205.

⁶⁶ As a member of the Privy Council, the earl of Essex was entitled to use the royal post (Daybell, *Material Letter in Early Modern England*, 118).

⁶⁷ Edward Stanhope to John Stanhope, 27 March 1595, LPL MS 650, fol.142r (copy) (misendorsed 1594).

There were indeed diverse others who sought the position. An unsigned letter to Lord Burghley in June 1595 identified five contenders including Sir Thomas Wilkes, John Ferne and William Gee (who apparently enjoyed the support of the letter-writer, as well as the archbishop of York and the Lord President himself).⁶⁸ It is unlikely that Stanhope's 'private respects of affection' would have motivated him to back John Ferne, from whom he had wrested the recordership of Doncaster in 1592,⁶⁹ but the implication of his letter to his brother is that the plausible claims of Wilkes, Gee and the unknown other applicants were trumped by Trott's candidacy on the Gray's Inn ticket. The notion is supported by the fact that of the nine surviving letters that were written by Trott during this affair, all but one are to members of Gray's Inn (the Bacon brothers, Stanhope, Hales and Purefoy). The sole exception is a letter to a Mr Davison, who is almost certainly the former Privy Council clerk William Davison whose guileless dispatch of Mary Stuart's execution warrant earned him a vicious rebuke from the queen. Even though Davison was not a member, he had a close connection to the Inn: his son Francis was currently restoring the family name as a junior member of Gray's Inn by writing and starring in *The Masque of Proteus*, a court revel staged by the society.⁷⁰ No other evidence survives of any attempt made by Trott to appeal to men connected to the Council in the North who were not also members, like him, of Gray's Inn, and the only individual directly connected with his campaign who was not a Grayan was the earl of Essex – an involvement I discuss in detail below. It was an

⁶⁸ Anon. to WC, 7 June 1595, TNA SP 12/252, fol.103r mentions five candidates and names Trott and Gee. Wilkes's interest is evident from Trott's remark that he abandoned his suit in April (LPL MS 651 fol.78r). If by June there were still five candidates in contention, there must have been two other unknown applicants beyond Trott, Ferne and Gee.

⁶⁹ Reid, *King's Council in the North*, 228 and Simon Healy, 'Ferne, Sir John (c.1560-1609)', *ODNB* (accessed 22.08.12).

⁷⁰ Simon Adams, 'Davison, William (d.1608)' and John Consadine, 'Davison, Francis (1573/4 – 1613x19)', *ODNB* (accessed 22.08.12).

unquestionable advantage for Trott that his friends and supporters knew each other (and, in the case of the northern councillors, lived in the same city). His backers could work in concert, exerting pressure where it was most needed. Trott made sure he kept his friends in the loop. He wrote to Charles Hales in April giving him a summary of activity so far: ‘those lettres according to your direction I haue addressed to Mr Purifie with myne to him of thanckes and offer of seruice. I haue receiued from Mr Edward Stanhope in awnsuer of myne, and one written by Mr Frauncis Bacon, a very frendlie letter [...] and allso one other written in my favour to Mr Iohn Stanhope.’⁷¹

Trott’s connections with these men comprehended other ties than simply shared Inn membership. His relationship with the Bacon brothers was a strong mix of affection and indebtedness; the Stanhopes were kin to the Bacons; Charles Hales, the northern councillor to whom Trott was closest, was also Robert Beale’s brother-in-law.⁷² But the Gray’s Inn link is unignorable, and explains Trott’s decision to write to the elderly Grayan, Humphrey Purefoy, a northern councillor whom he may never have met, with an appeal for support: ‘Right worshipfull Sir my bouldnes in writing to you groweth out of advice & assurance given me by Mr Charles Hales my good frend by whose letters I vnderstand that it hath pleased the Counsell there to favour me to my Lord President with commendacion of Relligion, honesty & sufficiencie for the place I desire.’⁷³ Trott

⁷¹ NT to Charles Hales, 9/10 April 1595, LPL MS 651, fol.289r (copy). This letter appears in the Appendix as Letter 3.

⁷² Trott refers to Beale as ‘your brother’ when writing to Charles Hales, but the nature of the link is obscure: Beale’s wife was Edith, née St Barbe, sister to the Ursula who had married Sir Francis Walsingham and there is no evidence of a connection to the Haleses by marriage. The term ‘brother’ may be a reference to the fact that Beale had been raised in the household of Coventry MP John Hales, to whom Charles may have been related. (Gary M. Bell, ‘Beale, Robert (1541-1601)’, *ODNB* (accessed 22.08.12)).

⁷³ NT to Humphrey Purefoy, 9 April 1595, LPL MS 651, fol.77r (copy). Purefoy had entered Gray’s Inn in 1556, and had been a northern councillor since 1582 (Joseph Foster (ed), *The Register of Admissions to Gray’s Inn, 1521-1889, Together with the Register of Marriages in Gray’s Inn Chapel, 1695-1754* (London: privately printed by The Hansard Publishing Union, 1889), 27, and Reid, *Council in the North*, 495).

had good reason to hope that his qualities would be noted by his fellow Grayans at York. Edward Stanhope assured his brother that ‘I beleue I shall not be found to erre in this my opinion of him, that he hath bene of honest[,] curteous, & verie sociable conversacion, from his youth, zealouslie affected in religion, [and] verie well studied in the common Lawes.’ Stanhope’s good opinion was not primarily the result of first-hand experience: ‘These respectes my good brother[,] well knowen to me by observacion but better knowen to other of our particular frendes with whom he hath much conversed[,] laying all affection aside doe vrge me [...] earnestlie to require your best furtherance, good commendacion & aprobacion of this suite.’⁷⁴ The Gray’s Inn network appeared to be working well for Trott, and those qualities which the young Templar John Manningham had also tried so assiduously to cultivate seemed to be proving their worth: the mix of gravity and sociability, conformist religion and good-fellowship that Stanhope saw in Trott, smoothed a man’s path not only at the Inns themselves, but through his later career as well.

Section 3: Law sports and rhetorics of friendship

As I will explain in Section 4, Trott’s application was ultimately unsuccessful. But he had good reason to expect a happier outcome. In this section, I argue that the Inns exposed their members to a rhetoric of friendship and career-long loyalty that made clear the extent of the societies’ support for these ideas. The Inns of Court engaged in the promulgation of the theory of friendship as well as its practice through their conscious adoption of historical modes of intimate fellowship. The Inns of Court alumni networks may seem to function like a modern old boys’ club, but early modern England lacked a vocabulary for the sort of professionalised fellow-feeling that would develop in

⁷⁴ Edward Stanhope to John Stanhope, 27 March 1595, LPL MS 650, fol.142r.

the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Instead, the members of the Inns of Court construed their reliance on and promotion of institutional loyalty in terms of a historical conception of chivalric brotherhood and the principles of classical-humanist male friendship. These were the models to which they defaulted when presenting their societies in print and dramatic display.⁷⁵

Inner and Middle Temple's distant connection to the chivalric order of the Knights Templar helped to locate the societies within a context of feudal honour and inherited masculine virtue.⁷⁶ The various property conveyances that had led the legal fraternity to adopt the ancient home of the Knights Templar, and assume responsibility for their distinctive circular church, also caused the lawyers to retain their knightly impresse. As George Buc explained in 1612, the ancient devise of 'a horse [...] with two men riding vpon him' was 'a true Hierogliffe of ingenious kindnesse, and Noble courtesie of soldiers [...] who [...] when they happened to see any other Christian soldiour Wounded, or hurt, or sicke, lying upon the way, they would take him vp vpon their owne horse, and carry him out of daunger.' One nineteenth-century legal scholar appreciated the suitability of this emblem for an institution such as Inner Temple where 'hardly a chamber was not tenanted by two or more of its members', but at the time Buc wrote his study of London's colleges, many people assumed that the emblem was 'devised to show and expresse the poore and needy beginnings, and first estate of this

⁷⁵ Paul Raffield has discussed the use by the Inns of 'an order of signs that was purposely invested with a pervasive humanist content' to redress a perceived 'ethical deficit' in the legal profession ('The Inner Temple revels (1561-62) and the Elizabethan rhetoric of signs', in Archer et al. (eds), *Intellectual and Cultural World*, 32-50), and Michelle O'Callaghan has suggested that in the 1580s and 90s the Inns remodelled themselves physically and culturally in accordance with classical humanist theories of the *polis*, and consciously presented themselves as an ideal commonwealth through their 'physical and cultural fabric' (*English Wits*, 10-34). This section draws on their work by suggesting that the ideologies the Inns adopted from classical humanism and other historical intellectual models included an institutional reverence for friendship.

⁷⁶ Jonathan Riley-Smith, 'Prologue: The Knights Templar' and John Toulmin, 'The Temple Church', in Havery (ed.), *History of the Middle Temple*, 1-30.

order, as beeing driuen for lacke of horses to ride two upon one horse', which was precisely not what Inner Temple wanted.⁷⁷ Rather, its purchased heritage provided an origin myth of fraternity and honour for an institution whose true founding, like those of the others Inns, was lost in an uninspiring bundle of deeds and contracts.

The myth received an elaborate staging during the festivities which marked the admission of Robert Dudley, then Master of the Queen's Horse and a Knight of the Garter, to Inner Temple in 1561. Dudley had been made a special patron (or 'chief governor') of the society in recognition of his intercession in a disagreement over Lyons Inn, one of its houses of Chancery.⁷⁸ As a sign of his new patronage, he attended the Christmas festivities held at the Temple which were celebrated in some style. Unlike most revels which survive only as records in an account book, the Dudley festivities were described in great detail by Inner Templar Gerard Legh in *The Accedence of Armorie* (1562), and as a historical curiosity by William Dugdale in *Origines Juridiciales* (1666). Legh presented the celebrations in allegorical form (although he was careful to identify the Inner Temple by name) as the product of a 'prouince [...] auncient in trew nobilitie [...] wherin are the store of gentilmen of the whole realme, that repaire thither to learne to rule, and obey the law, to yeld their fleece to their prince & comonweale.' The narrator (called 'Gerard', who relates his story to 'Legh') visits the Temple where he is greeted by 'an herehaught [herald], by name Palaphilos', the chivalric alter ego of Robert Dudley. Palaphilos recognises Gerard as a fellow 'louer of honour', and shows him the society's ancient documents testifying to its long armigerous history. He also smuggles him into the hall where he watches the Inner Temple's 'Prince', the appointed lord of the Christmas revels, 'serued with tender

⁷⁷ Buc, *Third Vniuersitie*, sig.4P1r; F.A. Inderwick (ed.), *Calendar of the Inner Temple Records*, 4 vols (London: privately printed, 1896), 1, xxix.

⁷⁸ Inderwick (ed.), *Inner Temple Records*, 1, 215-219.

meates, sweet frutes and deinte delicates, confectioned with curious Cookerie.’ The Prince’s colleagues are compared directly to the Knights Templar reposing in the Temple Church. They are ‘thenheritors of those auncestors, who, for the comon state nether spard labor, losse of lyberty, nor lyffe and all in the aduauncement of the same.’⁷⁹ William Dugdale, writing a century later and supplementing Legh with ‘other particulars touching these grand Christmasses extracted out of the Accomptes of the House’, described the ritual of Dudley’s admission on St Stephen’s Day, 26 December. Once the first course of dinner had been cleared away, Dudley entered the hall ‘arrayed with a fair, rich, compleat Harneys, white and bright, and gilt, with a Nest of Fethers of all colours upon his Crest or Helm, and a gilt Pole-axe in his hand [...] after two or three Curtesies made, [he] kneeleth down [...] [and] pronounceth an Oration of a quarter of an hours length, thereby declaring the purpose of his coming; and that his purpose is to be admitted to his Lordships service.’ When the festive lord made a show of reluctance, Dudley ‘in submissive manner delivereth his naked Sword to the Steward; who giveth it to the Lord Chancellour: and thereupon the Lord Chancellour willeth the Marshall to place the Constable-Marshall [Dudley] in his Seat: and so he doth.’ This show of vassalage was then repeated by other members of the society.⁸⁰ In Gerard Legh’s account, the Prince bid the new men welcome to a society to which they were ‘coupled in amitie.’ For him, the ‘seuerall members, maye create and conioyne, one vnseparable body, as the whole may support the partes, eche part seruyng his place to vpholde the whole [...] This vnion[,] a knot indissoluble, lynked with your consentes in so honorable a felowship, is a sure shielde to this estate, agaynst all throwes of Fortune.’⁸¹ In this ceremony, Dudley willingly participated in a performance of

⁷⁹ Gerard Legh, *The Accedence of Armorie* (London: Richard Cottill, 1562), sigs.Ccvi.r-Ddviii.v.

⁸⁰ Dugdale, *Origines Juridiciales*, sigs.V3v-X2v.

⁸¹ Legh, *Accedence of Armorie*, sigs.Eei.v-ii.r.

corporate loyalty, whereby the Templars drew strength from their shared bonds of friendship: it is notable that Dudley played along with the idea that his admission was a special favour or courtesy, for all that Inner Temple's status was raised by such a powerful ally.⁸²

The power of good fellowship was the theme of another Inns of Court revel, staged at Gray's Inn during the Christmas festivities of 1594-5. These lavish entertainments were described in a pamphlet printed, apparently from a contemporary manuscript source, in 1688, and fit the pattern of 'grand Christmasses' described by Dugdale, in which a stage-managed eruption of disorder was resolved and then celebrated with an elaborate masque or play.⁸³ At Gray's Inn, a chaotic night on Innocents' Day (28 December), when guests from Inner Temple stormed out before a performance of Shakespeare's *The Comedy of Errors*, provided the motive for the next day's mock-trial of the offender who had incited the riot of the night before, and the staging six days later of a 'device' of friendship, designed to heal the 'breach' between Gray's Inn and Inner Temple.⁸⁴ The device – a masque in miniature – featured a series of devotions at the altar to the Goddess of Amity by a procession of famous classical friends: Theseus and Pirithous, Achilles and Patroclus, Pilades and Orestes and Scipio and Laelius. But the prayers of 'Graius' and 'Templarius', personified as two friends

⁸² Confusion appears to have arisen in scholarly accounts of these festivities over the role played by Dudley. Many have ascribed him the part of the 'Prince' in Legh's account, but 'Palaphilos' is very clearly a different character to the Prince, whom the narrator is taken to see by Palaphilos. Dugdale explains that Dudley was 'chief person (his title Palaphilos) being Constable and Marshall', and it is the Constable-Marshall who makes his grand entrance on St Stephen's Day requesting admission to his 'lordship's' service: the lord in this instance being the festive 'Lord Chancellor', played in 1561 by a Mr Onslow.

⁸³ Desmond Bland (ed.), *Gesta Grayorum, or the History of the High and Mighty Prince Henry of Purpoole Anno Domini 1594* (Liverpool: University of Liverpool Press, 1968); *LL*, 1, 325-43; W.R. Elton, *Shakespeare's Troilus and Cressida and the Inns of Court Revels* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000), 4 and 7.

⁸⁴ See Margaret Knapp and Michael Kobialka, 'Shakespeare and the Prince of Purpoole: the 1594 production of *The Comedy of Errors* at Gray's Inn Hall', *Theatre History Studies* 4 (1984), 71-81.

walking arm-in-arm, fail to please the Goddess until the assembled nymphs have sung ‘Hymns of Pacification to her Deity’. Which done, Graius and Templarius are pronounced ‘to be as true and perfect Friends, and so familiarly united and linked with the Bond and League of sincere Friendship and Amity’ as any of the classical exemplars.⁸⁵ Classical friendship had been a leitmotif of that season’s revels at Gray’s Inn. Shakespeare’s *The Comedy of Errors* flattered its educated audience with a witty comment on Cicero’s paradoxical term for the ideal friend, ‘alter idem’ (awkwardly translated as ‘another, the same’). Antipholus of Syracuse’s impossible search for his twin, his missing other self, is at the same time a quest for the spiritual fulfilment of friendship: ‘I to the world am like a drop of water, / That in the ocean seeks another drop, / Who, falling there to find his fellow forth / (Unseen, inquisitive), confounds himself.’⁸⁶ The subsequent theatrical celebrations on Twelfth Night, a few days after the device of friendship, also featured a threat to the ‘state’ of Gray’s Inn that was resolved by the goddesses Amity and Arety, and their ‘inventions’ United Friendship and Vertue.⁸⁷

Friendship was important to the Inns because it was regarded as the force that held the four separate Inns together in fellowship, a united front that gave honour and status to the legal community. The proverbial rarity of humanist loving-friendship (Montaigne thought it a wonder if ‘Fortune can achieve it once in three centuries’) made it a flattering model for the institutional amity shared among the houses themselves, as demonstrated by the Gray’s Inn device.⁸⁸ The four Inns had a loose tradition of pairing

⁸⁵ Bland (ed.), *Gesta Grayorum*, 35-36. The staged reconciliation was followed by a series of six philosophic dialogues, written by Francis Bacon and performed by fellow Grayans (Stewart (ed.), *Oxford Francis Bacon I*, 583-606).

⁸⁶ *The Comedy of Errors*, 1.2.35-38 (Riverside Shakespeare).

⁸⁷ Bland (ed.), *Gesta Grayorum*, 58.

⁸⁸ Montaigne, ‘On Friendship’ (Screech (trans. and ed.), *Complete Essays*, 207). On classical-humanist friendship, and its currency in early modern England, see Chapter 1; Shannon, *Sovereign Amity*, 17-53;

off: in 1561 the Inner Temple parliament records spoke of the ‘ancient amity, familiarity, and friendship’ with Gray’s Inn,⁸⁹ and in 1613 they teamed up under the artistic direction of Francis Bacon to present a masque to James I on Princess Elizabeth’s marriage to Frederick, Elector Palatine (Middle Temple and Lincoln’s Inn scored a more notable success with their masque, devised by Inigo Jones).⁹⁰ More importantly, friendship among the members themselves generated the powerful ties of loyalty and affection that made the Inns of Court such influential organisations. We have seen already how a man’s public career might be furthered by the connections he made at the Inns. Gerard Legh was forthright about the benefits. Inner Temple was for him a place where ‘amitie is obtained & continued’, and where the members were ‘knitt by continuall acquaintance in such vnitie of minds & maners as lyghtly neuer after is seuerid.’⁹¹

Section 4: Seed-beds of support

By the end of the sixteenth century, the line of ‘continuall acquaintance’ could stretch from the Inns of Court to a large number of judicial, legislative, executive and ecclesiastical offices. The networks of Inns of Court alumni, which we have seen manipulated by Nicholas Trott, emerge as constituent parts of the patronage culture that obtained in early modern England.⁹² The direction of interest of such systems tends to

Tom MacFaul, *Male Friendship in Shakespeare and his Contemporaries* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 1-29.

⁸⁹ Inderwick (ed.), *Inner Temple Records*, 1, 217.

⁹⁰ McClure (ed.), *Letters of John Chamberlain*, 1, 425-6.

⁹¹ Legh, *Accedence of Armorie*, sigs.Ccv.v-Ccvi.r.

⁹² See: MacCaffrey, ‘Place and Patronage’; Arthur F. Marotti, ‘John Donne and the Rewards of Patronage’ in Guy Fitch Lytle and Stephen Orgel (eds), *Patronage in the Renaissance* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), 207-234; Linda Levy Peck, *Court Patronage and Corruption in Early Stuart England* (London: Routledge, 1993) (first published Unwin Hyman Ltd, 1990), chs. 1-3.

be bottom-up rather than top-down: those individuals who desired an office or court position lobbied men more influential than themselves, in the hope that they would take an interest and fight for their cause. Such is the implication of Catherine Patterson's conception of patronage as a series of reciprocal transactions, both tangible and ceremonial, between 'those who had and those who needed.'⁹³ This is the dynamic in which Trott appears to be operating. It is he who must take the initiative to bring his suit to the attention of the powerful, aided by brokers such as the Bacon brothers. The model, while demonstrably applicable in Trott's situation, nonetheless obscures an additional dynamic in which the direction of interest is top-down, and in which the Inns of Court appear as *resources* for politically influential men. Linda Levy Peck has shown that 'Renaissance patrons sought to extend their political power in time and space [...] [and] created networks of followers to enforce their will.'⁹⁴ For grandees who aspired to a national network of sympathetic clients (sympathy is here understood as an impulse felt by those who owed their political office to the support of a patron) the Inns were a rich resource. They were not simply the 'noblest nurseries of humanity and liberty', as Ben Jonson termed them in his dedication to *Every Man Out of his Humour*. They were also valuable seed-beds of support and political backing. And as such, they invited cultivation.⁹⁵

Members of the Inns of Court might find employment in a very broad range of government offices. England's common law courts were numerous and varied, comprising the Court of the Star Chamber, the King's Bench, the Court of Common

⁹³ Patterson, *Urban Patronage in Early Modern England*, 15.

⁹⁴ Peck, *Court Patronage*, 48.

⁹⁵ G.A. Wilkes (ed.), *The Complete Plays of Ben Jonson*, 4 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981-2), 1, 275-411, 279. Paul Hammer discusses the creation of a political power-base in *PP*, ch. 7. He distinguishes between a nobleman's following (a loose confederation of associates and supporters who might offer their backing for ideological, religious or tactical reasons) and a power-base (a network of influential men or office-holders who could wield political influence on his behalf).

Pleas, the Queen's Councils in the North and in Wales (which were also civil law institutions), the courts of the counties palatine of Chester and Lancaster, the Court of First Fruits and the Court of Wards. Each maintained a permanent staff of justices, attorneys and clerks. Lesser courts, such as the dozens of manorial and borough courts across the country, were increasingly attracting London-trained lawyers. Other centralised authorities such as customs houses in the major ports, tax offices and surveyors of the queen's lands in each country required men with legal knowledge. Inns of Court members might hope to become secretaries and clerks in executive and legislative branches of government.⁹⁶ These were not anonymous back-office positions. The northern secretaryship sought by Trott was to become particularly important in the 1590s as the government conducted increasingly open negotiations with James VI about the terms of succession. In the years before 1603, the secretary at York was a vital facilitator of communication between London and Edinburgh.⁹⁷ That men of the Inns of Court could hope to achieve positions of significance did not go unnoticed. The composition of the Inns was regarded as a matter of national interest: from the 1560s onwards, state records included copies of their membership registers. Such lists served a national security function (it behoved the government to keep an eye on large and diverse populations) but they also enabled the state to track its human assets. A manuscript handbook of 1576, probably made at the behest of the Principal Secretary or one of the queen's other senior councillors, contains information such as lists of musters for 1574 and 1575, the number of trained bands in each county, the names and crew of the queen's ships, the names of the justices of assize throughout the country and other

⁹⁶ 'A general Collection of all the offices in England with their fees and allowaunce in the Queenes gift', c.1589, Folger MS. V.a.98; C.W. Brooks, 'The Common Lawyers in England, c.1558-1642' in Wilfrid Prest (ed.), *Lawyers in Early Modern Europe and America* (London: Croom Helm, 1981), 42-64.

⁹⁷ Reid, *Council in the North*, 228, 233-4.

necessary data for effective government. It also contains ‘[t]he names of certayne lawiers in euery of the foure Innes of Court’ with a brief description of their estate and skills: a barrister, Mr Daniell, is ‘of great practise, very wealthie and relligious’, whereas his fellow Mr Williams is ‘smally learned.’ Some of the notes suggest an eye to professional development: Mr Brograve, a Gray’s Inn reader, although ‘very learned’ is poor – but ‘worthy of great practise.’⁹⁸

It is in the context of this high-powered interest in the Inns of Court that I return to Nicholas Trott’s pursuit of the position at York. Beyond his immediate Gray’s Inn circle, but intimately connected to several of its members, the earl of Essex played a key role as Trott’s most glittering supporter – and the only figure involved in the battle for the deputy secretaryship who was not also a member of Gray’s Inn. The earl in fact functioned as something rather more than a mere backer. His involvement was proactive and perhaps initiatory. Writing to Edward Stanhope on 9 April, Trott explained that the diminution of the office at York from joint to deputy secretary on Ralph Rokeby’s death had put him off, citing the lesser position’s lack of job security: ‘besides the small reputacion of a deputie I would for other reasons be lothe to spend many of these my ripe and indeede turning yeares in a seruice which I should vpon an others death be forced to leaue [a]nd in my more declyned age seeke an other.’⁹⁹ It was, he wrote to Charles Hales the next day, the earl of Essex who had urged him to persevere: ‘[n]otwithstanding my Lord of Essex seemeth confident and maketh both your brother [Robert Beale] and me hope that in some small time of my exequution of the place as deputy there will occasion be offered to moue and obtaine of Her Maiestie a graunt of the ioynt patency specially if my Lord Presidents satisfaction of my seruice may

⁹⁸ BL Lansdowne MS 683. The Gray’s Inn lawyers are fols.64v-65r.

⁹⁹ NT to Edward Stanhope, 9 April 1595, LPL MS 651, fol.78r (copy).

appeare.¹⁰⁰ Once Essex had convinced Trott that the deputy secretaryship was a stepping-stone to the full position (and by May he was airily confident of success, telling Mr Davison that as ‘I haue some good hope that it maie in tyme be wrought to a Iointpatencie I shalbe content to be so intreated into it’),¹⁰¹ the earl added his considerable weight to the effort to propel Trott into the office, writing a generous letter of recommendation on his behalf to the Lord President, the earl of Huntingdon.¹⁰²

Essex’s determined involvement in Trott’s campaign is surprising given his other administrative moves in 1595. Earlier in the year, he had taken advantage of (or possibly concocted) a mistaken advertisement of Robert Beale’s death to place one of his secretaries, Thomas Smith, in Beale’s place as clerk to the Privy Council.¹⁰³ The situation when Beale proclaimed his health and objected to the change was awkward, but in 1595 Essex enjoyed unmatched influence with the queen and it was decided that Beale should sacrifice his London position and devote himself to his secondary role as secretary at York – where he would be expected to relocate. The news reduced Beale to stunned silence for some weeks before he was able to put the case for his continued clerkship of the Privy Council in a long and dignified letter to Lord Burghley. He pointed out that he had ‘serued now almost xxiii yeres in the place, which is a longer tyme that anye Clerke of the privy Counsell serued eyther her Maiestie or anye her progenitors’, and ‘to be putt out of the hall into the kitchin’ was a profound disgrace. Moving to York was out of the question: not only did he suffer from urinary blockage, the stone and gout, but prolonged travel by coach rendered him prostrate. More to the

¹⁰⁰ NT to Charles Hales, 10 April 1595, LPL MS 651, fol.289v (copy).

¹⁰¹ NT to Mr Davison, 18 May 1595, LPL MS 651, fol.133r (copy).

¹⁰² EE to the earl of Huntingdon, 7 April 1595, LPL MS 651, fol.100r (copy).

¹⁰³ Paul Hammer, ‘The Uses of Scholarship: The Secretariat of Robert Devereux, Second Earl of Essex, c.1585-1601’, *English Historical Review* 109 (1994), 26-51, 28 (note).

point, his role in the trial and execution of Mary queen of Scots had made venturing into the northern parts a lethal prospect, ‘my self and my posterity threatened with all reuenges’ that Stuart vigilantism could muster. Finally, the demotion would ruin him financially, as the charge of travelling to York would require him to ‘sell my bookes and leave my wyfe and children destitute of anye house to putt their heades in, if anye mishappe should lyght vpon me there.’¹⁰⁴

Despite reports that the queen was in favour of the plan, there can never have been any serious prospect of Beale leaving London for York.¹⁰⁵ At 54, he might well have been considered too old to withstand such a change of climate and comfort. Even Trott, ten years his junior, had to fend off concern that the move would be dangerous. ‘I most humbly thancke you of your recording that I should examyne my self how I can abide a continuall estranging from the south parts,’ he wrote to Charles Hales. ‘Trulie I am neither of mynde nor bodie so delicate but that I maie endure a chaunge of so small disadvantage as I apprehend this to be.’¹⁰⁶ The assumption must have been that Beale would seek to appoint another deputy or joint-patentee, as – no doubt prompted by the flurry of interest in the vacant position – he suggested in his letter to Burghley: he requested that the queen should ‘suffer me to serue by a deputye, as by my Lettres Patentes I maye.’ For Essex, positioning Trott as Ralph Rokeby’s replacement was the complementary manoeuvre to his success in obtaining for Thomas Smith the Privy Council clerkship, a dual campaign inspired by the (actual) death of Rokeby and the (illusory) death of Beale. By side-lining the ageing Robert Beale, Essex hoped to slip his own supporters into two politically strategic posts.

¹⁰⁴ Robert Beale to WC, 24 April 1595, BL Additional MS 48116, fols.338-345v.

¹⁰⁵ Trott wrote to Charles Hales that it was ‘Her Maiestes pleasure that he [Beale] should himself exequite’ the office (LPL MS 651, fol.289r).

¹⁰⁶ NT to Charles Hales, 9 April 1595, LPL MS 51, fol.289v (copy).

It was an opportunity that would further Essex's chief objective in the middle years of the 1590s: the consolidation of his position as a counsellor and magnate. Since his elevation to the Privy Council in February 1593 and his triumph in the Dr Lopez affair in 1594, Essex had begun overtly to strengthen his power-base through the sponsorship of parliamentary seats and by pushing for crown offices for his friends and supporters. In this he had mixed success – his candidates for two senior placements, Francis Bacon as Attorney-General and Robert Sidney as Warden of the Cinque Ports, both failed.¹⁰⁷ More junior positions offered a greater chance of success, and the prospect of an ally in the northern council was particularly attractive for Essex, not least because of his growing interest in Scottish affairs. (Essex was also concerned to make good an ill-judged involvement in the Dacre affair, in which his support for the exiled pretender to the northern Dacre territories had threatened to become public when Sir Robert Cecil seized the lands for the queen.)¹⁰⁸ Planting a client in the Council in the North was more difficult than securing the Privy Council clerkship for Smith, however. In London, where he attended permanently on the queen as her councillor and as Master of the Horse, Essex was able to deploy his considerable power of persuasion. The northern deputy-secretaryship required the consent of both Robert Beale, and his direct superior the earl of Huntingdon. As Nicholas Trott explained to Edward Stanhope on 9 April, Beale was minded 'to haue not onlie my Lord Presidents allowance but his direction in the substitution of a deputie', and he refused to back Trott's claim until he had received further instructions.¹⁰⁹ Essex's relationship with the Huntingdon family was personally close (the earl and his wife had fostered the Devereux siblings after the death of Essex's father) but politically fraught: with his firm stance on recusants and

¹⁰⁷ *PP*, chs. 4, 5 and 7; *HF*, chs. 6 and 7.

¹⁰⁸ Reid, *Council in the North*, 225-28.

¹⁰⁹ NT to Edward Stanhope, 9 April 1595, LPL MS 651, fol. 78r (copy).

contempt for Catholic toleration, the earl of Huntingdon's views accorded more with those held by the Cecils than by Essex.¹¹⁰ The politics of the north, an area alert to recusancy and the prospect of a Catholic rising, were in general more sectarian than in the south. The Gray's Inn alumni network offered Essex a way round the hard-line inclinations of the Lord President and the Council. The tendency of Grayans to rally round their own provided Nicholas Trott with a ready-made cadre of supporters willing to press his suit with the Lord President, a personal touch that – co-opted by Essex – made up for the earl's lack of influence on the northern council compared with his sway over affairs in London. If Essex's power drew largely on the complex dynamics between favourite and monarch, he hoped to achieve his objective in York by exploiting the equally complicated webs of loyalties that existed between members of Gray's Inn.

The support of loyal colleagues could not, however, outweigh the damaging effects of rumour. Despite backing for Trott's appointment from the Grayan members of council, and Beale's promise – finally extracted in June – that he would 'propound [...] [his] name first to the consyderacion' of the Lord President, Huntingdon derailed these preparations by his decision 'not [to] nominate any person' as such but to appoint on merit and with regard to security considerations. The successful applicant needed to possess, as Trott himself pointed out in a letter to John Stanhope, 'competent learning in the Law [...] [and] Knoweldg of foreign matters & Languages'; it was also important 'that he be not borne or frended within the jurisdiction of that commission.' Although he was thoroughly qualified and had a long professional life behind him in London and the south of England, Trott came from a Yorkshire family and was open to charges that he was 'enwrapped in affections and partialities' towards the north.¹¹¹ It may have been an

¹¹⁰ *PP*, 31.

¹¹¹ NT to John Stanhope, June 1595, LPL MS 651, fol.186r-v (auto copy).

accusation of this kind to which Trott referred when he complained to Anthony Bacon in May of an unspecified ‘fiction’ that had been spread abroad about him, damaging his standing. Trott was in no doubt that the rumour was part of an orchestrated smear campaign to deny him the secretaryship and the income it would generate: ‘I know the shopp where this San-benito was made, and I haue a cloake of this Masters cutting out that thorough his treacherous conning cost me 1200*li* and himself and his factor gott 200*li* by the making of it [...] You know well whom I meane.’¹¹² By late summer the affair was over: in August the queen authorised the appointment of John Ferne of Inner Temple as Beale’s deputy, instructing Huntingdon to admit him ‘to all the duties and commodities of the office, to swear him as one of the Council in the North, and to commit to him the signet of the office.’¹¹³ Ferne satisfied the requirements of the job, with the additional benefit that he shared the Lord President’s belief in papist extirpation. He also enjoyed the support of Lord Burghley and his son Sir Robert Cecil. With Ferne’s appointment, the Cecils achieved another small success in the simmering competition between themselves and Essex which came to dominate the second half of the 1590s.

Section 5: Honorary admissions

Essex’s attempt to use the networks sustained by Gray’s Inn to his political advantage was not tactically innovative, although its failure may be illustrative of his comparatively weak hold on systems of patronage and appointment in the 1590s. As in so many other areas, he was outmanoeuvred by Lord Burghley and his son Robert Cecil. Burghley exerted a magisterial influence over appointments thanks to his roles as Lord

¹¹² NT to AB, 22 May 1595, LPL MS 651, fol.134r-v.

¹¹³ TNA SP 12/253, fol.118r.

Treasurer and Master of the Court of Wards, two departments that included a large proportion of the government's offices.¹¹⁴ By the early 1590s, after the deaths of Sir Christopher Hatton, the earl of Leicester and Sir Francis Walsingham, Burghley's power was unmatched. With the rise of Essex, each appointment became an opportunity for competition between the established figure (and his hopeful son), and the emergent star. There is also evidence that Burghley sought to wield a more finely-grained control over Gray's Inn, which he had entered as a student in 1540 (his son Robert followed him in 1580, a few years after his cousins the Bacon brothers). Burghley never held any official office at Gray's Inn as a barrister, although he was later to write of it as 'the place where myself came forth unto service' after the theoretical hot-housing of Cambridge.¹¹⁵ But from the mid-1580s he took a close interest in the membership of his old society. Starting in 1585, Burghley sponsored the admission of 26 gentlemen to Gray's Inn, in three batches of between six and twelve men, his responsibility being marked next to each name in the register.¹¹⁶ Special admission at the request of a member was the remnant of a tradition at the Inns that persons of distinction could request that their nominees be called to the bar. Although this overt nepotism was frowned upon by the end of the sixteenth century, the gift of an admission (with no automatic right to practice law) was still frequently granted to members who had performed some service: when Robert Dudley's patronage of Inner Temple was celebrated in 1561, the members who

¹¹⁴ 'A General Collection' identifies 35 named paid positions in the treasury, making it the biggest crown department by far (Folger MS V.a.98, fol.1r-v) – so great was his sway that MacCaffrey termed Burghley the queen's 'patronage minister' ('Place and Patronage', 109).

¹¹⁵ Quoted in Stephen Alford, *Burghley: William Cecil at the Court of Elizabeth I* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 29.

¹¹⁶ 28 February 1585: Thomas Morison; 15 March 1585: William, Lord Evers, George Heneage, Edward Boughton, Nicholas Luke, Charles Howard, Richard Spencer, Reginald Smith (67); 29 February 1588: Henry, earl of Southampton, Thomas Holcroft; 11 March 1588: Christopher, Baron Delvin, Robert Sidney, Henry Brooke, Anthony Cooke, Fulke Greville, [Thomas] Posthumous Hoby, Edward Fritton, Simon Killigrew, Robert Oglethorpe (66); 26 February 1589: William Cecil, Richard Hatton, Garrett Aylmer, Robert Welby, Henry Goldsmith, Edward Warryn (74) (Foster (ed.), *Gray's Inn Admissions*).

had spent the most money on the festivities were allowed to bestow between one and two special admissions on gentlemen of their choosing.¹¹⁷ Occasionally these entrants were relieved of the obligation of paying the normal fees and fines. The number of Burghley's admissions suggests that Gray's Inn was keen to retain a link with its eminent former student, and perhaps the three sets of admissions (in February and March 1585, February and March 1588, and February 1589) mark the occasions of some particular honour shown the society by the Lord Treasurer (although I have found no evidence of such). Burghley chose to extend his sponsorship to a diverse range of recipients. Some of the men may have been young enough (or sufficiently interested) to benefit from the professional education offered at the Inns. Others were granted admission as a cheap form of professional patronage: his nephew, Anthony Cooke, a contemporary of Robert Cecil and Francis and Anthony Bacon, entered Gray's Inn on 11 March 1588, aged about 28 or 29. The scapegrace Cooke had already failed to make the best of an introduction at court and had angered his uncle by exceeding a licence for foreign travel and running up considerable debts (in this he resembled his older cousin Anthony Bacon); the chance to make something of himself at Gray's Inn was Burghley's final act of avuncular support.¹¹⁸ Other beneficiaries were gentlemen with established career-paths, both kin and non-kin. These men were not, and did not intend to become, lawyers. Robert Sidney had no legal ambitions when he entered at the same time as Anthony Cooke. Knighted for his military service in the Low Countries, he was shortly to impress both the queen and King James VI on a diplomatic mission to Scotland, and in 1589 he was made governor of the English-controlled port of Flushing.

¹¹⁷ Inderwick (ed.), *Inner Temple Records*, 1, 219. All the Inns had orders similar to that which obtained at Middle Temple, that 'Gentlemen are prohibited from suing by noblemen's letters or otherwise for their calling and preferment to the bar, on pain of disgrace', Charles Henry Hopwood (ed. and trans.), *Minutes of Parliament of the Middle Temple*, 3 vols (London: privately printed, 1904-5), 1, 234.

¹¹⁸ McIntosh, 'Fall of a Tudor Gentle Family'.

Henry Brooke, the well-connected heir to the barony of Cobham, was set on a similarly elevated trajectory, becoming MP for Kent the same year as his Burghley-sponsored admission.¹¹⁹ Nor did they have any need of the services of a finishing school. It is unlikely that men such as these ever participated in the professional life of the Inns, and their attendance at social events, if it ever occurred, was as guests.¹²⁰ Their membership was honorary, a sign of favour or a reward, and they benefited from access to the fraternal and friendly ties of loyalty that made the Inns such influential institutions: inclusion in the privileged world of the Inns of Court was an advantage for any man with ambitions in the public sphere. An additional, and worldlier, benefit of membership is revealed in the records pertaining to Robert Dudley's admission to Inner Temple. His new fellows pledged that 'no person [...] hereafter shall [...] in any wise or by any manner of means, be retained counsel or otherwise give any counsel, help, or aid in any matter or cause against the said Lord Robert Duddelely and his heirs.'¹²¹ This was an extension of the prohibition that covered all Inns of Court, members of each individual house being forbidden from going to law against one another without the express consent of the benchers.¹²²

The potential advantage gained by Burghley in this patronage was more diffuse. Special admissions of the sort sponsored by the Lord Treasurer were granted by all four houses, often for free but sometimes on payment of anything up to £6 8s 4d.¹²³ For student members, a special admission, while costly, liberated them from duties and

¹¹⁹ Robert Shephard, 'Sidney, Robert, first earl of Leicester (1563-1626)'; Mark Nicholls, 'Brooke, Henry, eleventh Baron Cobham (1564-1619)', *ODNB* (accessed 22.08.12).

¹²⁰ See below, p. 197, for evidence of the attendance at Inns of Court revels by 'worshipful persons'.

¹²¹ Inderwick (ed.), *Inner Temple Records*, 1, 217-18.

¹²² J. Douglas Walker (ed.), *The Records of the Honourable Society of Lincoln's Inn. The Black Books*, 4 vols (London: H.C. Cartwright, 1897-1904), 2, xxx.

¹²³ Dugdale, *Origines Juridiciales*, sig.Y1r.

offices typically levied upon Inns of Court men (which could be onerous and expensive). Mature men, whose admission was ‘special’ in that their membership was honorary and entailed no obligation to follow the rules of the house, may or may not have paid entry dues. They certainly did not pay for dining or any other housekeeping fees – a significant gift, seeing that these sums were, for Lincoln’s Inn as much as the others, ‘the only renewes of this House’.¹²⁴ Even if most honorary members were not greeted with the expensive ‘masks, plays [and] disguisings’ that welcomed Dudley to Inner Temple, the cost of entertaining them was borne by the regular members, and the financial burden of hospitality occasioned frequent intercession by the governing bodies of all the Inns.¹²⁵ The calculation seems to have been that the interest and support of well-connected, highly-esteemed and rich people was of greater value than the charge of their entertainment, or the loss of piecemeal income from waived admissions dues and commons fees.

Certainly, those who were admitted as a mark of esteem were typically in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries men who had achieved a degree of success in the City or in trade, at the Court or in the church. The senior ranks of London’s guilds and livery companies enjoyed a close relationship with their legal counterparts, especially in the first decades of the seventeenth century: wealthy (and often knighted) aldermen feature strongly in the roll of honorary members at Middle Temple and Gray’s Inn, the

¹²⁴ Walker (ed.), *Lincoln’s Inn Records*, 2, 144. The specifics of special admission are addressed in Inderwick, *Inner Temple Records*, 1, 238.

¹²⁵ Inderwick (ed.), *Inner Temple Records*, 1, 219-20. The lavish entertainments for Robert Dudley necessitated the levying of a 20s tax upon every member. Lincoln’s Inn appears to have been particularly prone to overspending: their pension passed orders against extravagance at moot feasts (November 1598), demands for payment of debts owing by members (November 1608) and an order against the ‘great waste in coal, billetes, and faggots’ (June 1616), Walker (ed.), *Lincoln’s Inn Records*, 2, 57, 114 and 183. The expensive royal masques that all four Inns staged on two occasions for James and Charles virtually bankrupted them: the masque in 1613 honour of Princess Elizabeth cost each Lincoln’s Inn bencher £4 (150). They did not finish paying for Shirley’s *Triumph of Peace*, staged at court in 1634, until four years later (343).

two largest Inns, and it was a rare Lord Mayor who was not also an honorary member of an Inn of Court. In the space of a single month – March 1596 – Gray’s Inn welcomed into its ranks a visiting Bohemian nobleman, Jan Diviš, baron von Žerotín, and the queen’s long-standing gentleman-usher Richard Brakenbury, who had for several decades been responsible for managing courtiers’ admission to the privy chamber.¹²⁶ His was an important role, and gave him access to privileged information: he was able to see exactly who was at court, who talked with whom and for how long, and who gained access to the queen.¹²⁷ At the same time, Middle Temple granted honorary membership to two wealthy City merchants, Sir Robert Lee of the Worshipful Company of Merchant Tailors, and Sir John Watts, a trader who had supplied shipping during the Armada crisis in 1588. Both were aldermen, Lee was a sheriff and Watts would become one in the course of the year, and both were to serve as Lord Mayor.¹²⁸ By the end of the 1590s, Gray’s Inn had honoured, by way of a small selection, William Camden, Lancelot Andrewes, Jean Hotman, John Whitgift, Richard Fletcher (the bishop of Worcester), Humphrey Tyndall (the dean of Ely), and several more royal body-servants.¹²⁹ The City was represented by the aldermen Sir Richard Martyn, Henry Byllyngsley, John Garrard, Thomas Lowe, Edward Holmden, Leonard Halliday and William Craven.¹³⁰

Most of these men would not have been expected to perform the sort of

¹²⁶ Foster (ed.), *Gray’s Inn Admissions*, 87 (where Žerotín appears as ‘Johannes Dionysius’). For Jan Diviš’s older brother Karel, and the family in general, see Otakar Odložilík, ‘Karel of Žerotín and the English Court (1564-1636)’, *Slavonic Review* 15 (1936), 413-25, 421.

¹²⁷ Mears, *Queenship and Political Discourse*, 263.

¹²⁸ Hutchinson, *Notable Middle Templars*, 144 and 254; John C. Appleby, ‘Watts, Sir John (c.1550-1616)’, *ODNB Online* (accessed 22.08.12); Alfred P. Beaven, *The Aldermen of the City of London* (1908), *British History Online* (accessed 22.08.12).

¹²⁹ William Camden, August 1592 (81); Lancelot Andrewes, March 1590 (77); Jean Hotman, January 1588 (72); John Whitgift, March 1593 (82); Richard Fletcher and Humphrey Tyndall, February 1594 (83). Thomas Conway, another gentleman usher, was admitted in March 1598, along with Randle Belling, one of the queen’s shewers (93) (Foster (ed.), *Gray’s Inn Admissions*).

¹³⁰ Sir Richard Martyn and Henry Byllyngsley, February 1591 (78); John Garrard, Thomas Lowe and Edward Holmden, March 1599 (96); Leonard Halliday and William Craven, August 1600 (99) (*ibid.*).

patronage activities undertaken by Robert Dudley, earl of Leicester, who in 1576 paid for new chambers to be built at Inner Temple.¹³¹ But many of the honorary members enjoyed a proximity to money or political power that made them valuable friends: Sir John Spencer, the legendarily-wealthy merchant who was admitted, while a serving Lord Mayor, during the Gray's Inn Christmas festivities of 1594-5, was a money-lender to the crown and to other leading aristocrats; William Fowler, secretary to King James's queen Anne, was made an honorary member of Middle Temple in 1604.¹³² Of particular interest to Nicholas Trott when he was planning his application for the northern secretaryship would have been the fact that the two previous secretaries, Henry Cheke and Robert Beale, had been granted honorary membership of Gray's Inn in recognition of their role, the register in Beale's case citing his York office but not his superior position as clerk to the Privy Council.¹³³ What these men could offer was a willingness to carry the good name of the society into whichever corridors of power they walked, and to repay the gift of inclusion in the societies' closed world with such friendly services as they could reasonably perform. The figuring of honorary membership as the extension of friendship is suggested from the timing of the admissions. Special admissions took place in August, at the summer reading, or during the festive season between All Saints' and Shrovetide (November to March), with the largest number by far occurring in February and March to coincide with Candlemas, the principle feast at all four Inns of Court and the final celebration of the pre-Gregorian year. We have seen that Inns revels used the opportunity of theatrical display to reinforce their values of chivalric comradeship and belief in classical friendship. Such occasions were often

¹³¹ Inderwick (ed.), *Inner Temple Records*, 1, 285-6.

¹³² Foster (ed.), *Gray's Inn Admissions*, 87; Ian W. Archer, 'Spencer, Sir John (d.1610)', *ODNB* (accessed 22.08.12); Hutchinson, *Notable Middle Templars*, 96.

¹³³ Foster (ed.), *Gray's Inn Admissions*, 65 and 68 (Cheke is entered twice), 103.

private, designed for the members alone, but events which marked the end of a sequence of revels – the figurative restoration of order after engineered disruption – were sometimes attended by outsiders.¹³⁴ The device of friendship performed at Gray's Inn on 3 January 1595, which marked the return to amity of the Grayans and Inner Temple, was attended by the earls of Shrewsbury, Cumberland, Northumberland, Southampton and Essex, the Lords Buckhurst, Windsor, Mountjoy, Sheffield, Compton, Rich and Mouteagle, and 'a great number of Knights, Ladies and very worshipful personages.'¹³⁵ The timing of the honorary admissions suggests that the entry of a handful of such 'worshipful personages' was an integral part of the society's festivities, a friendly welcome to eminent new arrivals that functioned as a concrete example of the values of amity and loyalty enacted by the revels themselves.

Lord Burghley's involvement in this sort of admission can perhaps best be understood as that of a self-interested broker. By facilitating the entry of eminent or deserving men into Gray's Inn, he aimed to profit from the ties of loyalty and gratitude thereby created. It is unlikely he sought specifically to exercise the kind of soft influence that the earl of Essex attempted to wield through Nicholas Trott. His position was so strong that the additional benefit would have been nugatory by comparison. But he ensured that there was a distinct Cecilian mark on affairs at Gray's Inn, as there was at the treasury and the Court of Wards. He drew the society into a portfolio of institutions in which he had an interest, an influence that he ensured was passed down to

¹³⁴ It seems to have been the case that ceremonial revels, of the sort described by Dugdale and Legh, were private affairs (Legh's interloper is placed somewhere out of the way so he can watch unobserved). In 1590, the benchers of Middle Temple came down hard on a group of inner-barristers who had permitted 'townsmen' to take part in their ragging on Candlemas night (Hopwood (ed.), *Middle Temple Minutes*, 1, 318). Guests did attend certain occasions, however. Dugdale quotes an Inner Temple regulation that banned 'strangers' from the Hall except those 'as shall appear and seem to be of good sort and fashion' (*Origines Juridiciales*, sig.V3v). The outsiders were not just men: female guests were entertained at Inner Temple, but they dined separately in the library (sig.X3r).

¹³⁵ Bland (ed.), *Gesta Grayorum*, 35.

his son. The approach favoured by the earl of Essex was, as we have seen, quite different. As keen to break the Cecils' dominance as Burghley was to continue it, he did not have the same access to the Inns of Court. He was, in fact, able to grant admissions at one of the societies. When Leicester died in 1588, Inner Temple had been quick to extend to his step-son Essex the same honorary membership they had given to the elder earl, but Essex appears to have made almost no impact on his own society.¹³⁶ Instead, his interest by the 1590s was focused on Gray's Inn, the biggest of the Inns and the one said to be most favoured by the queen.¹³⁷ His factors in this world were Anthony and Francis Bacon, and his resource the Gray's Inn circle which they had acquired in the past fifteen years.

Like Edward Hyde at Middle Temple a generation later, the Bacon brothers used their association with Gray's Inn to make useful friendships with well-connected people. The brothers had been members since 1576, and although Anthony was to leave in 1579 on his extended continental tour, Francis's connection to the society remained strong, and his professional success as a lawyer made him a model for others (however frustrating he found his own lack of public recognition).¹³⁸ On Anthony's return in 1592, the Bacon family chambers at Gray's Inn were his first home, and Francis's lawyerly circle his first society. We have already met some of these men: Nicholas Trott failed in his attempt to become the earl of Essex's man in the north, but he performed a

¹³⁶ Essex was admitted in the autumn of 1588, and the fleeting impression that he made on the society is perhaps suggested by the memorandum inscribed next to his name: 'this admission should have been entered in the first parliament of this term'. He made a single request that a Mr John Hawykes be called to be the bar at the time of his own entry, but other than that his name does not appear in the Inner Temple records (Inderwick (ed.), *Inner Temple Records*, 1, 354).

¹³⁷ This favouritism is implied by Foss, *Judges of England*, 5, 441.

¹³⁸ An undated narrative, probably from 1607, entitled 'The case of Sir Francis Bacon's precedency when Queen Elizabeth and King James counsel and also when solicitor to King James' gives a stage-by-stage account of his career, recording his early accession to the readers' table, his election as reader and double-reader, appointment as King's Counsel in 1604 and Solicitor-General in 1607. It was copied into the Inner Temple parliament records (Inderwick (ed.), *Inner Temple Records*, 2, 32).

crucial financial role for the brothers, handling property sales and raising staggering amounts of money on his own credit. By October 1595 Anthony's debt to Trott stood at over £800. The loans were never fully repaid during Anthony's lifetime, and by 1601 the debt, inherited and considerably enhanced by Francis, had ballooned to more than £4,000 (the friendship did not survive).¹³⁹ But during the first half of the 1590s, Trott was an eager supporter of both Anthony and the earl, and he made his financial sacrifices with good grace. In his land-management duties he was helped by Thomas Crewe, a Cheshire attorney (and future speaker of the House of Commons).¹⁴⁰ Another useful Grayan was Henry Gosnold, who from 1594 worked for the Lord Deputy in Dublin, whence he sent intelligence on Irish matters to Anthony and to Robert Kempe, his Gray's Inn contemporary and cousin to the Bacons.¹⁴¹ The group was also known to Nicholas Faunt, and it may have been through Francis or Anthony's influence that Faunt was admitted to Gray's Inn as an honorary member during the August reading of 1592.¹⁴² It was into this circle that Anthony Standen was introduced in 1593, its comfortable intimacy a welcome change for the returning exile. These men constituted part of the intelligence apparatus that the Bacon brothers maintained for the benefit of their patrons – a contracting field that by 1593 or 1594 had narrowed to comprehend Essex only. From 1595, Anthony's association with the earl would become even closer, when he moved into his London house on the Strand (see below, Chapter 4), but before that point he and his brother saw themselves as the managers of an intelligence and

¹³⁹ 'Mr Francis Bacon's state of his account with Trott', BL Lansdowne MS 88, fols.50-1; *HF*, 206-08.

¹⁴⁰ A lengthy investigation into the profitability of Anthony's manor in Barley, prior to its sale, was copied for Anthony by a French secretary and endorsed 'Lettre de Monsieur Trott ou Monsieur Crewe a Monsieur touchant la terre de Barly 1593' (LPL MS 649 fols.509-511). It is certainly from Trott, but Crewe was probably involved in similar tasks during his periodic residencies with Anthony.

¹⁴¹ Henry Gosnold to AB, 14 September 1594, LPL MS 650, fol.265r; 16 October 1594, LPL MS 650, fol.291r (accompanying enclosure now lost); undated, LPL MS 650, fol.353r (accompanying enclosure now lost); Hammer, 'The Uses of Scholarship', 29 (note).

¹⁴² Foster (ed.), *Gray's Inn Admissions*, 81.

scholarly consultancy: in January 1595, Francis wrote to Anthony for more work, as he had ‘idle pens’ with nothing to do at Twickenham Park – they had already copied or composed a collection of Irish advertisements, news about king James and various data about the Low Countries.¹⁴³ The Gray’s Inn men would have been singularly well qualified to fulfil the requirements of scholarly service, defined by Lisa Jardine and William Sherman as the deployment of a ‘scholarly training in synthesising knowledge from a range of sources.’¹⁴⁴ As professional men of affairs, Trott, Kempe, Crewe and Gosnold boasted an intellectual ability that was matched by their applied training in common law and financial services.

The men formed a congenial grouping who enjoyed spending time together at Gray’s Inn and the Bacon manors outside London. Henry Gosnold missed this sociability when he was posted to Ireland in the summer of 1594, and in a letter to Anthony he deplored the society of the locals, sending, *en bloc*, his depressed regards to ‘Mr Trotte, Mr Standen, Mr Fant, Mr Crew and Mr Colman’.¹⁴⁵ Morgan Colman, the last of the group, was a scholar indebted to Anthony who worked off his obligations by providing him with advertisements of news from London and the West Country and, on occasion, plague bills from the afflicted city when it was struck in 1592.¹⁴⁶ His knowledge of the history of royal houses may have been extremely useful to Essex in the mid-1590s, as he attempted to curry favour with James VI (Colman drew up an expensively-printed genealogy of the Stuarts in 1608).¹⁴⁷ He became steward to the

¹⁴³ *GL*, 127.

¹⁴⁴ Jardine and Sherman, ‘Pragmatic Readers’, 102-124.

¹⁴⁵ Henry Gosnold to AB, 14 September 1594, LPL MS 650, fol.265r.

¹⁴⁶ Morgan Colman to AB, 12 September 1592, LPL MS 648, fol.235r; 23 September 1592, fol.237r. H.R. Woudhuysen briefly discusses Colman’s career in *Sir Philip Sidney and the Circulation of Manuscripts*, 76.

¹⁴⁷ Morgan Colman, [*Ten sheets containing genealogies and portraits of James I and Queen Anne. With complimentary verses, addressed to Henry Prince of Wales, the Duke of York, the Princess Elizabeth, and with the coats of arms of all the nobles living in 1608 and of their wives*] (London: [no printer’s

Lord Keeper, Sir John Puckering, in 1595, and it may have been in recognition of his new status that he too became an honorary Gray's Inn member in 1596.¹⁴⁸ The alumni circle cultivated by the Bacon brothers was notably active, and involved an unusual degree of sociable cohabitation. There is evidence that the Bacon household included numerous Grayan members including Kemp, Gosnold and Trott as temporary residents. Even at Gorhambury, Anthony liked to live with a legal entourage: writing in 1593 or 1594, Henry Gosnold extended his remembrance to Lady Bacon and 'your loose lawyer' – Thomas Crewe, whom he had mentioned earlier in the letter.¹⁴⁹

This Gray's Inn coterie served Essex's interests as well as the Bacons'. From 1593, the earl was the attractive star about which the others revolved, drawn into his orbit by the increasing overlap of his affairs with Anthony Bacon's. The busy market in court news, parliamentary gossip and foreign intelligence in which all the men traded took on a distinctly partisan bent in favour of Essex. As Essex enhanced his own secretariat in the 1590s, he also improved his access to other forms of intelligence, as well as legal, financial and consultancy support.¹⁵⁰ The Bacon brothers' Gray's Inn circle was a valuable resource for Essex, a tightly-focused complement to the nation-wide Grayan network he had attempted to harness during the Trott affair. If he was unable to exert the same overt influence over the society itself as his rival the Lord Treasurer, he was quick to take advantage of the services and favours its members could perform.

information, 1608). The BL copy – the only one known to survive – has no title page, but is inscribed in a seventeenth-century hand 'Pedigree of King James'.

¹⁴⁸ Foster (ed.), *Gray's Inn Admissions*, 91.

¹⁴⁹ Henry Gosnold to Anthony Bacon, 28 November [no year], LPL MS 653, fol.195r. In November 1593, Anthony Standen had sent his commendations to Anthony Bacon, Francis and Thomas Crewe at Gorhambury (LPL MS 649, fol.379r). Crewe had lived with Anthony before: Nicholas Faunt sent his salutations to a similar party at Gorhambury in September 1592 (LPL MS 648, fol.250v).

¹⁵⁰ Hammer, 'The Uses of Scholarship', 28-30.

Conclusion

The cultivation of friendship was a skill that the Inns of Court expected of their members, and it was also something that the Inns sustained as one of their institutional values. Members had the opportunity to make friends with a wide variety of men. Unusually for early modern England, those friendships might cross social boundaries: the illusion that the Inns were academies for the sons of the gentry effectively levelled the playing field and laid greater stress on the value of social skills. Sociability – who associated with whom – was not merely determined by social class. Members competed for friends, among peers and superiors, through displays of wit, charm and intellect. Prizes could be considerable. Friendships were for life, and members retained their loyalty to one another. Inns alumni, advanced to influential positions in England's crown and church bureaucracy, could further the careers of their colleagues. The Inns recognised and celebrated this culture of friendship through their institutional practices and cultural fictions. They jealously guarded their privileges and rights as communities of 'socii' – fellows – independent of municipal control. They were, however, open to a degree of influence and even exploitation by powerful men who sought to take advantage of the friendships that bound the fellows together.

Members of the Inns were nevertheless conscious of a certain cultural non-conformity in their promotion of friendly ties. The notion that a man might be propelled through life by the support of a particular organisation, beyond the control of family or crown, ran counter to a belief in royal authority and inherited power. It was for this reason that writers from the Inns vaunted the gentility of their members. Sir John Fortescue set the trend when he explained that the cost of life at the Inns put the practice of law beyond the reach of 'poor and common people [...] [a]nd merchants' and limited

it to those who were ‘noble or spring of noble lineage.’¹⁵¹ By the sixteenth century this had become a truism, constantly repeated despite evidence to the contrary. Gerard Legh dedicated *The Accedence of Armorie* to his colleagues at the Inns because of their feeling for the ‘ancient tokens of armory’, and he populated his lightly-allegorised version of Inner Temple with ‘many comly gentilmen’ who paraded with a ‘princes porte.’¹⁵² Legh was not the only writer on heraldry to emerge from the Inns. John Ferne, the Inner Templar who beat Nicholas Trott to the post of northern secretary, addressed his *Blazon of Gentry* (1586) to ‘the honorable assemblyes of the Innes of Court’, and like Legh he was particularly concerned to associate the Inns with ‘Gentlemen of bloud, possessing vertue’ – those, in other words, who ‘can lay fiue discents successiue & lineally, on the part of his father.’ In an echo of Gerard and Palaphilos’s fictional rummage through the Inner Temple archives in *The Accedence of Armorie*, Ferne asserted that ‘I my selfe haue seene a Kalender of all those, which were together, in the societie of the one of the same houses, about the last yeere of King Henry the fifth, with the Armes of theyr house and familie, marshalled by theyr names: and I assure you, the selfe-same monument doth [...] approue them all to be Gentlemen of perfect discents.’ The same could not be said of Ferne, whose father had bought his family’s Lincolnshire estate in the 1570s, and whose grandfather had been a yeoman farmer in Staffordshire.¹⁵³ George Buc too was careful to stress that although ‘they which are now admitted [to the Inns] are Registered by the Stile and name of Gentleman [...] it is an error to thinke that sonnes of Glaziers, Farmers, Merchants, Tradesmen, and Artificers, can be made Gentlemen, by their admittance or Matriculation in the Buttrie Role, or in

¹⁵¹ Fortescue, *De Laudibus Legum Angliae*, 119.

¹⁵² Legh, *Accedence of Armorie*, sigs.¶ii.r, CCvi.v.

¹⁵³ Ferne, *Blazon of Gentry*, sigs.Aiiii.r, Civ.v and Giiii.r; Healy, ‘Ferne, Sir John’, *ODNB*.

the Stewards Booke [...] for no man can bee made a Gentleman but by his father.¹⁵⁴

This was a disingenuous statement. As we have seen, the Inns offered precisely this sort of social mobility, and if their members affected to be concerned by it – John Ferne deplored the spectacular growth of the Inns of Court; all of the Inns passed ineffectual orders restricting admission to gentlemen's sons – the diversity of membership was part of what gave force to the ideology of fraternity and institutional loyalty at the societies.¹⁵⁵

The implications of that ideology were somewhat radical. Members of the Inns of Court lived and worked in a world in which conventional dynastic alliance seemed to take a back-seat to other, more complex qualities: institutional egalité, fraternal loyalty, friendship and intimacy. Despite the fact that the majority of members married, frequently contracting advantageous matches through their connections at the Inns, the social space of the Inns and the cultural identity it projected was wholly male.¹⁵⁶ The idealised commonwealth described by Gerard Legh was held together by affectionate same-sex bonds, a form of 'social erotics' that overlapped but also contrasted with another model of the social: one based on the traditional lineage loyalties of hierarchy and the family.¹⁵⁷ As Alan Bray observed two decades ago, male affective relationships were stigmatised in Renaissance England not when they seemed too intimate, but when they seemed to take precedence over established status relations.¹⁵⁸ The significant

¹⁵⁴ Buc, *Third Vniversitie*, sig.4O5v.

¹⁵⁵ In 1604, by royal command, the Inns ordered that admission be limited to gentlemen by descent. It was an order that seems wholly to have been ignored (Walker (ed.), *Lincoln's Inn Records*, 2, xxi).

¹⁵⁶ Prest, *Rise of the Barristers*, 116-18.

¹⁵⁷ The idea is Michael Warner's, 'New English Sodom,' *American Literature* 64, 1 (1992), 19-47, 35

¹⁵⁸ Alan Bray, 'Homosexuality and the signs of male friendship in Elizabethan England'. See also Jonathan Goldberg's argument that the Renaissance regarded sodomy as any act that threatened familial alliance (*Sodomities: Renaissance Texts, Modern Sexualities*) and Alan Stewart, whose *Close Readers* understands accusations of sodomy as centrally concerned with disruption in various reproductive economies.

achievement of the Inns of Court was that they were able to perform strategies of intimacy that precisely diffused the sodomitical implications of male friendship, by validating male-male relationships in a virtuous context. At most, public comment extended to mockery of the stereotypical Inns gallant, decked in ‘a paire of silk stockings, and a Beaver Hat.’ His passion for fashionable clothing was an established urban joke: he ‘laughes at euery man whose Band fits not well, or that hath not a faire shoo-tie, and hee is ashamed to bee seene in any mans company that weares not his clothes well.’¹⁵⁹ The implication of this ragging was not effeminacy as we understand it today. The victims were targeted for their perceived social ambition, for adopting the clothing and deportment of their superiors without the right to sartorial display that came with high birth.¹⁶⁰ Ridicule of flamboyant Innsmen was a response to the social advancement that was available at the Inns of Court, and a knowing gesture towards the alliances of male friendship that drove that advancement.¹⁶¹

Such teasing easily slid off the men of the Inns of Court. Their closed shop was a powerful private social network, and remains so to this day. Even the earl of Essex, at the height of his influence, was unable to bend the men of Gray’s Inn to his will. His failure confirms the considerable potency of the networks I have uncovered: they could outwit even the royal favourite. In my next and final chapter, I turn my attention to the earl of Essex and his household. In addition to his cultivation of institutions like the

¹⁵⁹ Anon., *Sir Thomas Overbury*, sigs.K4v-5r.

¹⁶⁰ Mario DiGangi, ‘How queer was the Renaissance?’, 142.

¹⁶¹ Lady Anne Bacon was rather more forthright in her suspicion of the social networks at Gray’s Inn. Anthony’s irregular hours and badly-managed servants caused her a flash of concern on his return in 1592 (ACB to AB, 29 February 1591/2, LPL MS 648, fol.6r), but her fiercest rage was reserved for Francis, whose lavish lifestyle was egged on by a company of hangers-on who exploited him for financial gain, ‘cormorant seducers and instruments of satan’ whose vices encompassed obscure ‘Fowle synns’ as well as well as more straightforward extortion. It was in the context of this attack that she railed against ‘that bloody peerce [Percy]’, an unidentified member of Francis’s household who has sometimes been mistaken for the Spanish exile Antonio Perez, a ‘coch [coach] companion and Bed companion A prowd prophane costly Fellow’ whose godless influence damaged her younger son’s credit and health (ACB to AB, 17 April [1593], LPL MS 653, fols. 318r and 319r).

Inns, the earl also attempted to sustain a personal team of close followers. He tied these men to him by means of a conscious appeal to chivalric traditions of loving service – an increasingly out-moded form whose inflexible structures were to have catastrophic consequences for the earl, Anthony and his friends in the final years of queen Elizabeth's reign.

Chapter 4

Instability: Service, love and jealousy in the Essex circle

Abstract

In my final chapter I explore the unstable political secretariat of the earl of Essex. I read the letters of the earl's secretary Edward Reynolds to argue that Essex's outmoded concept of ardent service was as damaging to his own household as it was to his relationship with the queen. Reynolds, like his master, regarded the duties of service in an intensely personal, highly emotive way, and the language with which he articulated these ties served to demonstrate and enhance his allegiance to the earl. But such a language co-existed and clashed with other forms of service and friendship in the 1590s, which revolved around developing ideas of self-advancement and meritocracy. I chart the points of contact between Reynolds's conception of lordly service, and the newer, pragmatic mode demonstrated by members of the Essex circle such as Henry Wotton and the disgraced junior secretary Godfrey Aleyn. I argue that the instability this conflict generated was a foreboding prelude to Essex's mistaken belief in his own chivalric attraction, which was to have such dire consequences when he launched his revolt in 1601.

Context

Anthony's peripatetic existence continued even after he took out a lease on a townhouse in Bishopsgate Street in spring 1594: he was there for little more than a year before he moved permanently into Essex House, the earl's London's residence on the Strand. It was to be his home for the next five years, until he was expelled from Essex's company by order of the Privy Council in 1600. From 1595 to 1600 Anthony was at the heart of the earl's circle, fulfilling an ambiguously-defined role as Essex's master of intelligence, and working closely with the earl's salaried secretarial team.

Archive

Letters pertaining to Edward Reynolds are numerous, and scattered throughout the collection (LPL MSS 648, 651, 652 and 654-661). 90 survive from Reynolds to Anthony Bacon, 49 from Anthony to Reynolds, six from Reynolds to the earl of Essex, five from Essex to him (a total of 150). Letters neither to nor from Anthony himself survive as autograph copies by Reynolds; their presence in the Bacon papers indicates the archiving and storage service Anthony performed for his secretarial colleagues. After Essex's fall,

Reynolds eventually re-entered crown service as a clerk of the Privy Seal, and his letters are therefore also scattered throughout the State Papers in TNA and Hatfield House.

Twenty-five years ago, David Starkey re-energised the study of court culture. He argued that despite the ‘distaste and bewilderment’ that modern scholars experienced when confronted by the venality and ambition of the Tudor and Stuart royal court, historians had a duty to understand the institution on its own terms.¹ The same applies to the political great house in the closing years of the sixteenth century: such establishments were courts in miniature, riven with similar jealousies, their inhabitants motivated by the same rewards of access to and influence over the aristocrat around whom they moved. This chapter reveals and seeks to explain the personality clashes among the men who served the earl of Essex in the mid-1590s. Intense, and from a modern perspective faintly embarrassing in their emotional (even piteous) expression, these disputes destabilised the household and weakened the earl’s position at a crucial time in his career. I focus on the experiences of Edward Reynolds, the earl of Essex’s most senior secretary and an intimate friend of Anthony Bacon. I argue that for a variety of reasons, both specific to the earl’s circle and reflective of wider English society, the earl’s followers performed their duties in a state of confusion. The household was unstable, an instability that was to have dire consequences for the earl, his men, and late sixteenth-century political culture in general after 1599.

There is a scholarly consensus that the career of the earl of Essex – his soaring heights, followed by his catastrophic revolt and execution – represented the end of something. For Mervyn James, it was the ideals and goals of a code of honour whose

¹ David Starkey, ‘Introduction: Court history in perspective’ and Neil Cuddy, ‘The revival of the entourage: the Bedchamber of James I, 1603-1625’, in Starkey (ed.), *The English Court: from the Wars of the Roses to the Civil War* (London: Longman, 1987), 1-24 and 173-225, 2.

time had passed. For Alexandra Gajda, it was the belief that a great noble like Essex could carve out for himself a role as an independent political leader under an increasingly authoritarian monarchic government, while Janet Dickinson has argued that the revolt can be read as an earnest attempt by a peer with a grievance to come into the presence of the monarch and present his case – an act that, while arguably constitutional, had become by the end of Elizabeth’s reign indistinguishable from *lèse-majesté*.² Building on these conclusions, and following directions laid down by Alan Bray in his work on the changing significance of friendship and service in the sixteenth century, I argue that part of the anachronistic world-view represented by Essex and propounded by his followers concerned the conception of, and language used to articulate, service.³ This chapter circles back to consider the ardent language of early modern friendship discussed in Chapter 1. Here, I explore how the same terms and conventions were deployed in an overtly institutional and political way, as a language that bound together the earl’s men. But this tactic was inflexible, old-fashioned and inconsistent. The conflict between the earl’s view, and the changing conception of the nature of service in the culture at large, contributed to the cracks in the fabric of Essex’s household and the unravelling of his fortunes in the closing years of the queen’s reign.

I begin the chapter with an overview of Essex’s secretariat and an account of Edward Reynolds’s duties and political influence. As will become clear, Reynolds was

² Mervyn James, ‘At a crossroads of the political culture: the Essex Revolt, 1601’, in *Society, Politics and Culture: Studies in early modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 416-65; Gajda, *Essex*; Dickinson, *Court Politics*. Gajda and Dickinson represent part of the new wave of Essex scholars building on the work of Paul Hammer, whose *PP* – an analysis of the earl’s early and middle years – helped to reclaim him as a figure of major political, military and cultural importance after many decades in which he appeared in biographies and monographs as a frivolous, misguided favourite (Lytton Strachey, *Elizabeth and Essex: A Tragic History* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1928) and Robert Lacey, *Robert, Earl of Essex: An Elizabethan Icarus* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1971) are two examples of this approach from either end of the twentieth century). Essexian historiography is now concerned with assessing the nature of the earl’s influence in the 1590s, and recovering the objectives behind his seemingly chaotic uprising.

³ Alan Bray, ‘Homosexuality and the signs of male friendship’; Bray, *The Friend*.

excessively self-effacing, and it is necessary to show quite how significant and politically involved he actually was in the day-to-day running of Essex's affairs and the development of his policy objectives. In the longer second section, I move on to explain how Reynolds figured himself and his role in his correspondence with Essex, Anthony Bacon and others. I reveal that his chosen mode of self-presentation – as a loyal vassal, and worthy of notice solely on account of his faithfulness and duty – accorded with a particular ideal that drew on a combination of historic lordly service and a veneration for classical *amicitia* that was popular among members of the Essex circle. Variations of this model are to be found in the correspondence of the earl, Anthony Bacon, and the Spanish defector Antonio Pérez. I suggest that certain men in the Essex circle cultivated an approach to service and loyalty that demanded an overt acknowledgement of affection and emotional obligation, with an associated denial of intellectual, professional or technical skill (in itself a common modesty topos). This was not, however, a mode that was consistently adopted by Essex's followers, and in the third section I suggest that Henry Wotton, employed by the earl from December 1594, represented a 'new' type of follower, keen to advertise his own abilities and happy for his careerist objectives to be known to his colleagues. Such divergent styles of service struggled to co-exist in the earl's household, and generated conflict and dispute in the 1590s. Evidence does not survive to make a true assessment of the damage caused by such personality clashes in the Essex circle in the second half of the decade, but a model for how relations between master and servant could be spectacularly soured is to be found in the unfortunate story of Godfrey Aleyn, sent abroad as secretary to Antonio Pérez in 1595. This relationship played out on the periphery of the Essex circle, and I provide an account and an analysis of its features in the fourth section. I conclude with the suggestion that personal, communicative and cultural differences such as these were not germane only *within* the earl's household – they also had an impact on the wider

political stage. I argue that, as a complement to his commitment to martial glory at the expense of *politique* foreign relations, Essex believed passionately in the idea of service relations that were based on the unswerving adoration of a charismatic master. The wilder sort of language that both of these preferences brought with them marked the earl and his followers out for marginalisation in the later part of the 1590s, and caused an irreparable breach with Essex's own 'master' – the queen.

Section 1: The shape of Essex's secretariat

Edward Reynolds fulfilled an important role in the small staff of men who supported the earl of Essex.⁴ From 1595 onwards, he was responsible for managing epistolary and face-to-face access to his master, as well as the more administrative duties that fell to a secretary to discharge. Reynolds also handled negotiations with foreign and domestic politicians in the earl's absence, took part in the formulation of Essex's policy objectives, and managed the dissemination of intelligence and propaganda beneficial to his cause. Much of this has been obscured by the extent to which Reynolds erased his own contribution to the earl's affairs, not for reasons of political expediency but because such demanding and skilful labour was largely inexpressible in the language with which Reynolds chose to articulate his service. This language will be explored in detail in the next section; for now it is necessary to sketch out the nature of his duties.

The bulk of the surviving material documenting Reynolds's activities for Essex dates from 1595, when Anthony Bacon moved into Essex House as the earl's resident intelligence expert and informal archivist.⁵ By this point, Edward Reynolds had been in

⁴ Edward Reynolds's biographical heritage extends to Hasler (ed.), *House of Commons 1558-1603*, 3, 286-7, and Paul E.J. Hammer, 'Reynolds, Edward (d.1623)', *ODNB* (accessed 28.01.13). Hammer is currently the de facto expert on Reynolds and Essex's other secretaries, and the standard work on the Essex secretariat remains his article of nearly twenty years ago, 'The Uses of Scholarship'.

⁵ Anthony's move occurred at some point in the summer of 1595, when Lady Bacon warned her son to rethink his plan: 'yow have hitherto ben Estemed as A worthy Frende now shalbe Accounted his

the earl's service for some seven years. From occupying a post as secretary to Sir Amias Paulet during his custody of Mary queen of Scots, Reynolds took up a position as the earl of Essex's junior secretary, under Thomas Smith, in 1588.⁶ With Smith's transfer to the clerkship of the Privy Council in 1595, discussed in the previous chapter, Reynolds's significance was both heightened and diluted: he became by default senior secretary, but some of the earl's increasingly complex secretarial requirements were now shared among three new members of staff.⁷ Henry Wotton, recently returned from a lengthy continental tour, had been taken on in December 1594 through the good offices of his half-brother Sir Edward Wotton, a friend of Anthony Bacon's (the Wottons and Bacons were also kin by marriage).⁸ In the autumn of 1595 Wotton and Reynolds were joined by Henry Cuffe, fellow of Merton College, Oxford and Regius Professor of Greek at the university, and William Temple, fellow of King's College, Cambridge and an established Ramist logician.⁹ Essex now had something approaching a full

Follower? (ACB to AB, n.d. August 1595, LPL MS 651, fol.326r). The precise nature of Anthony's relationship to Essex – not quite a friend, more than a follower, but performing some of the duties of an employee – remained in question during and after his service for the earl.

⁶ Writing to Sir Robert Cecil in 1597, Reynolds offered a resumé of his secretarial career: 'I served Sir Amice Poulet during the whole time of his charge of the Scottish Queen [...] I have ever since served my lord of Essex, nine whole years' (*HMCS*, 7, 332-3).

⁷ Hammer discussed the difficulty of pinning down the precise date of Smith's promotion in 'The Uses of Scholarship', 28, but it is clear from Robert Beale's letter of complaint that the staffing change on the Privy Council occurred in the spring of 1595 (BL Additional MS 48116, fols.338-345v).

⁸ Edward Wotton's letter of recommendation for his half-brother is n.d. December 1594, LPL MS 650, fol.321r. For more on Wotton, see Logan Pearsall Smith, *The Life and Letters of Sir Henry Wotton*, 2 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1907), and A.J. Loomie, 'Wotton, Sir Henry (1568-1639)', *ODNB* (accessed 05.02.13).

⁹ Hammer explains that the precise date of Cuffe's entry into Essex's service is unclear, but he was certainly part of the Essex House team by September 1595, and possibly as early as spring ('Uses of Scholarship', 29). For more on Cuffe, see Paul E.J. Hammer, 'Cuffe [Cuff], Henry (1562/3-1601)', *ODNB* (accessed 28.05.13); A.L. Rowse, 'The Tragic Career of Henry Cuffe' in *Court and Country: Studies in Tudor Social History* (Brighton: Harvester Press, 1987), 211-41; and Alan Stewart, 'Instigating Treason: the Life and Death of Henry Cuffe, Secretary', in Erica Sheen and Lorna Hutson (eds), *Literature, Politics and Law in Renaissance England* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 50-70. William Temple made less of an impression on the record than his colleagues, but he was certainly in employment by 11 October 1595 (TNA SP 12/254 fol.32r). For more on Temple, see Hasler (ed.), *House of Commons 1558-1603*, 3, 481-2, and Elizabethanne Boran, 'Temple, Sir William (1554/5-1627)', *ODNB* (accessed 28.05.13).

secretariat, most of whom were lodged in Essex House along with his steward, Gelly Meyrick, and a fluctuating corps of family members that at any one time might include his mother Lettice Blount (formerly the countess of Leicester), his sister Penelope Rich and his grandfather Sir Francis Knollys.¹⁰ Anthony Bacon's move must have owed something to this institutional consolidation: perhaps the extra messengers and copied documents necessary to keep him in the loop in his house in Bishopsgate Street were regarded as unjustifiable. Whatever the reasons for these domestic and administrative changes, Essex House was now a busy political headquarters. One figure who seldom stayed at the house was the earl himself. Along with Edward Reynolds, he spent much of his time at Court, returning to his London residence to entertain or for meetings with his newly-enlarged secretariat.¹¹

Reynolds's duties also underwent an alteration with the changes to Essex's secretariat. During the duopoly with Smith, Reynolds had remained at the earl's side, even when he went campaigning in Portugal in 1589 and France in 1591. After 1595, Reynolds stayed at home, performing his long-standing role as the earl's personal secretary when his master was at Court, and discharging what had been Smith's duties – representing Essex's political interests in his absence – when the earl was away.¹² When Essex was in England, Reynolds was his 'cheife confident secretary', entrusted with his seal and with responsibility for his correspondence and papers.¹³ In addition to scribal

¹⁰ *PP*, 131 and 277; *GL*, 138; Charles Lethbridge Kingsford, 'Essex House, formerly Leicester House and Exeter Inn', *Archaeologia* 73 (1923), 1-54.

¹¹ *HF*, 172-3. Essex's presence in his London home could be something worthy of notice: in September 1596, Reynolds wrote to Anthony Bacon at Essex House giving him advance warning that 'my Lord will visit you to day, comming to Essex howse to dyne with Count Lodowick' (ER to AB, n.d. September 1596, LPL MS 659, fol.92r).

¹² Hammer, 'Uses of Scholarship', 32.

¹³ The phrase is to be found in AB to Henry Hawkins, 12 June 1596, BL Harley MS 286, fol.258r. On several occasions Reynolds lent Essex's seal to Anthony, in order that he might read and copy a letter from the earl intended for someone else, before sealing it up and sending it on his way – whenever he did

and safeguarding duties, Reynolds also managed access to his master, an important responsibility at a time when the earl was attempting to extend his network of followers through his patronage of courtiers, crown appointees and soldiers. As I suggested in Chapter 3 the earl made significant efforts to pull such strings as were within his reach in the 1590s in order to win favours for friends or place them in useful offices. He was attractive to a wide constituency of people: his visible presence at the queen's side, his reputation as a committed martialist, his known support for scholarship, his identity as a hero of the international Protestant cause and his simultaneous belief in pragmatic religious toleration lent him broad appeal, for all that the range of these contrasting qualities frequently diminished the force of his influence.¹⁴ Reynolds was a loyal although not necessarily impartial doorkeeper. Given the quantity of paperwork with which Essex and his staff were confronted, some form of administrative triage was essential and it was Reynolds who pressed certain suits on his master – while, consequently, holding others back. In January 1597 he wrote to Anthony:

It will be late ere my Lord come to bed, and therefore I cannot do what I would most willingly in Mr Dr Fletchers cause but I will leave your lettres to be perused this night sealed, in Mr Pitchfordes handes, and in the morning refreshe the remembrance thereof, in as effectual manner as I can. The like I will do for young Mr Davison aswell to put his Lordship in mynd of his own purpose & resolution of writing and sending [...] I will also showe all your other remembrances in hope that after these hollydayes he will take some fitt opportunity to dispatche them. Amongst the rest

so, he made sure to ask that the seal might be 'presently returned' (LPL MS 652, fol.115r, and MS 654, fols.27r and 91r).

¹⁴ For Essex's wide-ranging patronage interests, see *PP*, 269-315; Dickinson, *Court Politics*, 99-113; Gajda, *Essex*, 141-188; Hugh Gazzard, 'The patronage of Robert Devereux, second earl of Essex, c.1577-1596', unpublished DPhil thesis, University of Oxford, 2000.

Monsieur Castels bill shall be effectually remembred to the Master of Requestes.¹⁵

As Reynolds often made clear, Anthony's letters deserved priority delivery by virtue of his intimate involvement with Essex's affairs, but he also indicates in this letter the methods he used to push certain cases – in this instance, Giles Fletcher's suit to be freed from his late brother's debts, a dispatch for Francis Davison, then travelling on the continent, and the application of Jean Castol, minister of the French Protestant church in London, for naturalisation – to the front of the queue for the earl's attention.¹⁶ He commented routinely that he 'put his Lordship in mynd', or 'refreshe[d] the remembrance' of something.¹⁷ He was able to vary the mode of his approach depending on his master's mood. Although he explains in the letter quoted above that Essex retired too late to permit any lobbying last thing at night, on other occasions the hour afforded the only window of opportunity: 'His Lordship hathe bene so busye all this daye,' that delivery of a letter 'could not be conveniently done. When he commeth to bed, will be a very fit tyme.'¹⁸ On New Year's morning 1597 he told Anthony that the previous day had been an ill-advised time to approach the earl, 'and the night worse, for that his Lordship came late to bed a loser (but not by much) at play.'¹⁹ Reynolds's well-judged solicitation on behalf of a suitor was an important aspect in the process of delivering a letter of request to the earl. He makes clear above that the letters from Anthony on

¹⁵ ER to AB, 6 January 1596/7, LPL MS 654, fol.29r.

¹⁶ Reynolds observed that even when the earl was withdrawn in his chamber, Anthony's letters '[have] accesse at all tymes' (ER to AB, 17 February 1596/7, LPL MS 655, fol.64r). For more detail on the cases of Giles Fletcher, Francis Davison and Jean Castol, see Birch, *Memoirs*, 2, 172 and 223.

¹⁷ ER to AB, 4 January 1596/7, LPL MS 654, fol.91r; 14 February 1596/7, LPL MS 655, fol.53r; 23 February 1596/7, LPL MS 655, fol.56r. Anthony also nudged Reynolds to 'put my Lord in mynde to wright' to suitors or clients (AB to ER, n.d. January 1596/7, LPL MS 654, fol.107r).

¹⁸ ER to AB, 30 December 1596, LPL MS 660, fol.195r.

¹⁹ ER to AB, 1 January 1596/7, LPL MS 654, fol.89r.

behalf of Dr Fletcher are to be left in the hands of Essex's servant Pitchford, still sealed, in order that Reynolds can be there the next morning to accompany the written request with a spoken appeal, delivered 'in as effectual manner as I can.' Such advocacy was valuable: in February 1597 Reynolds was embarrassed to receive £10 from the brother of Ralph Lord Eure, warden of the marches in the north, 'for the good office (as it pleaseth hym to say) done towards my Lord' (Eure). Despite the fact that a rule 'current in the Court [...] marketh all rewardes from men of quality acceptable', Reynolds returned the money, perhaps concerned that such a substantial gift would make him more beholden to Lord Eure than he wished: '[i]f it had bene a payre of silk stockens, or a guift of some other nature & lesse value I think I should not have had any such scrupull.'²⁰ Whether Reynolds ever accepted such glad-handing is unknown, but his influence and intimacy with the earl of Essex were common knowledge, and he was a familiar figure at Court. Rowland Whyte, secretary to Sir Robert Sidney, knew he needed to '[step] to Mr Reinal's' when he wanted to arrange an interview between his master and the earl.²¹

Reynolds's political significance increased when Essex was out of the country. In 1596, during the Cadiz expedition, and 1597, when Essex led the unsuccessful assault on the Spanish treasure fleet off the Azores, Reynolds represented the earl's interests at court, dealing with members of the English governing establishment and continental diplomats, particularly the French emissary Henri de la Tour d'Auvergne, duc de Bouillon, and the Dutch resident, Noel Caron. In 1596 the situation with the French was delicate: the prospect of attainable glory on the Iberian coast had caused Essex precipitately to abandon his obligations to France and engage on a mission that

²⁰ ER to AB, 4 February 1596/7, LPL MS 655, fol.68r.

²¹ Historical Manuscripts Commission, *Report on the Manuscripts of Lord De L'Isle and Dudley Preserved at Penshurst Place*, 6 vols (London: HMSO, 1925-66), 2, 219.

drew men and resources from the English army intended for the support of Henri IV. Essex's absence from the English-French commission assembled to draw up a 'league offensive and defensive' against Spain in the spring of 1596 was noted, and made Reynolds's position as the earl's man awkward.²² As he wrote to Essex on 6 May:

I mett Mr de la Fontaine with the Duke who tould me that they did quarrell & fall out with your Lordship euerye day, who had drawn them into the bryers, & departed when you should haue hollpen them out & now they are at the deuocion of the father & the sonne & can effect nothing to any purpose.²³

The duc de Bouillon's presence in England was in large part due to the concerted efforts of Robert de la Fontaine (minister of the French church in London and a close friend of both Reynolds and Anthony Bacon), Antonio Pérez and the earl of Essex to forge a treaty between England and France for a combined assault on Spain, and the accusation relayed by Reynolds that the earl had ensnared the Frenchmen into a thorny and unsatisfactory diplomatic tussle, only to set off as soon as they arrived on a unilateral military action, had some merit. Affronted, Bouillon turned his attention to Lord Burghley and Sir Robert Cecil ('the father & the sonne').²⁴ Reynolds was tasked with repairing this breach, which he did in the course of a long interview in French with the duke on 18 May when he managed not only to persuade Bouillon 'to impart vnto [him]

²² Birch, *Memoirs*, 2, 1; Wernham, *Return of the Armadas*, 69-81; MacCaffrey, *Elizabeth I: War and Politics*, 202-07, 495-500; *PP*, 250-51.

²³ ER to EE, 6 May 1596, LPL MS 657, fol.108r-v.

²⁴ Anthony Standen made use of the same formulation when describing his encounters with the Cecils: 'After dyner I meane to goo visit the ffather and sonne the holly ghost be wythe me' (AS to AB, 15 August 1593, LPL MS 649, fol.244r). The phrase may have been part of the canon of disrespectful terms for Burghley and Cecil that the Essex circle employed in their letters.

his knowledge & iudgement of the French affayres'²⁵ but convince him of the earl's loyalty to that country's cause:

[T]o shewe your Lordships constancie I interpreted vnto him your last lettre vnto me, which I had communicated before to Monsieur de la fontaine by your commaundment and namelie that pointe wherein your Lordship said yow are aboute to doe more for the publicke and for all our frendes then they can hope fore, and that yow would either goe thorough with it, or of a Generall become a Moncke at an howres warning[.] Whiche your Lordships resolution he did much commende.²⁶

Reynolds undoubtedly also drew the duke's attention to the earl's declaration in the aforementioned letter that 'I haue loued the Duke more then all the strangers of christendome allmost more then all of mine owne Cuntry', although it is likely that he neglected to translate the next sentence in which he accused the French visitors of being 'vnquiet harted': they 'know not our Queene and state so well as I doe for they feed the Queene in her irresolution wherin though they first vndo me they shall next vndoe themselues.'²⁷ Reynolds's important role as conduit and mediator between the earl and the French was recognised by Bouillon:

After he had commanded me to take spetiall care of his lettres to your Lordship and to recomende his best loue and affection to yow, he said he would likewyse sende to your Lordship by Monsieur de la fontaines meanes whensoever anie worthy matter occurred. I told him that your Lordship had expreslie left me here for those services, which he liked verie well. He was at first doubtfull to deale so freele with me in those

²⁵ ER to EE, 6 May 1596, LPL MS 657, fol.108r-v.

²⁶ ER to EE, 18 May 1596, LPL MS 657, fols.109-111r.

²⁷ EE to ER, 10 May 1596, LPL MS 657, fol.140r.

things but saith he yow are my Lordes secretary and I thinke are acquainted withe greater matters betwixt vs.²⁸

Reynolds was one of a number of men surrounding Essex who had an influence over the policies that he followed. The roles of Henry Cuffe, Henry Savile, Arthur Atey, Antonio Pérez and Anthony Bacon in formulating and refining foreign policy objectives is well-understood, but Reynolds was not a mere mouthpiece or message-carrier.²⁹ Just as he could use his position to speak for certain suitors, and modify the manner in which a message was delivered, so he had considerable leeway in the style with which he chose to relay his master's pronouncements. In the afterglow of Cadiz, Essex ordered Reynolds to lobby the French and the Dutch through their representatives in London for the redeployment of the victorious English forces in the recapture of Calais, recently seized by Spanish-aligned Leaguers. Essex entrusted him with a distinctly hawkish message, the contents of which would have confirmed in the minds of the earl's detractors that he was a magnate with a dangerously independent streak:

[T]his is onlie for your owne eyes and after for the fire. Yow shall goe to Mr Caron and to Monsieur la Fontaine and tell them I am retorninge withe this Armie, that is stronge riche and prowde[;] that they knowe the difference of perswadinge to leuie an Armie and solliciting to vse an Armie alredie formed and disiplined[,] besides the difference in the service of these 2 Armies willbe as greate[.] Let them therefore make

²⁸ ER to EE, 18 May 1596, LPL MS 657, fols.109-111r.

²⁹ See Alexandra Gajda, 'The State of Christendom: history, political thought and the Essex circle', *Historical Research* 8/213 (2008), 423-46, and Gajda, *Essex*, chapters 2 and 6 on the commitment of the Essex circle to a Tacitean belief in the puissant, virtuous state. See *PP*, 299-315, for an account of the intellectual circle that co-authored material ascribed to and often dedicated to Essex. See Warren Boutcher, 'Montaigne et Anthony Bacon: la *familia* et la fonction des lettres', trans. Ariane Smart, *Montaigne Studies* 13 (2001), 241-76, for a study of the print and manuscript texts in Anthony's possession during his intimacy with the earl of Essex (I am very grateful to Dr Boutcher for permission to consult his original English draft).

both themselves and their Masters [*illegible*] and see whether they can get this Armie to be kept together till we maie treat of conditions for the seige of Callais.³⁰

Given Reynolds's caution in matters of forward foreign policy, it may be the case that his delivery of the message by mouth had the effect of tempering Essex's self-presentation as a would-be Coriolanus.³¹ At separate private meetings with de la Fontaine and Caron in early August, he 'deliuered the *effect* of that which your Lordship gaue me in charge' (my emphasis). Whether or not Reynolds also delivered the martial bravado of his master's original message is not known, but he wrote up the emissaries' objections (chiefly centring on the queen's dissatisfaction with the profitability of Cadiz, and the likelihood that Essex's 'ylwillers' would 'labor to crosse this proposition for Callays') in meticulous detail, concluding the letter to the earl with his own observation that Essex's return had happily hindered the progress of his enemies' objectives to pack the Court with anti-Essex 'officers and Councillors'. But he sounded his own note of caution, too: '[t]heir mallice worketh still, and her Maieste is muche incensed.' The implication that Essex should abandon plans for Calais and return to England to secure his position was clear.³² Two years previously, during Francis Bacon's campaign for the attorney-generalship, Reynolds's colleague Anthony Standen had recognised that Essex required a degree of firm management to keep his mind focussed on a task: 'he muste continually be puld by the eare as a boye that learneth ut,

³⁰ EE to ER, 23 July 1596, LPL MS 658, fol.136r.

³¹ Reynolds was concerned, especially after Cadiz, that too much overseas campaigning would leave his master vulnerable to the practices of his enemies at Court, who would take advantage of his absence to poison the queen against him (ER to AB, 2 March 1596/7, LPL MS 656, fol.20r). The figure of Coriolanus, 'a gallant young, but discontented Romane', was an irresistible parallel for preachers seeking to draw instruction from Essex's fall (William Barlow, *A Sermon preached at Paules Crosse [...] With a short discourse of the late Earle of Essex, his confession, and penitence, before and at the time of his death* (London: Matthew Law, 1601), sig.C3v).

³² ER to EE, 10 August 1596, LPL MS 657, fol.106r-v.

re, me fa.’³³ The earl’s followers, Reynolds included, were able to use a range of tactics to steer their master in a direction that they considered appropriate.

Reynolds’s most important contribution to the Cadiz affair was his central role in the publicity campaign that followed the action. From the start the mission had been controversial, and news of its success did not prevent Essex’s enemies from casting the earl’s leadership in poor light: Henry Brooke, his especial foe, suggested that ‘all this service was but a matter of chance: that your Lordship went to seeke blowes at aduerture without any certen knowledge.’ Brooke made the voyage sound like a rash game of chance: ‘what,’ he asked, ‘yf the fleete at Calez had bene departed[?]’. Others were quick to ascribe the victory to the ‘sea faction’ under Sir Walter Raleigh rather than the ‘land faction’ under Essex.³⁴ In order to counter the political gamesmanship that he anticipated after the battle, Essex ordered Henry Cuffe, who had travelled with him to Spain, to put together a document that became known as ‘The True Relation’, a collectively-authored account described by Cuffe as ‘a discourse of our great Action at Calez penned very truly according to his Lordships large enstructions’ with Essex’s interlinear additions ‘*extremam manum*’, and designed to represent the success of the raid as wholly down to the earl.³⁵ Drafted while the fires of Cadiz were still smouldering, Cuffe was dispatched as carrier with all speed to England, and when he fell sick on the way he sent the discourse with the earl’s instructions on to Reynolds. The text was to be set in print as soon as possible, and Cuffe was brazen about the need for pseudonymous authorship so that no ‘slender guesse may be drawen who was the

³³ AS to FB, LPL MS 650, fol.81r; Birch, *Memoirs*, 1, 154.

³⁴ ER to EE, 10 August 1596, LPL MS 657, fol.106r-v.

³⁵ Cuffe to ER, n.d. July 1596, LPL MS 658, fol.88r-v. For reflections on the process of composition of ‘The True Relation’, see Alan Stewart, ‘The Making of Writing in Renaissance England: Re-thinking Authorship Through Collaboration’, in Margaret Healy and Thomas Healy (ed.), *Renaissance Transformations: The Making of English Writing (1500-1650)* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009), 81-96.

penneman’:

[C]onferre with Mr Griuill [Fulke Greville] whether he can be contented to suffer the 2 first letters of his name to be vsed in the inscription [...] If he be vnwilling you may put R.B. which some noe doubt will interpret to be Mr Beale but it skillest not. The originall you are the rather to keepe because my Lord charged me to cause ether you or Monsieur ffountaine to turne ether the whole or the summe of it into French and to cause it to be sent to some good personage in those partes.³⁶

As the instruction to arrange for translation suggests, ‘The True Relation’ was not to be confined to an English readership. In a letter sent at the same time as Cuffe’s dispatch, Essex further commanded that the manuscript be shown to Thomas Bodley, then an agent in the Low Countries, as well as de la Fontaine and Anthony Bacon, who was expected to arrange for its publication in Scotland.³⁷

The Relation did not make it to the press, as the manuscript was seized and unauthorised accounts of the expedition banned by the Privy Council, but Reynolds and Anthony Bacon laboured with some success to ensure scribal publication, so that the account was able to ‘passe very shortly into all partes & speake all languages [...] For Scotland Mr Bacon doth his parte for the Low Cuntries Mr Bodely & Monsieur de la Fontaine for France to whome I gaue a cobby translated into French.’³⁸ Reynolds also took pains to ‘procure a publicke thanksgeving for this great victory’ from the

³⁶ Cuffe to ER, n.d. July 1596, LPL MS 658, fol.88r-v.

³⁷ EE to ER, 1 July 1596, LPL MS 658, fol.135r. For more on Thomas Bodley, see W.H. Clennell, ‘Bodley, Sir Thomas (1545-1613)’, *ODNB* (accessed 28.05.13) and Robyn Adams (ed.), *The Diplomatic Correspondence of Thomas Bodley, 1585-1597*, www.livesandletters.ac.uk/bodley (Centre for Editing Lives and Letters, UCL and the Bodleian Library, University of Oxford) (accessed 28.05.13).

³⁸ ER to EE, 9 August 1596, LPL MS 658, fols.259-260v. For more on the political fall-out of the Cadiz campaign, see *PP*, 250-257.

Archbishop of Canterbury in accordance with Essex's wishes.³⁹ Writing to him on 9 August, he reassured his master that despite the hindrances placed in his way, the earl's message was getting through:

I may not forgett to lett your Lordship vnderstand how honourably my Lord Arch Bishop hath carried himselfe towardes your Lordship in procuring a thanksgiuing for this victory which once was graunted to be generall in all partes but afterwards restrayned by her Maiestes commaundement for London only. And how yesterday their was a sermon preached at Paules by a Chaplaine of his who very truly & with great applause sounded your Lordships worthy fame. Your iustice wisdomes valour & noble cariage in this action making many comparisons of your Lordship with the cheifest generalls; & much inueghing at such as extenuated this happy victory.⁴⁰

Reynolds was over-optimistic: the queen's clampdown on unauthorised accounts had severely limited the earl's propaganda effort. But the failure was no fault of Reynolds. The Cadiz controversy reveals his activities at the centre of Essex's political and media operations.

Section 2: Figuring Reynolds

Despite Edward Reynolds's active involvement in the earl's affairs in the 1590s, a historical observer would at first glance find it difficult to deduce his importance from his surviving correspondence. In this section I explore in some detail the language Reynolds used to articulate his relationship with the earl, Anthony Bacon and others. I show that he favoured a form of language that situated these relationships somewhere

³⁹ EE to ER, 1 July 1596, LPL MS 658, fol.135r.

⁴⁰ ER to EE, 9 August 1596, LPL MS 658, fols.259-260v.

on a continuum between the venerable idea of lordly retainership, and the intense sort of Ciceronian *amicitia* discussed in Chapter 1. In part this was a natural consequence of the nature of intimate secretaryship, but I argue that Reynolds's language in his surviving letters also reflects a thorough-going commitment among various members of the Essex circle to an interpretation of service that depended on the frequent and ardent expression of highly emotional language. Reynolds figured himself in accordance with styles that were demonstrated by his fellows and superiors.

In his letters Reynolds chose to present his privileged and confidential position as arising from a sort of dogged loyalty and affection for the earl and the men who served him. Despite his relative youth (he was in his mid-thirties between 1595 and 1597), he presented himself as an ageing retainer: he was Essex's 'faithfull and old servant'; he was 'old, & wearing out of date' by 1596.⁴¹ In part this was a deliberate tactic to distinguish himself from his secretarial colleagues. Although Wotton, Cuffe and Temple were not much his junior in years, Reynolds felt unsettled by the new arrivals and his 'long faythfull & painfull seruice' contrasted with their much shorter histories.⁴² But it also tallied with his belief that serving the earl was a matter of faithfulness and loyalty. Reynolds was noticeably reluctant to define his employment in Essex's secretariat in terms that drew attention to his technical skills or intellectual training. Instead, he located his merits almost solely in his capacity for prolonged and dutiful service. In this, he was in agreement with Angel Day, the author of *The English Secretorie*, who in his 1599 edition, which featured a new essay on the 'partes, place and office of a Secretorie', explained that he was 'not of the opinion of the multitude,

⁴¹ ER to EE, 18 August 1596, LPL MS 658, fol.258r; ER to AB, n.d. September 1596, LPL MS 659, fol.92r.

⁴² ER to AB, 5 January 1596/7, LPL MS 654, fol.83r-v. Reynolds had previously made aggrieved reference to his 'long, chargeable, & faythfull service' (ER to AB, 18 August 1596, LPL MS 658, fol.210r).

who holde that the praiseable endeouour or abilitie of well writing or ordering of the pen, is the matter that maketh the Secretorie' but rather his value was to be found in his 'affinitie [...] of trust and fidelitie' with his master.⁴³ Lord Burghley's secretary, Michael Hickes, expressed himself in very similar terms when he wrote of his 'cheifest hope & comfort [...] that my syncere & Dutifull affection towards his Lordship in this service accompanied with a Carefull endeavor & Diligence to performe as muche, as shall lye in my power, shall sarve [...] in some parte to excuse, or at the least to cover my manyfold wantes & imperfections,' which in Hickes's case included a laborious scribal hand and very poor French.⁴⁴ These were real hindrances, and Hickes initially struggled in Burghley's employ.⁴⁵ There is no evidence that Reynoldes was ever anything less than competent, but his epistolary mode was consistently self-effacing. When in January 1597 Essex began making plans for the expedition that would become the Azores campaign, Reynolds revealed to Anthony that his master was in danger of rushing headlong into an action that required a more thoughtful approach. But he stopped himself from speaking out of turn: 'But what meddle I in so highe matters! Not of any curiosity I protest, but out of a faithfull trewe and honest zeale, of his Lordships honor, & the good of his estate.'⁴⁶ Some months earlier, in the middle of a dispute about an additional secretary (of which more below), Reynolds urged Anthony to persuade the earl to dismiss the new man in his favour: 'of me, delyver your favourable opinion, not of any sufficiency, (for I knowe howe small it is) but of my dewtifull affection to his

⁴³ Angel Day, *The English Secretary, or Methode of writing of Epistles and Letters*, 2nd edn. (London: P.S. for C. Burbie, 1599), sig.Nn1v.

⁴⁴ Michael Hickes to Vincent Skinner, n.d., BL Lansdowne MS 107, fol.166r.

⁴⁵ Alan G.R. Smith, *Servant of the Cecils: The Life of Michael Hickes, 1543-1612* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1977), 37.

⁴⁶ ER to AB, 20 January 1596/7, LPL MS 654, fol.78r.

Lordships service, which is as greate as any [...] in England.⁴⁷ On the same issue, Reynolds revealed in another letter to Anthony that he might be compelled to resign, in which case he hoped for financial compensation from Essex:

My Lord is noble & honourable, & never sent strangers from hym discontented, in whome there was any merit, or in whome he found any affection to his service. For merit I can pleade but little; because all I can do is nothinge; but for affection to perform all acceptable service, I trust his Lordship will (if he should be asked) witnes that it hath not bene wanting: and I will presume to appeale to your knowledge herein.⁴⁸

Reynolds's self-effacement has led commentators to conclude that he was conscious of an intellectual inferiority to the other men in Essex's secretariat. Paul Hammer suggests that he 'felt uneasy at the comparison between the scholarly brilliance of his new colleagues and his own abilities, which had become dulled by years of service away from the groves of academe,' and points out that he was 'rather defensive' about his Latin which, as Reynolds put it, 'I knowe is barbarous having not written so much these seven yeares.'⁴⁹ His modesty on this subject may be a facet of his general commitment to self-abnegation: denial of his own ability was prompted by Anthony's request that he, rather than Henry Wotton, see to a letter for the Grand Duke of Tuscany and the Doge of Venice. Anthony wanted the letter 'rather clad ether in your owne or Mr Temples Lattine then in my Cosen Wottons Italien.'⁵⁰ Henry Wotton was known as a

⁴⁷ ER to AB, 19 August 1596, LPL MS 658, fol.166r.

⁴⁸ ER to AB, 19 August 1596, LPL MS 658, fol.228r.

⁴⁹ Hammer, 'The Uses of Scholarship', 34. The letter which Hammer quotes is ER to AB, 13 October 1596, LPL MS 659, fol.331r. Reynolds repeated the sentiment in another letter two days later (ER to AB, 15 October 1596, LPL MS 659, fol.379r).

⁵⁰ AB to ER, 13 October 1596, LPL MS 659, fol.317r.

‘linguist of great experience’ and had particular responsibility in Essex’s circle for Italy, but Anthony nonetheless regarded Reynolds’s Latin as more suitable for letters to high-ranking foreigners (Wotton’s vernacular was a metal ‘of to basse alloy to be currant with [such] princes as the Duke of Florence and the most principall antient cheife Senators of Venice.’)⁵¹ It was Reynolds’s attitude to his own capabilities that contrasted so markedly with his fellow secretaries, rather than the nature or extent of his skills. Although he was not a professional academic like Cuffe and Temple, he had been elected to a fellowship at All Souls College, Oxford, had taken his MA, and managed the earl’s correspondence in English, French and Latin. He was rather better qualified than Wotton, who had only progressed as far as his BA at Oxford.⁵²

Partly this attitude reflected his role: as Essex’s secretary, his job required permanent attendance on the earl and a necessary sublimation of his own political and social identity into that of his master. Nicholas Faunt, whom Reynolds knew through his friendship with Anthony Bacon, analysed the nature of the relationship between a Principal Secretary (the high political office held by Sir Francis Walsingham until his death, and unfilled for much of the 1590s) and his own personal secretary in a discourse written in 1592. In it, Faunt stressed that the ideal confidential secretary should not ‘serue his owne turne’ but wholly ‘yeeld himself to that calling or business [...] he must cast of[f] the care of his private estate to th[is] end hee may chiefly attend and intend this service, which assuredly will requier a whole man.’⁵³ The nature of the role Essex carved out for himself in the mid-1590s was analogous to the Principal Secretary’s,

⁵¹ ER to AB, n.d. December 1596, LPL MS 660, fol.214r; AB to ER, 8 October 1596, LPL MS 659, fol.314r. Anthony’s wish to squeeze out Henry Wotton was a result of Wotton’s earlier failure to dispatch letters of introduction for Essex’s Italian agent Dr Henry Hawkins, but his preference for Reynolds’s or Temple’s Latin suggests that Reynolds was not as rusty as he claimed. A fluent Latin letter from Reynolds to Antonio Pérez is n.d. November 1596, LPL MS 653, fol.78r.

⁵² Hammer, ‘Reynolds’, *ODNB*; Loomie, ‘Wotton’, *ODNB*.

⁵³ Hughes (ed.), ‘Nicholas Faunt’s “Discourse”’, 501.

especially with regard to his involvement in foreign affairs, and Reynolds evidently felt the same as Faunt about the obligations of attendance; it is probably relevant that Reynolds did not marry until around 1599, the period of Essex's disgrace and withdrawal from active politics.⁵⁴ His service at the earl's side was an intimate, arduous and at times tedious occupation, necessitating frequent travel as the court migrated from palace to palace, and as the earl's business took him to London, his estate at Barn Elms and elsewhere.⁵⁵ As he complained to Anthony in September 1596, 'I come seldome to London; I wayte and attend hard at Court.'⁵⁶ The growth in Essex's secretariat had not resulted in any slack time for Reynolds. The earl's promotion to the Privy Council in 1593 and his hugely expanded foreign intelligence operation generated an enormous quantity of paperwork. Supervision of this correspondence was the secretary's responsibility: 'my fellowes take no compassion of me, but let the burthen of the service lye vpon me at Court and abrode.'⁵⁷ Attendance on Essex was a job that took all of Reynolds's waking hours, with business being dispatched from breakfast to bedtime – the earl's occasionally mercurial behaviour only made things worse.⁵⁸ Reynolds wrote to Anthony with some frustration in March 1597:

My Lord hath bene private these 3 howres, and was suddenly gone throughe the garden before I could come at hym: when he returneth to his chamber: I will shewe hym your letter, & refresh the remembrance of your memorials once more: His

⁵⁴ Reynolds began courting Katharine Mills, a widow of Southampton, in 1598 or the very start of 1599 (the first surviving letter to Katharine is January 1599, SP 12/270, fol.47r). The date of their marriage is unknown, but Hammer presumes it to have been at some point in 1599 (Hammer, 'Reynolds', *ODNB*).

⁵⁵ *PP*, 121-3, 130-2, 317.

⁵⁶ ER to AB, [17?] September 1596, LPL MS 659, fol.96r.

⁵⁷ ER to AB, [4?] November 1596, LPL MS 660, fol.63r.

⁵⁸ Reynolds was at the earl's side from first thing in the morning to 'when he commeth to bed' (LPL MS 660, fol.195r).

Lordship seemeth not so myndfull of these ordinary busines as he hath bene.⁵⁹

That spring, as the Azores mission neared, was a particularly demanding time for all his servants, and the earl's 'infinite busines' took its toll on his mood: 'he is in continewall labor. I think the husbandman endureth not more toyle. I wisse it were lesse, for it maketh him the more hard to please in his service as all busines are accompanied with a kind of chagrin & full of fascherie, as the french phrase is.'⁶⁰ Discontentment or ill-health made Essex difficult to serve, as both conditions caused him to retreat into aggressively solitary contemplation. Henry Wotton later wrote that when Essex's 'humours grew tart' he would betake himself to 'certayne suddaine recesses; sometimes from the court to Wanstead, other whiles into Greenwich, often to his owne chamber, doors shut, visits forbidden.'⁶¹ On 17 February 1597 he was 'so pryvat [...] through his indisposition' that Reynolds was unable to get anything done at all.⁶² Three days later the situation had not improved:

I haue bene as a prisoner these fiue or sixe dayes, because my Lord hath bene so hym self by reason of his indisposicion. The busines that hath accosted me here hath bene very small, but the attendance is as much necessary in sickenes as in health, and somewhat more, for that the tymes of imployment are so incerten, & the offence of

⁵⁹ ER to AB, [5/8?] March 1596/7, LPL MS 656, fol.24r.

⁶⁰ ER to AB, 8 March 1596/7, LPL MS 656, fol.75r.

⁶¹ Henry Wotton, 'Of Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex; and George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham: Some Observations by way of Parallel, in the time of their estates of Favour', in *Reliquiae Wottonianae. Or a Collection of Lives, Letters, Poems; With Characters of Sundry Personages and other Incomparable Pieces of Language and Art* (London: Thomas Maxey for R. Marriot, G. Bedel and T. Garthwait, 1651), reprinted in Walter Scott (ed.), *A Collection of Scarce and Valuable Tracts [...]* (The Somers Tracts), 13 vols (London: T. Cadell. W. Davies, W. Miller, R.H. Evans, J. White, J. Murray and J. Harding, 1810), 4, 154-165, 157.

⁶² ER to AB, 17 February 1596/7, LPL MS 655, fol.64r.

absence greater.⁶³

For over eleven years, from 1588 until at least 1599, Reynolds's life revolved around the earl of Essex: his emotional, intellectual and physical closeness to the earl was total. Even when family matters arose, the earl's interests were central. In August 1596 Reynolds's 'bad brother' Augustine was found to have embezzled money collected under Essex's license to claim the import duty on sweet wines. The effect on Reynolds was devastating, both financially (he had to repay the stolen money himself) and emotionally – he wrote to Sir Robert Cecil that shame and grief had overwhelmed him at the thought that the scandal might prejudice his master.⁶⁴

Reynolds's absorption in the life of his master goes some way to explain the intensely personal terms with which he conceived his relationships with the earl and those nearest to him. Several years after the earl's fall and execution, Reynolds felt himself sufficiently close to the interests of the Devereux family to write a concerned note to the late earl's teenage son Robert, an intimate of the Stuart prince Henry, reminding him of his obligations to his king and country, an intrusion justified by '[t]he trewe and everlasting loue which I beare to the memory of your late thrice worthy father'.⁶⁵ This was not simply the effect of nostalgia. During his period of service it was his habitual practice to identify himself as the earl's devoted personal servant. 'I am wholly his Lordships perpetuallie deuoted to his seruice', he wrote in January 1597.⁶⁶ Most frequently, his fierce loyalty found expression in letters to Anthony Bacon, in which his respect and admiration for Anthony was mixed with his love for his master.

⁶³ ER to AB, 20 February 1596/7, LPL MS 655, fol.66r.

⁶⁴ *HMCS*, 6, 359.

⁶⁵ ER to the third earl of Essex, 22 October 1605, TNA SP 14/15, fol.159r-v.

⁶⁶ ER to AB, [5?] January 1596/7, LPL MS 654, fol.83r-v.

For Reynolds, Anthony was the earl's avatar, deserving of all the credit and worth due to one who sat only slightly below greatness. His 'chief care,' he wrote in November 1596, was to do Anthony – 'being next after my Lord' – 'all acceptable service, as to the gentleman in England to whome I hold my selfe most bound.'⁶⁷ Anthony's own painstaking service to the earl lent his relationship with Reynolds a pleasing intimacy: both men were committed to the same ultimate goal, and if Reynolds considered himself Anthony's junior it was a matter of great satisfaction that the efforts he might expend on his behalf were in the cause of a greater good:

Sir I haue shewed your lettre of remembrances to my Lord, who semeth to haue spetiall care of everye particular therein recommended, and god willing my dayly solicitation shall not be wanting either in that, or any thinge elce it shall please you to commit vnto my trust: to whome I do & will more studiouslye and zealouslye seeke to yeld all contentement by all dewtifull & honest offices, and services, then all the world besides, I except only one, to whome I knowe your self do yeld the like honor with me.⁶⁸

Gratifyingly, Anthony was quick to pick up on Reynolds's language and used similar terms when he paid compliments to the secretary. In August 1596 Anthony testified to 'mine owne knowledge & prooffe of your faithfull zelous harte & indefatigable minde in serving his Lordshipp' and praised his 'intire deuotion diligence & fidelity which hath taken so deep impression in my minde as that I aspire to nothing more then to deserue

⁶⁷ ER to AB, 14 November 1596, LPL MS 660, fol.59r. That Anthony stood just below the earl of Essex in Reynolds's estimation was a frequent sentiment in his letters: 'Hold me still I beseeche you in your good favour, which I most esteeme, next vnto my Lordes, & shall think my self happye therewith,' he wrote to Anthony on 28 April 1596 (LPL MS 656, fol.268r).

⁶⁸ ER to AB, 16 October 1596, LPL MS 659, fol.327r.

the true loue of so rare a seruant by witnessing the truth to so noble a Master.’⁶⁹ A few months later Reynolds needed another fillip, and Anthony reached for the same phrases: he admired Reynolds’s ‘intire deuotion and faithfull diligence to & in his Lordships seruice [...] [which possesses] intirely your honest harte.’⁷⁰

Reynolds maintained this high pitch of emotional involvement in his friendship with Anthony Bacon, an intimacy aided by the fact that Anthony became his confidant and champion in the newly-enlarged secretariat. His support when Reynolds felt threatened by his new colleagues prompted a flood of heartfelt thanks:

I can not omit in all my lettres, to geve you a tast of my thankfull dispoicion for your great favors[,] not that I can by any woordes sufficiently expresse the same, but that you may knowe what I would do, if ability & meanes served: which I will dispayre to be ever aunswerable to your merites; which are so many; or to my affection; which no abilitye can equall.⁷¹

Reynolds’s pre-existing inclination to present himself as poor in merit but rich in affection in relation to the earl of Essex provided a language for his friendship with Anthony: in the formulation favoured by Reynolds, the favours of a meritorious patron could only be repaid with affection from a lowly and unskilful supplicant. Reynolds pushed the conventions of this model further in his letters to Anthony than he did with the earl, pledging in return for his ‘exceeding great favors [...] my faythfull love’,⁷² and

⁶⁹ AB to ER, 22 August 1596, LPL MS 658, fol.202r-v.

⁷⁰ AB to ER, 9 October 1596, LPL MS 659, fol.315r.

⁷¹ ER to AB, 3 January 1596/7, LPL MS 654, fol.101r. This passage in the manuscript letter has been highlighted with a marginal line, although it is of course impossible to say when, or by whom, the mark was made.

⁷² ER to AB, n.d. January 1596/7, LPL MS 654, fol.74r. The personal sentiments in this letter have been highlighted with a marginal line.

defining their relationship in explicitly affective terms:

Sir. When I haue filled whole sheetes of paper, all I can say is, to present vnto you my best thanks for your exceeding great favors, which you heap dayly vpon me, and cannot be expressed in whole volumes. Therefore because all I can say, is to yeld all dewtifull thanks, I do offer the same from a most affectionate and trewe hart vnto you, as to the dearest frend I haue in this world, of whose honorable favour I will endeavour to be held worthy, by all services so long as I lyve.⁷³

Reynolds took care to inscribe the special nature of his friendship with Anthony in the subscriptions he appended to his routine letters, varying a standard ‘Yours wholly & trewly devoted’⁷⁴ with elaborations that included ‘Yours wholly & constantly bound & devoted’ and even ‘yours by solemne vowe faithfully devoted.’⁷⁵ On one occasion he gestured poetically towards the inadequacy of language to capture the full scope of his feelings: ‘I can add nothing to my former professions; neyther can any thinge be added to my trewe affection, being ever Yours wholly & constantly.’⁷⁶ These subscriptions contrast with those intended for others: to Essex, he is ‘Your Lordships most humble & faythfull seruaunt’, and to correspondents of a more workaday nature he is ‘your very assured freind’, also the formulation most used frequently by Anthony to Reynolds.⁷⁷

⁷³ ER to AB, 29 January 1596/7, LPL MS 654, fol.80r.

⁷⁴ ER to AB, 9 March 1596/7, LPL MS 656, fol.33r. With minor variations, this was Reynolds’s most common formulation in his letters to Anthony: ‘Yours perfect and trewly devoted’ (1 October 1594, LPL MS 648, fol.100r); ‘Yours wholly and faithfully devoted’ (9 October 1596, LPL MS 659, fol.329r); ‘Yours treuly & faythfully devoted’ (3 January 1596/7, LPL MS 654, fol.27r).

⁷⁵ ER to AB, [5/8?] March 1596/7, LPL MS 656, fol.24r; ER to AB, n.d. September 1596, LPL MS 659, fol.88r.

⁷⁶ ER to AB, 14 January 1596/7, LPL MS 654, fol.99r.

⁷⁷ ER to EE, 6 May 1596, LPL MS 657, fol.105r; ER to John Wake, Lieutenant of Salcey Forest, 30 July 1596, LPL MS 658, fol.99r. For examples of Anthony’s subscriptions in his letters to Reynolds, see 3 January 1596/7, LPL MS 654, fol.109r and 7 February 1596/7, LPL MS 655, fol.76r.

Reynolds's language in his letters to the earl of Essex and Anthony Bacon reflected his status in the household of a senior noble, and tells us something about the way he chose to conceive of his position as a servant to one and intimate friend to the other. He was reliant on his patron for present security and future prospects and took pains to form bonds of obligation with influential men such as Anthony who could facilitate his advancement. The languages of friendship and service comprehended these bonds of mutual (or one-sided) indebtedness, and Reynolds was not unusual in articulating this debt in such seemingly emotional terms.⁷⁸ Much of this thesis has been concerned with the way in which these conventions operated in practice. In terms of the position in which Reynolds placed himself in relation to Essex, his language implies a close adherence to the idea of lordship, a concept that was becoming antiquated even in the sixteenth century: a relationship of honour maintained between a superior and an inferior through the pledging of faithfulness on one side, and lordly protection and just dealing on the other.⁷⁹ In both cases, intimate friendship and lordly service, the striking emotionality of Reynolds's language can be explained as a trick of the light. We are detecting, in Alan Bray's terminology, the 'traces' of a forgotten set of 'rhetorical gestures' that served to negotiate the complex set of exchanges that constituted a relation of service or friendship in the early modern period.⁸⁰ But I would argue that such a conclusion glosses the messy, conflicted and changing nature of the relationships in the Essex circle in particular. Reynolds's language reflected an enthusiasm for

⁷⁸ Lisa Jardine and William Sherman have argued that a flattering language of relational indebtedness could be used to cover a more transactional relationship between social equals ('Pragmatic Readers', 102-24). Alan Bray first addressed the idea that expressions of feeling in word or gesture could function as public declarations of alliance and indebtedness in 'Homosexuality and the signs of male friendship in Elizabethan England', a theme he explored in more detail in *The Friend*, particularly chapters 2 and 4.

⁷⁹ Mervyn James, 'English politics and the concept of honour, 1485-1642', in *Society, Politics and Culture*, 308-415, 330.

⁸⁰ Bray, *The Friend*, 6, 26.

conceptualising duty in unusually personal terms that was shared by some (but not all) members of that circle, including Reynolds, Anthony Bacon, the earl and other followers, notably the Spanish exile Antonio Pérez. This style was one that drew on two heritages: a reverence for the bonds of classical *amicitia* as interpreted by humanism; and the chivalric code of honour that tied followers to their lord with an appeal to loyalty and friendship. Neither of these heritages were in themselves eccentric in the context of the late sixteenth century, a period which saw an enormous public appetite for discourses on chivalry and idealised male friendship.⁸¹ But both institutions had, to varying degrees, evolved from living cultural forms into rhetorical modes that retained only the language and gestures of the original form. Men might speak the language of honour and *amicitia* while acting in ways that owed more to pragmatism and a developing idea of public service.⁸² For Essex and his circle to adhere so wholeheartedly to both an ideal and a language of impassioned service *was* unusual by the 1590s. In the next section I will suggest that those members of the circle who did not adopt the style attracted resentment and conflict, but for the rest of the present section I will focus on the men in the Essex household who demonstrated their commitment to this mode in their letters.

For Anthony Bacon, the focus of his affections was the earl of Essex. The earl gave him a professional purpose and provided an outlet for his considerable talents. Anthony's service in his cause made use of the experiences he had gathered and the

⁸¹ For more on the enthusiasm in the later part of the sixteenth century for idealised male friendship in the Ciceronian mode, see Chapter 1, pp. 81-4. For more on the vogue, especially in the 1580s and 1590s, for heraldry and chivalric virtue, see Chapter 3, pp. 178-80 and 202-4, and Dickinson, *Court Politics*, 5-23.

⁸² Charting these sorts of cultural shifts is a task that has occupied both period experts and cultural historians. In the first camp, Michael Hicks (*Bastard Feudalism* (London: Longman, 1995), 201-7) and Felicity Heal (*Hospitality in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1999)) have explored change and continuity in the great houses of early-modern England. In the second camp, Bray (*The Friend*) spent the last years of his life charting the shifting conceptions of friendship and service as England moved from a medieval and early-modern state into modernity.

acquaintances he had made during his twelve year absence on the continent, a spotted history that he sought to cleanse by putting his experience and acquaintance at the disposal of one of the queen's most senior servants. Anthony was painfully conscious that his lost years of, in his words, 'obedyence, care and expenses' in France had reaped 'no other frutes then iealousies, suspitions, and misimputations' when he returned to England and began rebuilding his relationship with his uncle Lord Burghley. As he explained to his aunt, the dowager Lady Russell, during a fraught interview at Essex House in September 1596,

when on the one side at my first cominge ouer I founde nothinge but faire words which make fooles faine, and yet euen in those no offer, or hopefull assurance of reall kindness, which I thought I might iustlie expecte at his Lordships [Burghley's] hands, who had inned my ten yeares haruest in his owne barne without anie halfpennie charge, and on the other side vnderstood the Earle of Essex his care vertues and perfections and the interest he had worthelie in my Souueraines fauour, together withe his spetiall noble kindenes to my germaine brother [...] I did extremelie longe to [...] mete withe some oportunitie to make the honourable Earle knowe, howe muche I honoured and esteemed his excellent guiftes, and howe earnestlie I desired to deserue his good opinion and loue.⁸³

Anthony's account of this conversation was written explicitly for the earl, and the sentiments expressed in it are consistent with the terms used by both men in their correspondence. Essex praised Anthony as 'a gentleman whose vertue I reuerence, and loue his person' and wished for 'better and oftner occasions to shew you my loue and

⁸³ AB to EE, n.d. September [1596] [endorsement faded], LPL MS 659, fols.23-26v.

howe worthily I thinke it is placed.⁸⁴ In the postscript of a letter of secret instructions sent to Reynolds, he made Anthony's special position clear: 'When I say in the beginning of my lettre that this is onlie for your owne eyes I exclude all men but Mr Anthony Bacon who in all these things is to me as the hande with which I write this commende me vnto him a 1000 times.'⁸⁵ As Essex's right hand man, Anthony also had the privilege of absolutely private correspondence with the earl, veiled even from the sight of the other secretaries. In October 1596 Reynolds assured him that 'my Lord taketh all possible care of your private lettres, and if I happen to take vp any (as it falleth out very seldome), I do make a religion to delyver them to his Lordship, vnseene being fit for no mans eyes elce; vnles it be such as he geveth me, containing matters of remembrance only.'⁸⁶ For his part, Anthony most often expressed his devotion to the earl with the trope that the honour of his favours put him beyond the power of speech. Writing of his reunion with the earl after his return from Cadiz, he told Reynolds, '[a]s I was very happily surprized yesternight at Supper by the most comfortable presence of my singular good Lord so confesse I freely vnto yow that my eyes were so rauished with so sweet & deare and [*sic*] obiect as that they did vsurp ouer my minde & tong.'⁸⁷ Elsewhere he wrote of 'the vnspeakable comferte & ioy to inioy my Lords presence' and the 'vnspeakable kindnes' he had been shown.⁸⁸ Such kindness frequently took the form of favours for Anthony's friends, family and suitors, from commissions for soldiers to livings for robustly Protestant preachers, a form of patronage that was less to

⁸⁴ EE to AB, n.d., LPL MS 653, fol.178r and the same to the same, n.d., fol.212r; Birch, *Memoirs*, 1, 161 and 148.

⁸⁵ EE to ER, 23 July 1596, LPL MS 658, fol.136r.

⁸⁶ ER to AB, 15 October 1596, LPL MS 659, fol.379r.

⁸⁷ AB to ER, 18 August 1596, LPL MS 658, fol.188r.

⁸⁸ AB to ER, 22 August 1596, LPL MS 658, fol.202r-v; AB to ACB, 22 September 1593, LPL MS 649 fol.312r (copy).

do with the earl's own religious convictions than the effect of the constant pressure of Lady Bacon, relayed through Anthony, who was unremitting in her support for reformed clerics.⁸⁹ Such evident favour was a public matter: writing to the keeper of Salcey Forest in Northamptonshire to arrange the dispatch of one of the earl's bucks to Anthony, Reynolds warned the forester to have 'spetiall care of the seruing of this Warraunte bycause it is for a gentleman whome I know my Lord doth dearly loue & respect as much as any gentleman in England.'⁹⁰ Henry Wotton's later sketch of the earl's household arrangements, although shot through with residual bitterness and written with objectives particular to the Stuart years, gives an indication of the special treatment Anthony received. He described how '[t]he Earle of Essex had accommodated Master Anthony Bacon in a partition of his house, and had assigned him a noble entertaynement.' Anthony's position in Essex House was unassailable: with the earl he was 'commonly *primae admissionis*, by his bed-side in the morning', a suggestive image of professional and personal intimacy that ignores the fact that Essex was frequently absent from his London house.⁹¹

The earl's preferential treatment of Anthony was of a piece with his enthusiastic support for his followers. It has been noted that Essex threw himself into campaigns for his friends, seemingly regardless of the likelihood of success and blind to the political realities behind the endeavours.⁹² His suits on behalf of Francis Bacon for the post of attorney-general in 1593-5 and Sir Robert Sidney for the wardenship of the Cinque

⁸⁹ See AB to ER, [8/9?] March 1596/7, LPL MS 656, fol.91r for a typical discussion of the steps Essex and his followers could take to prefer a cleric 'vppon my Mothers recommendacion'. For a thorough analysis of Lady Bacon's religious patronage, see Mair, 'Anne, Lady Bacon', 212-260.

⁹⁰ ER to John Wake, Lieutenant of Salcey Forest, 30 July 1596, LPL MS 658, fol.99r.

⁹¹ Wotton, *Reliquiae Wottonianae*, Somers Tracts, 4, 158-9.

⁹² Gajda, *Essex*, 143-4; Paul E. J. Hammer, 'Patronage at Court, faction and the earl of Essex', in Guy (ed.), *The Reign of Elizabeth I*, 65-86, 76.

Ports in 1597 demonstrate the extent to which his desire to support his friends could tip into single-minded obsession. Lobbying the queen for Francis's preferment in March 1594 he succeeded in moving her to nothing but irritation, at which point he declared 'in passion' that 'while I was with her I could not but solicit for the cause and the man I so much affected and therefore I would retire myself till I might be more graciously heard,' an exit line that prefigured a brief but characteristic withdrawal to his chamber.⁹³ He had already made his commitment to Francis clear, in an ill-humoured exchange with Sir Robert Cecil in January of that year: 'the Attorneyship for Frances ys that I must have,' he had insisted, 'and in that will I spend all my power, might, authoritye and amytye, and with toothe and nayle deffende and procuer the same for hym against whomsoever.'⁹⁴ When the death of the elderly Lord Cobham in 1597 left the post of Warden of the Cinque Ports vacant, Essex sought the position for Sir Robert Sidney over the more likely successor, Cobham's eldest son Henry Brooke. Essex's implacable dislike of Brooke was the reason for his particular dedication to this cause, but he expressed it in similarly personal terms to his advocacy of Francis: 'I mean resolutely to stand for it [the office] myself against him [Brooke].'⁹⁵

Like his secretary Edward Reynolds, Essex employed a register that Alexandra Gajda has termed 'strikingly emotive' in his letters of recommendation on behalf of clients, even those in pursuit of relatively humble offices – writing in support of one John Bowen Phillips to be made JP in Pembrokeshire, Essex informed Lord Keeper Puckering that he would account his help a 'spetiall curtesie, & add it to manye otheres whereby your Lordship continuallye by satisfying my lik requests doth tye me unto

⁹³ EE to FB, 28 March 1594, LPL MS 650, fol.148r (copy); Birch, *Memoirs*, 1, 166.

⁹⁴ AS to AB, 3 February 1593/4, LPL MS 650, fol.81r.

⁹⁵ *HF*, 188; *LL*, 2, 48.

yow.’⁹⁶ It was, as Paul Hammer observed, a ‘point of honour’ for Essex to pursue suits to their conclusion once he had become involved in them, a loyalty that made him an extremely attractive figure, for all that his actual powers of patronage were limited.⁹⁷ This popularity added substantially to Reynolds’s workload, as Essex was frequently importuned by courtiers who distracted him from more pressing business. Anthony Standen remarked that ‘in Court, ytt is hard negotiatinge wythe my Lord for the multitudes that overwhelme hym,’ an impression corroborated by his other followers: Henry Wotton remembered that his chamber was ‘commonly strived with friends or suitors of one kinde or other,’ and Reynolds found himself battling ‘roughe Cavaliers’ who so ‘pulled & troubled’ his master that there was ‘neyther tyme nor place for any of vs to sollicite hym in matters of his service.’⁹⁸

The brand of highly-personalised, emotionally-heightened service practised by certain members of the Essex circle provides a context in which to understand the behaviour and language of the Spanish defector Antonio Pérez during his time in England under the earl of Essex’s protection in 1593-5. Variousy described by scholars of the period as ‘flamboyant’ and ‘glamorous’, the former secretary to the King of Spain entered the earl’s orbit during a diplomatic mission to England with the French envoy the vidame de Chartres in 1593; finding Essex’s company congenial, he contrived to remain his guest until the summer of 1595.⁹⁹ With his knowledge of the workings of the Escorial and his insights into Spanish policy objectives, Pérez was an invaluable

⁹⁶ BL Harley MS 6996, fol.130r (quoted in Gajda, *Essex*, 143).

⁹⁷ *PP*, 293-8, 297.

⁹⁸ AS to AB, 5 April 1594, LPL MS 650, fol.182r; Wotton, *Reliquiae Wottonianae*, Somers Tracts, 4, 160; ER to AB, n.d. September 1596, LPL MS 659, fol.88r.

⁹⁹ ‘Flamboyant’ is to be found in *HF*, 161; *GL*, 127; and Robert Gittings, *Shakespeare’s Rival: A Study in Three Parts* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1976), 26; ‘glamorous’ is Gajda, *Essex*, 11. The standard work on Pérez is Gustav Ungerer, *A Spaniard in Elizabethan England: The Correspondence of Antonio Pérez’s Exile*, 2 vols (London: Tamesis Books, 1974-6).

intelligence resource in his own right as well as being the lodestar for a network of continental informers that exceeded even Anthony Bacon's.¹⁰⁰ Conscious of his worth, Essex made Pérez welcome, entrusting him to the care of Thomas Smith and Francis and Anthony Bacon (much to their mother's displeasure).¹⁰¹ Essex also granted him an allowance of about £20 per month. Pérez repaid this kindness in the manner modelled by his hosts, with an effusion of loyal gratitude that found its form in public statements of favour and elaborate epistolary declarations of service and devotion. Anthony's friend Nicholas Faunt, meeting Pérez at a supper party hosted by his kinsman John Harrison, the high master of St Paul's School, remarked that 'of the Earle (as I heare he hath particular occasion) he speaketh without all exception for his yeares.'¹⁰² Pérez's passion for the earl determined the style in which he corresponded with him. Organising a meeting for the next day, he managed to work an elaborate metaphysical conceit into the mundane arrangements:

Today I desired to meet you. I should say that more briefly: I desired you, for he who loves is carried around in the orbit of his desire. Truly in the orbit, for desire is carried hither and thither by the heart, the centre of love, and approaches the beloved just as in orbit on this side and on that. Not in sight, not in speech – not just in one action alone, nor in the effect of one part – does love rest: it encompasses the beloved entirely, and it will inevitably possess him. Farewell, and very early in the morning expect me.¹⁰³

¹⁰⁰ *PP*, 132 and 180-1; Ungerer, *Spaniard*, 1, 296-7.

¹⁰¹ Hammer, 'Uses of Scholarship', 33; Ungerer, *Spaniard*, 1, 221.

¹⁰² NF to AB, 11 February 1594, LPL MS 650, fol.114v.

¹⁰³ Epistle 75, *Ant. Perezii ad Comitum Essexivm, singularem Angliae Magnatem, & ad Alios* (Paris: no printer's information, [1603]), sigs.G3v-4r, translation Bray, *The Friend*, 48. That this letter eventually ended up in Pérez's published collection suggests it was less a carelessly dashed off note, and more a mannerist composition. Whether it was ever sent as a 'real' letter is immaterial: it presents the relationship with Essex that Pérez wished to present to the world.

Pérez used the same tone – erudite, intimate, tinged with an arch and private eroticism – in letters to the Bacon brothers, as in this message to Anthony in which he affects to be wounded that Francis invited him to dine by written letter:

Your brother invited me to dinner. He has wounded me in writing – his pen being the most rabid and biting of teeth. As if he himself were above blame – some kind of chaste vestal virgin. You can tell immediately what this imagined modesty of his is all about. For I am just the same. Those who claim to love modesty are in fact the most bold of men, and submit to force, and enjoy the excuse of being taken by force, like the Roman matron in Tacitus who consented to be raped by her lover. But alas, if you do not reads these letters before dinner, the provocation behind his viciousness towards me will not be clear to you.¹⁰⁴

Pérez took his stylistic cue from the men with whom he had the most intimate or most voluminous correspondence, including Anthony Bacon and the earl of Essex. We are detecting here, I would argue, a coterie style that was both reflective and constitutive of the ways the members of the circle actually regarded loyalty and service: as institutions celebrated for being held together by affection, intimacy, and even ardour – and expressed with an appropriately emotional language.

Section 3: The coming men

If the language discussed above was common among some of the men in the Essex circle, it was by no means consistently practised. The employment of Henry Wotton in late 1594 or early 1595 heralded the arrival of a man who regarded secretarial service in a different light to either Edward Reynolds or Anthony Bacon. Entering Essex's service

¹⁰⁴ Ungerer, *Spaniard*, 1, 490-1, translation *HF*, 163.

after five years on the continent, Wotton brought with him a self-proclaimed expertise on matters pertaining to Italy and central Europe, and a correspondence network that encompassed Siena, Florence, Rome, Venice, Geneva, Heidelberg, Speyer, Basel, Vienna, Prague, Utrecht and The Hague.¹⁰⁵ Unlike the Francophile Anthony, whose long residence abroad had bred an ecumenism that sometimes put him in conflict with Essex's more militantly Protestant colleagues,¹⁰⁶ Wotton returned from his travels with his faith and political world-view largely unchanged, a quality noted by his friend John Donne:

But, sir, I advise not you, I rather do
 Say o'er those lessons, which I learnt of you,
 Whom, free from German schisms, and lightness
 Of France, and fair Italy's faithlessness,
 Having from these sucked all they had of worth,
 And brought home that faith which you carried forth,
 I throughly love.¹⁰⁷

Wotton had spent much of his time in the libraries of Italy and Germany, and he was the author of at least one briefing paper on the Holy Roman Empire (although he was probably not the sole author of the treatise known as *The State of Christendom*, which has been ascribed to him for the past century).¹⁰⁸ His experience, and his acquaintance

¹⁰⁵ Loomie, 'Wotton', *ODNB*; Smith, *Wotton*, 1, 299-301.

¹⁰⁶ Gajda, 'State of Christendom', 433.

¹⁰⁷ John Donne, 'To Mr Henry Wotton ('Sir, more than kisses')', lines 63-9, in Robin Robbins (ed.), *The Complete Poems of John Donne*, revised edn. (Harlow: Longman, 2010), 87-8.

¹⁰⁸ Alexandra Gajda has argued convincingly that *The State of Christendom*, not printed until 1657, was a co-authored document produced under Essex's patronage, with Anthony Bacon as lead editor and author. Henry Wotton may well have contributed to it, as he was part of the earl's circle by 1594-5 ('*The State of Christendom*', 423-30).

with significant European scholars and political figures, allowed him to advertise his own knowledge in matters of foreign policy, a solipsistic approach to service that was to unnerve Reynolds in particular. The older secretary was sensitive to the sharp-elbowed tactics of his new colleague, who appeared willing to ignore established habits of precedence. In February 1597 Wotton caused outrage by dispatching a letter from the earl of Essex to his agent in Venice, Dr Henry Hawkins, without first showing it either to Reynolds or to Anthony, ‘which he had reason to do the rather for that he might be assur’d you had something to write to the Doctor[,] and my Lord had left those things wholly to your addresse.’ To make matters worse, Wotton brushed off the mistake with an insouciance that verged on insolence: ‘he made sleight aunswere, & sayd that he had a double of them, which you might see & send yf it pleased you. This caryeth a great showe only of greate confidence of iudgement in hym, & of his own abilitye, or vnwillingnes to be censured, or neglect of those whome he should better regard.’¹⁰⁹

Wotton’s casual appropriation of the correspondence re-ignited a former dispute: he had been responsible for an extraordinary administrative failure in the summer and autumn of 1596 when letters of introduction from the earl intended for Dr Hawkins had somehow ended up in the possession of a London merchant, publicly displayed in a shop-window. Anthony had resolved the problem, soothing Hawkins with apologies for Wotton’s ‘prank’ and privately fuming to Essex about his ‘treachery’.¹¹⁰ A few months after the second Hawkins *faux pas*, Wotton and Reynolds again exchanged ‘crosse woordes’, this time about a passport for a visiting Bohemian, Jan Divíš, baron von Žerotín, who had recently been accepted as an honorary member of Gray’s Inn (perhaps through the support of the Bacon brothers at Essex’s request). Wotton had allegedly

¹⁰⁹ ER to AB, 23 February 1596/7, LPL MS 655, fol.54r.

¹¹⁰ Hammer, ‘Uses of Scholarship’, 36; Ungerer, *Spaniard*, 2, 170-2.

attempted to intercept the license and deliver it to its recipient, ‘to pick a thank of the Baron’ and reinforce his right to handle all German affairs.¹¹¹ Wotton’s smooth confidence upset Reynolds, not least because such assuredness contrasted with his own self-effacement – a mode of expression so entrenched that he rhetorically undercut his own abilities even while complaining about Wotton’s ambition:

Mr Wotton is alreedy Secretary for Transilvania, Polonia, Italye, Germanye, and if I were gon (so he hath vaunted) would haue also my charge, making some comparisons of sufficiency betwixt my selfe & hym [...] But I repeat not this, as any whit moved with those speaches or reprochfull termes, for I desire only to please & content my Lord, & not Mr Wotton, or any other that doth or shall contentiously or vpon humor seek to disgrace me, howe mean soever my sufficiency be in their eyes, which I will acknowledge to be far vnder that which such a place as I hould requireth.¹¹²

A good deal of the discord between Reynolds and Wotton can be ascribed to personality clash (Wotton’s early twentieth-century biographer conceded that many of his colleagues regarded him with ‘a certain suspicion of his sincerity and good faith’¹¹³), but Reynolds was also conscious that the new appointments – certainly Henry Wotton and Henry Cuffe – had a quality that distinguished them from other secretaries. ‘I must confesse they are all sufficient men,’ he explained to Anthony, ‘but I finde none of my own humor but Mr Temple’ (William Temple, the third new secretary employed after Thomas Smith’s departure).¹¹⁴ In part, Reynolds’s discomfort had its origin in the sort

¹¹¹ ER to AB, 9 March 1596/7, LPL MS 656, fol.65r. See Chapter 3, p. 195, for Žerotín’s entry into Gray’s Inn.

¹¹² ER to AB, n.d. December 1596, LPL MS 660, fol.214r.

¹¹³ Smith, *Wotton*, 1, 28. Joyce Freedman observed that he was ‘sometimes a gentleman of little honour’, and ‘a person of questionable character’ (‘Anthony Bacon and His World’, 272).

¹¹⁴ ER to AB, 19 August 1596, LPL MS 658, fol.166r.

of men these new appointments were, or purported to be. While he described Temple as a ‘godlie sufficient Secretarie’, he identified Wotton primarily as a ‘great languaged Traueller’ and Cuffe as a ‘learned scholler’.¹¹⁵ This was not at root an assessment of their skills or qualifications – as we have seen, William Temple was, like Cuffe, a published academic – but an indication of the identity that Reynolds believed each man chose to present. Those identities – careerist and self-determined – contrasted with his ideal of service, and could not be accommodated in a definition that conceived of the master-secretary relationship in wholly personal terms. Reynolds’s refusal to contemplate the potential benefits of a secretary employed for his technical skills, rather than his capacity for faithful service, is demonstrated by his response to the possibility of a fourth new appointment, Edward Jones, the former secretary to Sir Thomas Heneage and Lord Keeper Puckering, in the summer of 1596:

If there were any extraordinary partes, or any rare guiftes, in the partye commended, whereby my Lord might be the better served, I would be rather glad, then grieved at his intertaynement, although my Lord hath more then inoughe alreedy, & I amongst them the meanest; but I cannot vnderstand any such fame of hym. I thinke you knowe the man. His name is Iones, he sometimes served Master Vicechamberlain, & the late Lord Keeper, He is a great translator of books, & is preferred by Mr Waade for a spetiall man of language.¹¹⁶

Reynolds explicitly removed from the comprehension of ‘extraordinary partes, or [...] rare guiftes’ the linguistic skills inherent in being a ‘great translator of books, & [...] a

¹¹⁵ ER to EE, 18 August 1596, LPL MS 658, fol.258r. Later in the year Reynolds made the same distinction, writing to Anthony that the secretariat currently constituted ‘Mr Wootton a linguist of great experience, Mr Cuffe, a great philosopher, and Mr Temple, a man not inferior for a Secretary to eyther’ (n.d. December 1596, LPL MS 660, fol.214r).

¹¹⁶ ER to AB, 19 August 1596, LPL MS 658, fol.166r.

spetiall man of language'. Like Angel Day and Nicholas Faunt, Reynolds conceived of his role as secretary primarily in relational terms that brought to the fore his ability to keep the counsel of his master and provide diligent, faithful and secret service. For Nicholas Faunt, the prime requirement of discretion and trustworthiness in a secretary was achieved through the 'special loue and affeccion hee bearerth towards his Master, the same beeing grounded likewise upon some testimonie of his masters good opinion and repicracall love borne vnto him.'¹¹⁷ Angel Day was even more explicit: the 'neereness and attendance' demanded by such a role generated an affection between master and secretary that grew to a 'feruencie' and thence to a 'simpathie vnseperable' between the two.¹¹⁸ This conception was a flattering image for a secretary to sustain, and tallied well with Reynolds's increasingly old-fashioned sense that his duty to a noble lord was based around an offering of faithfulness in exchange for visible favour and support from his powerful patron (what Francis Bacon would term 'countenance' in his essay 'Of Followers and Friends').¹¹⁹ For Reynolds, the idea that a man might be taken on to perform important and confidential services for the earl of Essex simply as a result of a disinterested assessment of his skills was extremely disturbing.

The controversy surrounding Edward Jones was a flash-point for Reynolds, because it exposed the limitations of his conception of service, based as it was around a dated idea of lordly duty and an idealised view of a secretary's privileged position. Reynolds's response to Jones's mooted appointment also exposed the potential combustibility of relations within the Essex circle: for Reynolds, the earl's decision was only legible as a denial of countenance and a withdrawal of favour, to which the only meaningful reply was a concomitant denial of faithful service. Like his master, whose

¹¹⁷ Hughes, 'Nicholas Faunt's "Discourse"', 501.

¹¹⁸ Day, *English Secretary*, sig.Oo3r.

¹¹⁹ Kiernan (ed.), *Oxford Francis Bacon XV: Essayes*, 148.

reaction to being crossed by the queen was peremptorily to withdraw from her company (either briefly or for an extended period of time), Reynolds's response to perceived ill-usage was similarly dramatic: he tried to resign. His understanding of service and the language with which it was articulated left him very little rhetorical wriggle-room or indeed any option other than retreat. As Essex found when his relationship with the queen soured, a language of lordly service (or indeed courtly love) did not permit negotiation and compromise.

Reynolds had responded badly when Essex hired three additional secretaries after Smith's promotion to the Privy Council in 1595, conscious of the implication that the outgoing senior secretary was worth the labour of three men.¹²⁰ The earl's decision in the aftermath of the Cadiz expedition to take on Edward Jones as an additional foreign language secretary was a snub that Reynolds regarded as the last straw. He wrote in some distress to Anthony on 18 August:

I appeall to your iudgement howe little it can be to my credit in the world, when it shall be sayd that for our Mr Smith, his Lordship receved fower others. I protest vnto you that this affliction of mynd [...] hath gone very neare my hart; and I will despaire to remove it [...] I beseche you Sir accuse me not of causeles ielousye or discontented humores: but impute my complaint to a iust care of my poore credit, which is dearer to me then me lyfe; and when I loose but one iott of it with his Lordship, I will desire no more to behold the light.¹²¹

Reynolds decided that the public nature of this perceived disgrace required a public

¹²⁰ Laying out his grievance in 1596, Reynolds reminded Essex that he had served the earl 'without anie other Colledge [colleague]' than Thomas Smith for seven years, before 'your Lordship [...] intertained 3 secretaries' on Smith's preferment (ER to EE, 18 August 1596, LPL MS 658, fol.258r; this letter appears in the Appendix as Letter 5).

¹²¹ ER to AB, 18 August 1596, LPL MS 658, fol.210r.

response – or at least the show of one. In ‘the extremity of melancholy’, and without waiting to hear Anthony’s advice, he wrote another letter, this time addressed to the earl, which he ‘resolue[d] to leave to his Lordships viewe’.¹²² This was a letter of resignation:

But the greefe that hath broken my harte is, that after all this time and monie spent; after so faithfull and honest service, after the intertainment of so manie others, after my vnsupportable losse, your Lordship hath receiued a fith Secretarie, and a good parte of my former credit and imployment is caried an other waie, by reason whereof I hold my self vtterlie disgraced, and thorough melacholie greefe and wants am made vnfit to serve yow, and indeede I see little vse of me amonge so manie other sufficient menn. I have chosen rather to liue like a begger then with discredit and disgrace, and am retired to obscurity the poorest Secretarie that ever served so noble and bountyfull a person [...] I leaue the key of my Cabinett sealed vp with Sir Gellie Mericke where your Lordship shall finde all your papers in good order. For my self I neuer desire to be sene more of your Lordship but will spende my time in sighing for my hard fortune, and prayinge for your honorable estate and the greatest hapines your harte can wishe.¹²³

As the final sally in a battle over hurt pride, the letter was devastating. But it is unlikely that Reynolds ever intended to send it to the earl, still less that he planned to leave it lying open to public view. Instead, he sent the draft with a covering letter to Anthony, explaining his intentions ‘vnles your wise counsell do overrule me.’¹²⁴ The hint was

¹²² ER to AB, [18/19?] August 1596, LPL MS 658, fol.155r. This letter appears in the Appendix as Letter 4.

¹²³ ER to EE, 18 August 1596, LPL MS 658, fol.258r. This letter appears in the Appendix as Letter 5.

¹²⁴ ER to AB, [18/19?] August 1596, LPL MS 658, fol.155r.

hardly necessary. Anthony responded at once to this impulsive plan: ‘yow should reserue your lettre for the last refuge [...] permitt me to morrow to sound my Lord a loofe of in the best sorte my small discretion can devise touching your selfe [...] I would be loth yow should as yet deliuer your lettre.’¹²⁵ His urgent reply crossed with another letter from Reynolds, in which he pondered again the wisdom of so spectacularly burning his bridges: ‘In the extremity of grief I sent you this day a note; which as then, so nowe I intreate you may be only for your sight, vntill I may haue tyme to speak with you, by whose wise Councell I will govern my self [...] I beseche you Sir to burne these lettres.’¹²⁶ The gesture towards a dramatic final exit had been sufficient to guarantee Anthony’s assistance in the matter, and Reynolds was able to lay out his case more objectively in the third letter he wrote that day:

I am not malicious towards hym [Jones], or any other, neither will I ever seeke to hinder any honest mans good or preferment; nor contradict my Lordes honourable purposes to intertayn men fitt for his service: This only I beseche you to beleve, that I only respected in my complaint & moane made vnto you, my poore credit, somewhat blemished by so many of our profession, whereas before, for 7 yeares space, 2 were held sufficient: and my sufficiency hath bene the more called in question, because my Lord hath had this humor only since Mr Smithes preferment, which makes the world to iudge that he did all the service: whereas indeede the burden lay vpon my shoulders for the most part [...] But as his Lordship hath ever studied to do hym [Smith] good & laboured his preferment to great place, for his woorth: so I trust he will at last for my faythfull & honest services, haue me in remembrance; & prefer me to some place, nowe he is so well & so fully provided & furnisshed of Secretaryes: for I see nowe I

¹²⁵ AB to ER, [18/19?] August 1596, LPL MS 658, fol.187r.

¹²⁶ ER to AB, 19 August 1596, LPL MS 658, fol.166r.

shall not lyve with some of them, without envye.¹²⁷

For Reynolds, the injustice of his situation was that the earl's disregard for his faithful service damaged his public reputation as a secretary – his 'creditt'. This was a matter of honour, but it was also a matter of employability. His claim to require a new position away from Essex's secretariat, 'nowe I shall not lyve with some of them, without envye', was not the first time he had explored the possibility of a new job, for all his proclaimed loyalty. During 1594 and 1595, Reynolds attempted to secure a position as clerk of the Signet (a role which went eventually to Nicholas Faunt); in 1596, he sought to obtain the third reversion of the clerkship of the Privy Seal; in 1596 and 1597 he turned his attention to the clerkship of the Avery, the chief officer of the royal stables under the Master of the Horse; in 1597 he failed to win a reversion to a post at the Court of Requests, as well as the job of surveyor of the queen's ordinance (despite writing in a timely fashion when he heard the incumbent was 'dangerously sick, & past hope of recoverie').¹²⁸ His final effort to win higher place while in the earl of Essex's service was between 1597 and 1599, when he hoped to become secretary to the Court of Wards, on the understanding that Essex would be granted control of the office.¹²⁹ In most, if not all, of these cases, the earl was complicit and indeed instrumental in furthering Reynolds's suits, and with his help Reynolds was successful in securing the reversion of

¹²⁷ ER to AB, 19 August 1596, LPL MS 658, fol.228r.

¹²⁸ Reynolds's pursuit of the clerkships of the Signet and Privy Seal are discussed in ER to EE, 18 August 1596, LPL MS 658 fol.258r; his interest in the clerkship of the Avery is expressed in ER to AB, 1 January 1596/7, LPL MS 654, fol.89r; a letter in pursuit of an office in the Court of Requests is ER to Sir Robert Cecil, 3 August 1597, printed in *HMCS*, 7, 332-3; mention of the suit for the surveyorship of the ordinance is to be found in ER to AB, 12 March 1596/7, LPL MS 656, fol.12r and TNA SP 12/265, fol.147r.

¹²⁹ Captain Chamberlain to ER, 1597: 'Let no man be secretary to the Court of Wards but yourself, for my father bid me tell you it will be worth 400*l* a year' (*HMCS*, 7, 531). The prize was a long time in the offing: Reynolds wrote to Katherine Mills at the start of 1599, 'if my Lord be Master of the Wardes, I am promised a very contented fortune' (TNA SP 12/270, fol.47r).

the clerkship of the Privy Seal and, in 1597, a burgess's seat in Parliament for Andover.¹³⁰ In 1596, the dishonour and disgrace he felt at the 'multitude of Secretaryes' was in large part due to his fear that his public reputation would suffer and threaten his chances of winning a profitable government post.¹³¹

But Reynolds's prediction that he would not be able to work with his new colleagues 'without envye' should be taken seriously, and brings us back to the notion that he detected in them an antipathy of character. Edward Jones, the 'great translator of books' was, along with Cuffe the scholar and Wotton the linguist, something different to and perhaps less than a secretary, as Reynolds understood the role, and their advent diminished in his eyes the honour of the office. The professionals, bringing with them technical skill and independent ambition, upset the balance of faithful service and lordly reward that Reynolds believed he sustained with Essex. Like the anonymous author of *A Health to the Gentlemanly profession of Seruingmen* (1598), who mourned the passing of the days when the love 'betwixt the Maister and the Seruant [...] was in manner equall with the Husbandes to the Wyfe' and deprecated the new breed of covetous self-made men ('[i]t is Money they minde, Golde they grope after, and Gayne they groane for'), Reynolds distrusted the intentions of the new arrivals.¹³²

These abrasions and conflicts had a damaging effect on Essex's secretariat in the middle years of the 1590s, seeding internal divisions among his men even as the factional dispute that would arise at the end of the decade between Essex and Cecil (or,

¹³⁰ Hammer, 'Reynolds', *ODNB*.

¹³¹ ER to AB, n.d. September 1596, LPL MS 659, fol.92r.

¹³² I.M. [Gervaise Markham?], *A Health to the Gentlemanly profession of Seruingmen: or, The Seruingmans Comfort* (London: W.W., 1598), sigs.C2v and G3r. The extent to which English writers of the period remarked on the changing nature of service has been explored by Hicks, *Bastard Feudalism*, 201-207 and Heal, *Hospitality*, 164-165.

indeed, Essex and the rest of the court) began taking root.¹³³ The origin of these internal conflicts was cultural. Reynolds was not so very different from Wotton in his desire for enrichment and success. Wotton tried boldly to stake his claim to Italian and German affairs, and made semi-earnest play for Reynolds's job too, while Reynolds had his eye more or less constantly on other government offices, suits '[w]hich I doe not propound I protest with any desire to free my selfe of this seruice then the which I hould nothing more deare,' as he put it delicately to Anthony in December 1596.¹³⁴ The difference was to be found in the way the men regarded their service to their master. Men like Wotton who made their ambitions transparent rendered the traditional language of service obsolete: 'faithfulness' could hardly be assumed in the upwardly mobile. We have seen how these differences of opinion could breed discord and misunderstanding in the Essex secretariat. At its worst, differing views about the nature of service held by master and servant could lead to a catastrophe. Such a disaster occurred when Antonio Pérez took as his travelling secretary a man called Godfrey Aleyn, recently taken on by the earl of Essex.

Section 4: Antonio Pérez and Godfrey Aleyn

Godfrey Aleyn was still young, but by no means green, when he entered the earl of Essex's service in June 1595. Aged about 30, he had already spent nine years in the employment of Sir William Spencer, deputy lieutenant of Oxfordshire, and some time under Robert Bowes, ambassador to Scotland and treasurer of Berwick (for whom Godfrey's father John had also worked). Grammar-schooled and proficient in Latin, he was placed at Antonio Pérez's request as his secretary in the household of English

¹³³ *PP*, 341-404; MacCaffrey, *Elizabeth I: War and Politics*, 453-536; the essays in Guy (ed.), *The Reign of Elizabeth I*.

¹³⁴ ER to AB, 30 December 1596, LPL MS 660, fol.212r.

servants who followed him to France in August 1595.¹³⁵ Attending on Pérez, an internationally-significant figure deserving of great honour, was an intoxicating experience for Aleyn: at St Germaine, he kissed the hand of Henri IV's sister Princess Catherine of Navarre; at a town near Chauny in Picardy he witnessed a siege and 'escaped many a daunger', and wrote excitedly of his hope 'before I retourne into England to become a handy soldiour.'¹³⁶ He considered himself constitutionally fit for such a life: 'allreadye I have been glad of good strawe to lye vpon[,] wheron I have slept in my clothes viii nights together as soundly as euer I did in my lyfe.'¹³⁷ Yet more thrilling was Antonio Pérez's attention and interest. Early in November 1595 Pérez made the nature of his preference clear in a private conversation that Godfrey related to his father:

My Master called me vnto him th'other daye and amongst many good promises he willed me to tell him what thinge I wold moste desyer he shold doe for me. I aunswered him that I only desired him to love me. He againe asked me (not being satisfied with that aunswere) and I aunswered him againe the same. He then assured me that he loved me as his owne sonne and wold doe as much for me as for his owne sonne and willed me earnestly to tell him of any thinge wherin his lettres might pleasure me and he protested to me that he wold both wright to the Queen and to my

¹³⁵ In a letter of 5 November 1595, John Aleyn reminded his son that 'for his great love towards you,' Pérez 'made spetiall choyse of you' (LPL MS 653, fol.104r-v). Godfrey himself later wrote to Essex that '[y]our Lordship knows how & what means he [Pérez] sought to have me with him into ffrance, when as for my part I was so vnwilling to goe with him, as I was neuer resolved to goe before I was commanded by your Lordship' (LPL MS 654, fol.126r-v). Ungerer discusses Godfrey Aleyn's misadventures in *Spaniard*, 2, 4-9, and prints extract of his letters in 2, 38-67. Ungerer assumes Pérez harboured a sexual infatuation for the younger man that turned suddenly sour. Alan Bray analyses Ungerer's extracts in *The Friend* (62-4), and regards the relationship as one of uncomplicated love and countenance in exchange for service.

¹³⁶ Godfrey Aleyn to AB, 20 September 1595, LPL MS 652, fol.67r; Godfrey Aleyn to Robert Ansloe, 14 November 1595, LPL MS 652, fol.152r.

¹³⁷ Godfrey Aleyn to John Aleyn, 10 November 1595, LPL MS 652, fols.145-6r.

Lord [of Essex] in my behalf and that so earnestly that I shold not be denyed me sute. Saying further that my Lorde promised to doe me any pleasure soe I did please him with my service.¹³⁸

Aleyn's response to Pérez's assertion of favour was in the first instance dutiful and appropriate: he claimed that his master's love was a sufficient recompense for the services he performed. As a rhetorical gesture, such behaviour situates this exchange in the mode of idealised service favoured by Edward Reynolds. But in Aleyn's case the gesture was a hollow one. Receiving Pérez's declaration without any firm objectives currently in hand, he took immediate steps to convert his master's promise of reward into a concrete opportunity for preferment. He continued to his father:

Therefore I praye you learne out some sute that I might in tyme sett him in hand, and of the obtaining of it I doe not once doubte what soeuer it be allthoughe it be worth a thowsand pounds by the year. I praye you let slipp no tyme herein but as soone as ever you cane, give me notice of some thinge worthy the havinge: for I doe not doubte that I assuredly beleev that god appointed this man to doe vs all good.¹³⁹

Aleyn understood Pérez's extension of favour to mean a categorical promise. Writing to his friend Thomas Harrold a few days later, he crowed that 'I neither want meat, drinke, nor money, nor hope of further benefittes. The loue of my Master dayly increaseth towards me, and soe much (I knowe) he loues me, as yf he know of any thinge that I wold desyre of him I am perswaded he wold preuent my desyer in giuing it before I

¹³⁸ *ibid.*

¹³⁹ *ibid.*

should aske it.’¹⁴⁰ Buoyed by his master’s warmth, and by the promise of fifty crowns (£12 6s) to pay for a new suit at Pérez’s anticipated investiture as a knight of the Order of the Holy Spirit, Aleyn went on a lavish shopping spree, sending home for six and a half yards of purple satin, three yards of fine black cloth, nearly four yards of purple taffeta sarsenet and almost eight yards of black taffeta, a quantity of fine black lace, plenty of sewing silk, a pair of purple silk stockings, four pairs of Spanish leather shoes, one pair of walking boots ‘after the frenche fasshion’, one pair of winter boots ‘very wyde at the topps and bigg euery where and of very good leather’, a square felt hat lined with velvet and trimmed with a black scarf, and six pairs of gloves.¹⁴¹ As far as Aleyn was concerned, Pérez’s favour – tied up as it was with the potency of earls and monarchs – was his ticket to future security and material wealth.

What the Spaniard’s patronage did not do was guarantee Aleyn’s discretion, or ensure that his loyalty passed wholly from his old employers to his new master. Even in the flush of Pérez’s attentions, when he was ‘farr better contented then euer I was in my lyfe’, Aleyn considered himself beholden to both Sir William Spencer and Robert Bowes, writing to the former on 12 November with a pledge that ‘allthoughe I haue an other Master, yet will I be your seruant as long as I lyue’ and providing details of his ‘nowe Master[’s]’ projected pension from the French crown.¹⁴² He sent a letter with very similar contents to Bowes, probably on the same day.¹⁴³ It was with either extreme naivety or deliberate cunning that Aleyn then took to copying Pérez’s letters to Essex and sending the duplicates to Bowes: ‘I haue sent vnto you copyes of three lettres

¹⁴⁰ Godfrey Aleyn to Thomas Harrold, 12 November 1595, LPL MS 652, fol.155r.

¹⁴¹ For Pérez’s reception by the French king, see Godfrey Aleyn to AB, 9 November 1595, LPL MS 652, fol.237r-v. Godfrey’s various requests for supplies and clothing from England are LPL MS 652, fols.76r, 144r, 150r-v and 153r.

¹⁴² Godfrey Aleyn to William Spencer, 12 November 1595, LPL MS 652, fol.151r.

¹⁴³ Godfrey Aleyn to Robert Bowes, n.d November 1595, LPL MS 652, fol.322r.

wrytten to my Lord Essex read them I praye yow and excuse my bad wrytinge of them for that tyme wold not suffer me to wryte them fayrer. I beseech you read them to your self and consider of them. They were wrytten by him whom I am with nowe.¹⁴⁴

Possibly Aleyn had decided that Bowes's friendship with the earl of Essex meant that the breach of confidence did not signify, and he later claimed that Pérez's habit of reading aloud his letters led him to believe their contents were of no importance.¹⁴⁵ He made little effort to hide the copies in dispatches he sent back to Anthony Bacon, despite his father's request that he write 'in more darke manner', which is how the betrayal was discovered by Anthony and the earl in December.¹⁴⁶ Henry Wotton was sent out to France with a bogus reason for Aleyn's immediate recall, and on his arrival at the court in Richmond he was committed to custody, before removal on Essex's warrant to the Clink in Southwark. His father John, implicated in the letter-copying, was also arrested and placed in the Marshalsea.¹⁴⁷

By the time of his rendition, Aleyn was disillusioned with Pérez. In an undated, ciphered letter to his father – apparently coded in response to John's request for circumspection, and probably written in early December – he revealed that his enthusiasm for Pérez had not lasted long, and had cooled when it became apparent that his master's benevolence and generosity was dependent on his mood:

I think I shall not stay with him long he is so inconstant in his determinations, & such are his humours euerye day increasing more & more strange as I am not wise enough to vse my selfe to, as I may allwayes please him, And to speake truth, the King

¹⁴⁴ Godfrey Aleyn to Robert Bowes, 13 November 1595, LPL MS 652, fol.156r.

¹⁴⁵ Godfrey Aleyn to EE, n.d. January 1595/6, LPL MS 654, fol.126r-v.

¹⁴⁶ 'Examination of Godfrey Aleyn', 7 January 1595/6, LPL MS 651, fol.16r.

¹⁴⁷ Birch, *Memoirs*, 1, 346-9; Ungerer, *Spaniard*, 2, 4-5. Godfrey's papers were evidently impounded at this point, which is how they came to be in Anthony Bacon's possession.

allreadye beginneth to be weary of his humours, insomuch as I am sure he can not endure here long [...] yet doe I determine to doe the best I can to please him, because I haue a desire to stay with him so long as I can, only bycause I haue an intent to gett knowledge in such matters as I begin to be acquainted with which I hope will be much for my benefitt hereafter.¹⁴⁸

Perhaps it had also become clear that Antonio Pérez's promises did not amount to an office worth a thousand pounds per year, or even a costly suit of black and purple satin. The castles Godfrey Aleyn had built in the air would evaporate for good once he was back in England and imprisoned for petty treason, but they were growing insubstantial even while he was in France, as the chances of self-improvement he saw in his service with Pérez – military experience, proficiency in French and Spanish, practice in Latin – were suborned to the needs of a demanding master. Certainly, at some time between early November (when Aleyn wrote in such high spirits of his standing with Pérez) and Christmas (when he was incarcerated in Richmond), relations between master and secretary collapsed. Writing to the earl of Essex from prison in January 1596, Aleyn accused Pérez of deliberately plotting his downfall because of his 'displeasure', 'he seing my vnwillingnes to stay with him, for he would often tell me in his anger that he wold send me one day into England to my Cost, when I would answere him desiring him that if his pleasure was not to do me any good, that he would do me noe harme.'¹⁴⁹ This was a steep fall from Aleyn's expectations of preferment. The root of the breakdown lies, I suggest, in the ciphered letter to John Aleyn quoted above. From Godfrey Aleyn's perspective, the discovery that his master was 'inconstant in his determinations' was a blow after the rash boasts he had made of prosperity and place;

¹⁴⁸ Godfrey Aleyn to John Aleyn, n.d. 1595, LPL MS 652, fol.323r (contemporary deciphered copy).

¹⁴⁹ Godfrey Aleyn to EE, n.d January 1595/6, LPL MS 654, fol.126r-v.

for Pérez, the suspicion that his secretary's objectives were wholly self-centred – Aleyn's intention to stay in his service was 'only [...] to get knowledge in such matters [...] [which] will be much for my benefitt hereafter' – was an affront to his idea of true service and an intolerable rejection of his special attention. This was more than enough to breed a 'disliking' between the two. When the nature of Aleyn's treachery was revealed, Pérez's fury was extreme: the man was a 'Judas', and a 'Satan'.¹⁵⁰

Antonio Pérez, like the earl of Essex, deployed a rhetoric of intense affection and favour as a tool to ensure satisfactory service from his followers; unlike Essex, he failed to modulate it in a way that would be intelligible to the men who served him. Aleyn, carried wholly away by fantasies of favour, did not understand the rhetoric for what it was. Pérez's promises were not guarantees of future security at all. Instead, they were standard clauses in a master-servant contract, and valid only in the most general terms for the duration of service, or the durability of Pérez's whim – whichever was the shorter. When Robert Naunton, a Cambridge man in Essex's service, arrived as Pérez's substitute secretary in January 1596, he was greeted with similarly excessive language of estimation and favour. Pérez wrote to Essex hailing his new secretary's learning and eloquence in typically sensual terms: he welcomed his arrival 'in order that he [Naunton] might instruct and polish' the 'raw and unrefined' Pérez, like a masterful *inamorato* teaching his lover the ways of the world (the image is Pérez's).¹⁵¹ Naunton, however, understood the nature of the privileged reception he had been granted. He wrote to the earl of Essex:

We dine alltogether with my lord [ambassador Sir Henry Unton] but I afterwards with

¹⁵⁰ Ungerer, *Spaniard*, 1, 383-4, 389.

¹⁵¹ Ungerer, *Spaniard*, 1, 424-5; 2, 11-14.

Signor Antonio, who hath more want of Company: These fauours be farre about my merit but I must most of all esteeme of their trustes and forwardnes to communicate with me what with conuenience they may for my best informacion: Which as I feell the Comfort of it only through your lordships Commendacion, so must I consecrate the use of it, & all the pore powers I have, to your lordships seruice.¹⁵²

Naunton recognised that such favours as he received from Pérez were those that came his way as part of the very much more significant bonds of obligation and favour that tied the earl of Essex to Antonio Pérez. More importantly, he realised that Pérez's bestowal of countenance was simply an extension of credit: he could not cash in his master's favour for a tangible reward. Godfrey Aleyn was not so clear-sighted, and fatally mistook Pérez's rhetorical generosity for a material promise.

Conclusion

Misunderstanding has also been at the heart of recent re-appraisals of Essex's rebellion. Janet Dickinson has argued that Essex regarded his behaviour in February 1601 as entirely consistent with the tactic he had always adopted when dealing with the queen – a form of 'rough wooing' that incorporated a dramatic narrative of discord, retributory heroics and triumphant return to favour. It was the earl's tragedy that by 1601, he could not see that the queen was no longer receptive to theatrics such as these.¹⁵³ Alexandra Gajda has shown that Essex's wholehearted support for Ciceronian concepts of active citizenship, combined with a bleakly Tacitean view of court corruption, gave an 'ideological coherence' to his desire to free the queen of evil counsel – but also permitted his enemies to portray him as an ambitious rabble-rouser, treasonously set on

¹⁵² Robert Naunton to EE, February 2 [1596], LPL MS 655, fol.169r; Birch, *Memoirs*, 1, 399-400.

¹⁵³ Dickinson, *Court Politics*, 51-64.

turning Elizabeth's people against her.¹⁵⁴ It is not the object of this chapter to offer another analysis of the events of 1601. But I want to suggest that the traces of Essex's final, fatal misreadings can be found in the relationships I have analysed in the foregoing pages. The men who articulated their loyalty to Essex and his cause in the hot-house language of passionate friendship and lordly service did so in the knowledge that the earl placed enormous value on their devotion. Henry Wotton commented later that Essex had been 'in love with his passions' – he was, after a fashion, in love with those of other people, too.¹⁵⁵ In the aftermath of the rebellion, the staunch loyalty of his closest allies was noted: William Killigrew claimed that Christopher Blount 'and dyvers more had vowed their lyves for [Essex]: and would spend them for him.'¹⁵⁶ The earl of Southampton 'promised to venture my fortune and life for the earl' in a rising 'by my best frendes'.¹⁵⁷ But this contrasted with the indifference of the wider population. Ferdinando Gorges realised that Essex's decision to 'depende upon the giddy multitude' of the city of London had been seriously misguided.¹⁵⁸ The form of intense personal loyalty favoured by the earl, and the mode of unbalanced ardour used to express it, were not generally practiced in 1601. Nor had they been in 1595-6, when Henry Wotton clashed with Edward Reynolds and Godfrey Aleyn misunderstood the favours granted by Antonio Pérez. Friendship and service were in flux in the late sixteenth century, and misreading a relationship could be catastrophic – as the earl of Essex came to realise.

After his master's disgrace and execution, Edward Reynolds left London,

¹⁵⁴ Gajda, *Essex*, 27-66.

¹⁵⁵ Henry Wotton, 'The Difference and Disparity Between the Estates and Conditions of George Duke of Buckingham, and Robert Earl of Essex, in *Reliquiae Wottonianae*, sigs.F7r-G11v, sig.F12v.

¹⁵⁶ 'Testimony of William Killigrew', TNA SP 12/279/13 fol.21r.

¹⁵⁷ Cited in Gajda, *Essex*, 61.

¹⁵⁸ BL Cotton MS Julius F.VI, fol.451v-452r. Essex's failure to rouse the city to his cause is encapsulated in his unsuccessful appeal to the armourer William Pickering: 'not for me, Pickering?' (*HMCS*, 11, 67).

‘[betaking] himself to voluntarie basnishment, & [...] entring into a monasticall lyfe (as it were) out of the world.’¹⁵⁹ His experiences at the earl’s side in ‘that unhappy family’ had left a scar.¹⁶⁰ Writing to a friend at the start of 1602, Reynolds advised him to stay well away from ‘places where you may heare & see the course & condition of the world.’ In such a hazardous environment, friends could be as dangerous as enemies: ‘There be manie that stand sentinells at mans lipps, and watch all advantages: and the wisest man that is, may sometimes be overtaken, especially when zeale & affection beareth sway.’¹⁶¹

¹⁵⁹ ER to John Rawlins, 2 January 1601/2, TNA SP 12/283a, fol.9r-v.

¹⁶⁰ Henry Wotton to Sir Robert Cecil, 23 May 1603 (printed in Smith, *Wotton*, 1, 317-318).

¹⁶¹ ER to John Rawlins, 2 January 1601/2, TNA SP 12/283a, fol.9r-v.

Conclusion

By the time Edward Reynolds had settled himself in his ‘monasticall’ retirement, the Essexian circle of which he had been a part was no more, its members dead, disgraced or already estranged from their over-reaching lord. Francis Bacon began distancing himself from the earl in the late 1590s; during Essex’s hearing at York House in 1600 for misconduct in the Irish campaign, and his trial for high treason in 1601, Francis took a leading role in the prosecution.¹ Henry Wotton, abroad on Essex’s business at the time of the uprising, prudently remained overseas, waiting until the start of the new reign before he sought the patronage of Sir Robert Cecil.² Henry Cuffe, along with Gelly Meyrick, suffered a traitor’s death at Tyburn in March 1601. The earl himself was beheaded in the yard of the Tower of London on 25 February. Anthony Bacon was at this point still alive. Lodged in a house in Crotched Friars, close to the Tower, his health entirely broken, he left no record of his reaction to his patron’s fall, or the execution and exile of his colleagues. Within months he too was dead, buried with little ceremony in the church of St Olave, Hart Street, on 17 May.³

This spate of deaths and departures exerts a teleological pull on the argument I have been making. But it is not my intention, or my place, to suggest that with the purging of the Essex circle, there died a mode or a language of friendship and service. No sudden shifts occurred as a result of Essex’s execution; even Elizabeth’s death and the Stuart accession in 1603 was marked as much by cultural continuity as dramatic change. The social world with which I have been concerned was to remain, more or less

¹ *HF*, 228-32, 240-47.

² Loomie, ‘Wotton’, *ODNB*; Hammer, ‘Uses of Scholarship’, 42.

³ *HF*, 252; *GL*, 258.

intact, until the convulsions of the civil war. The deaths of Anthony, Essex and their friends do, however, give narrative closure to a thesis that has by necessity followed a biographical direction. The events of 1601 close the ‘window’ onto late sixteenth-century life and political culture offered by the Anthony Bacon Papers.

My aim in this thesis has been to argue that the duties and obligations of friendship were a significant force in the lives and careers of sixteenth-century Englishmen. Being a man in early modern England involved learning about, and making use of, the structures of friendship between men. These structures could facilitate a form of institutional fraternalism, as at the Inns of Court. There, an educated population drew on revered conceptions of chivalric brotherhood and classical-humanist friendship to give authority to their networks of mutual assistance and professional loyalty.⁴ Elsewhere, exchanges of instrumental friendship were the essential transactions that sustained day-to-day life, and I have argued that the early modern prison was notable for its reliance on, and promotion of, useful friendships. Friendship was of course an intensely affective bond, and in the sixteenth century intimate friendship between men was routinely praised as the purest and most noble form of human relation. This was not simply cant: in the example of Nicholas Faunt, we see a man who drew great comfort from the virtue and power of – as he saw it – perfect friendship with Anthony Bacon. The cultural valorisation of male friendship in the sixteenth century, and the institutions that evolved to sustain it, granted the networks of association between elite men a degree of autonomy: as Anthony demonstrated, it was

⁴ In this, the Inns of Court can be understood as a bourgeois or gentry version of the forms of alternative ‘kinship’ offered by fraternal associations such as guilds and rural boys’ groups, as examined by Mary Ann Clawson, ‘Early Modern Fraternalism and the Patriarchal Family’, *Feminist Studies* 6:2 (1980), 368-91.

possible to negotiate a path through life that did not depend on the support of kin or the creation of new alliances through marriage.

Not everyone was happy with the idea that friendship between men offered a complementary – or alternative – form of personal advancement. Lady Anne Bacon looked on in horror as her sons wilfully turned away from their expected roles as husbands, fathers and householders. As independent bachelors, Anthony and Francis were reliant on the favours of their patrons, and vulnerable to exploitation by other men in their circle. Lady Bacon's letters resounded with anxieties about the followers and servants who surrounded them: 'be not overruled still by subtile and hurtful hangers on'; 'yowr men overrule yow'; 'looke well to your servants'.⁵ It was these 'seducers' who weakened her sons's hold on their expenditure, and who drove them to sell off and mortgage their patrimonial properties – a course of action that served to further reduce Anthony and Francis's value as potential husbands.⁶ Lady Bacon's main task – and her principal way of expressing maternal affection – was to secure the future of her children, both financially and professionally. That she was constantly thwarted in her desire to settle her sons in households of their own explains in large part the frustration and bitterness evident in her letters.⁷

Perhaps behind Lady Bacon's maternal interventions lay a less expressible fear about her sons's sexual choices. This has been the inference drawn from her letters by scholars such as A.L. Rowse, who sought to identify Anthony as one of his

⁵ ACB to AB, 17 May 1592, LPL MS 648, fol.167r; n.d. May 1594, LPL MS 650, fol.187r; 29 February 1591/2, LPL MS 648, fol.6r.

⁶ Mair, 'Lady Bacon', 107 and 144. 'Seducers' is ACB to AB, 17 April [1593], LPL MS 653, fol.319r.

⁷ Barbara J. Harris, *English Aristocratic Women, 1450-1550: Marriage, Family, Property and Careers* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 100.

‘homosexuals in history’.⁸ It seems more likely that homosexual activity in and of itself was a matter of little concern for men and women in the sixteenth century. What did concern them was the way that certain relations might destabilise the established order of things, whether inside the home and between master and servant, or in the world at large and between subject and monarch. And when, as we have seen, a great noble like the earl of Essex attempted to assert the primacy of sworn friendship and feudal loyalty over obedience to the crown, state and society were very concerned indeed.

⁸ A.L. Rowse, *Homosexuals in History: A Study of Ambivalence in Society, Literature and the Arts* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1977), 41-47. See also Martin Greif, *The Gay Book of Days: an evocatively illustrated who's who of who is, was, may have been, probably was, and almost certainly seems to have been gay during the past 5,000 years* (London: W.H. Allen, 1985), 27.

Appendix

Sample letters from Nicholas Faunt, Anthony Standen, Nicholas Trott and Edward Reynolds

In the following transcriptions, all superscript characters have been silently lowered. All contractions have been expanded and indicated by italics. The fossil thorn (seldom used except in ‘that’) has been silently replaced with ‘th’. The use of italic or underlining has been retained where possible, although the habit of underlining numbers has not been retained. Scribal interlinear insertions are marked with angled brackets < >. Illegible, blotted or faded words are placed within square brackets and marked by a row of periods approximating the length of the word: [...]. Legibly deleted words or letters are placed within square brackets and crossed through: [~~that~~]. Illegibly deleted words are marked by a row of periods and crossed through [----]. Doubtful or suppositional readings are placed within square brackets and indicated with a question mark: [sooner?]. Editorial interventions are in italic and placed within square brackets: [*sic*].

Letter 1. NF to AB, 22 February 1582/3, LPL MS 647, fols. 119-122r (extract)

Addressed fol.122v: To the worshippingfull my / very good frend Mr Anthony / Bacon Esqr

[fol.119r]

Sir, Your *lettre* of the xxth of the last dated at *Marseilles* I received by *our* good frend *Master Selwin* on the 13th of this present after *our* old Englishe accompt which as yet beareth not the newe Romishe Calculacion and for that I suppose he being but lately arryved shall not be hable to depart from hence so soone <as> ether he or you wold. I thought it not amiss to preuent your expectacion with somewhat before hand, & to send the same by my former meanes of *Robineau* which you must accept as a preparatife to that good Phisicke you are to receaue from your best frendes here at Master Selwins

returne wherby no doubt you shalbe perfectly cured in body mynde and purse. Hitherto I have not had halfe an houres company with *Master Selwin*: though I repayed to London of purpose to find him out hearing before of his being at *Paris* and passing the [...] but only receaving *your lettres* and enquiring of th'estate he left you in I was loth to hinder his and your earnest business: he being then to go into the countrey and I to retourne in some hast hither: not doubting but at his returne to make choice of a sett tyme to conferre with him at large to both our contentment. Nowe having [*marginal line starts*] againe and againe perused *your* sweete and frendly Letter though at the first I was euen amazed to vnderstand of the greatnes of that Visitacion wherwith it pleased the Lord to trye *your* faith and patience yet remembering that it is his manner so to deale with his dearest children only for their good I rather comforted my selfe with the glad tydinges of *your* happy recouerye then entred any further to sorrowe vnchristianly for that *which* the Lord in his fatherly and tender care of *your* welldoing thought meetest to be layd vppon you no doubt to some singular ende though <through> so great corruption & dullnes of nature wee cannot so soone consider therof accordingly. And for myne owne when I look into the nature of those distastes and the long tyme they held you, I find that *your* owne and others relation of the extremetie you were brought vnto is nothing to th'impression I have conceaved in my mynde of the manifold tormentes *your* poore body hath endured the lest of *which* sicknesses might in reason have greatly weakned a stronger complexion then *your* owne: So that as you will confesse *our* good [*lord?*] hath therin extended an exceeding measure of his *mercie* towardes you and on *your* behalfe to all *your* godly and faithfull frendes; amonge <whom> I being the meanest and in truth nothing worthy of *your* name but only in respect of a Spirituall conviction wherby as a feeling member of that misticall body I cannot but participate if th'effectes of so straight a vinom do therefore with *your* selfe therby as otherwise at all tymes most humblie thanke the divine Maiestie for this <his>

most *mercifull deliuerance* of you and albeit his love *towardes* you hath likewise
 appeared in that his chastisement and correction yet as zealous of his glorys and tendring
 to the good of his church here wonderfully afflicted vpon [Earth?] do most especially
 praise and magnify his goodness in that he hath thus spared or rather *reserued* you in his
mercifull prouidence [for?] an Instrument hereafter to promote his owne glorye and to be
 in that measure of meanes he shall giue you a *particu<lar>* comfort to the true
 professors of his name according to the calling and place he shall appointe you for the
 reste of *your* dayes. Whervnto assuring my selfe that euen from *your* first yeares of
 discretion you have *euer* vowed the whole course of *your* lyfe albeit for many other
 respectes I am greatly bound to affecte you yet I protest this only consideration (*which*
 is indeed the highest poynt of all and necessarily draweth *with* it all the rest) hath long
 since settled my *vnfayned* and sincere affection *towardes* you; *which* because it is a right
 sincere and *vnfayned* I find it cannot be giuen in the highest measure but to one only:
 Nowe though I had longe ago propounded in my mynde *your* selfe to be the same one
 only yet still fearing to be thought *ouer presumptuous* and bold in this behalfe I have
 deferred the signifying therof vnto you vntill vpon some further experience you might
 see what especially moved mee to make so singular a choyce for so unworthy a gyfte, as
 is the free possession of my whole mynde and most secreat *thoughtes* *which* I interpret
 for the true and best effectes I can shewe you of my forsaid *vnfayned* and sincere
 affection: other demonstration I have not nether shalbe hable to make of my mynde that
 is peculiarly devoted vnto you but only reioycing in the resolution I have taken herin
 must rest contented with the base will & good meaning I still *present* vnto you, vntill it
 shall please the Lord to giue mee better meanes to lett you vnderstand more effectually
 not more affectionatly if I may so speak what I am only yours in the intyrest sort and
 nearer (if it were possible) then *your* selfe can wishe mee to be. Vnto *which* most
 straight kinde of vniting

[fol.119v]

our myndes *your* late Letter hath giuen the finall conclusion and removed all difficulties and doubttes on my *part* which yet were neuer other then the inequalitye of *our* conditions and my unhablenes to supply that defecte residing in mee alone ether by industrie or any other effectes of my good will. Nowe finding that you stand very litle vpon such termes and that notwithstanding vpon the most vrgent occasion that cold be offred you cold not of late signifye vnto mee the contynuaunce of *your* affection towardes me yet nowe by the first and best meanes you had you have *perfourmed* the same in <the> most ample manner that can be framed by any much *your* inferiour: I see not therefore any further impediment (th' other being removed throughe the freenes of *your* good *perswasion* of mee testified aswell hertofore as in this *your* said *lettre*) why I should not close my hand with *yours* in wittnes of *our* perfecte and sincere vnion and band at the lest in respecte of the libertye of th'inward disposition and settling of the mynde which is not tyed to any outward meanes nor framed to a liking or disliking but by the power of the Lord working by his holly Spirite: As by many testimonies I most evidently *perceave* and acknowledge that this *our* especiall affecting one of another was wrought first by the same Spirit, hath for that only cause bene more firmly grounded and shall the more happely continewe to both *our* comfortes so long as wee shall lyve together: which God graunt may <be> effected when and so farre forth as shall make most for the aduancement of his glorye and the weale of his Churche. And touching the many and exceeding large offers you make mee farre above any *desert* that can euer come from mee, I must humbly and hartely [giue?] those thankes which in wordes cannot be expressed acknowledging therein *your* great & bountifull good meaning towardes mee: Howbeit I beseech you *Sir* not to esteeme mee indiscreat or litle respectiue of *your* courtesye offered in that kinde, if in my wonted playnnes I giue you to vnderstand that th'aforsaid ground and principall knott of *our* amitie shall euer be

hable to cause me *perfourme* that you nowe demaund at my *handes*, as <wherin> I may at any other tyme stande you in steed <sooner> then my other *consideracions* whatsoeuer: as giuing allwayes myne obedience in this behalfe to the cheefe and inward authoritie you have to dispose of mee and all myne actions; *which* I only remember vnto you to th'end you may see howe willingly I wold testi[=]fy vnto you the sinceritye [œf] of my hart by such poore meanes as you shall accept at my *handes* without refusing neuerthelesse or not thankfully accepting from you such demonstracion as you shall make of *your* like affected mynde towardes mee: seing they both procede from one fountayne and wellspring I meane the operation of *godes* holly Spirit who I trust will in tyme *perfecte* this and all other his good motions in vs: And thus much I cold not but deliuer vnto you before all other specialities in requitall of *your* most frendly and comfortable Letter, *which* I will retayne euer with mee as *your* true portraicte for my often and sweet remembraunce of you vntill it shall please the Lord to graunt vs a tyme of meeting and more free possessing of eche other./ [*end of marginal line*]

Letter 2. AS to AB, 8 April 1591, LPL MS 648, fol.27r-v

Addressed fol.28v: A Monsieur / de Bacon seigneur / Anglois

[fol.27r]

Right worshipfull.

I am sorye that throughe restraynt of my person I haue byn de pryved of the commoditie to haue kyssed yowr *handes* whiche longe ere this I woulde haue done, had <not> [byn?] my ymprisonment, and withall haue had somme discourse with yow about my commynge hyther, wherof I mutche desier yow should be informed to th'ende that in tyme and place yow make capable sutch as are well acquaynted with my affection and my endeoures to them, whome to I am bounde by leige dewtie:

The deathe of *Sir ffraunces* Walsingham (with whome I haue vsed longe conference by letters) hathe byn the only cause of this my longe and incommodous trouble, whiche yf I had knowen before my departure from Spaine I had vndowtedly shunned this snare, wherof I nede <not> repent so Her *Maiestie* vnderstand the cause whiche I hope yow will so favor as I mene to commyt wholly to yowr courteous relation. Her Hyghnes knoweth me to be a *Catholic* whiche I haue ever professed, so doth Her *Maiestie* knowe that I am her subiect and sworne servant, whiche to my power I haue contynually made profession of as *Sir ffraunces* will knowe and for that cause procured me a pencion of 100li Wherof I haue not byn paied nowe these 18 monethes, a cause why I am in this miserable estate in dett here 60 crownes and without sherte or a whole tatter to my backe, whiche by mouthe I hope more amplye to relate yow att yowr nexte walkinge abrode.

Iff *Master* Selvyn had comme hyther as I wysshed and entreted hym by *Lauagnon* he knowethe me and might haue eased me of mutche woo by a messege [~~for~~] <from> me to Her *Maiestie* declaringe my case as ytt standeth, but not knowinge me as I suppose, by the
[fol.27v]

name whiche nowe I vse, toke no farder care of me, whome I dowte not yf he had knowne he woulde not haue fayled to haue bothe visited and furthered to his power for the smale offices I dyd vse towards hym att his longe staye in *Pisa* and peregrynation throughe *Toscany*. This my letter and the rest of my conference with yow I must commytt to yowr secrecie as matter that concernethe more Her Highnes service then myne owne safetie althoughe the last purporteth me mutche, wherfore I must entrete yow to commyt this to the fyer and me to yowr good opinion and grace to whiche with all dewe respect I desire[~~d~~] to be commended, as I do with all my hart yowr person and estate to God Almightye. ffrom this miserable prison this viiith of Aprill 1591.

Your worshippes humble & affectionate servant.

AS

Letter 3. NT to Charles Hales, 9/10 April 1595, LPL MS 651, fols.289-290r (copy)

Endorsed fol.290v: De Mr Trott a Mr Charles Hales le 9me d'auril 1595

[fol.289r]

Right *Worshipfull Sir* I haue receaued fower seuerall *lettres* from you whereby I vnderstand how farre your affection to me hath engaged your creditt both to my *Lord* President and the rest of the Councell there as also to your brother *Master* Beale and for that your self (if the matter succede) shalbe ouerseer & iudge of my actions and endeauours very shortlie I hope speedie effectes shall neede no forerunner of wordes.

Vpon the delivery of your note to *Master* Beale I fownd him well prepared to receaue good liking of me. but yet verie reserued in promise or dealing assuring me that he would reserue himself intire vntill that my *Lord* Presidentes pleasure were knowen by whom he would be directed. if he made as Deputie as he seemeth inclined to doe though my *Lord* Threasuror deliuered him her *Maiestes* pleasure that he should himself exequite it *which* in respect of his indisposicion of bodie & diuerse other great reasons he is as he seemeth to me verie loth to doe.

Ffor that the repaire of my *Lord* President to the Court is to vs verie vncertaine and verie like his *Lordship* wilbe importuned in the mean time by some competitor it hath pleased my good *Lord* the Earle of Essex and *Master* Anthony Bacon (according to your advice) to recommend my suit to my *Lord* President whiche ioyned with your commendacion I hope will confirme his *Lordship* and (may be) hasten or ripen this matter, those *lettres* according to your direction I haue addressed to *Master* Purifie with myne to him of thanckes and offer of seruice.

I haue receiued from *Master* Edward Stanhope in awnsuer of myne, and one

written by *Master Ffrauncis Bacon*, a very frendlie letter whereby I perceave how effectually your commendacion did worke on his favourable disposicion towards me, and allso one other written in my favour to *Master Iohn Stanhope* which by th'advice of my frendes I retaine vntill the matter betwene your brother and me shall growe to agrement and then to vse his furtherance for obtayning the ioynt patent for out of the [fol.289v]

for out of the attempt of *Sir Thomas Wilkes* (althoughe he hath relinquished his suit) is growne a great difficulty to obtaine that which your brother and I cheiflie desire. Ffor as I writt to *Master Stanhope* besides the small reputacion of a deputie, I would be loth to spend many of these my ripe and indeede turning yeares in a seruice *which* I should vpon an others pleasure or death be forced to leave. and in myne age seeke a nother. Notwithstanding my *Lord* of Essex seemeth confident and maketh both your brother and me hope that in some <small> time of [~~the~~] my exequution of the place as deputy. there will occasion be offered to moue and obtaine of her *Maiestie* a graunt of the ioynt patencie specially if my *Lord* *Presidentes* satisfaction of my seruice may appeare.

I most humbly thancke you of your recording that I should examyne my self how I can abide a continuall estranging from the south partes. Trulie I am neither of mynde nor bodie so delicate but that I maie endure a chaunge of so small disadvantage as I apprehend this to be specially for so good a condicion as I am enformed this is. *Master Beale* is verie firme that the place is worthe yeerelie (and so was for three yeeres in which *Master Rokby* exequuted it vpon account) 800li but for that the variety of [times?] to *which* it is subiect. and the manner of the raising of benefitt is to be regarded. I rest in your valuation which notwithstanding I keepe to my selfe for myne instruction and gouerment in this matter.

You likewise remember me that it requireth continuall attendance and great paines. I desire much to be enformed wherein this labour is employed for I resolue to

ease my self by neither mynister nor servant in any thinge the seruice or our benefitt shall require of my personall trauell of hand or eie.

[fol.290r]

of hand or eie. And yet I would verie gladlie vnderstand of what nature the bussines is. for I would not willinglie vndertake anie charge so laborious and continuall that I should haue no time for priuate studie for my furder inabling in seruice. and other comfort and contentment. Althrough if I take the place I meane to sesquester my self from all other bussines & care and intend that seruice with serious dilligence.

For this cause and for diuerse other (besides the great comfort I should haue to see you) I would willinglie according to your frendlie invitacion haue waited on you at your howse. But the nature of this bussines and vncertainty of my *Lord* Presidentes coming require my continuall attendance. And therefore if you can conveniently I pray you let me vnderstand from you what labour requireth the hand of the officer himself. and what his care and ouerseeing [oneli?]. *Sir* I must acknowledge the contentment I shall haue in the successe of this matter from you. to whome I would allso be behoulding for direction which my want of exeperience [*sic*] in the seruice doth require. And for all I trust to shewe my self to you honest and thanckfull. And so I leaue you to Gods favour. This 10 Aprilis.

Your worships in all humble dutie.

Nicolas Trott.

Letter 4. ER to AB, 18/19 August 1596, LPL MS 658, fol.155r

Addressed, fol.156v: To my honorable frend Mr Antony Bacon

Endorsed, fol.156v: De monsr Reynoldes le 19me d'aoust 1596

Sir Assone as my *Lord* returned hether: I acquainted hym with your *lettre* sent vnto me by this gentleman: who could not but take as greate contentement in so greate love

which you expresse therein, as you did in that sudden sight & *presence* of his *Lordship*: both being causes of the greatest contentement that <can> be conceyved or expressed./

To that point of Iacomo Marencos packtes [sic=*packets*], his *Lordship* commandeth me to let you knowe that he will hymself bring them vnto you to morowe./ and for the other: he will deferre to write to *Signor* Perez vntill he hathe spoken with the *Duke* of Bouillon, & doth knowe what he bringeth. *Which* he iudgeth verie convenient, & therefore would haue the messenger to stay. For my self, I did make accomt to haue receaued comfort in my particular vpon his *Lordships* returne; but I fynd the contrary in the highest degree that can be: and therefore as I haue ever found you trewly honorable & perfectly kind: so <I> cannot but complayn & bemoane my self vnto you, and acquaint you *with* my purposes in this my hard fortune. The inclosed [.....] the extremity of melancholy did dictate vnto me I do send you, *which* vnles your wise councell do overrule me, I do resolue to leave to his *Lordships* viewe. All I do desire, is, that it will please you to seale it vp fast when you haue reade it, & that none els may see either this *lettre*, or that note, So in extremity of grief, & in trewe & dewtifull affection I rest

Yours most devoted to do you service

E Reynoldes

Letter 5. ER to EE, 18 August 1596, LPL MS 658, fol.258r (copy; never sent)

Endorsed, fol.258v: De Monsr Reynoldes a Monsr la Comte d'Essex le 18me d'aoust 1596

Your *Lordships* faithfull and old servant *Edward* Reynoldes humblie besecheth yow to peruse and consider these fewe notes.

I haue served your *Lordship* 8 whole yeares, seuen with the *Master* Smithe, without anie other Colledge [=colleague], who (I speake it without envie) had all the credit of the place; and for my parte, I had litle or no proffit.

I spent full 600li more then I gained out of my poore stocke.

At the time of *Master Smithes preferment* your *Lordship* knoweth howe I neglected the oportunitie of the Clerkship of the Signet, havinge deuoted my self wholie to your service, and desiringe a 3d reversion of the priuie seale, *which* it pleased your *Lordship* to promise me, to [.....] and to accepte of this humble offer of my service.

For *Master Smithe* your *Lordship* hath intertained 3 secretaries *Master Cuffe* a worthie learned scholler *Master Wotton* a great languaged Traueller, and *Master Temple* a godlie sufficient Secretarie.

Vppon your late departure in this Iournie, it pleased yow most honorable to giue me a lease of 1 li for xx yeares to increase the small helps I had before, In *whiche* time I receiued a great losse in my poore estate to my no small greef.

But the greefe *that* hath broken my harte is, that after all this time and monie spent; after so faithfull and honest service, after the intertainment of so manie others, after my vnsuportable losse, your *Lordship* hath receiued a fith Secretarie, and a good *parte* of my former credit and imployment is carried an other waie, by reason whereof I hold my self vtterlie disgraced, and thoroughe melancholie greefe and wantes am made vnfit to serve yow, and indeede I see litle vse of me amonge so manie other sufficient menn. I have chosen rather to liue like a begger then *with* discredit and disgrace, and am retired to obscurity the poorest Secretarie that ever served so noble and bountyfull a person: Nay the meanest Iustice of peace or Lawier in Englande. I leaue the key of my Cabinet sealed vp *withe* *Sir Gellie Mericke* where your *Lordship* shall finde all your papers in good order. For my self I neuer desire to be sene more of your *Lordship* but will spende my time in sighinge for my hard fortune, and prayinge for your honorable estate and the greatest hapines your harte can wishe; And so rest for ever

Your *Lordships* most poore and faithfull servant

E Reynoldes

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