INTRODUCTION

The 128 letters sent by William Cecil, Lord Burghley (1520–1598) to his son, Sir Robert Cecil, later 1st earl of Salisbury (1563–1612), represent the majority of their extant correspondence in what had been a nearly daily exchange of notes and papers between 1593–1598. The correspondence demonstrates how Burghley directed affairs and communicated with the Queen through his son as well as devolving responsibility for certain matters to him. In doing so, Burghley trained Cecil in the role of Principal Secretary to Queen Elizabeth, a role which he came to perform de facto before his official appointment. Burghley trained his son during a particularly difficult period which was characterized by dearth, war, Irish rebellion, and waning continental commitments, as well as domestic strain throughout the shires, towns, and cities.

There was growing tension among the political leaders during the Queen's last years with an emerging generation and an uncertain succession. These letters give an intimate view of the relations between father and son, their work with the difficult Queen, and a transition of power. They show how their work merged the financial acuity and power of Burghley with Cecil's growing control of official papers as parcelled out by his father. In July 1596 Cecil received the office of Principal Secretary fulfilling his father's wishes, although, as these letters demonstrate, he had assumed these duties and responsibilities de facto several years before.

The letters reveal the complexity of secretarial administration. Not only were the two Cecils in receipt of a vast and wide-ranging series of reports and financial estimates, but increasingly Cecil became the conduit for their dispatch through the Queen and Privy Council. Although he was housed near his father, and their archives clearly merged, the letters show the trajectory of the secretaryship gradually being transferred under Burghley's direction, so that his son was co-ordinating the high matters of state by 1598. Furthermore, these letters illustrate the remarkable workload undertaken by the aged Lord Treasurer as offices were given to him, supposedly for interim periods, following the deaths of his Privy Council colleagues, particularly Sir Francis Walsingham in 1590. Sir Christopher Hatton's death in 1591 deprived Burghley of a close friend and the last leading privy councillor of his generation.

Military concerns came to dominate business and after Hatton's death it became harder for Burghley to retain a consensus in the Privy Council. There were military commitments not only in the Low Countries after 1585 but also, fitfully, in France, as well as Essex's daring Iberian campaigns.

The drift to rebellion in Ireland after 1593, the Nine Years War, exacerbated the political tensions at court and in the Privy Council. These letters show the move away from further continental commitments towards defeating the Irish rebels at all costs.

Against this background, the Cecilian transmission of dynastic administrative power was curbed by the vaunting influence of Robert Devereux, 2nd earl of Essex (1564–1601) and his brilliant coterie of scholars, military hopefuls, and young aristocrats of the highest rank. While the breach with these erstwhile enemies of the Cecils was long-standing, it had been overshadowed by the perception that the Cecils held sway through official patronage and the Queen. While the Essexian view tended to ascribe tyranny and weak monarchy to Elizabeth and her closest advisers – the Cecils – these letters reveal a more vulnerable alliance of father and son than the impregnable stance perceived by contemporaries.

Burghley's last years were marred by illness unrelieved by rest or leisure. Although the transfer of power to his son was marked by stately and courtly manners, the letters here reveal a man marred by bodily pain, overwork and, if it can be said, despair. Cecil's responses to his father must, save for a few rare surviving letters, be inferred from these letters. His increasing work was accepted by him willingly not only for official ambition but also out of care for his father's poor health. Both men were widowed (Cecil in 1597) and the letters show a close, if often renegade, family of children and grandchildren. Furthermore, Burghley is seen here moving away from the physical splendour of court – although he attended frequently at the Queen's command – into the shared archive of state housed in the Strand at Burghley House where most of these letters were written or dictated.

The rushed daily communications between Burghley and Cecil were nearly always informal despite Burghley's repeated address to 'my verie loving son' of letters full of fatherly care. The letters give a unique vantage-point on Burghley's use of his son during his final years, while creating in the Queen a sense of Robert's indispensability. This was Burghley's final main political achievement revealed in its minutiae. The piecemeal details in this correspondence reveals what must have been an even more substantial leveraging of power through referring Privy Council and royal tasks to his son.

At the end of Burghley's long term of public service his health failed, according to his biographers, quite precipitously in the last

three or four years of his life. Thus, the threnody of illness and pain illustrate his 'morosity'. In spite of the remarkable density of their correspondence, the partial survival of this correspondence prevents a day-to-day reconstruction of political affairs and an overarching narrative, complete with all aspects of this dynastic transfer. However, corroborating sources fill out what in places within the correspondence are mere vignettes of the political affairs of the final decade of the Queen's life and the ambitions of Burghley and his son.

The Cecils and the Queen: The Making of a Secretary

The correspondence reveals Elizabeth's trust in Robert Cecil and his increasing secretarial role, particularly through his reception, digestion, and reading of the letters and accompanying materials. It is unclear how these messages were relayed to the Queen. Cecil may possibly have read them aloud while on his knees during his lengthy audiences. These conferences were made longer by Burghley's judicious packaging of documents, which merged his son's secretarial role with the financial advice and judgements Burghley provided: 'I have red your letter, wherby I perceave yow have red and shewed my letter of my hand wrytyng to hir Ma[jes]ty who sayeth that she will have a battell with my fyngars and than afor hand'.[1] James Daybell's emphasis on both the material and performative function of letters and their uses sharpens Cecil's role into a necessary mixture of messenger and interpreter: 'Renaissance letters were often written with the intention of being read out aloud and performance was integral to their presentation . . . Letters were often disseminated with enclosures which include other correspondences, written text and letters and material goods'.[2] Cecil did not cut a grand figure at court: his scoliosis was mocked by detractors such as Antonio Perez who called him 'Microgibbus' – and Burghley was 'Aeolus', the wind-bag. Still others dubbed him 'Diabolus', in the belief that sinister souls inhabited crooked bodies; from the Queen he endured 'pigmy' and 'dwarf'.[3]

An important aspect of the earlier letters before Cecil formally assumed secretarial office, was Burghley's close co-ordination of his son's role. While some of the longer letters were read

[1]Letter No. 73.

[2]James Daybell, *The Material Letter in Early Modern England: Manuscript Letters and the Culture and Practices of Letter-Writing, 1512–1635* (Basingstoke, 2012), 18.

[3]TNA SP 78/36/fol. 181r. Printed in Gustav Ungerer, *A Spaniard in Elizabethan England: The Correspondence of Antonio Pérez's Exile*, 2 vols (1974–1976), I, 336.

privately, Burghley wanted his words repeated. These are, in part, 'ventriloquizing' letters, but nuanced. For very complex matters presented to the Queen, Cecil had to balance the demands of his father with frayed tempers at council, court and in the Privy Chamber – to which as councillor he had immediate access from August 1591. Cecil seems to have projected a generally quiet and calming effect on the Queen, but to others he was full of cares and business. Burghley's character is predominant in these letters, while Cecil's recedes often into complete opacity. Both Cecils knew well the Queen's devotion to words; Burghley intended this effect and inculcated it in his son: 'It is my comfort that hir Ma[jes]ty maketh such a comparison of my symplicite with hir pryncely wordynes [worthyness], to which in very truth, I thynk nether forayn prynce nor brytish subiect can approache'.[4] Sir Robert Cecil assured Elizabeth while on an embassy to Henry IV in April 1598

> We have therefore thought it good to set down precisely the same language which I, the Secretary, used – for that we know your Majesty to be in all languages one of the *mieulx disans* of Europe must justly think that your Majesty had cause to be very jealous whether your meaning had been delivered in the French to the same sense which our English repetition should now express. And therefore, I, the Secretary, beseech your Majesty to pardon my errors especially, who have come so short of that significance and propriety which in your pure style did always flourish.[5]

Falling short in sight of the royal radiance was something of a Cecilian pose, leavened in these letters with humour, espousing the Lord Treasurer's uniquely close standing as counsel to the Queen, but not as her final arbiter.

Queen Elizabeth is referred to in this correspondence more frequently than any other person, appearing in 94 of 124 papers. Apart from the first dozen, instructional, letters, the Queen, together with the Privy Council, was Burghley's sole focus. In his wordier earlier letters, Burghley's own words and the deliberations of the Council were factored directly into his calculations of the probable royal response.[6] He took great care in these to be precise and timely. Burghley's deep deference to the Queen's majesty is clear – a deference which is evident in Letter No. 2. The Queen was the majestic force who bound them in service to the realm: '[I] will not be hasty therein, but will preserve

[4]Letter No. 120.

[5]*HMCS*, viii, 119, 5 Apr. 1598.

[6]See Letters Nos 15–138: 15–28, 30–36, 38, 40, 41, 43–55, 58–67, 69, 70, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 78–84, 86, 87, 89, 91, 94, 96, 97, 99, 100–103, 105, 108, 109, 111–114, 116–118, 120, 121, 123, 125–127, 130–132, 134–136, 138.

[page torn] the advise of hir ma[jest]tie may have some secret [page torn] from God hir and my director to ser[page torn].' Thus, the Queen's providential rule conjoins them all, but they are all called in their varying conditions to serve God, a blatant reminder to his son to underscoring some trepidation at shouldering these matters without his father present. The secret conversations with the Queen, Burghley is saying, are the ultimate privilege.

Sir Robert's audiences must be entertaining, but his jests are choreographed: to introduce and work with the comments and jokes of his father, her most senior and over-burdened officer. Most tellingly, 'hir and my director' admits of exactly the distance a good councillor must keep so that honesty may be preserved. In December 1595, Burghley warns the Queen through his son that his handwriting is now almost indecipherable, 'she will have a battell with my fyngars', but continues with his identification with the Queen as head, ancestress of David:

> but hir Ma[jest]y is allowed to saye as kyng David sayth in the i C xliii psalme, as the same was repeated the 30 of the last month: Benedictus Dominus meus, qui docet manus meas ad prœlium et digitos meos ad bellum. And in his next vers he added that which properly belongeth to hir Ma[jes]ty: refugium meum, susceptor meus, et liberator meus, protector meus in ipso speravi, qui subdit populum meum sub me.

He concludes, 'I durst match hir with king philip and overmatch hym'.[7] It is a resoundingly absolutist sentiment, doubtless calculated to direct the royal gaze on his son, to whom he was then devoutly wishing her enduring protection, refuge and raising up.

Here was a family succession playing out against the unquiet of the Queen's own royal one. Sir Robert had to negotiate Elizabeth's powerful temperament: 'I fynd the lady some what strange to gyve care to my request, for that she useth not to gyve audience, in clowdy and fowle wether, and herof is here to great plenty, and yet betwixt showres I do attend and follow hir trayne. Thus much metaphorically I trust without offence to hir Ma[jes]ty.'[8] In March 1596, Burghley's strong disagreement with the Queen's 'hyndrance' for the relief of Calais then under threat – his most agitated handwriting in the entire volume – contrasts their mutual 'slowness' over rushing aid to Boulogne in May 1593, thus the Treasurer and Queen were not invariably moving at the same speed in responses to crisis, nor was Burghley a constant break on the 'quickness' of 'martial men', as

[7]Letter No. 73.
[8]Letter No. 10.

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he put it.[9] When Cobham's intelligence network failed to detect the 1596 Spanish attack on Calais, Burghley dreaded the loss 'for that war to offend God to whom I am sworn first'. But he would follow, 'presuming that she God's cheff minister hear it shall be God's will to have hir commanndementes obeyed'. There was, therefore, a clear distinction between royal prerogative and Burghley's own deeply held conviction that France, at that juncture must not return to the Spanish fold: 'Yow se I am in a mixture of divinite and polycye preferring in polecy, hir Majesty afor all others on the erth and in dyvynitie the Kyng of heaven above all betwixt alpha and omega'.[10] A month later the Queen 'exceedeth, all hir equalls in body and Government'.[11] Despite frequent differences of opinion over the matters presented here, Burghley always conquers his physical torment and mental care with a return to the Queen as his final point of reckoning: 'I am no opinionaster but an opyner.'[12] But her reckoning he concentrated on his son's abilities. The father could be short and demanded efficiency, a workload equal to his own: 'Sir Robert Cecill', begins one letter, with the equivalent of a shout.

Burghley's holograph conclusion to Letter No. 2 shifts to one aspect of the letters: the intimate tone designed to endear the Queen with his endless labours, the unhappiness of great debility and his inferiority to her princely state. Lady Burghley had died in 1589. Bereft of his brilliant wife and her meticulous ministrations, Burghley was in his late age and illness. He lacked the one person with whom he had shared cures and remedies, an attention to health – to say nothing of the immense pleasure of their houses and gardens, their libraries and her scholarly mind. His enormous tomb for her in Westminster Abbey was eloquence enough.[13] Without her the letters often portray an old widower whose body is falling to pieces – admittedly one with dozens of servants in three great houses to care for him. Thus, given his condition, he tied the son directly and closely in this triangle of confidence and trust: 'offerers conceave to come of the quicksilver, and therfor to give me the tyncture of Gold, my nightly paynes are so grevous'.[14] Physicians and remedies for Burghley's pain and sleeplessness give a rare portrait of an aged man reporting on his ailments in the late sixteenth

[9]Letter No. 2.
[10]Letter No. 85.
[11]Letter No. 93.
[12]Letter No. 14.
[13]Pauline Croft, 'Mildred, Lady Burghley: The matriarch', in Pauline Croft (ed.), *Patronage, Culture and Power: The Early Cecils* (New Haven, CT, 2002), 283–300.
[14]Letter No. 2.

century.[15] Burghley clearly used his ailments as a conversation piece in Cecil's briefing of the Queen. For example in early 1594, 'Even now I receaved your l[ette]r, wherein yow report hir Ma[jes]tie's care for my helth for which I most humbly thank hir, hopyng that her good wishyngs shall help to retorn me to strength for hir service which I esteem the service of God, whose place she holdeth in erth'.[16] He continues with a joke about how he is not even a man, but at best three quarters with 'one quarter syck'.[17] Unable to walk, Burghley allows on another occasion he will attend the Queen 'but I must be carryed there very paynfully, and unmete to be in hir Ma[jesty's] presence'.[18] Such instances of Burghley's sheer inability to sleep, sit, read, write or walk are a recurring topic in the letters; some days he must be borne on a litter or in a 'litle coche',[19] as lame as his nephew Sir Edward Hoby. The 'Anonymous Life' notes especially his digestion was failing (he spares the Queen these details) – he has broth, some artichoke leaves, (inexplicably) a 'panado'.[20] A draft of red wine and sugar revives him on another occasion – a remedy to be related to the Queen.[21] The baths are considered.[22] He suffers with his eyesight. On one occasion he is nearly 'a monoculous' within a year of his death working long into the night with only a candle.[23] His son, too, would be similarly bereft in January 1597 following the death of Elizabeth Brooke in a miscarriage. There is a curious maternal-royal relation Burghley invoked in his letters.

Habits of a lifetime continued despite the possibly severe political and personal consequences for his son: servants noted Burghley always read the Bible in Latin every morning and evening on his knees, and when unable in his bed – perhaps his early years hearing the chanting in St John's College, Cambridge formed a distinct memory.[24] Perhaps it was a half-century of following the Edwardine ordinance of 1549 preserving prayer in Hebrew, Greek or Latin.[25] Certainly he and Mildred Cecil and her extended family of learnedly devout scholars

[15]For the Queen's physicians in attendance near the end, Dr George Baker and Master Goodrosse, see *HMCS*, viii, 277.

[16]Letter No. 17.

[17]Letter No. 17.

[18]Letter No. 46.

[19]Letter No. 118.

[20]Letter No. 133. A.G.R Smith, *The 'Anonymous Life' of William Cecil* (Lewiston, NY, 1990).

[21]Letter No. 17.

[22]Letter No. 19.

[23]Letter No. 130.

[24]Smith, *The 'Anonymous Life'*, 13; John Clapham, *Elizabeth of England: Certain Observations Concerning the Life and Reign of Queen Elizabeth*, ed. E.P. and C. Read (Philadelphia, 1951), 80.

[25]Act of Uniformity 1549 (Edward 2 & 3, c.1); Burghley used the 1560 Geneva Bible in the letters here.

were capable in Latin and Greek.[26] The connection with Sir John Cheke (1514–1557), Burghley's first wife's brother was another bond with the Queen. Burghley knew well the importance of both prayer and the psalms to the Queen, whose public devotions often formed directly into a proof-text of contemporary events. He would be privy to the suppression of her Cadiz prayer in 1596 when Essex's daring expedition failed in its objectives. Burghley read Cicero constantly, carrying with him 'Tully's' *Offices*, which are echoed in the aphorisms which close Hickes's biography of him. Here Burghley quotes Psalms and Cicero in letters to Essex during the earl's brief period of grace in the Queen's eyes in the following year, in the summer of 1597, as the Islands expedition optimistically set sail (only to fail and blight the earl's reputation).[27] He dictated from memory to Maynard: wishing the earl the best on his expedition with a hasty return to his family of which Burghley still imagined some headship.[28] The words, again, precisely recited doubtless to remind the earl of his place, not only as former royal ward in the Cecil household, but in the Queen's *domus*. They have a sense of drawing Essex back into the world of the Queen, the court, the Church and his upbringing. Burghley's immobility also propelled Cecil into the central orbit of political life.

Cecil family matters occupied Burghley as he relayed news to his constantly busy son: he referred only obliquely to the debacle involving the earl's affair with Burghley's grand-daughter Elizabeth, the countess of Derby, then ending with Burghley's demand that Derby make public declaration of his grand-daughter's innocence. To his spy on her household at Knowsley, Sir Edward Fitton, he sent four letters, one for her alone to open in private as marked, the rest for public reading. Burghley's direction here suggests he expected parts of his letters to be shared, even read aloud. He rejoiced that summer in his family.[29] His grandchildren and children gathered, fourteen of them on one occasion, and they are 'mery' – this following the death of Cecil's wife, Elizabeth Brooke in January 1597. His guardianship of his two Oxford grand-daughters would pass to Sir Robert Cecil – as much else. There was no mention of his elder son Sir

[26]See Caroline Bowden 'The library of Mildred Cooke, Lady Burghley', *The Library*, 7th ser., 6 (2005), 3–29.

[27]Letter No. 117. See also Letter No. 73.

[28]Jill Husselby, 'The politics of pleasure: William Cecil and Burghley House', in Croft, *Patronage, Culture and Power*, 21–46, 42; M.T. Cicero, *On Duties (De Officiis)*, ed. M.T. Griffin and E.M. Atkins, Cambridge Texts in the History of Political Thought (Cambridge, 1991), 43, 88; Letters Nos 116 and 117, July 1597. For the countess, Letters Nos 39 and 123.

[29]Helen Payne, 'The Cecil Women at court', 265–281, in Croft, *Patronage, Culture and Power*, treats in detail the importance to the family advance of well-placed Cecil women, particularly the countess of Derby, 266–269.

Thomas, for theirs was a chilly relationship, extended into the future solely by his succession to the barony of Burghley and its attendant real estate.

Securing the Principal Secretary's Place

From 1593, Sir Robert Cecil acted as de facto Principal Secretary for the next three years. The formation of a secretarial role and establishment was conceived and housed within his father's official remit and physical surroundings. Against the backdrop of Burghley's age and infirmity, the time allotted to gaining the instruments and mastering the complex tasks, it was not too long before Cecil was formally appointed as Principal Secretary. Cecil swore in July 1596 to 'assist and defend all Jurisdictions, Preheminences, and Athorities granted to hir Ma[jes]tie and annexed to hir Crowne against all Forreigne Princes, Persons, prelates or potentates'.[30] Cecil later reflected on the unique and ambivalent nature of the position. In his Jacobean 'Treatise' on the office, he argued for the office of sole Secretary, that of an intimate. Perhaps, Cecil was nostalgic for Elizabeth given his somewhat distant relationship with James VI:

> As longe as the any matter of what weight is handled onely between y(e) Prince and y(e) Secretary, those Councells are compared to the mutuall affection of two lovers, discouered to their friendes. When it cometh to be Disputed in Councell, it is liken to conference of Parentes, and solemnization of Marriage, The first matter, The second Order, and indeed y(e) one y(e) Acte, y(e) other y(e) Publication.[31]

His close 'mutuall affection' with the Queen is the major counterpoint in Burghley's letters, a relationship which finally can only be guessed at in the interstices of his suggestions and jokes.[32] By that measure a degree of opacity might be expected. The Secretary's associations and designs could never be fathomed entirely.

The Queen's intimate circle, like Burghley's, was already diminishing in the 1590s exactly when the brilliant challenges from Essex and his followers demanded her notice – and that of the court and her people. And, so, the more Cecil kept inward with her, and managed (as did his father) to cope with her unique view of her realms, the Cecils' influence in the machinery of office-holding, with

[30]CUL MS Ee.2.32 fol. 349r. 'The Oath of a Secretarie of State'.

[31]Sir Robert Cecil, *The State and Dignitie of a Secretarie of Estates Place, with the Care and Perill thereof*. (London, 1642) sig. 4r.

[32]CUL MS Ee.2.32 fol. 349r.

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waged and well-patronized friends and family, piled up impressively in the period 1593–1598. Cecil had a relationship in which 'Order' and publication prevailed. These letters are evidence that his father scripted quotidian aspects of it. Cecil's presentation was precisely the ground for his advance with both the Queen and her council.

The princely voice, intimate with the Secretary and given as 'solemnization' to that innermost council, here a 'conference of Parentes', is a telling choice of words, given his father's motives. Burghley's Hertfordshire prodigy house Theobalds was an essential, nearly neutral place, for the transfer of royal trust to Sir Robert, 1591–1594.[33] Letters and architectural drawings show intricate links between the house, the Queen, and the Cecils. These were especially true in the royal visits 1591 and 1594. These progresses to Theobalds were marked with the two respective masques, carefully constructed allegories for Cecil's promotion and his father's retirement – a word unknown, perhaps more properly understood as *retraite* – to Theobalds.[34] No expense was spared on the first masque in May 1591 played for the Queen and visiting court at Theobalds. Robert Cecil was knighted and sworn of the Privy Council on or soon after 2 August 1591. Burghley's trope as aged hermit made a tacit agreement that his son would aid in his work with the Queen. But the second masque during the 1594 progress had the 'hermit' (Burghley) reminding the Queen of that earlier contract: 'Sonnes are not ever of their Fathers conditions', most notably in her refusal to name Robert as Secretary in the way she had done with dispatch at the outset of her reign.[35]

Burghley's afflictions drew Elizabeth to him, also, in the role of 'Parente', nurse, even as he was in a second childhood in some ways. He extolls her great superiority in heart and mind: he 'cannot conteane in the flowyng of my hart' his thankfulness for 'hir superabundant care'.[36] But at the end of his life, 'who though she will not be a mother, yet she sheweth hirself by fedyng me with hir own princely hand, as a careful Nurss and if I may be wayned to fede my self, I shall be more redy to serve hir on the erth'. Here is a parent to Cecil's parent, a

[33]The vast majority of the letters were written or dictated in Burghley's chamber in the Strand. For Theobalds, either coming from or going to: see Letters Nos 12–14, 19, 20, 45, 56, 59, 98, 100, 115–118, 120–123, 125, 134, and 135.

[34]Marion Colthorpe, 'The Theobalds entertainment for Queen Elizabeth I in 1591, with a transcript of the Gardener's Speech', *Records of Early English Drama* 12, 2 (1987), 2–9; Curtis C. Breight, 'Entertainments of Elizabeth at Theobalds in the early 1590s', *Records of Early English Drama* 12, 1 (1987), 1–9.

[35]James M. Sutton's revealing analysis of the two masques, *Materializing Space at an Early Modern Prodigy House: The Cecils at Theobalds, 1564–1607* (Aldershot, 2004), 95–123, with the quotation here from 1594, taken from John Nichol's *The Progresses and Public Processions of Queen Elizabeth* (London, 1789–1823), Vol. III, 244.

[36]Letter No. 93.

double role. The long-established intimacy between the Queen and Burghley was now shared by his son. The language of parent and nurse doubtless eased what had been, for Cecil, a somewhat vexed period of newly consistent front-line exposure to the Queen. This shared relationship, built out of Burghley's guiding hand, fed by the Queen's princely wisdom in return, was one which contemporaries, such as Essex and his retinue, would soon characterize as 'evil'.

By the summer of 1598, the forays of Essex and his allies in Scotland as well as the spread of continental ideas of republicanism in the Low Countries, led to criticism of the Queen, regarding her as subject to the diabolical influence of the Cecils.[37] Open conflict in 1596 over place and precedent (principally the secretaryship) were foreshadowed in wrangling over Irish appointments in 1595 and by Essex's haste in prosecuting spies in 1594 (Lopez and York).[38] Essex was not above exposing other councillors' own agents to retribution through his ego or by the manipulation of Sir Henry Unton's embassy to Henry IV in 1596. But in 1597 the earl had turned.[39] In June or July 1598, Essex had drawn his sword and turned his back on the Queen calling out terrible oaths of disobedience. Sometime earlier, Burghley had accused Essex to his face of being a man of blood who would not live out half his days, pointing to these words in verse 23 of Psalm 55.[40] The earl's incessant lust for war, and a fully equipped Iberian armada, as outlined in the *Apologie* of late 1597, was utterly beyond the furthest capacities of the Exchequer especially against the background of the Irish situation.[41] Sidney's embassy to France had warned of reduced English aid. The Cecils' attention would turn to the Queen's 'second realm'. Ireland would be the fulcrum on which negotiation, repayment, and withdrawal of military aid to France and the States General would rest. Cecil, thus, faced the stark reality that whatever the earl's shortcomings had been, by the time of his father's death there was an unbridgeable enmity rooted partly in these divergent aims.

[37]For the growing ideological hostilities to the Cecils, Alexandra Gajda, *The Earl of Essex and Late Elizabethan Political Culture* (Oxford, 2012) is invaluable; for example, see pp. 94–95, 131–135, 127–140, 147–149, 186, 233.

[38]See Stephen Alford, *The Watchers: A Secret History of the Reign of Elizabeth I* (London, 2012), 285–325; Dominic Green, *The Double Life of Dr. Lopez: Spies, Shakespeare and the Plot to Poison Elizabeth I* (London, 2003), chs 13–16; P.E.J. Hammer, *Polarisation of Elizabethan Politics: The Political Career of Robert Devereux, 2nd Earl of Essex, 1585–1597* (Cambridge, 1999), 157 ff.

[39]Ungerer, *A Spaniard in Elizabethan England*, II, 76–78.

[40]William Camden, *Annales Rerum Angliae et Hiberniae Regnante Elizabetha*, ed. Thomas Hearne, 3 vols (London, 1717), III, 608.

[41]Gajda, *The Earl of Essex*, 197–204.

Cecil's secretary noted that this was the most melancholy time anyone had known around the old Lord Treasurer. Burghley appears almost Lear-like:

> I see yow contynue yowr care for me, for which I thank yow. I took wit your howss for that it was to neare the breathyng of westm[inste]r, nor wymbleton[42] because of the discommodites in passyng the ryv[e]r byt cam hyther to my familiar place, although forced to seke a restyng place, but without rest.[43]

By August 1597 Burghley had not been able to leave his bedchamber or bed for two weeks, yet continued with writing warrants and letters and making Exchequer judgments. The following summer his old friends, Sir Edward Hoby, George Coppin, his secretaries Maynard and Hickes, Sir Walter Cope and a few others stayed close to Burghley House on the Strand where he died on 4 August 1598. He had planned to be generous, and he was indulgent to his closest friends. He would leave Cope and Maynard their houses.[44]

Operation of the Secretaryship

The Cecils' secretariats and, particularly at the house in the Strand, were driven by Henry Maynard, the Lord Treasurer's amanuensis in many of the letters published here. Burghley House in the Strand, as it was then known, later Exeter House, was built in 1585 for its proximity to court, council, and the Exchequer. It housed the Lord Treasurer's significant household with an annex for Robert Cecil; Thomas Cecil built a house at Wimbledon to a similar design but he later inherited Exeter House which was entailed to the peerage. The Strand house was fronted by a porter's lodge, 'the west and south ranges of this court are divided into moderate-sized chambers, suitable as administrative offices and services'. Here, Burghley's secretariat worked and it was from these chambers that most of the letters in this collection were written: Michael Hickes, John Clapham and Henry Maynard were in attendance. Burghley worked in a series of two chambers with a privy closet on the ground floor. As Burghley was infirm, even unable to leave his bed for long periods during the years 1594–1598, much of the materials he used in these letters were either arranged in the house and shared freely with his younger son. Papers were brought by Cecil to

[42] Sir Thomas Cecil's house.

[43] Letter No. 133.

[44] *HMCS*, viii, 296, 299; Maynard to Hickes, BL Lansdowne MS, 85/no. 23 at the time of the Polish ambassador's disastrous audience with the Queen in June 1597. See Letter No. 126.

his father directly, or by any number of their servants when documents were left in various palaces – both men had suitable lodgings in court, wherever the Queen travelled – but the house was a practical necessity. Burghley's will left goods 'within my bedchamber at Westminster and my two closets and any chamber thereto adjoining and extending to the lodgings of Sir Robert Cecil'. Analysis of the plans for the Strand house suggest that the living and working arrangements for father and Sir Robert were indeed close, even intimate. Theobalds, the great Hertfordshire prodigy house completed in the 1580s, had a similar arrangement of chambers and offices set out by Cecil after his father's death. In effect, one reason for Burghley's dominance beyond his son's appointment as Secretary on 5 July 1596 was his role as collator of materials.[45]

As Burghley's leading secretary, Maynard managed foreign papers.[46] His role is especially evident in the materials enclosed with many of the letters relating to France and the Low Countries throughout the volume. Before his father's death, Cecil's secretaryship meant that he possessed a very large set of papers foreign and domestic, with the control of the signet seal, the secret service stipend, and a burgeoning list of suitors, spies, and clients.[47] Yet despite the growing archive of materials and minutes of secretarial business he is known to have procured and retained, Cecil still relied until his father's death on a massive cache of official documents. However, it was Maynard, rather than Cecil, who knew the precise contents of Burghley's archive on his

[45]Jill Husselby and Paula Henderson, 'Location, location, location: Cecil House in the Strand', *Architectural History*, 45 (2002), 159–193, see esp. 181–182 and 183–188.

[46]Henry Maynard: the clerk to whom the letters were dictated. Richard C. Barnett, *Place, Profit, and Power: A Study of the Servants of William Cecil, Elizabethan Statesman* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1969); A.G.R. Smith, 'The secretariats of the Cecils', *English Historical Review*, 83 (1968), 484–485, 491–493. His frequent handling of papers and drafts of policy is noted extensively: '[Maynard] was considered the senior man in the secretariat and was sometimes addressed as "principall" or "cheyffe" secretary'. He specialized in foreign affairs.

[47]*Guide to the Contents of the Public Record Office*, 3 vols (London, 1963–68), II, 258–259 gives a concise reading of the role of the seals. The signet seal was the proper seal of the Secretary, and several letters here show Cecil was using it but not officially before July 1596. The passage of paper and parchment moved in accordance with the Henrician statute of 1535, 27 Henry VIII c. 11, 'An Act concerning the clerks of the Signet and Privy Seal'. All grants given by the king (or prince) or in his or her name would go to the Principal Secretary or one of the clerks of the signet, where a paper copy would be made to go to the privy seal; thence from the privy seal a further paper copy would be made to go to the great seal and enrolment as letters patent. Grants made by immediate warrant, royal signature given right away, did not go through the seals. When a grant or letter or warrant was received at the signet the clerks were to make a parchment (engrossed) version of the paper (enregistered) draft. This parchment version was sent for signing at the Queen's hand, usually by the Principal Secretary. For commissions and other legal documents the solicitor general or attorney general may have assisted in the original drafting.

death.[48] When he asked leave to go to his house after Burghley's death, presumably exhausted, Maynard assured Cecil that John Clapham (whose hand is found also on the later letters here) 'is acquainted with most of the books'.[49] Burghley rarely refers, except in passing, to the working of the Exchequer, although he heard suits in equity and touching the Crown in massive numbers almost until his death.[50] When he was near death, George Coppin – for whom Burghley secured the clerkship of the Crown in Chancery[51] – was with him giving Robert Cecil nearly daily reports on his father's worsening condition. Coppin presumably, also helped to field the constant stream of suitors and causes, which he relayed and dispatched as Burghley willed.[52]

Before Cecil was named to the secretaryship, several aspirants, Nicholas Faunt and Robert Beale, wrote treatises in 1592. Faunt, as clerk of the council, prescribed a rather clerk-like approach, one which can be detected in Maynard's handling of paper. The bureau of the Secretary was to have papers organized by topic, more properly *topica*, a sort of vast *copia* or combination of missives and received correspondence endorsed clearly but copied into letter books:

> In his secretarial discourse Faunt describes one of the secretary's main tasks as the compiling of 'necessary collections made into books' – alongside a bedside book, and a journal, the secreatary should have a number of 'Bookes peculiar for foraine services', such as 'A booke of Treatises', 'A booke of present negociations'; 'Bookes for home service' such as 'A survey of y(e) lands with the Commodities thereof', 'The revenues of y(e) Land', 'The Charges of the Crowne', and 'The Courtes of Justice'.[53]

Cecil made numerous procurations to the signet office for engrossing letters in parchment for the Queen's signature, and some of these are

[48] *HMCS*, viii, 299 where Maynard had made a list of papers after Burghley's death concerning Exchequer causes pending to be delivered immediately to the chancellor, Sir John Fortescue. Fortescue took over immediately *pro tem* as signatory for £8,000 in Irish warrants to be sent, but the warrants were with Burghley's papers (see Letters Nos 135–138).

[49] *HMCS*, viii, 296, Maynard to Cecil, 6 Aug. 1598.

[50] Letter No. 108, for example.

[51] Letter No. 80.

[52] *HMCS*, viii, 259, 276, 277, 285. See also Letter No. 52, 8 July 1595, for Coppin relaying a bill for the creation of a provost marshal in London during apprentice riots. Ian W. Archer, *The Pursuit of Stability: Social Relations in Elizabethan London* (Cambridge, 1991), 1–2.

[53] Charles Hughes (ed.), 'Nicholas Faunt's *Discourse Touching the Office of the Principal Secretary of Estate, &c.*, 1592', *English Historical Review*, 20 (1905), 499–508 at 538. Faunt was a clerk of the signet. Robert Beale, *Instructions for a Principall Secretarie, Observed by R.B. for Sir Edwarde Wotton, Anno Domini*, 1592. Beale's treatise was published in Conyers Read, *Mr Secretary Walsingham and the Policy of Queen Elizabeth*, 3 vols (London, 1925) I, 423–443. Both treatises are discussed in all the literature on the office. See Alan Stewart, *Close Readers: Humanism and Sodomy in Early Modern England* (Princeton, NJ, 1997), 173–183.

noted here as taking a great deal of the Queen's time and necessitating the lengthy conferences Cecil's critics grew to fear. Records of Cecil's gaining and retaining procured minutes of suits and letters are uneven as administrative records. Enough survive for 1591–1594 to show a rough shape of Cecil's role with the Queen, Privy Council and his father. In May 1593 alone, for example, Cecil was credited in the signet docquets with procuring a variety of letters to that seal: he kept the Queen's minutes to the duke of Montpensier; the son of the French ambassador and Henry IV's envoy of the spring of 1593, Pregent de la Fin, vidame of Chartres; letters to the lord deputy Fitzwilliam and Council of Ireland; the ambassador to Scotland, Robert Bowes; Sir John Norris; Sir Thomas Leighton, captain of the island of Jersey; the lieutenants of the town of Portsmouth; and a letter from the Queen of England to Queen Anne of Scotland presented by her ambassador Lord Zouche, an embassy in which Cecil's hand helped form secret designs round the earl of Bothwell (see below). Letters for which Cecil retained minutes at the signet are nearly all referred to in Burghley's letters in this volume. The Queen did not use the dry stamp, or prepared signature. Hence, Cecil's receiving the procuration does form a kind of record for a small percentage of his growing retention of the presentation of papers.[54]

Moreover, the 'procuration' of a letter to the signet is an imprecise term: the masters of requests did this work routinely, each of the four taking a quarter of the year. All that need be taken from these examples is that the keeping of these minutes marked Cecil's real role in state paper control. Together these procured and retained minutes represent Cecil's first large cache of secretarial documents and work. Cecil continued receiving, and ordering the perfecting (drawing up of a clean final version for enregistering) and passing of papers at the signet, and consequently kept custody of the minutes. That every one of the hundreds of papers and warrants he received subsequently is not docketed in the National Archives SO3 (docquets of the signet) suggests his 1593–1594 procurations to the seal and retentions were not yet regarded as *ex officio*. Such minutes tail off in 1596, but Cecil continued to be named on occasion. For example, in January 1594 he retained letters missive from the Queen: to the king of Scots over the shambles of the Zouche embassy (see below); to the States General of the United Provinces of the Low Countries; the Counts William and Maurice of Nassau; Monsieur de Sourdeac and the Brittany Protestants; and for the lord president of her Council in the North, the earl of Huntingdon – retention of drafts which go very far in

[54]Letter No. 4 is an excellent early example of Burghley outlining exactly what the lord keeper (Puckering) wanted for the proclamation about the current plague in May 1593.

explaining Burghley's inclusion of such matters to his son. These letters were only small part of the work done at the signet.[55] Some of these matters are touched upon in Burghley's instructions but it was Cecil who kept the administrative records and copies of letters sent. Against this growing official work the transfer of documents and his father's forwarding of papers must be understood.[56] On the other hand, Cecil would procure virtually all *conges d'elire* to deans and chapters as well as the nominations by *mandamus* of every single translation and elevation in nine dioceses during the years 1594–1596.[57] In the autumn of 1595 Cecil provided the content of warrants for Sir John Puckering, lord keeper of the great seal, for warrants for musters.[58]

While retaining the minutes of important business does tell of a growing level of administrative power in Cecil's official assistance to his father, it was in the creation of documents and attendant policy that their mutual advantage was attained. One example of how papers were shared for drafting and comment, other than by Sir Robert's constant receipt of his father's comments to the Queen and Council, emerges in how Burghley frames their collective authorship, not excluding other experts, the Queen or others of the Privy Council. Frequently the idea of a single-authored report or idea is challenged, even obscured, since exact authorship of materials apart from treatises or tracts was not known.

For example, in the summer of 1595 Burghley refers to 'our' letter to Edward Barton, the Queen's envoy to Constantinople (Istanbul): 'but hearewith must be remembered that theare be our letter written to Mr. Barton, which would be written with somm good Caution, least it might be miscarried and so cumm to the handes of suche as ar readie to detract anie thinge, thowghe never soe well ment by hir Majestie'. All of this touched directly on Polish negotiations and the work of Sir Christopher Parkins, a kind of man-of-all-work in eastern and central European correspondence; as well as the envoys of the Turkey Company (merged with the Levant Company in 1582), William Harborne with Barton. Parkins had been taken up by the Cecils but denied the Latin secretaryship which went to Sir John Wolley, clerk

[55] TNA SO 3/vol. 1/fols. 439r, 440r, 443r.

[56] For France, see Letters Nos 12–14; Ireland, Letter No. 17, for Cecil to press the Queen to send money; Scotland, Letter No. 16.

[57] See W.D. Acres, 'The early political career of Sir Robert Cecil, *c.*1582–1597: Some aspects of late Elizabethan secretarial administration', PhD thesis, University of Cambridge, 1991, 167–195.

[58] The lord keeper, Puckering, also asked Cecil for the names of the new deputy lieutenants in Wales to be inserted in the warrant, a matter which he remitted to Cecil's own clerks or to the office of the clerk of the Crown in Chancery. Hatfield, Cecil Papers, 35/17; *HMCS*, v, 382.

of the Privy Council, in 1596. Parkins's foreign education marked him as outside the general level of Burghley's comfort, despite his evident expertise on matters in Poland, the Empire and the Baltic.[59]

Seniority was not necessarily the final authority, however, as Robert Beale's extreme displeasure on being replaced in the Cecils' regular expert group by Parkins by 1597 showed the latter's worth.[60] Beale's hope to be Cecil's second secretary after Walsingham's death was overshadowed by a man of better credentials without obvious connection to the previous secretarial office. Burghley's caution about those who would 'detract' from the tone of Barton's letter might refer to Parkins's personal enemies, perhaps Beale; or he may have referred to the possibility of the pilfering or alteration of royal letters or their reading in combination with those of political rivals. The intent behind the word 'our' remains ambiguous. The collective might refer to councillors and the Queen, or any number of persons, including merchants and other advisers, who had an interest in the Turkey Company. The use of the possessive word suggests only that the drafts, whoever the authors, were kept with the Cecils' own repository, and cannot signal their authorship.[61]

More telling than attributions of single drafting in documents – nearly impossible to detect in many cases – was Burghley's exasperated tone when sending wearying papers: 'At your departure yesterdaie I had noe leisure to deliver sondrie thinges unto yowe, which nowe with thes my letters in a heape I send unto yowe'. Letters in this 'heape' were diplomatic and intelligence concerns, with drafts mixed among correspondence received, nearly all of them sent for discussion with the Queen.[62] The combination of hands and subject matter blurs the

[59]Letter No. 55 to Edward Barton the Queen's agent in Constantinople who was principally concerned with mercantile causes, while also gathering intelligence. Barton corresponded with Parkins at least once (Parkins to Barton, 18 July 1593, TNA SP 81/7/fol. 144r). For the diplomatic implications of Parkins's embassy and the Turkish implications see Letter No. 34. Although the custody of these drafts is not made clear, Cecil's control of such papers may be inferred from a signet docquet entry of Dec. 1593, at a time when Cecil was beginning to have some secretarial control of these matters: 'A letter to Edward Barton Esq. her Majesty's ambassador with the Grand Seigneur in favour of the Prince of Transilvania, The m[inute] rem[aining] with Sir Robert Cecill, dated at Hampton Court, the xxiith of December', TNA SO3/1/fol. 437v.

[60]Beale's enmity toward Parkins intensified. His letter to Cecil of 28 September 1597 complained to Cecil that negotiations with the Emperor proceeded 'without taking any account of me', see *HMCS*, vii, 405.

[61]For Barton in particular, see Rayne Allinson, *A Monarchy of Letters: Royal Correspondence and English Diplomacy in the Reign of Elizabeth I* (New York, 2012), 31, 132, 134, 135, 136, 143–150 for his sometimes sly additions to royal correspondence. See 185–193 for Allinson's summation of the role of the Queen's holograph letters, as opposed to her councillors' letters, and their importance in Turkey, and to the Emperor and other monarchs in Europe.

[62]Letter No. 58.

exact provenance of materials up to July 1596, save that Burghley directed in nearly every case exactly how his son should manage the paper. When in 1595 Cecil needed a schedule for munitions for the Isle of Man to discuss with Sir George Carew, master of the Ordnance, Burghley replied somewhat off-handedly 'yowe shall finde these letters and papers I had from him in my Chamber there at Nonsuch in one of the packettes uppon the shelfe, where my other papers are'.[63] The retention of paper is harder to grasp. Letter No. 14 ends with a need to find Sir John Norris's cipher:[64] 'I send to yow from Sir John Norreis there is a clause in Ciphre, which I cannot deciphire here readely for lack of my Alphabete which is with my bookes at the Courte'.[65] When Cecil was unable to find an important letter from Sir Thomas Bodley regarding Low Countries' intelligence in 1595: 'I praie yowe cawse your man to seek yt owt, and if yowe shall misse yt emongest your papers, yowe maie looke for yt emongest mine of the Lowe Contries, least peradventure yowe might leave them with mee.'[66] The materials were spread over several offices in royal palaces, at least in December 1593:[67] 'But if my stuff be come from Windsore, yow shall fynd a Big paper Booke in folio entituled Mattars of France, in which by looking into the table yow shall fynd the Alphabet of Sir John Norreis.'[68] Peter Proby, of the Chester posts, was doubtless typical of the servants charged with guarding the skein of transport and communication throughout the ports and towns in England and abroad. It is significant that he also had access to ciphers and to members of commissions close to the Council. It is not merely a question of the creation but also the custody of materials. When Proby fired a servant on Burghley's command, the man was sent for close questioning but not

[63]Letter No. 59, 3 Sept. 1595.

[64]See Acres, 'The early political career of Sir Robert Cecil', 115 n. 60, re Letter No. 17 and below, p. 55. On the rising expenditure and widening rebellion under Tyrone (the O'Neill), and O'Donnell, see Letters Nos 9, 13, 17, 27, 33, 37, 40, 43, 47, 73, 75, 82, 91, 99, 100, 103, 124, 125, 127, 132, 134, 135.

[65]Letter No. 14.

[66]Letter No. 54.

[67]Letter No. 14.

[68]Sir Robert Sidney's embassy to Henry IV in 1593 was undertaken partly to assure Henry IV's protection of the Huguenots after his conversion. The book of intelligence codes is secondary to the 'Matters of France' which can be identified in the SP Various [45/vol. 20, no. 45] list of volumes of papers Burghley left at his death at the court. Queen Elizabeth changed her mind over the best course of action concerning the relief of Pempole [Paimpol]: on reading Norris's first dispatch (the one here mentioned) she was prepared to entertain support for Henry's troops, but when the hard conditions of her offer were set forth in his second letter, she informed Norris that she would revoke (redeploy) his troops. *L&A*, v, Analysis no. 285; TNA SP 78/32/fols. 372r–373v, draft corrected by Burghley. Burghley's secretary with responsibility for foreign matters was Henry Maynard – Cecil had open access to the alphabet or cipher codes.

allowed to carry up with him 'my books' concerning the movement of posts.[69] By such methods, informal agents, and Crown servants, the materials of the secretarial office were to be found at council, the various palaces of court, Westminster, and in the Cecils' own chambers.

Embassies and instructions are easier to follow: they were framed and drafted, Burghley usually making the first copy with later amendments often with Cecil (and the Queen and Council), with a fair draft filed and endorsed by Simon Willis. The pattern can be observed in the modern (Victorian) volumes of what were the Cecils' archives, but the originals have been re-arranged so that the reader can see what these letters illustrate: nearly constant receipt and comment of materials. Notes to some of the letters here emphasize only a few examples of dozens throughout their shared papers, sometimes obscured in R.B. Wernham's meticulous *List and Analysis* series of the papers:[70] embassies of Sir Robert Sidney to France in 1594;[71] Sir Robert Bowes in Scotland;[72] instructions military and diplomatic for the removal of Sir John Norris out of Brittany, across the Channel Islands, and into Ireland;[73] Sir Christopher Parkins's drafts, as noted above, for further places where he was the most recent envoy;[74] and Edward Barton in Turkey. Preparations of bills, supply, and commands were also moved and amended by the Cecils.[75] Thus, while Burghley's 'booke chamber', referred to by his secretaries, may have housed the bulk of his career-long working papers, the Cecils' needs had to be met by a series of signet and Privy Council clerks, and grooms of the privy chamber, postal officers, Chancery, privy seal and Exchequer servants.[76] All of this was, of course, more complex as Essex persuaded the Dutch and French envoys in particular, Sir Thomas Edmondes, Sir Henry Unton, and Sir Thomas Bodley to begin sending him first copies of Burghley's letters (always shared with Cecil) and then original missives.[77] Cecil's ally, Sir John Stanhope, was made master of the posts in 1590, but even that manner of surveillance could not always be definitive. When Burghley was outright refused access to the letters of the lord deputy, Russell, in 1595 it is likely that a

[69] *CSPD 1595–1597*, 184–185.

[70] Scholars are also fortunate in the Calendars (published nearly verbatim) to the Hatfield House collection of Cecil Papers.

[71] Letter No. 14.

[72] Letters Nos 16, 20, 21.

[73] Letters Nos 40, 49.

[74] Letters Nos 55, 58.

[75] Letters Nos 87, 89.

[76] Letter No. 107.

[77] Hammer, *Polarisation of Elizabethan Politics*, 195.

combination of agents, including Proby, opened and re-sealed the materials.[78]

The warrants for privy seals were nearly always drawn by Burghley (see discussion on expenditure below) of which there are many examples in these letters: 'I send to yow herwith a bill for a warrant for monnny for Sir Thomas layton, which as my L[ord] Admyrall can tell yow is required to be iii^{C} [£300] and for Jersey ii^{C} [£200] with monny for iiii tons of lead. I pray yow procure these to be signed, and pass to the signet and prive seal.'[79] This process was repeatedly undertaken with bills drawn by the father and passed to the son – in nearly sixty of these letters. Although, apart from exchequer classes of the audit and declared accounts of the Pipe Rolls (extant for AO1 and E 351) where privy seals were copied into accounts, the original privy seals for much of this period are lost, Burghley's notes provide a sure reckoning.

Simon Willis, of whom very little is known, provided order in Cecil's chambers, either at court but more likely in the annex at Burghley House in the Strand where the father and son's chambers adjoined. His hand is ubiquitous in Cecil's correspondence from 1591. It would appear he was taking the role of Henry Maynard in Cecil's official paperwork. His endorsements and notations abound in the state paper collections wherever Cecil is working together with his father, or alone on a multitude of drafts and minutes. Letter No. 2 is an example of Cecil's retaining papers primarily relating to France. Dated 21 May 1593, Burghley dictated about two-thirds of this three-page missive to his son through the hand of Henry Maynard from which stems a series of Cecil-controlled documents bearing Willis's handling in the archival remains.[80] The endorsement on the letter, '21 Maii 1593, The lo[r]d Thre[sure]r to my M[aste]r' is in the distinctive hand of Cecil's secretary, Simon Willis. If Willis's hand is followed, it can be seen in materials in the present volume, and earlier. Willis worked on drafts and letters beginning at the ill-fated expedition led by the earl of Essex to assist Henry IV of France in relieving Rouen from November 1591. In that month, Cecil made a list of letters to be sent concerning the French king's movement during the siege of Rouen: 'Letters to the French king, to the Prince of Anhalt and reitmasters; to the Earl; to Sir H. Unton; to the States'.[81] Of the letters sent, those to Anhalt, the Queen's letter to Essex, and the draft of the letter to Henry IV all bear either Willis's or Cecil's

[78] *CSPD 1595–1597*, 184–185; see Letters Nos 20, 76.
[79] Letter No. 54.
[80] Letter No. 2.
[81] TNA SP 78/26/fol. 225v.

handling.[82] The Queen's angry letter to Essex over the failure of the Rouen expedition was also made in Willis's hand[83] and Cecil drafted the Queen's instructions for her ambassador Sir Henry Unton.[84] Cecil alluded to his own increased standing with the Queen in late 1591.[85] At the time when Cecil began to receive dispatches from Germany in the spring of 1593,[86] Willis drafted Cecil's first letter to a German prince, Anhalt, on the Queen's behalf in that summer.[87] Cecil's early, somewhat piecemeal, activities in Spanish intelligence, employing a secret service allowance outside the intelligence network of Privy Council, the prisons and the Customs House, bear some handling by Willis.[88] In this sense, Willis was being trained at the same time as Cecil was learning the drafting and presentation of matters before the Queen and council.

Willis and Cecil worked on a wide variety of foreign and domestic causes, both of secret and princely design. Cecil began to keep a letter book of Scottish correspondence in October 1593 which survives entire;[89] the first entry is Burghley's instructions to Robert Bowes copied by Simon Willis.[90] Willis's work as filing clerk and copyist of the letters in the Scottish book matches the chronology of the Cambridge volume: Willis's last sole Scottish copy entry in this Letter Book was made on 25 September 1596. Thereafter the hand of another Cecil secretary, Richard Percival, appears. The two secretaries' hands are then found regularly in Cecil's working papers until 1599. Percival's

[82]To Anhalt, TNA SP 81/7/fol. 83r–v, see instructions on the dorse, *L&A*, iii, G143-5; the French drafts of the letters to the States are not so marked by Cecil handling, but a clerk of the French secretary, Sir John Wolley, may have worked from their original, no longer extant; to Essex, Cecil's draft of the Queen's letter, TNA SP 78/26/fols. 152r–155r; and to Henry IV, in Willis's hand of early Nov. 1591, TNA SP 78/26/fol. 142r.

[83]Howell A. Lloyd, *The Rouen Campaign, 1590–1592: Politics, Warfare and the Early Modern State* (New York and London, 1973), 88–89.

[84]TNA SP 78/26/fols. 104r, 142r; 27/fol. 148r.

[85]*Correspondence of Sir Henry Unton, Knt., Ambassador from Queen Elizabeth to Henry IV King of France, in the years MDXCI and MDXCII*, ed. Joseph Stevenson (London, 1847), 168, 174–175; possibly the result of Burghley's ill-health, ibid. 146, 209.

[86]From B. Combes, a Cecil agent in the German principalities, to Sir Robert Cecil, May 1593, TNA SP 81/7/fols. 124r, 128r, 131r, 133r, 138r.

[87]TNA SP 81/7/fols. 136r, and endorsed, 137v.

[88]TNA SP 94/4/fol. 168v, which was Willis's endorsement of fol. 168r, 'Advertisements delivered to ffra: Rumbold'; Cecil's letters from agents on the Gironde, pertinent to Spanish intelligence, endorsed by Willis, TNA SP 94/4/ fol. 204v on 204r.

[89]TNA SP 52/ 52.

[90]SP 52/52/p.1. The MS volume is prefaced by an index, noting the final entry as 2 June 1597, whereas the final entry is of 25 Apr. 1599, two years before Cecil's secret correspondence with James VI began. See John Bruce, *Correspondence of King James VI of Scotland with Sir Robert Cecil and Others in England, during the Reign of Queen Elizabeth*, Camden Society, old ser., 78 (1861), 1–8, showing Cecil's correspondence with James VI did not begin until after Essex's execution in 1601.

hand appears at nearly the same time in these letters.[91] It is Willis's hand which allows the tracing of Burghley's letters here to the vast repository of re-organized Victorian classes (primarily) in the National Archives and Hatfield House. He worked closely under Cecil's directions with the clerks of the Privy Council and seals in managing the presentation of materials for consideration. While many of Burghley's letters refer specifically to the intimacy of their relations with the Queen, the matters arising before the Council were of equal concern.

Yet the letters here do not describe or allude to the personal patronage Cecil began to exercise. A later secretary, probably Levinus Munck, calendared suitors to Cecil dating from his elevation to the Privy Council in August 1591. A single name in 1591 expands to 110 in 1593; most of these suits and causes are not found amongst any of the surviving Cecilian archives. In this vein, too, nothing of Cecil's private gain with Sir Michael Hickes out of the Court of Wards and elsewhere is even alluded to here. Cecil's own penumbra of influence increased with the work parcelled out by his father before July 1596.[92]

Even after Cecil was made Secretary, in July 1596, Burghley sent a packet where he had 'severed the advertisements and wrytyngs according to ther severall conditions and tyed with threds', presumably in deference to his son's official control of papers and their keeping.[93] Up to his death, Burghley would continue to retain and add materials to his son's official materials, especially foreign letters, usually when he was unable to attend court or council.

Burghley sent additional papers, enclosures or 'advertisements', examinations of prisoners or warrants for official appointments, or referred to letters known to his son, in the text of 70 of the 124 letters remaining letters.[94] The notes here are meant to convey the substance of the materials (not possible in all cases) in their modern archival placement.

We cannot know where these forwarded documents, to Queen and Council, were retained and archived for future use. Contemporary treatises on the Principal Secretary's place, written by hopeful candidates in 1592, lay emphasis on the 'bureau' of the secret papers, all foreign papers, copies of letters sent, and retention of letters

[91] Willis was dismissed abruptly in 1602. Cecil doubtless feared his 'proud, excitable' clerk might be disposed to tell others of the secret correspondence he had opened with James VI, following Essex's trial and execution. Willis converted to Catholicism and rapidly relocated to Paris where Cecil's agents knew of him in 1606.

[92] Hatfield, Cecil Papers, vol. 242/2; see Smith, *Servant of the Cecils*, ch. 3.

[93] Letter No. 99.

[94] Letters Nos 15, 17, 18, 20, 21, 24, 25, 27, 28, 30, 34, 36, 37, 38, 48, 49, 51, 53–56, 58, 59, 60, 62, 63, 74, 75, 78, 80, 81–83, 88, 91, 93, 96–100, 105–107, 110, 112–118, 120, 122, 123, 124, 127, 128, 131, 133.

received. Presumably these papers merged into the so-called 'Acts' of the Privy Council imagined by J.R. Dasent. Council servants, principally the clerks of the Privy Council, are mentioned in Burghley's letters as are clerks of the signet seal. They also retained minutes and copies, it would appear. For example, Burghley directed Cecil in a private cause appealed to Council by the earl of Lincoln to get the document, 'therefore I praie yowe, to speake to the Clarke of the Connsell that attendeth theare to seke for yt'.[95] By default, the onus on the Secretary was to retain some of the minutes, most of the copies of letters missive, and to co-ordinate the drafting of replies and the circulation of discussions relating to replies. The exact nature of Cecil's administrative establishment can only be surmised before he became Secretary. Presumably, given the ease with which he exchanged documents with his father, their respective offices were in good order, shared, and open to each other's needs, but with the balance of materials shifting after 1595 to Sir Robert – a fact that is not made explicitly clear in Burghley's letters. These matters, arising among many others in a Privy Council for which imperfect or scant archival evidence remains, also had to be discussed in detail. Warrants or letters arising, as has been seen, required royal consultation. Cecil's work was heavy indeed. As his father's health became frailer, new appointees to key Exchequer offices ensured continuity in their joint access to the control of financial information.

Coppin's successful patents for perfecting all Crown materials in Chancery in 1596, as Cecil became Secretary, was one notable example.[96] Francis Guston's letters patent as auditor of the prests (advance payments out of the Exchequer, usually for troops and supply), as well as foreign accounts, was made in May 1597:

> to determine all accounts, and views of accounts of clerks and surveyors of the queen's works in England and Wales and the marches thereof, the treasurer or keeper of the queen's ships, the master of her ordnances, all persons accountable for any sums of money concerning the queen's business, the clerk or keeper of the hanaper of Chancery, the keeper of the great wardrobe and the chief butler of England.[97]

These may have been appointments with oversight of money and paper, but they presented the mechanisms through which policy could be both formed and executed around the Queen from the amenable

[95] Letter No. 29.

[96] See Letters Nos 52 and 80, *CPR 39 Eliz. I*, no. 269 dated 31 Jan. 1597, to write writs of pardon for murder, treason, homicides, felonies and all writs of extent – none of which would have kept him busy for the £40 p.a. emolument.

[97] *CPR 39 Eliz. I*, no. 386, 19 July 1597.

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and quieter quarters of Burghley House and Theobalds. Throughout 1593–1596 Burghley honed his son in the mastery and in obtaining the secretaryship, surrounding him with allies in crucial financial positions. The letters are replete with advice, notes on expenses in anticipation of Cecil's eventual control of records of expenditure under privy seal, and the best way to present complex and often incomplete business to the Queen and in consultation with the Privy Council with or without Burghley in attendance.[98] There is a shift in these letters after July 1596. From the date of Cecil's secretaryship both father and son sought to retain firm control of financial affairs. In July 1596 the Lord Treasurer ordered all warrants to be signed by four privy councillors always including himself. Peculation and mysterious accounting practices were endemic in late Elizabethan England. These were found notably in war accounts (which were considerable from 1585) but in office-holding generally. As Burghley noted Sir Robert Constable was 'beggard' in a Berwick office, so it was for many of the war offices mentioned in these letters.[99] Sir Thomas Sherley's infamous grand embezzlement on the two huge declared accounts in the Low Countries (1586–1597) was matched by the chaotic scramble of the vice-treasurer in Ireland, Sir Henry Wallop, for warrants to pay favours, debts to merchants and captains, and massive decay in troops and supply.[100] Together with the much better administration of the navy board, the provisioning and supply of these two principal accountants (including also the French expeditions) were weighed down in policy, arguments, weather, and personalities.

Control of the paperwork, for good or ill, and moving expenditure rested until Burghley's death with the Cecils. Sir Thomas Heneage's death in 1595 opened the place of vice-chamberlain. A strong Cecil

[98]But his correspondence, Lansdowne Manuscripts, for example, contains numerous letters from the Lord Treasurer's remembrancer, Peter Osborne. Vincent Skinner's 1593 promotion to auditor of the prests vacated a place for Hickes (during Chidiock Wardour's campaign to have the Auditor retain privy seals and issue new accounts instead of the more usual use of tallies as the basis for the casting and declaration of accounts at the Pipe Roll office). See G.R. Elton, 'The Elizabethan exchequer: War in the receipt', in S.T. Bindoff, J. Hurstfield, and C.H. Williams (eds), *Elizabethan Government and Society: Essays Presented to Sir John Neale* (London and Toronto, 1961), 213–248.

[99]Letter No. 2.

[100]For Sherley's accounts see TNA E 351 (Declared Accounts at the Pipe) 243 (France 1591–1594 for the Brittany forces), 244 (Normandy 1591–Nov. 1593), 245 (May–Oct. 1593 for the Channel Islands), and the two largest accounts 240 (1 Feb. 1586/7–16 Oct. 1590) and 241 (16 Oct. 1590–10 May 1597). By May 1597 (see Letters Nos 111–114) new creditors and suppliers had to be arranged for the Islands/Azores expedition as well as reforms in Ireland. Wallop as treasurer at war in Ireland, E 351, 235 (1 Oct. 1591–30 Sept. 1595), 236 (1 Oct. 1595–30 Sept. 1597) and 237 (1 Oct. 1597–14 April 1599), the last being Wallop's death – the last two accounts cast *per executor* at nearly £20,000 total indebtedness – and the beginning of Essex's army in Apr. 1599. For Wallop's difficulties with Burghley see 'War and Ireland'.

ally, Sir John Stanhope was named then treasurer of the Chamber, with the offices of the Household, upper and lower, under his watch – and Burghley's. Stanhope was named vice-chamberlain in 1597. The Household officers were sometimes holders of lucrative Crown contracts for military supply, now coming directly under Stanhope's account at court; the posts were likewise paid out of the treasurer's account, and while Stanhope did not achieve Heneage's stature in intelligence-gathering or Privy Council examination of seditious persons, Burghley made sure that he had the control of the posts from 1590.[101]

Money estimates – mostly military – Burghley obtained by running totals of privy seals (dozens are noted in these letters) or from the termly Tellers' views, or from well-placed former personal employees now holding various Exchequer offices. Access to the workings of the Exchequer and its personnel added timeliness and weight to Burghley's views. But in military matters requiring speed he was often exasperated with the Queen. Exchequer funds warranted by letters under the privy seal and the letters refer repeatedly to their form and content, and also to the need for signatures – a role taken on by his relatively able-bodied son and council and chamber servants. In May 1597 Sir Robert Sidney at Flushing wrote of great want in the garrisons with Burghley writing his son in angry agreement: 'This lack of a resolute answer from hir Ma[jes]ty dryveth to the wall . . . hir people suffre great extremities for want of releff of monny and clothes', referring to Sidney's letter enclosed.[102] Burghley had clearly conferred on these needs with an ailing and absent Sir John Fortescue, chancellor of the Exchequer – 'I dowt how to gett Mr. Chancellor to come because he complayneth of his helth'[103] – at a critical moment when a new paymaster, William Meredith, was named as the accountant to the Low Countries and warrants required his signature.[104] Even before he was made Secretary, Cecil was moved into the front line of these expenditures and estimates: when Berwick-upon-Tweed, Carlisle, and Newcastle upon Tyne required ordnance in February 1596, Burghley sent Cecil enregistered letters for engrossing at the signet; with a privy seal he instructed 'I praye yowe procure to be signed assone as nomination of my l[ord] of Essex.'[105] These were routine instructions.

[101] After the earl of Leicester's death in 1588 no Lord Steward of the Household was named. Thus, Stanhope held one of the three senior Household offices, together with Sir William Knollys, son of Sir Francis (1512–1596), a Privy Council generational successor, named comptroller of the Household in 1596. Lord North was named treasurer, also in 1596.

[102] Letter No. 112.

[103] Letter No. 112.

[104] Named 17 May 1597. *CPR 39 Eliz I*, no. 695.

[105] Letter No. 80.

A major consideration was, of course, *specie* on hand for distribution under warrants for expenditure and while Cecil had no official role in the receipt of subsidy or other form of taxation, its disbursement and existence extended his secretarial remit. Cecil was also clearly worried for his father's health in the sheer work required for the calculation and presentation of these materials. On 9 November 1596 when Burghley wrote 'you found me not disposed to mak any censur of the certificates thynkyng the borden to heavy for me alon . . . yow may shew hir this included, which I began by Candell light, but my head would not answer my desire' – the breviates for the privy seal warrants he was then completing included reckoning of the year's Cadiz expedition (further harsh criticism for Essex), current need in the borders, Low Countries, Ireland, and in various fortifications in England. On 15 November 1596, one day after the Michaelmas accounting began on these matters – ordnance, Admiralty, victuals, powder, Ireland and the Low Countries – Cecil directed Henry Maynard, who clearly had oversight in the filing of documents relating to expense 'I desire you to survey the book of Privy Seals; Her Majesty has commended me to deliver monthly a docquet of all warrants signed for money, as with these no man meddles but me'; and he asked 'for some short breviates, and I will henceforth be my own carver'.[106]

Sir Thomas Egerton made the same complaint of the Rolls noting there had been many omissions and gaps since Walsingham's death – a confluence of complaints which suggest that during the years between 1590 and 1596 Burghley had had little time and energy to enforce or give oversight to the clerks of signet, privy and great seals.[107] Cecil's patent as Principal Secretary, for example, is not to be found on the rolls.[108] Before Cecil received the office of Secretary proper he could not operate these powerful, almost invisible levers of power. Once in charge, given custody and use of the seals, his father could rest assured of his son's ability to delegate rather than take direction constantly in obtaining copies and signatures of materials. Here, it was the Queen rather than the Lord Treasurer who was responsible. The massive number of tasks piled on Burghley's increasingly frail body since April 1590 had only very slowly been parcelled out. On one occasion in 1596 he is even referred to as earl marshal, a task he was doubtless happy to be rid of when Essex was appointed in 1597.[109] Essex, for his part, was correct on his return from Cadiz in 1596 that the granting of the

[106]TNA SP 12/265/105; *CSPD 1595–1597*, 306.

[107]TNA SO3/1 fol. 603v addressed in Oct. 1596, Egerton's complaints about missing and incorrect enrolments on the Patent Rolls now under his purview as master of the rolls.

[108]Hatfield House, Uncalendared Deeds 219/20; BL Harleian MS 36/fol. 384r.

[109]BL Lansdowne MS 82/no. 108.

Secretary's place (and Stanhope's) would prove formidable obstacles to his own policies and the progress of his many clients simply because of the erratic bureaucratic handling of letters and warrants outlined in these letters.

Nonetheless, Robert Cecil's burgeoning cache of papers from foreign and domestic correspondents probably already matched his father's by July 1596, when he was in receipt of the cabinets of papers (the daily working papers of the Privy Council), as well as the secret service emolument.[110] But now the realm of expense was directly merged into the warrants passing through the Secretary's place. By this time it was obvious that Robert Cecil was very concerned with his father's overwork. Before the secretaryship Cecil could not make direction for the control of financial records relating to expenditure. While Burghley had to be as precise and clear as possible for his son's discussions with the Queen and Council in what were, doubtless, voluminous papers and inclusions, there must have been great frustrations. Before his son's appointment Burghley asked that Cecil report to him the Queen's immediate decisions on expenses: 'I doe send to heare of hir Ma[jes]ties' amendment, for by hir impediments to order hir affayres, all hir realm shall suffer detriment'.[111] By using Robert as mutual interlocutor, the impression of great closeness to the Queen, managed very quietly, was already earning the son the jealousy and libels which would eventually shape his fame. To an extent greater than any other Elizabethan Secretary, Robert Cecil's official reach was conditioned not only by the relentless disequilibrium of dearth and want in the 1590s but by the reckonings of the Lord Treasurer and the supply of treasure itself.

Intelligence was the area in which Burghley most decidedly balked at continuing the vast and expensive remnant of Sir Francis Walsingham's service whose emolument he inherited. He stopped these initiatives almost entirely in 1590: 'servyce befor wagis is orderlie', he cautioned his son.[112] Walsingham's brother-in-law Robert Beale, clerk of the Privy Council and master of requests may have wished to follow the previous pattern of a junior secretary should Cecil have been appointed, perhaps on the expectation that the old agents and informers would remain in the pay of the Crown. He described the

[110]It cannot be known precisely how many of his father's papers came to Cecil when he became Secretary and how much was passed between them until Burghley's death. A huge archive of Burghley's papers, often somewhat haphazard, doubtless remained with him, while correspondents would (from July 1596) write to father and son knowing of their constant contact. The shift here is that the working cabinets, the daily papers, had to go to Cecil at this stage.

[111]Letter No. 108.

[112]TNA SP 52/50/no. 67; *CSPS 1593–1595*, 98.

work in a treatise of 1592 by describing the secrecy having a physical centre:

> A Secretarie must have speciall Cabinett, whereof he is himself to keepe the Keye, for his signets, Ciphers and secrett Intelligences, distinguishing the boxes or tills rather by letters than by the names of the Countreyes or places, keeping that only unto himself, for the names my inflame a desire to come by such thinges.[113]

Burghley's refusal to build his son's career on intelligence has been well-established.[114] Cecil was kept close to London, prisons and gaols in the region of the capital, and Westminster.[115] Other initiatives (Scotland, Ireland and the western highlands and islands)[116] were worked into the interstices of trade, ports, ships, and armies which of which these letters are so full.[117] Cecil's forays reveal themselves in Burghley's correspondence organically rather than systematically, until July 1596. Nonetheless, by 1598, when Cecil had been Secretary for two years, there was an extensive supply of secret continental news through shadowy figures handled by merchants with the foreign addresses and mysterious meeting places used by Walsingham. Indeed, the Walsingham remnant formed the spine of Essex's steely resolve to counter Cecilian control. While Cecil's secretarial establishment included secret links – and these are discussed below for Scotland and Ireland – they were of a piece with his gathering of the seals and administrative control of the office. Burghley's letters on intelligence do not make specific reference after 1596 to his son's initiatives; he knew of them, of course.[118]

> Divers other there are that doe as occasione serves and as a due to my place, advertise me of occurrents. But those I cannot foreknowe but leave order that all letteres which come to mee be brought to my Lo. My Father and all ordinarye dispatches to be then red to her Maiestye. or the letters by Mr.

[113]Beale, *Instructions for a Principall Secretarie*, published in Read, *Walsingham*, I, 428. Beale had been a clerk of the Privy Council since 1572.

[114]See Alford, *The Watchers*, 285–325 for a thorough analysis and contrast between the Cecils' and Essex's ideas on intelligence gathering.

[115]See Letter No. 9, for example where Cecil was clearly part of the Privy Council intelligence-gathering, notably the suspected assassination of the earl of Derby (1594) by Richard Hesketh, a sort of proto-Lopez plot. See Acres, 'The early political career of Sir Robert Cecil', 27.

[116]See pp. 53–54.

[117]Intelligence is noted in each letter where an agent of the Cecils or another of the Privy Council appears to have given information. These are too lengthy to list in this introduction.

[118]Lawrence Stone, *An Elizabethan: Sir Horatio Palavicino* (Oxford, 1956), App. III, where SP 12/265/133 is printed verbatim.

Smith, Mr. Waade or Mr. Windebancke as the nature of the advertisements requireth.[119]

Burghley's instructions in these earlier letters did not, therefore, necessarily indulge in long disquisitions on intelligence or the bearers of secret information. This was the area of greatest caution for Burghley and the last piece of the secretarial office given to Cecil.

Burghley's Governance

As Burghley came to the end of his life, the former dynamism of his relentless work faltered nearly entirely. What had been devolved entirely to his son was the competence required for office, not only the secretarial control of paper, but also his father's vision of the Queen's realms. In the last weeks of Burghley's life, the close circle of secretaries, friends, and family, together with loyal servants, provided as much comfort as possible for Burghley's pain-wracked body, while his son's attainments might have provided another kind of relief. The events of the winter of 1598 had proved Cecil triumphant in his embassy to Henry IV, as the Secretary coolly read aloud from his spies' accurate transcriptions of letters treating for peace between the French king's secretaries and those of Archduke Albert. On his return, in early April he had not paused, but went to visit his 'most dear Father', then set down immediately the work which had not been done in his absence in a 'memorial', exactly as his father would have done. In the last few months Cecil was not among the people who could be constantly present with his father. He was in attendance furthering the Cecilian succession.

The final sentence of Letter No. 138, noted as 'My lord's last letter that he wrote with his own hande', conveys Burghley's *nunc dimittis* to his son, the rule above all: 'Serve God by servyng of the Quene for all other service is in dede bondage to the Devil'. What process do these letters reveal about Robert Cecil, emerging from an able control of a contentious parliament in 1593 with his rival Essex on the Privy Council from February of that year?

The irony of this sentence follows Burghley's long career and remarkable self-preservation during Edward VI's and Mary's reigns. For just as his son's conditions of service differed markedly from his own appointment in 1558, Burghley had had to manage the politics of her succession. Elizabeth's failure to marry and produce an heir was a long-standing anxiety felt sharply from the 1580s as were her

[119]Ibid.

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serious illnesses. The Queen's mortality now occupied the collective mind of the ruling orders. James VI of Scotland moved into the tacit calculations of the Privy Council over the course of the 1590s. His estate, as far as Burghley could see, was torn by the pro-Spanish positions of the northern earls, and the loose management of his nobles in the lowlands and borders, with a wary eye on the Kirk. Burghley seems to have shared the Queen's view, or indeed coloured her perceptions: Scotland was unstable in religion and external alliances across England, Ireland, and his own realm. While Elizabeth expended great energy on her own royal concept of parenthood with James, not least in a steady stream of holograph letters, Burghley mulled over the intricacies of maps and plats, projects and advises; he returned to her often in these letters as the sole means for his son's promotion. Cecil seems to have inherited the precision of the father's mind, an understanding of the Queen's own anxieties over the future of her realm, and the possible future for a Europe in which peace between Spain and France could not be bought too dearly to avoid the possible loss of Ireland. Thus, the anxiety of Scotland was as much on his mind as his father's.[120]

Perhaps the most impassioned of any letter in the volume, with the most agitated hand offered his son, with cartographic precision, an immediate relief plan for Calais in April 1596 (once he was able to write, as he was then in agony after a sleepless night of 'many cogitations') deserves full quotation here:

> what he wanteth of men or munition to defend the town [;] how he is hable to receave succors [;] of what nombres the army ar that doth besege it. Wher the battery is planted. How the haven remayneth fre for such succor to coem with shypping. if the haven be possessed by the enemy with his shipping. Why may not ayd be sent by shippiyng to a place est from Callies toward Gravelienes or to willoby and if the town may be defended for xiiii days, in this space la fare will be yelded or taken, and ther it may be hoped that the Kyng will levy the sege.[121] Wharunto he had v or v[i]^{M} [5,000 or 6,000] Footemen, that may be had in this sort, ii^{M} [2,000] from London, i^{M} [1,000] from Essex, ii^{M} [2,000] from Kent, i^{M} [1,000] from Sussex or such lyke for England may not endure this town to be Spanish. and the Q[ueen] that also promised hym ayde.[122]

Burghley's passion was born of intense curiosity about the Queen's realms and revenues and the need for such reckonings and complex solutions. Burghley's long-term method was to preserve her Crown lands from predation; to ensure her revenues; and to parse policies and

[120] See pp. 46–47 below.
[121] See pp. 210–211 above.
[122] Letter No. 90.

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requests which had a spatial aspect.[123] Burghley's estimates here were based, doubtless, on long experience of musters and costs to localities – a major issue in the 1590s, particularly with new forces for Ireland and French crises – as well as local financial need, those of the counties, and an awareness of many previous military engagements.[124] He knew Gravelines and Calais (and saw the Queen's wish to secure this former royal toehold in memory of very distant Plantagenet and Angevin ancestors) – as well as all the English plats and plans in the Queen's Works. But he saw the expense of maintenance of fabric rather than the glory and pomp of display. Although the relief of Calais was highly complex, Burghley may well have produced it without reference to detailed notes, as his close servants reported he hardly ever used them. His son would not have the luxury of this vast memory but had doubtless spent long hours devouring the materials in his father's book chamber.

Burghley's governance also required careful mapping. Christopher Saxton's 1570s maps of the shires, for example, were for the use of tax and revenue: merely one example of this is the extraordinary reckoning of charge by mile and horse Peter Proby had to provide in order to extend his letters patent as carrier of posts to Chester and Holyhead and onto shipping in 1595, his pay supported from the Household by the treasurer of the Chamber.[125] Burghley was, by this time, working on practised templates for nearly all of it.

The alarm over Calais shows that the Queen's realms were rapidly affected during the 1590s by the scarcity of resources, vastly increased cost, and radically shifting ideas, especially about war and largely from the earl of Essex. Cecil learned of the importance of precision, cost, measurement, and finance to the preservation of the realm. Perhaps the tutelage over the period 1593–1598 revealed in these letters influenced Cecil's failed 'Great Contract' of 1607–1610, a microcosmic brokerage of royal prerogative with the limitations of production and local political will.

At the root of Burghley's intense anxieties in the years 1593–1598, particularly latterly, was the collapse, not only of the entire Irish system, the danger of religious civil war, but the threat to –what he

[123]See Peter Barber 'Was Elizabeth interested in maps– and did it matter?', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 6th ser., 14 (2004), 185–198, esp. 191, on Burghley noting the importance of the new information that maps provided, and 190–194.

[124]John J.N. McGurk, *The Elizabethan Conquest of Ireland: The 1590s Crisis* (Manchester, 1997), 54–66, 108–134.

[125]Proby to Burghley and posts for Chester and Holyhead, BL Lansdowne MSS vol. 78, nos 92–100 in 1595. See Burghley's detailed notes on the provisioning and accounts for the lower Household, acatry and pantry for the uses of the board of Greencloth, ibid. 86, nos 47–53.

measured, in terms of Ciceronian reciprocity of parts – the Queen's realms, even imperium. In his seminal paper on Elizabethan offices using Burghley's ubiquitous lists, Wallace T. MacCaffrey similarly divided English officialdom into seven categories: court, central administration, regional administration, judiciary, military, church, and land administration. He defined 'office' to include 'benefits' such as annuities and grants of land 'at the disposal of the Crown', mediated through a complex patronage system ascending to the Queen, and descending from her.[126] Through office, he argued, came the 'nationalization' of the Tudor polity, begun in 1529 by Henry VIII, with his Majesty as 'centripetal' focus of an array of newly (particularly under Thomas Cromwell) reconstructed offices designed to weaken all parts of the body politic but the head.[127] The system under Elizabeth I was outwardly one of 'majestic simplicity'. In practice, it was a 'curiously complex foundation, its maintenance requiring the most assiduous practice of the arts of political persuasion'; arts, it must be concluded, of writing, flattery, and style.[128] These arts were the purpose of Burghley's tutelage, as each of these areas would come to the Secretary and his clerks in the form of suits or business to be presented to the Queen for signing or to the Privy Council. Burghley was not, despite Essex's later pejorative use of the term, training a clerk. But Essex overlooked or disregarded the rhetorical placement of the collated information and the reckonings, both calculated and forecast, before the Queen. Cecil made the presentation for her to make the final reckoning. As Stephen Alford has noted elsewhere, the fashioning of an estimate such as this fell for Burghley and his contemporaries into the category of 'definite questions', of arguing *in utrumque partem*, just as Cecil wrote *pro* and *contra* delineations of all regions of France in 1584[129]

One way of reading some of Burghley's longer communications is not only the obvious display of the material by Cecil in the privy chamber but his facility in matching and explaining precisely what was being communicated during a barrage of questions – this would have held, too, in Privy Council and ambassadorial negotiations. Burghley's

[126]Wallace T. MacCaffrey, 'Place and patronage in Elizabethan England', in Bindoff, Hurstfield, and Williams *Elizabethan Government and Society*, 95–126, 106. A list here taken from Hatfield MSS, calendared, *HMCS*, v, 195; vi, 387–388; BL Lansdowne MS 68 no. 107.

[127]MacCaffrey, 'Place and patronage', 95–97. The division of seven is a contemporary classification, probably Burghley's own.

[128]MacCaffrey, 'Place and patronage', 97.

[129]Stephen Alford, *The Early Elizabethan Polity: William Cecil and British Succession Crisis, 1558–1569* (Cambridge, 1998) for an excellent discussion of the rhetorical education and grounding of Burghley's work, 14–24, a method which the letters here make clear was shared by his son.

ability to turn the academic balancing of information quickly takes form, here and in all of Burghley's communications in these letters, to the action required, from the abstract to questions and answers: to repeat the parts of the questions in April 1596 gives an idea of this razor-sharp delineations of questions, such as those revealed in Letter No. 90 on the relief of Calais. The definite questions are posed:

> 'of what nombres the army ar that doth besege it'
> 'Wher the battery is planted'
> 'How the haven remayneth fre for such succor to come with shipping'
> 'Why may not ayd be sent by shippyng to a place est from Callies toward Gravelienes or to willoby'

These 'definite questions' could be answered by various intelligencers or officers in the government's penumbra of influence assuming Willoughby was supplied well enough to carry out the tasks communicated clearly. But they argue precise points with analysis of fortifications and munitions, troops and their naval and land deployment. Only the final point is obviously an indefinite question:

> and if the town may be defended for xiiii days, in this space la fare will be yelded or taken, and ther it may be hoped that the Kyng will levy the sege

The 'hope' in this analysis was, like the Queen's intentions, an indefinite question, one that sometimes gave rise to expostulations about 'dyvynitie' and other supernatural speculations where the will of anointed monarchs was in play, for Burghley would never trust Henry IV. The Queen stalled and when the fortress had fallen rebuked the king for his insolence towards her in not granting England temporary custody of a place they had not yet taken.

Burghley's obsession with mapping, weights, distances, and the financial reckonings associated with them were all ordered in this way to the rhetorical needs of definite questions or civil theses. Against these practical exercises the Queen's will was another category of information altogether. Nonetheless, as her servitor and delegate, in his responsibility for the Queen's realms, he maintained, as it were, in his head a map of revenues and expenditures populated by office-holders known to him, their causes and cares (or those of their families), from whom he was in constant receipt of information. While military concerns bulk large in these letters, their contents merge the financial and the secretarial, the merchants, the gentry, and the office-holders, and the reckoning of their indebtedness. The official list for military offices used by MacCaffrey was compiled in 1579 by Burghley:[130] a

[130] MacCaffrey, 'Place and patronage', 99.

settled pattern of various fortresses and fortifications with offices in the Crown's possession together with all major Crown offices worthy of place. Each of these he knew: emoluments, accounts, fortifications, works and maintenance. For the Tower, as an example, he had drawn up a detailed list of all men on watch by shift and all inhabitants (and why they were there), for an evaluation not only of the Queen's charge but of risk. Burghley's list of military offices indicated relative stability in pre-1588 conditions, but only after the sustained Scottish situation of the 1560s.

Burghley saw the Exchequer through the costly late Elizabethan wars when by his calculations, policy could no longer fend off Philip II abroad and still pay for the Irish rebellion. In the 1570s list he calculated forty-five lords and gentlemen, 'fit by experience for captaincies at sea and nearly sixty who could undertake military commands on land'. Most of these were permanent officers of the Admiralty, Berwick (which had been reduced by two-thirds after the Scottish wars in the 1560s), the Ordnance office, and coastal and other garrisons. For the late 1580s, MacCaffrey shows another of Burghley's lists giving thirty-five commanders of domestic garrisons not including Ireland.[131] The enormous scale of English war commitments in the Low Countries by treaty began to drop to a stable and feasible level from 1591; debt repayment from the Low Countries to the Queen was negotiated by Cecil in the very last weeks of Burghley's life. French commitments appear here to be similarly waning save for Boulogne, Calais, and Amiens in 1597 under Baskerville and Sir John Savage.[132] By early 1594, the worsening Irish situation, unaffected by the move to Franco-Spanish peace, saw rebellion break out into war. Furthermore, a truce which nearly expired at Burghley's death led to the disastrous defeat at the Yellow Ford soon afterwards and the vengeful atrocities committed in September 1598 resulted in one of the largest Tudor military campaigns under Essex in 1599. With the restoration of the lieutenancy system in 1585 and without large numbers of experienced captains (approximately 475 captains would be named during the Nine Years War), military needs attracted young men desiring service and advancement. This demand enormously expanded Burghley's irenic earlier model of 1579. Robert Cecil was in the first line in the creation of warrants for pay and supply of captains and officers, with his father with whom he seems to have shared a sceptical view of their probity.[133]

[131] MacCaffrey, 'Place and patronage', 108.
[132] Letters Nos 2, 3, 10, 14, 90.
[133] The importance of the seals is discussed below, p. 13.

The expense of war appears in the first fourteen letters in the volumes up to the end of 1593, relating to Norris and the growing charge in Ireland, together with ordnance for the relief of Normandy.[134] Of the remaining 124 letters, 55 urged Cecil to expedite similar expenses.[135] Of these, almost all of them, are concerned with war *materiel* or the maintenance of troops.[136] The letters are full of requests and business by persons for whom Crown revenues were implied. These included bishops, for whom nine new translations or elevations with attendant payments occurred between 1594 and 1596; the Household and the posts and the officers of maintenance of the royal fabric; and the plethora of ordinary suitors (usually, for Burghley, causes at equity in the Exchequer). The weight of these letters, however, tends towards fortifications and garrisons, especially heavy during the removal from French soil of the bulk of the Queen's extraordinary forces into the uncertain breakdown of the Queen's rule of Ireland. The Dutch and their repayments form a counterpoint to all this foreign or Irish expense after 1595. Here is precisely where the two major officers, the Secretary and the Lord Treasurer, intersected most frequently in their business as shown these letters. Here was probably the weightiest of Burghley's roles in the Privy Council and, in persuading the Queen, he was keenly aware of their shared frugality. His knowledge of the realm, its resources, and the pay and composition of forces, musters, and funding combined with an unmatched expertise, born of long service and mastery of detail.[137]

[134]Letters Nos 2, 3, 10, 12 and 14.

[135]Letters Nos 15, 17, 20, 27, 33, 35, 36, 37, 38, 40, 45, 47–50, 54, 58, 59, 60–64, 73, 75, 76, 77, 80–82, 89, 90, 95, 99, 100, 103, 104, 106, 107, 109, 112–115, 117–118, 120–123, 125, 127, 132, 134, 135, 137.

[136]An exception is Letter No. 126, on the Imperial edict banning English merchants from the Empire, and the jeopardy to royal revenue implied with the loss of Danish and Hanse trade.

[137]The historiography of the Elizabethan military has been significantly revised. See Neil Younger, *War and Politics in the Elizabethan Counties* (Manchester, 2012) 4–7, when discussing the achievement of overall aims, relative solvency and the orderly succession of crowns; these challenges were faced by many other early modern monarchies with less success. See Paul Hammer, *Elizabeth's Wars: War, Government and Society in Tudor England, 1544–1604* (Basingstoke, 2003) and John S. Nolan, 'The militarization of the Elizabethan state', *Journal of Military History*, 58 (1994) 391–420. They demonstrate how counties were successful in meeting levies and Council requirements, especially where the role of the deputy lieutenants and the justices of the peace seem to have been warranted to heavy workloads in commissions not known before the 1585 revival of the lieutenancies. These matters were clearly behind Burghley's calculations and, while analysis of the present letters cannot compass this large field, his mutual work with his son did involve precisely the kind of reckoning and 'definite questions' of rhetoric in which they both flourished. See Alford, *The Early Elizabethan Polity*, 14–24 on the argumentation and rhetorical arrangement of 'memorials', lists, drafts, and plats for policy.

So, too, was knowledge of the principal characters, human frailty falling into the category of the 'indefinite'. To take a French example, in Letter No. 2 Burghley sets out the complex rhythm for the paperwork needed for the relief of Boulogne; the French servants disposed towards or against Henry IV, were well-known to both Cecils. Robert Cecil knew these people, at least by reputation, for he had written treatises on France in 1584 when a guest of Sir Edward Stafford's ambassadorial household. In them, noble connections, sources of revenue, and characteristics of various regions, *pro* and *contra*, were established in long perfected notes sent to his father. The principals of Boulogne in May 1593 and their relationships – the 'Ladye' governor, Mme de Rouillac and Épernon, for their sister Anne (all born Nogaret) had married Charles of Luxembourg whose sister Marie was married to the Leaguer enemy, the duke of Mercoeur – were all in his grasp, because that is how Burghley delineated alliances, by kin, wealth, place, and stability. This complicated family professed allegiance to Henry IV through Épernon, while he himself continued his activities in pro-Spanish Catholic plots.[138] The indefinite aspect here is surely one of the complex intentions of both the king and his attempted reduction of powerful subjects, an area of speculation rather than precision. Burghley would remit these concerns, too, to Cecil for consideration by the Queen and Council.

Lengthy letters to his father in 1587 – matched again only by the official despatches he wrote in France, while attending Henry IV during the Franco-Spanish peace negotiations of 1598 – during Cobham's commission to treat for peace at Ostend only days before the arrival of the armada of the following year.[139] These long letters are full of carefully drawn portraits of the council in Brussels. His charming manner extended his father's courtesies to long-serving servants of the king of Spain, under the duke of Parma's government, to Richardot, Le Grenier, Parma himself.[140] Father and son had beautiful manners with rapier minds. In 1598 as in 1587 the question was whether Philip II had authorized persons to treat for peace rather than to carry out an elaborate ruse of negotiation. In 1598, Cecil's group of newly minted intelligencers paid out of the secretarial emolument – and much more expense not accounted – had an agent at the heart of

[138]Cecil's 1584 treatise on the French aristocracy made clear the connection between Mme de Rouillac and the duke of Épernon, TNA SP 78/12/fol. 245rs, for her sister Anne married Charles of Luxembourg. See also Letters Nos 2, 56.

[139]William Brooke, 10th Baron Cobham (1527–1597), lord warden of the Cinque Ports, was Cecil's future father-in-law, *ODNB*.

[140]None of the letters in the present volume are from the period Feb.–April 1598. See, e.g. *HMCS*, viii, 104–112 and 119 for his method of delivery of the Queen's instructions.

the Archduke Albert's train sending perfect copies of the already negotiated settlement directly to Burghley for use in audience with Henry IV.[141]

Burghley had been sent to the Low Countries by Queen Mary to receive Cardinal Pole as papal legate in 1555. Cecil's viewing of the vivid scenes of desolation and want brought on by incessant war in that rich country by 1587 underlined their shared horror of the consequences of Spanish army's occupation and the division of the Netherlands by religion and civil war. War and its attendant horrors appear in Burghley's calculations, but it was the threat to stability, even outright incivility in ordinary life attendant on poverty and want, which Burghley feared and thought that military culture would only escalate: 'Martial men' were often quick, choleric and hasty to spend the Queen's treasure. The violence associated with their command spilled into the peace of England, presenting in Burghley's mind – and doubtless the Queen's – a force to be contained. For example, a Captain Troughton in Essex's employ stabbed an innocent bystander for his horse in Hertfordshire, news which reached Burghley as Lord Lieutenant:

> an honest man and a trumpett of hir Majestie's that dwelleth at Totnam whose name is ffissher, comminge throwgh the towne with his wief being a sicklie womann, this Trowghton would neades unhorse ffissher and have his horse to ride past, which the other refusinge, and the Constables & post m[aste]r beinge by, and offeringe other horses, which he refused, he drewe his rapier, and hath hurt ffissher in one of his handes.[142]

While the threat of civil war on religious (but not solely religious) lines threatened Scotland and England, becoming an expensive military irritant in Ireland, out of Spanish ideas of universal monarchy, the sorry example of Henry IV's reduction of the Catholic League was one which all members of the Queen's government were desperate to avoid. Whether that was the extension of surveillance by the Privy Council commissions against recusants and 'conventicles' in 1593 or secret plots to force James VI of Scotland to impose order on his Catholic nobles, there is a sense in Burghley's letters here of the perfidies into which a lawful kingdom might have to descend in civil war.[143] Attempts to extend the branch of Protestant unity to the Low

[141] R.B. Wernham, *Return of the Armadas: The Last Years of the Elizabethan War Against Spain, 1595–1603* (Oxford, 1994), 221–223; TNA SP 78/41/fols. 246r, 255r, 378r; *HMCS*, viii, 538–539.

[142] Letter No. 59.

[143] See *CPR 35 Eliz. I*, nos 569–570 on the council commissions of 26 Feb. and 26 Mar. for such investigations in and around London with powers to interrogate and commit to

Countries and the Huguenots in Brittany were exhausted during the years of these letters; their greatest success in Cecil's skilful negotiation of Dutch debt payments in June 1598.[144] In the final analysis Captain Troughton's unlicensed violence was a form of rapacity Burghley and others saw as the result of giving too much virtue to the soldier and the captain;[145] an assault, as it were, on the, *vir civilis*, in the 'publike weale'.[146] One example, the Irish, was within the Queen's second realm. James's prevarication in Scotland was undoubtedly aimed at Catholic support in England for his eventual accession. But to what sort of kingship would he accede? On the ground, it was the kind of wounds, disease and vagrancy of the returning soldier which the Cecils feared would boil into another kind of disorder.[147]

Burghley's calculation of how order should be established revolved round these questions of order and disorder, definite and indefinite questions; he reckoned the particulars of what the Queen's realms could bear or not. War dominated, even deformed, Burghley's Ciceronian balance. The letters give a sampling of coastal fortifications and defence, spies, and supply for ports and customs.[148] There were the business and intelligence links in the Council of the North. After the earl of Huntingdon's death in 1595 it was Burghley who saw the need to perfect documents for an interim presidency of the council, especially in view of the intelligence connections he ran through its membership to say nothing of the stalling of legal suits and petitions.[149] The borders had to be secured for mutual, if wary, watch on the

trial. Lisa Ferraro Parmelee, *Good Newes from Fraunce: French Anti-League Propaganda in Late Elizabethan England* (Woodbridge, 1996), 76–96 on Huguenot resistance theory and the League's response. Burghley could not travel all the way with the Politique – of Sir John Hayward's *The First Part of the Life and Reigne of King Henrie III* (1599), where 'The King is the anointed of God, and even tyrants are instruments of God's providence', 115. See also Burghley's response to Person's *Conference* on the succession as discussed below on pp. 67–68, 71–72, and Letter No. 65.

[144]Wernham, *Return of the Armadas*, 238–239. No direct references to these negotiations were made in these letters by Burghley. Both Cecils, and the Queen, wanted peace with Spain and France but could not abandon the Dutch, particularly as the debt was now rescheduled satisfactorily. For Essex's incessant clamour for pro-Dutch anti-Spanish expenditure in 1597–1598, and his *Apologie*, see below, p. 73; Gajda, *The Earl of Essex*, 97–104, 186, 233. For the growing hostilities of the Essex House men against the Cecils, ibid. 75, 147–149. For Burghley's characterization as 'Aelius Sejanus', the archetypal evil favourite, ibid. 233.

[145]Rory Rapple, *Martial Power and Elizabethan Political Culture: Military Men in England and Ireland, 1558–1694* (Cambridge, 2009), 51–85. Martial men are seen to have lost virtue, becoming, as in the case of Peter Carew, a career captain, 'a horror story in the light of the civic humanist and godly ethos of an Ascham, a Smith or a Cecil', 53.

[146]Alford, *The Early Elizabethan Polity*, 22.

[147]See P.M. Handover, *The Second Cecil: The Rise to Power, 1563–1604, of Sir Robert Cecil, Later 1st Earl of Salisbury* (London, 1959), 151–163.

[148]Letters Nos 2, 14, 98, 122, 137.

[149]Letters Nos 79, 83, 100.

raiding families with their grievances and feuds as unstable agents in the amity of England and Scotland.[150] With Spanish incursion rumoured, the Channel Islands fortifications, the office of works, and the Ordnance office were integrally connected to both financial and strategic calculations.[151] The Exchequer offices, mostly for warrants for *specie*, were crucial links to the collections of subsidies, tax, and loans vital to the royal revenues.[152]

Not only were the coastal ports important for their customs revenue, they were possible points of entry for the seditious enemies of the Queen. The officers entrusted by the Crown to these places had their own networks of informers and agents reporting to the government. As the loci of vast sums of expenditure Burghley was vigilant of their news and needs: Portsmouth was a critical naval link.[153] So, too, were Plymouth and Dover (under Cecil's father-in-law Lord Cobham as lord warden of the Cinque Ports).[154] Southampton had to be secured.[155] With the shift to Irish war, Chester assumed greater importance and Burghley's agent Peter Proby acted as overseer for Irish posts onshore and to Ireland, with his agent George Beverly as commissary of victuals and transport. These were examples of dangerous entry points into the Queen's realm.[156] They were portals for pro-Spanish agents, theft, corruption, and double-dealing, but also sites for the provisioning and embarkation of fleets (such as in 1591–1592, 1596, and 1597 under Essex). They were places where ordnance and supply needed constant provisioning but fell into dangerous want during these years of dearth. Fortifications in Berwick, officers, and their wrangling for place and food supplies were causes of concern.[157] The strategic Isle of Wight had to be looked to for intelligence and as part of the outer ring of information on shipping.[158] Milford Haven under its lord lieutenant, the earl of Pembroke, was rumoured as a Spanish landing point under threat of future Spanish armadas.[159] Even the vast ordnance of the Tower of London was considered at risk after a plot was discovered to blow up the huge store of munitions kept there.[160] These places and their officers fell into the category of what

[150]Letters Nos 30, 58, 96, 97, 106, 110, 127, 134.
[151]Letters Nos 49, 94.
[152]Letter No. 41.
[153]Letter No. 117.
[154]Letters Nos 2, 6, 73, 92, 124, 127, 130.
[155]Letter No. 14.
[156]Letter No. 91.
[157]Letter No. 15.
[158]Letter No. 104.
[159]Letters Nos 54, 58, 64.
[160]Letter No. 23.

was 'definite', and 'indefinite', for shifting loyalties were all practical and political concerns where the state lacked immediate coercion.

Such a mapping of the realms in Burghley's letters bears remarkable similarities to Cecil's youthful French almanacs. He had to include for Burghley the major nobility and their sources of revenue – important during the ravages of war in determining pro- or anti-peace families. All of these English suits represent the extension beyond Westminster of concern for the security of the realm.[161] When anti-alien riots and a deeply unpopular lord mayor of London threatened the stability of the capital, Burghley, with others, advocated the appointment of Thomas Wilford as provost marshal in London, after apprentice riots in 1595.[162] Appointees to Crown offices in reversion and long-standing suits had to be balanced against competency and pressing need. Burghley saw these as a piece, the texts of the letters providing the Ciceronian aspect of definite and indefinite (usually personal) qualities of a place or problem.

His phrase 'brytish subiectes' (discussed below) suggests that Burghley saw further than he let the Queen see: to the mix of kingdoms, provinces and shires, each complex with their own difficulties, which James VI's succession would entail.[163] He cannot have foreseen the disastrous effect a small rising in Ulster in 1593 would have throughout the Queen's realms, a possession he accepted as an empire. His son's eventual Spanish pension and negotiation of the Treaty of London in 1604 would have appealed both to his irenic Ciceronian sense of virtue in the kingdom, but it is difficult to see from these letters any softening of Burghley's rhetorical anti-Catholicism, anti-papalism, disdain for the 'boglishe', and distaste for the French. He found the Dutch difficult. Perhaps these letters were part truthful and part performative, a hard, outer defence within which more secret aspects of the Queen's rule and her Council's decisions could operate.

Suitors and the Balance of Patronage

Burghley never assumed that the Queen was immune from bad counsel: where royal power was appealed to matters required a purpose. Burghley's over-arching concern was the preservation of the kingdom. There is however, an element of rumination in these letters, where the immense worldly responsibilities merged into 'dyvynite', far from the cares of the state. In a startling neo-Platonic image

[161] See p. 55.
[162] Letters Nos 52, 80.
[163] Letter No. 120; see p. 30.

he confided to Robert, 'if sowles have sence of earthly thynges, I shall be in God's sight an intercessor for the prosperite of his chyrch here, and for hir Ma[jes]ty, as his Governor thereof to his Glory'.[164] Burghley issued a rather extraordinary warning to his son during a hotly contested election of the master of St John's College, Cambridge, where both father and son had attended, and of which the Queen's great-grandmother, Lady Margaret Beaufort, was foundress:

> my request is that if ye shall fynd any intention in hir Ma[jes]ty upon any sinister sute, to prefer any on other than the voyces of the Company shall frely choose,[165] to besech hir Ma[jes]ty, that at my sute being ther Chancellor, and havyng bene wholly brought up ther from my age of xiii yers, and now the only person lyving of the tyme and education, the Statutes of the Colledg to which all that ar electors ar sworn, may not be now broken, as I hope hir Ma[jes]ty will not in hir honor and conscience do.

That the Queen could or would be swayed by a 'sinister' candidate speaks of the anxiety inherent in their direct dealings with the fount of honour, perhaps the most indefinite category of all, where Burghley exclaimed 'I remitt all to God, fiat voluntas sua'.[166] Cecil was warned not to allow the mastership to drift into the realm of courtly bidding or for the Queen to name by fiat, *mandamus*. When the non-puritan candidate Dr Richard Clayton, master of Magdalene College, Cambridge, was elected in December 1595, after some fellows' objections to the other candidate Henry Alvey, the College president, Burghley was asked his opinion as chancellor and oldest living graduate. Clergy under Alvey's patronage had been inhibited in college livings in 1582 and 1589 for veering into *classis* practices. Burghley had insisted upon the free election although Clayton may have been pressed into it. True, the fellows praised him, 'te autem (Honorissimus Maecenas) tanti beneficii authorem', author of honour and goodness their great Maecenas (a word used also to describe

[164]Letter No. 5.

[165]Cecil was only to present the fellows' dissenting petition if the Queen gave weight to outside suitors. The archbishop of Canterbury, John Whitgift, used Sir William Cornwallis to inform Cecil that he supported Laurence Stanton, as did Roger Manners. Hatfield, Cecil Papers, 36/79; *HMCS*, v, 497, 498. The archbishop's support might have indicated his desire to steer the College away from radical Protestant leadership, in the event of President Henry Alvey's certain election, by introducing a moderate. 'Sinister' meant non-Statutory, which contravenes much of the Cecils' work in ecclesiastical appointments and nominations to headships of ancient foundations during the years 1594–1596; see Acres, 'The early political career of Sir Robert Cecil', 161–192. Burghley's correspondence with the heads and fellows of the College are discussed here. See Richard Clayton (d.*c.*1612), *ODNB*. He was the Cecils' preferred candidate as distinctly against the 'presbytery' group at St John's College, Cambridge.

[166]Letter No. 31.

his son in another context), but his action was not 'sinister'. As chancellor, he supported the professor of Hebrew, Peter Baro, after his sermon in early December 1595, a few days before Whitaker's death on the 4th, in Great St Mary's, Cambridge, in which he excoriated Calvinism and sent many of the heads of houses into rebellion. Despite Burghley's support for the late master of St John's, William Whitaker, a man of decidedly Puritan sympathies who had, with Burghley's full knowledge, been shrewd and forceful in his support of Alvey as president of the College, he was not going to allow the University of Cambridge to embrace a public doctrine other than that that which had been set by statute.

Burghley's true religious leanings cannot be discerned from the balancing of claims on doctrine, for example. Burghley, of course, had never warmed to the anti-Puritanism of Christopher Hatton and Richard Bancroft in 1589 and after.[167] Following his support for Baro, who had been forbidden from lecturing by the college heads, Burghley, aided by Cecil, was complicit in the suppression of the Lambeth Articles. These were a national statement of the doctrine of grace, which it was argued was not freely given by God. This was altered by Archbishop John Whitgift with the assistance of Burghley and Cecil at the behest of the Queen.[168] As the fellows of St John's College appealed to Burghley in December 1595, the church was now cursed by these divisions into ranks of papist and puritan.[169] Burghley protected their statutes, and avoided directly staking his own religious claims. Whatever his own religion was, and he attended divine service at court in the presence of bishops in rochet and chimire, the crucial instruction to his son was to protect the Queen from direct meddling in the cursed theological controversies. Thus, it is nearly impossible in this conflict to place Burghley as anything other than a distant adviser whose priority was to control governance in the University.

Cambridge in 1595 would suggest a decisive Burghley. Every statute in every place would be observed. In fact, both Cecils were adept at statutory games when it suited the Queen or when her prerogative was at stake or their motives required. When Essex supported his brilliant secretary Henry Savile as a candidate for provost of Eton in 1596, both Burghley and Cecil were wholly supportive. Savile asked

[167]See Patrick Collinson, *Richard Bancroft and Elizabethan Anti-Puritanism* (Cambridge, 2013).

[168]Parmelee, *Good Newes from Fraunce*, 103–104. The Calvinist idea of grace conditional was suppressed here, but the notion that protectors of thrones fill 'providentially designated roles' was one which Burghley's other maxims in these letters appear to support.

[169]BL Lansdowne MS 79 no. 62, fols.156r–v, 'maxime 'vero' quae nunc nostrum hanc Ecclesiam Anglicanum perturbant, papismum et puritanismum, execremae'. The petition of 23 fellows for a free election, 'libera electio'.

Burghley as one 'from whom one commendation in cold blood and seeming to proceed of judgement, shall more prevail than all the affectionate speech of my lord of Essex can use'. Burghley endorsed Savile's appointment by the Queen but it greatly angered the fellows of Eton, who on receiving her letter railed 'though by our Prerogative Roiall . . . the free and liberall disposicion of the Provoste's place is in our sole and absolute gift'. They responded by stalling his appointment for over a week. Savile consulted the former provost of Winchester, William Day, now the bishop of Winchester who offered to help to remove the offensive article of the fellows' right 'whereby all the former statutes are so left at liberty, that no fellow for transgressing of anie shalbe deemed or iudged in anye sorte subiecte to the gilt of periurie'. The royal chaplain Henry Cotton, who prevailed as royal candidate as provost of Winchester College (his letters patent already written while his nomination was contested) used almost the same argument, possibly having conferred with Savile and others about this new loophole of non-perjury. The fellows of Winchester College resisted for a time, with candidates proposed with heavy references from all sides, the Queen herself changing her candidate. But while Cotton scraped in at Winchester, Eton had to contend with Savile whose noisy demolition of the fellows' objections he called slavish in following 'every little ceremonial thinge . . . (as that the Provost should say masses and diriges some festival dayes)'. It was 'an error', he continued, 'and ignorance in law to Imagin . . . that her Ma[jesty's] naming by prerogative is tyed to anye locall statute'.[170] Winchester's fellows went through an immensely complicated struggle involving bishops, the Queen, Essex and Cecil, and the fellows of New College, Oxford: each of them finally having to cavil to Cotton whose bill, procured incidentally by Robert Cecil, was, finally, by *mandamus*: 'All other exception which may be made against him by her H[ighness] by her prerogative Roiall doth supply'.[171] These machinations on behalf of the royal prerogative contrast with Burghley's insistence on St John's College, Cambridge, as a purely local resolution albeit one with national implications for doctrine.

Burghley was similarly vigilant of the Crown's interests during the dozen or so episcopal appointments between 1594 and 1596 in which, almost routinely, certain suitors got good lands at favourable rents before the candidate was consecrated and restituted, or restored, to their temporalities – lands which would have to produce first fruits

[170]TNA SP 12/251/fol. 204r–v.

[171]TNA SO3/1/fol. 585v; Acres, 'The early political career of Sir Robert Cecil', 204–205, 206–207, 212–219; *HMCS*, vi, 184, 188, 181, 208–209, 254–255, 299–300; TNA SP 12/251/fol. 204 r–v.

and tenths.[172] But there is a sense, too, in these many appointments, elevations, and translations, that both Cecils were protective of the Queen's rights, not necessarily of candidates. Although there were some notable exceptions such as Matthew Hutton as Archbishop of York and Tobie Matthew to Durham, these were also strong intelligence connections. Elizabethan bishops were notably absent from the highest political levels, Whitgift her sole exception on the council. But bishoprics possessed great lands and wealth. Burghley urged his son to be constantly vigilant in such matters, with Winchester providing an excellent example. Essex and others of the Privy Council raised no objection to the problem of 'local' rights where Crown preserve or court appointments were urged in these cases. And so their accusation of the Cecils' alleged control of prerogative as evidence of a badly counselled Queen seems hollow by this measure. Whether Burghley was Maecenas or one whose word would 'more prevail' were words alone; they were not appeals to Burghley's or Cecil's theological proclivities, but a recognition that their authority stemmed from the ability to navigate the immensely complicated terrain of the royal will across hundreds of offices, policies and, most importantly, persons.

Burghley had intended to have another great patron at court for his son – beyond himself, as stipulated in his *Precepts* to Robert – the lord chancellor Sir Christopher Hatton.[173] But Burghley's cultivation was doubtless meant to lessen the sense that Cecil would have only one patron. The choice of Hatton suggests Burghley was seeking qualities of judgement and an ability to handle the Queen. The Leicester-Walsingham group was scattered in the wake of their patrons' deaths in 1588 and 1590 – a remnant to prove so potent for Essex and in Irish office-holding. Burghley was seeking to re-fashion a consensus for his son's advance with a great friend on the Privy Council, one not allied by family as Cobham or himself. Yet, Hatton remains one of the most elusive of Elizabeth I's senior statesmen. Burghley's choice was not, thus, one of ideology or religion or faction, but that of a man who had excelled in the Queen's estimation. Hatton had legal training but fulfilled the highest office of the law with distinction without having served in any legal office; he was active in the anti-Puritanism campaign, 1589–1591, with Robert Cecil's later strong ally Richard Bancroft. That Bancroft and Cecil could stir the so-called 'Archpriest controversy', designed to flood the public with works on

[172] See Letter No. 41; Acres, 'The early political career of Sir Robert Cecil', 192–223.

[173] P.E.J. Hammer, 'Letters from Sir Robert Cecil to Sir Christopher Hatton, 1590–1' in *Religion, Politics and Society in Sixteenth-Century England*, ed. Ian W. Archer, Camden Society, 5th ser., 22 (2003), 197–267.

loyal Catholicism, was testament to the kind of control Cecil was able to assume.[174] Hatton's letters from Robert Cecil in 1591, then on the cusp of promotion to the Privy Council, reveal their mutual closeness to Burghley. Burghley and Hatton shared a strong aversion to Sir Walter Raleigh. Essex's overbearing habits were already veering close to her prerogative. Knighthoods for captains at Rouen exceeded Elizabeth's orders, 1591–1592, where Burghley showed clemency – indeed he seems to have shown the earl sympathy until very late in his life. Elizabeth forgave the earl's transgressions having denounced him vocally and harshly; and when they were repeated she renewed the cycle. More tellingly, she was to tar his supporters with perhaps an even stronger and lasting displeasure than the earl himself, as if support for his waywardness was the royal prerogative. This threat to what in 1591 was the 'common cause' of the Privy Council had begun to grow considerably by the mid 1590s. Hatton's death in 1591 removed Cecil's other potential patron but by Burghley's death the parity between Cecil and Essex was destroyed.

After Burghley's death, Cecil promoted his own generation as the Essex circle drew into itself in bitterness and open contempt. His friendship with Bancroft is an example. As bishop of London in 1598, Bancroft controlled the printing presses and was Cecil's client; he was thus in direct control of communication among people who read. Bancroft had been a senior lecturer at Cambridge in the early 1580s when Cecil was a student at St John's College. Another Cecil chaplain, Richard Neile, a close friend in Westminster, where the Cecils held serious sway for two generations in civic and church politics, had been an undergraduate with Cecil.[175] Cecil's generation, apart from Essex and his cousin Francis Bacon, would begin to find higher office after Burghley's death but only if they avoided the Queen's knowledge that they were in the earl's penumbra of patronage. Cecil would gain intimate knowledge of all of it. Cecil would also heed his father's words to follow the Queen's train without offence in cloudy and foul weather so far as can be discerned during the period 1593–1598.

These letters do not alter radically the debates on the 1590s in recent historiography. But they add to understanding the inner workings of Burghley's mind as he sought steadily to provision his son. Burghley's ability to laugh at his physical decline does not mask it. He is very conscious of time. His lack of bodily control weighs on him very heavily. Indeed, in his handwriting a kind of barometer might be detected. There is no rigorous pattern to it, no steady decline.

[174]Susan Doran, *Elizabeth and Her Circle* (Oxford, 2015) ch. 6; Collinson, *Richard Bancroft*.

[175]Julia Merritt, 'The Cecils and Westminster, 1558–1612: The development of an urban power base', in Croft, *Patronage, Culture and Power*, 231–246.

Relations with Scotland

While Elizabeth lived, discussion of her successor on the throne was an invitation to disgrace. Nonetheless, Robert Cecil, despite his sickliness and physical weakness, looked certain in his father's sight to live to see her replacement. While a view of Scotland and Ireland was consistent with the plats and maps and almanacs of materials Burghley compiled on the continental powers and English shires, it was on this debatable ground that the Stuart accession was most problematic. Spanish designs on the British archipelago in the 1590s remained unabated after wider peace in 1598 with Philip III's continued support of the rebellion against the Queen. Burghley and Sir Robert saw a possible way of discovering Spanish plans through the Hebridean clans with their complex alliances and immediate kinship connections to Ulster and elsewhere. Burghley had been the principal voice responding to the continental Catholic critics of the Queen's legitimacy and rule: the publications of Richard Verstegan, Robert Persons (or Parsons), Joseph Creswell and Thomas Stapleton named Burghley 'Machiavel'.[176] By the 1590s, the circle through the 'British' skein of approach to Spanish incursion joined in Burghley's mind the political, religious, and practical matters of sounding out the relations and alliances of both Scotland and Spain within the archipelago, the projected future Stuart kingdom.

When letters arriving from Scotland were brought to Burghley's coach on 20 May 1594 he referred the dilemma, without advice, to his son, with a weary rejoinder that without money, the annual pension specified in the 1585 Act of Abolition, 'the kyng will contynew his delayes'. Cecil had by then gained control of diplomatic relations with James VI, particularly through the Queen and her ambassador Sir Robert Bowes.[177] Cecil was now the chief recipient of Scottish materials: 'I do retorn to yow the draught of your letter to Mr. bowes havyng no lesur nor yet cawse to alter the sence but in the report of the wordes of the Q[ueen's] letter, by them remembred'.[178] After a year of plotting in and around the Scottish court the Cecils had yet to move the Scottish king into a posture of submission to the Queen – the annual calculation for the payment of the annuity was now fixed on the willingness of the Scottish king to cast his lot with the Queen and her loyal English on the matter of Spanish designs on the amity of their crowns. The background to the Queen's plan was doubtless predicated on unsure intelligence; nonetheless

[176]Joseph Creswell *ODNB* (1557–1623), Thomas Stapleton *ODNB* (1532–1598).
[177]Letters Nos 20, 21.
[178]Letter No. 21.

Elizabeth was clearly frightened by news from disparate Catholic sources and various spies that Spain was planning an invasion through Scotland.

The 'sence' in the Queen's letter in May 1594 refers to the extent she had secretly licensed her councillors' tactics during the previous six months to coerce James into public declarations of treason against those earls who subscribed to Philip II. Letters from the earls intercepted in November 1592, the so-called 'Spanish Blanks', addressed promises of aid if they should undertake to overthrow James. This danger brackets the letters: in early 1593 Cecil's maiden parliament as a privy councillor, his fifth (by his own words), announced these discoveries of Spain in Scotland as shocking and immediate. The Cecils' response was to play on 'private mens causes' in making a party. By establishing a pro-Elizabeth group James might be encouraged to act against the pro-Spanish earls as an alternative strategy to dealing with the oppressive tactics of the Kirk. Alternatively, these forays could expose a cabal of hostile nobles and adherents – the plan cut both ways in finding more Spanish designs. Allies were to be cultivated by the Queen's accredited ambassadors, Bowes and Edward, 11th Lord Zouche, in a series of complex instructions drafted by Cecil, in consultation with his father. They were meant to enter a 'labyrinth', to use Burghley's word for the shifting Scots' loyalties. Zouche's ostensible embassy was to the christening of Princess Elizabeth (when he was recalled he was replaced by the earl of Sussex). Miscommunication among the Scots caused an escalation from promoting faction to a mock attack from 'Borough Muir' on Holyroodhouse; a small military force which so enraged James that Zouche was recalled by the time Elizabeth wrote her holograph letter in May 1594 to the king. A group around Bothwell marched against the king whose hastily assembled force routed them causing the earl to flee (apparently unbeknownst to the Queen) back into English territory.[179] Thus, Elizabeth's 'sence' pled her royal ignorance of all parts of a plan ending with this flight across the border into her realm. James would not respond to the plot save to banish Bothwell (again), and to use his secret knowledge of English councillors' and spies' tactics in his kingdom against the Queen. Nonetheless the plots opened channels for Robert Cecil particularly.

At the outset of this project, a year earlier, Burghley had cautioned Robert on the gravity of mixing private causes with princely discourses:

[179]Patrick Fraser Tytler, *History of Scotland*, 9 vols (Edinburgh, 1828–1843), IX, 148–149; TNA SP 52/53/nos. 24, 25; *CSPS 1593–1595*, 303–304.

> The matter yow write of concerning the answar to be made by Locke is very piquant for difficulties on both sides. Wherein the Rule of Christian Philosophie consisteth in difference between Utile, and Honestum. And yett utile incertum and Honestum certum. But if Honestum were reciproche it were to be preferred to with more Constancye. In private mens causes Cretisare cum Cretensi is allowable.

The Ciceronian distinction between 'Utile' and 'Honestum', or expediency and honesty, moral good, created here for Burghley a question: in a truly honest and beneficial action for the state could a taint of deception for gain remain secret, 'private'? To deceive the deceiver – 'Cretisare cum Cretensi' – was not, in private causes detrimental to the state if it were removed entirely from the level of princely knowledge. The plot itself verged into the darker, Tacitean world where a theatrical physical threat to the king's body was the result. In a telling postscript to this passage, Burghley advises that he is wandering, but 'If my hand were free from payne I would not commytt thus much to another mans hand', implying Maynard was utterly trustworthy. The Queen knew all about it: 'yow may impart my words to hir Majesty, without offence'. The following day, 22 May, Burghley wrote to his son further that the matter of supporting Bothwell in some design against the Scottish king was so delicate as to require Cecil to be present in person to read his father's thoughts.[180] These innermost words would then, with counsel, find their way to the Queen through Cecil. Burghley was not about to let his son or himself be saddled with responsibility for the actions of the bizarre Bothwell.

Intelligence in the shadowy work of Henry Lock and the spies near Boulogne suggest Burghley's Ciceronian clemency was not a complete view of the secretarial place.[181] For example, the cultivation of Bothwell, 'Utile Incertum', as a bogeyman to frighten James VI into public condemnation of three Catholic earls – Huntly, Erroll, and Angus – was obviously for the security of the mutual realms. Bothwell, on the other hand, was the relation of a man who had possibly murdered Lord Darnley, the king's father, and was himself a deeply frightening man to the king; accused of witchcraft and acquitted, implicated in the plots of his wife's family – of the earls of Angus, the Douglases –

[180] Burghley wrote to Cecil that he had written his deliberations concerning the earl of Bothwell which were so delicate that he would not trust their drafting to a secretary, and insisting that Cecil see them in person before presentation to the Queen. Hatfield, Cecil Papers, 169/81; *HMCS*, iv, 319.

[181] Henry Lok (1553?–1608?), *ODNB*, was a minor poet and Cecil agent was then entrusted with covert co-ordination with others of the faction at the Scottish court. He remained in Cecil's employ until 1599.

and now, in the summer of 1593 attainted by the king for treason. In an about-face, James would restore the earl in the autumn of 1593, when the Cecils instructed Edward, Lord Zouche, the Queen's proxy at the christening of her namesake the Princess Elizabeth. Bothwell, whose religious inclinations were as unstable as his personality, was to operate as chief Protestant counterweight to his errant in-law, Angus, who with the earls of Huntly and Erroll were the earls implicated as Spanish pensioners. Months later, Bothwell was ready to frighten his cousin again.

The Cecils and the Queen combined forces, private and princely, to set the parts of Zouche's journey. The bonds of affection with James were not obvious in the documents: Elizabeth's cover letter of 22 December 1593 to Bowes called James 'a seduced king', abusing 'council and wry guided kingdom'. A year had passed since the 'blanks' without remedy or action. Burghley drew up, from his extensive papers, genealogies of all principal Scottish nobility, many of whom were among the king's 'seducers', the earls of Huntly, Erroll, and Angus. On the Borders' Scottish side, Burghley knew in detail the alliances and members of Homes and Scotts, lairds of Buccleuch, for he had good relations with their English opposites, the wardens of the West and Middle Marches, the Eures and Scropes (the East Marches being a sinecure of the Queen's Hunsdon cousins). The lowland nobles, the houses of Douglas and Hamilton, were illustrated by notes on the bitter enmities between the families of Angus, Mar, Hamilton, and Glamis. Burghley revealed the mass of royal affinities near James; by contrast the lone Elizabeth's dangerous succession loomed. Connections to the ancient kings of the Isle of Man and detailed Irish-Highland-Hebridean kinship were shown in comprehensive genealogies of the chieftains.[182] Burghley made notes, in which he rehearsed the events of 1593 for Zouche with further additions by Sir Robert Cecil.[183]

Cecil's control of Zouche's embassy after December 1593 was prepared extensively; Cecil documented how feelers at the Scottish court could be manipulated, for example, into a chain of connections going into Ireland. The secret aspect of Zouche's embassy was to find English support for a permanent noble Protestant connection not under the influence of the Kirk.[184] Zouche would be first pawn in

[182]TNA SP 52/51/no. 75; *CSPS 1593–1595*, 248; Burghley's genealogies: TNA SP 52/51 nos. 80–86.

[183]BL Cottonian MS Caligual D ii, fol. 38r–v (transcription, BL Harleian MS 4648, p. 88; *CSPS 1593–1595*, 255–256; Thomas Birch, *Memoirs of the Reign of Queen Elizabeth from the Year 1581 until Her Death . . . and the Conduct of her Favourite, Robert Earl of Essex . . .* 2 vols (London, 1754), I, 144.

[184]TNA SP 52/52/pp. 19–22, SOS/1/fol. 439v.

a very long Cecilian network of alliances. Some of these families and individuals were useful and some were not. Their tenuous relations operated on 'utile', or the degree of secret personal affection persons felt for Elizabeth as negotiated through Cecil. John Colville of Easter Wemyss of a Borders family together with Henry Lock, knew the secrets of some members of the king's council and how alliances after Maitland of Thirlestane's fall in 1592 might play with elements around the earl of Mar or Ludovick Stuart, duke of Lennox. Cecil warned that the Queen could never be implicated with the faction. But the plans were far from secret from the outset: Zouche was immediately hampered in January 1594 by accusations (correctly) from some of the king's inner circle that Bothwell had found protection in England after his threatening visit to the king in the summer of 1593.[185]

Zouche, for his part, stayed silent. Cecil had impressed upon him also to 'leave her Majestie as ignorant as before', while understanding that 'her Majestie . . . willeth you . . . not to stande upon to many doubtes or Scruples, but to followe the Substance of her Majestie's Instructions'. Burghley could have wished for no better exposition of his maxim, 'Cretiziare cum Cretensis'. Zouche's secret strategy was to recruit 'good Patriotes' from among those councillors which supporters of the Catholic cause would inhibit. Lock would be directed by Zouche. The Queen could not be 'Author, which cannot be done without toutche to the Treatye'. Cecil was clear in his interpretation of his father's precept: 'the Q[ueen] wold have hir ministers doe that she will not avowe' was his marginal note on the instruction.[186] Zouche's meeting with the newly minted Protestant confederacy at Berwick was, according to the Queen, to include no Scots, only English and only persons already known on the Scottish side to be unconnected to Bothwell, an impossible feat as he was to learn. Elizabeth denied all knowledge of the plans while James received information about what Zouche and the Cecils were doing.[187]

Cecilian machinations moved across Scottish alliances into the Hebrides and down into Ulster towards Dublin – and back to London. A sort of circular web of informants and loosely allied chieftains – Macleans of Duart, members of the Campbell family at Inverary – fed the Queen with information about the Scottish-Irish connections and their usefulness against Spanish designs. Eventually, in November 1594 this loose alliance would be soundly defeated at the battle of Glenlivet by the forces of Erroll and Huntly, who had been banished but not

[185]TNA SP 52/52/ pp. 23–25; 20.
[186]TNA SP 52/52/ pp. 27, 28, 29.
[187]TNA SP 52/52/ pp. 30–31; 53/no. 9.

forfeited the year before. The view to Ireland through the Hebrides was even more debatable ground, but by 1596 the king would follow with a proclamation forbidding any Highland and Hebridean families from offering succour to the Irish rebels, doubtless prefiguring the *True Law of Free Monarchies* (1598). The great subjects of the Scottish peripheries – in James's phrase, 'beyond doom of forfeiture' – were equally beyond the remit of his funds and armies.[188] But they could, with rewards, and other connections, be moved as needed to protect the interests of the Scottish (and English) crowns if their alliances could be strengthened in their own regions. Burghley knew this was a possibility – hence Zouche's long list of dramatis personae. Eventually the king would proceed, after long negotiations by Cecil and his agents, with a clear strategy, at least on paper, to proclaim publicly and royally against any of his subjects who were known to send their families to fight for the Irish rebels.[189]

The strange Bothwell gambit also gained what was 'Utile' for Cecil. As the Queen's ambassador Sir Robert Bowes wrote on 13 April 1594, that 'forasmuch as her Majesty has employed the services of Sir Robert Cecil in the directions for the advertisements . . . for all Scottish matters . . . I have presumed at this time to make my certificate to him'.[190] The complex plan was symptomatic of a private and public Cecilian view: James was susceptible by poverty and faction to manipulation which they used at every opportunity largely through John Colville, Henry Lock, and a cast of shadowy characters with noble connections.[191] The northern intelligence links Cecil used employed Colville and Lock to effect further policies for the Queen in Scotland which assisted the amity of the crowns in the face of more divisive problems.[192] With the well-affected Matthew Hutton as archbishop of York installed as president of the Council in the North following the earl of Huntingdon's death – to be succeeded by Sir Thomas Cecil in 1598 – the links with the borders were moderately secure. Despite conflict among the Border families, reivers, such stalwarts as Lords Eure and Scrope, the latter married to Hunsdon's daughter Philadelphia, resorted to the Cecils with frequent letters. When the Grahams escaped Carlisle castle having been discovered as renegades in the English marches, Scrope and others turned to the Cecils. Tobie Matthew, made bishop of Durham in 1595, remained

[188] *CSPS 1593–1595*, 495, 537, 542.
[189] The king's proclamation of July 1595 against Macdonnell and Gorme of Sleat, see *CSPS 1593–1595*, 595.
[190] *CSPS 1593–1595*, 308–311, quoted from p. 308; TNA SP 52/53/no. 31, 13 Apr. 1594.
[191] Letters Nos 2, 16, 20.
[192] TNA SP 52/52/pp. 119–123, esp. 120, 122.

part of Cecil's Privy Council intelligence personnel.[193] Cecil became 'Maecenas' to Colville and his adherents.[194] Cecil, with the assistance of the Queen, played close to the king through a dense web of informants and shadowy connections across the well-named 'debatable lands' of the borders. The Cecils were, of course, limited in their plans and alliances by geography, water, and mountains. James VI negotiated across these barriers with his own subjects, granting the Highlanders and Islanders latitude which horrified the English queen. Guarded by the impenetrability of their lands and supported by kinship alliances, many of the great clans were, nonetheless, strongly attractive for English designs.

Mercenaries for the Irish rebels' arsenal could be purchased into neutrality by good relations from London with chieftains – Cecil pursued these men with gifts and tokens, becoming their 'Maecenas'. Captains were intent on gaining land in Ireland, and while the events of 1594–1603 scarcely ensured tenure, the hope of gain was a powerful incentive for loyalties, however expedient. The Scots chieftains were not immune from the family tribulations which had brought the earl of Tyrone to his position as the O'Neill; nor were they ignorant of the Spanish assistance which bought him resources and time. From 1594 Cecil pursued secret measures to bring under his influence the Scottish Hebridean chiefs, in Mull particularly,[195] in order to withstand the strength of Spanish money pouring into the old galloglass (Scottish mercenary) families in the north.[196] Cecil was running agents from Inverary in western Scotland to Limerick;[197] another through Irish (Protestant) bishops;[198] yet another from the Pale (area of initial English conquest and control centred on Dublin); and finally, he was in charge of interrogations of captured Spanish

[193]Which connection must offer an explanation for Cecil's desire to have Matthew as bishop of Durham. TNA SP 52/53, no. 49. For Scrope, see Letters Nos 2, 28, 30, 96, 97, 104, 106, 110, 121, 127, and 128.

[194]TNA SP 52/53/no. 52.

[195]See Cecil's instructions to the Maclean of Duart Castle, Mull, sanctioning payments and ships, TNA SP 52/52/pp. 119–123.

[196]James VI could not control his Highlanders or Islanders, see *CSPS 1593–1595*, 495, 537, 542.

[197]TNA SP 52/58/no. 25 – The earl of Argyll's cousin, Dioness Campbell, Protestant dean of Limerick sent Cecil numerous 'plats' on the Hebridean islands, and clans, giving detailed descriptions of current efforts on behalf of Tyrone and Spain.

[198]Cecil's principal Irish spymaster was the bishop of Limerick, John Thornborough, who used many shady characters, principally William Udall. TNA SP 63/184/no. 41, fol. 141r–v, giving Cecil's protection to Udall. Thornborough: TNA SP 63/183/fols. 331r–332r, no. 106. Cecil also used John Talbot, of Dundalk. Argyll's kinsman, Dioness Campbell, regarded Burghley as a friend, but he was a sworn enemy of Thornborough. See Letters Nos 34, 38.

agents.[199] Sir Geoffrey Fenton was an important part of much of this work.[200]

Key players for the English crown were George Thornton, an English captain who ran a pinnace along the western Scottish coast south of Glasgow, and members of the earl of Argyll's family including his cousin Dioness Campbell, dean of Limerick, as well as John Thornborough, bishop of Limerick.[201] Part of the appeal of fledgling alliance lay in the absence of a coherent, lasting military strategy where the many layers of Irish families, government and law overlapped into the Hebrides. The Cecils hardly regarded their English governors in Ireland as innocent. Burghley blamed them entirely for the massacre of many of the O'Tooles as well as the taking of the rebel Feagh McHugh, issuing the reprimand, 'I dowt of my l[ord] deputies intention to reform it'. Furthermore, he continued to use Essex's ally, Sir Thomas Lea, against the wishes of leading English governors, including Sir John Harrington.[202] Burghley's fear was always that this barbarity was born of the English policies as much as their Irish enemies; massacres under the Queen's licence were very dark sides of her princely language with rebels. The sequestration and removal of Sir Richard Bingham in Connacht, engineered in part by both Cecils, was doubtless part of an attempt (mostly futile at the time) to limit lawlessness and brutality in what had become a bloody and uncontrolled contest.

The Spanish designs Burghley sought to monitor and frustrate within the peripheries of Scotland spread from across the Irish Sea to the north. The geographical extent of these designs was rhetorical. But they were also given credence by the intelligence of toleration emanating from the king in Scotland towards the Spanish and Jesuits. When Burghley received the English translation of *The Conference on the Succession*, published in 1595 by Richard Verstegan in Antwerp and written by the Jesuit Father Robert Persons, he wrote of pulling the reins of these connections and ideas together – all through the hands of his son – to force the king further in his public anti-Spanish posture. He wrote to his son to urge the Scottish king (by his own letters and presumably the Queen's own pen) to make a direct declaration against Spain. He must end all ambivalence towards Philip II in a proclamation. James, he suggested, must embargo Spanish ships in the Orkneys, exactly where the Spanish fleets would cross north of

[199]Cecil occasionally received intercepted letters being sent to the Spanish authorities, but he usually got these from Russell, TNA SP 63/183/no. 60, fol. 200r–v, 208r–v.
[200]e.g. TNA SP 63/183/fols. 284r–v.
[201]Letters Nos 34, 38.
[202]Letter No. 61.

Scotland to Ulster and thence, it was presumed, into the English chaos.

> I have intred onto consideracion howe the k[ing] might be stirred upp ernestlye to impeache both this and other the like[203] with Munición or graine for the king of Spaine's purpose to sett a foote A title for himself and his dawghter to the present succession to the Crowne of England, which doth appear manifestlye by a seditious Booke[204] published for the said K[ing] by a Nomber of Englishe Rebells residinge in Spaine, by which booke is maintained that kingdoms are at the disposition of the people withowt regard of right by Blood and sucession; and to be preferred to that for their greatnes are most hable to Governe Contries. And consequentlie the Awthors of thes Bookes have manifestlie improved anie title that the k[ing] of Scottes might pretend; and in like manner disprovinge all other pretended titles onelie preferring the k[ing] of Spaine wither himself or his eldest dawghter Bretaigne.[205]

A Spanish invasion of Ireland, abetted even slightly by Scottish ambivalence, would have tilted the European balance of power strongly and ended James's claim to the succession (a claim actually strengthened in the *Conference*). The phrase 'for their greatnes are most hable to Governe Contries' has an eerie prescience in view of Essex's future designs. But it was the republican sentiment that 'the disposition of the people' was sufficiently legitimate which tells that he was thinking also of the Irish situation where the Queen's rule was under attack. This, Burghley urged, was James's situation also.

Burghley and the council were aware that the Spanish were working through priests and their patrons in Ireland – and receiving support under cover from James himself – which only fuelled the Lord Treasurer's campaign against any response but a direct supply of men and arms into the troubled realm. His servants were certainly supplying ample information to suggest the direction of danger

[203]Burghley refers to James VI's reluctance to prosecute his rebellious Catholic nobility. As for stirring the king, Roger Aston reported to the English ambassador Bowes on 28 November 1598 that James VI had resolved absolutely to fight the Spanish, in Scotland and in England (which might have implied sending mercenaries or others into Ireland) *CSPS 1595–1597*, xxi, 66–67. As for the reception of the book regarding the English succession, Aston further informed Bowes on 16 December that in the English translation recently arrived from Antwerp, 'the author deloudes all those in the succession save the Derbys and the Infanta of Spain by right of her title to Brittany' (ibid. 93; see also the letter to Cecil from one of his principal agents in Scotland, George Nicolson, 96). An Italian treatise of that year discussed James's inviolate claim to England, even though he was born outside that kingdom, while urging him to establish Catholicism in Scotland, ibid. 104–111. Henry VIII's Act of Succession is not mentioned.

[204]Letter No 65. John Snowden *alias* 'Cecyll' (1558–1626), *ODNB*, was one of Cecil's earliest intelligence contacts in 1591.

[205]Letters Nos 64 and 65.

was shifting out of the Low Countries and France directly into the Queen's territories. Sir John Norris was activating an intelligence group with information from Galway with reports of Jesuit priests leaving directly from Calais or St Malo.[206] These spies were infiltrating Tyrone's adherents and adding weight to the anti-Spanish arguments. Burghley's excoriation of the attempted negotiations of Henry IV and his minister Villeroy with the Pope for the return of Jesuits into France, after the king's absolution in September 1595, showed the fulcrum of Burghley's mind, the great dangers 'the french kyng[s] reconcilment with such dishonorable and servill conditions, is lyk to work in the world'.[207] These reports he related directly to the rising charges of the Irish army where Russell had intelligence that the earl of Tyrone from December 1594 was entirely controlled by Jesuits.[208] Burghley's language in 1595 saw a singular hatred of the kind Persons attributed to him, a rhetorical outrage at the Pope as well as Spain. When forwarding documents to his son about the negotiations of the nuncio in Poland at that time, Burghley weighed his attempts to Catholicize the commonwealth there as typical, 'to slawnder hir ma[jes]tie after the accustomed manner of his master the ffather of Lies'.[209] Clement VIII's nuncios, seeking distance from Spanish control, were set to form a holy alliance against the Turks. Jesuit successes in Poland and Slovenia increased the terrain against Protestant allies, an already tenuous group about to be riven by the Imperial mandates against the Merchant Adventurers' monopolies in the Empire.

Cecil was to employ an altogether different tactic in 1598 – once Spain was at peace with France – in playing the pro-Spanish Catholics against loyal English Catholics. The opportunity to implicate James VI in the *Conference* and the risings in Ulster proved irresistible to Burghley, in fact stirring James into action against the Spanish incursions despite good intelligence of his Jesuit connections in the Irish rebels' territories. Consciously drawing James VI's attention to the inevitable realities of insurrection in Ireland with designs around Bothwell continued Burghley's policy of keeping him unsettled, all the while supporting

[206]Letter No. 70.

[207]Letter No. 63. Sidney felt that the Queen's refusal to assist Henry IV had created a situation whereby France would have to seek peace with Spain on conditions dictated by the enemy, *HMCS*, v, 409. Anglo-French diplomatic relations reached stalemate during the embassy of Antoine de Lomenie, lord of La Ville-aux-Clerics (1560–1638). As ambassador for Henry IV, he charged the Queen with negligence in refusing to assist in the relief of Calais. The Queen refuted vigorously these claims in Oct. 1595 following the ambassador's return to France, TNA SP 78/36/fols. 52r–54r.

[208]Letter No. 37.

[209]Letter No. 58.

roundly, in speech and writing, the unclouded amity of the crowns particularly in the chaos in the Borders.[210]

Colville and his friends were eventually persuaded to the views of the earl of Essex (who did not take up the Hebridean or the Irish end of the matrix) to secure their future with James VI. The succession bid has been analysed by Alexandra Gajda and others to have been Essex's final refuge when military and domestic greatness eluded him entirely.[211] Essex was by turns, implicated, exonerated, and deeply embarrassed by Persons' dedication to him of the *Conference on the Succession*. Essex was keen, through his Italian and other ultramontane agents, to promote a clement royalist Catholicism in England sharply delineated from the Hispanophile designs of Philip II's loyal English supporters – projects he continued, fatally, beyond the deaths of Burghley and the Spanish king in August and September 1598. Allusions to the earl's cultivation of this loyal Catholicism appears here in the examination of two converted seminary priests, William Alabaster and Thomas Wright (*c.*1561–1623): 'whoe both would be streightlie examined of many things necessarie to be understood, for their combinations and Companions'.[212] Examinations of them had already been taken by the Cecil loyalist and client Matthew Hutton, archbishop of York, where the informant, Miles Dawson, revealed among much other information about rifts with the pro-Spanish party, Wright's 'cavilling to Bacon'.[213] Mining here a rich source of information about Spanish preparations for invasion in mid 1596, Hutton forwarded evidence to the Cecils.[214] Dawson had met two of Sir Robert Cecil's erstwhile spies from 1591, a Captain Burley and John Cecil *alias* Snowden,[215] both still employed by him and supplying information across the 'British' cast of the Cecilian landscape – including Ireland.[216] Wright would compose strong praise for Essex and Anthony Bacon and find employ in the earl's growing secretarial establishment, a situation verging on danger as the only Jesuit to be so employed by any English privy councillor.[217] Burghley would not relent. His rhetoric stayed absolute against the Catholic threat. Yet, his son was able to negotiate a treaty with two Catholic

[210] See Letter No. 69 approving the work of Roger Aston and Sir Robert Bowes.
[211] Gajda, *The Earl of Essex*, 136–140, 214.
[212] Letters Nos 100, 127.
[213] See Anthony Bacon's dispatch of intelligence to the lord deputy, Sir William Russell, and their mutual reliance on Wright's testimonies of his intelligence and religious conformity, Birch, *Memoirs of the Reign of Queen Elizabeth*, II, 308–309.
[214] *HMCS*, vi, 431–432.
[215] John Snowden, see above, p. 28 n. 114.
[216] *HMCS*, vi, 283–284.
[217] Gajda, *The Earl of Essex*, 130–140.

powers, two thrones, without negligence or presumption; his work in 1598 on the 'Archpriest' controversy, and his greater affinity to 'ceremonialism' suggest that in all things he was not of his father's condition.

Burghley's care for the security of the realms was more than obliquely 'brytysh'. Yet nothing was sure. Following the death of the earl of Huntingdon in mid 1595, Burghley extended the Council of the North's warrants to hear the cases brought before them – letters patent of early 1596 shows Hutton chairing this group together with the bishop of Durham – Tobie Matthew, a sure Cecil controller of examination and intelligence – the earl of Cumberland, Lords Scrope and Eure, wardens of the Border marches, representatives from Berwick, York, Hull, Newcastle, and Carlisle.[218] The imagined borders of the wider archipelago indicate as much as Burghley himself would avow of his views on the eventual succession:

> I wishe it weare nowe afore hand, sent to him by order of hir ma[jes]ty hearbie to move him to take hart to him against the k[ing] of Spaines tirannous practizes, and particularlye at this time to require him to geve order to the hand as in the Northe part of his Realme,

The grouping of the Spanish incursions along the peripheries and into the heartland of the Queen's two realms was inseparable from Burghley's mental map of the Queen's kingdom. Burghley's concern over Ireland and possible Jesuit intelligence in 1595–1596 was to impose order in the Isle of Man and the coastal regions of the western coasts of Wales and Cheshire as well.[219] Referring to the fortification of Milford Haven, on 10 October 1595, he asked his son to inform the earl of Pembroke: 'which being uncertain may bring danger considering all Comen reportes from Spayne mak mention of the Haven'.[220] Burghley linked negotiations on Ireland and Scotland as a piece with the kinds of campaigns he had engineered against Persons and his fellow-writers.

[218]Letters Nos 79, 83. See also Letter No. 59; *CPR 38 Eliz. 1*, no. 1065. Huntingdon's remit was extended for the entire council to hear 'real and personal actions in cases where the poverty of one or both the parties impedes the ordinary execution of justice' – the membership of which included Privy Council links. Robert Beale was their secretary as well as a clerk of the Privy Council. Edward Stanhope, whose brother, Sir John, was master of the posts and treasurer of the Chamber, was also a member. Both men were close to both Burghley and Sir Robert Cecil and were viewed with favour. On occasion, they acted as messengers. See Letters Nos 45. 80, 94.

[219]Letter No. 66.

[220]Letter No. 64.

War and Ireland, 1595–1598

The Cecils cannot have predicted the impetus the Irish situation would take: £2 million pounds and thousands of men creating a virtual sinkhole of reputations – primarily Essex's – and resources, ending in 1602. Spanish war policy had shifted (sparing the Low Countries); and as the rebels increased in strength over 1595–1596 the weight of Burghley's mind in the letters had moved somewhat radically to Irish affairs. As the protracted negotiation and 'reduction' of the rebels failed repeatedly and the English war administration fell further into the morass, Burghley came to see the Queen as radically isolated, abandoned by those she had aided, France and the Low Countries. He was to characterize England's sole option as a concentration on gaining hold of the Queen's 'second realm', as 'havyng no hope nor apparence to be ayded by any other'.[221] However, in 1593, Ireland had not been foremost in anyone's mind in the Privy Council. In December 1593, while Zouche was being primed for his factional work at the Scottish court, Simon Willis had made a long list of reasons why no new assistance should go into Ireland until the spring. The rebellion there was just beginning. The French king's conversion and long series of abortive embassies from him – all handled by Cecil's correspondence – were nonetheless marked by crises. The English efforts in fulfilling the Treaty of Nonsuch with the States General of the Netherlands were under strain. In 1594 the collapse of the English system in Ireland was not anticipated.[222]

If Norris's move there from France in 1595 spelled a decisive move in retrospect, his officers were dispersed into commands secondary to existing Irish place-holders. What might have been a coherent military force with a strategy disappeared into the morass of Irish confusion. Burghley's concern for this situation, however rhetorical, ran against the concerns of those such as Essex who still rallied for continental commitment. This tension dominates the letters. Burghley was in support of Norris until his death in 1597, the best English military commander of experience. In 1595 lists of officers who had held command, notably foreign, since 1585 were drawn up for consideration by the Council. The dead and retired names subtracted still left a sizeable number of able officers. Captains with foreign experience were valuable, did not by statute interfere with trained bands in the shires or militia, and could, if needed, be persuaded to

[221] Letter No. 120.
[222] Rapple, *Martial Power*, 17.

Irish service. The lists may also have been devised as a way of tracking Essex's dominance of military matters.[223]

Cecil's counsel with the Queen was, by then, the primary source for Burghley's conservative ideas about expenditure. The later letters, 1596–1598, repeat Burghley's anxieties about a kingdom disabled with foreign military aid. Rising expense in Ireland and disputes with the States General in the Low Countries caused by the rumours of an imminent Franco-Spanish peace after 1596, were punctuated by the need for immediate relief for Henry IV in the Catholic League's attacks at Calais and Amiens in May 1596 and March 1597. Burghley wanted financial matters with the Dutch put on terms of the treaty and accounts rendered without the Queen shouldering undue burdens. These monies, he balanced against the rising cost of dealing with the Irish rebels O'Neill and O'Donnell: many of these letters relay Burghley's comments on estimates, decays, shortfalls, and needs emanating from Ireland, principally relating to Sir John Norris.[224]

As Burghley characterized Ireland, 'ther is no good newes'. Low Countries military estimates and indebtedness would be tied directly to Irish needs in Burghley's calculation as the Irish news worsened by mid decade: to find money out of an existing treaty which mandated approximately £120,000 a year for the cautionary towns and garrisons there meant arguing with the Dutch over privy seals lent but not repaid. Hence, much of the negotiations with the States General by Sir Thomas Bodley and others (Noel de Caron, the States General's English agent, and Sir Edmund Uvedale, the Queen's envoy to the *Raad van Staat*) were, privately, another aspect of the Irish debacle for Burghley.[225] On 12 May 1594 his comment on the Queen's unhappiness with Bodley's progress with the States and his return 'upon ther advise' was bleak: 'hir Ma[jes]ty is now also provoked in Irland to enter into a charg not estimable, wherto she hath no hop of any help, but of hyndrance by Spayne and otherwise'.[226] Burghley's letters here join the parts not always visible in the various classes of state papers. The States General would continue to press hard in negotiations with the Queen over the relative share expended in her cautionary towns and auxiliary forces against their common Spanish enemy, as peace between Spain and France was being rumoured in late 1596.[227]

[223]TNA SP12/252/ fols. 61r – 67v, 156r.

[224]Letters Nos 7, 9, 15, 17, 27, 33, 37, 38, 40, 47, 73, 75, 76, 81, 82, 91, 99, 103, 107, 123, 125, 132, 134, 135, 137.

[225]Letters Nos 36, 47, 63, 100, 107, 109, 112.

[226]Letter No. 47.

[227]Letter No. 109.

Burghley could relent in his drive to have Henry IV make good his debts: Burghley's extraordinary upset at the assault on Calais by the League in 1596 showed his financial concerns were tempered by strategic matters.[228] The capture of Amiens by Spanish and Leaguer forces in March 1597 saw him urging immediate supply, 'I wish hir Ma[jes]ty without delay whilest the fr[ench] k[ing's] Irons ar hott supply him nombres for 2 or 3 monethes'.[229] Once the money was sent, Henry IV continued his peace negotiations, knowing the Archduke Albert was without funds to continue the siege of Amiens, earning Burghley's terse comment: 'this chantyng of peace, is a song only to allure the Q[ueen's] Ma[jes]tie to yeld hym still aide of more men or monny or both'.[230] As for Bodley, Burghley may have suspected he was too close to Essex despite his usefulness as an ambassador. The disputes over the Queen's cautionary towns were augmented by criticism by the Queen's own servants: Sir Robert Sidney, governor of Flushing, had complained pointedly to Essex in these matters. His deputy, Sir William Uvedall, who returned to England in October 1595, was to be provided royal entrée and a long conversation with Cecil, 'being as I thinke unkowen to yowe, is one who hath longe served hir Ma[jes]tie both faithfullie and carefullie in his charge at Fflushing and in other services in the Lowe Contries'. Burghley's balancing of Sidney's complaint and Bodley's information included a command for a private royal audience with Cecil in attendance. For as he told his son, 'I have been more beholding to this gentleman for his often writing to mee than to anie other'.[231]

While continental matters flared occasionally in the uneasy moves towards French-Spanish peace in November 1596, the demands in Ireland were provoking dangerous conditions: 'therfor I pray yow whan tyme may serve yow, lett hir Ma[jes]ty know that I do send to heare of hir Ma[jes]ty's ammendment for by hir impediments to order hir affayres, all hir realme shall suffer detriment'.[232] This was not favouring Ireland over, for example, the Low Countries. When Sir Robert Sidney's repeated requests for assistance at Flushing in late 1597 were rebuffed by the Queen's desire to reduce her charge, Burghley expostulated, 'This lack of a resolut answer from hir Ma[jes]ty dryveth to the wall'. Elizabeth did not enjoy spending money, particularly on war. Cecil's difficult position in these many instructions from his father was to remind the Queen

[228]Letters Nos 89, 90–92.
[229]Letters Nos 115–117.
[230]Letter No. 117.
[231]Letter No. 62.
[232]Letter No. 108.

'hir people suffre great extremite for want of releff of monny and clothes'.[233]

It was only later that Norris's 'revocation' or redeployment of his forces from France through the Channel Islands into Ireland from late 1593 assumed great significance. The rising rebellion and beginning of the Nine Years War in 1594 was not yet fully in view. With hindsight and perspective Burghley's detailed projection of Norris's movement, outlined in Letter No. 14, would have far-reaching repercussions across negotiations with the Low Countries and France, and ultimately give rise to deep and irrevocable divisions on the Privy Council. Burghley referred to his son a 'barren' Irish letter as the Privy Council rift began to open.[234] He replied with pessimism to an equally unfortunate set of Irish dispatches as he returned them to his son.[235] The quarrels of the lord deputy, Sir William Russell, with Sir John Norris over precedence, policy, and jurisdiction were given over to Cecil as he had more energy and access to the Queen and Council to deal with their incessant bickering.[236] The Irish rift mirrored growing distemper in the Queen's Privy Council over deployment of limited resources.

In December 1595, once he arrived and was established, Norris was fully in enmity with Russell. Norris was receiving intelligence from spies formerly in Brittany and in Galway who sent reports of Spanish designs on Ireland, no longer strictly French matters.[237] Some of those men examined were former priests in the Low Countries who had served French Leaguers, such as the duke of Mercouer, with connections to Spaniards investigated by Cecil at the taking of the *Madre di Dios*.[238] Up to his death in 1597, Norris occupied a critical place in Burghley's calculations despite exceeding his warrant for command outside Connacht. Norris was not the Cecils' only connection: a wide variety of office-holders from the lord deputy and provincial governors and their colleagues and servants sent masses of letters which grew only larger and more complex during the year 1594. On 25 April 1594 Burghley was working closely with his son on these matters: 'I marvell that I heare not from yow concerning the letters to be sent into Irland wyther also I have in redynes some from myself'.[239] But the presenting issue was Burghley and the lord deputy, Russell, falling into open conflict, apparently over control of captains' nominations. Russell refused to let Burghley open his packets alone, implying someone

[233]Letter No. 112.
[234]Letter No. 61.
[235]Letters Nos 61, 75.
[236]Letter No. 76.
[237]Letters Nos 70, 76.
[238]See Letter No. 70.
[239]Letter No. 19.

(perhaps the Queen or Essex ought to be present) so, 'I have not opened . . . as upon a Caveat geven upon the last sent from thence' and they arrived sealed for Robert's reading of them to the Queen.[240] Burghley did open Russell's letters in late December 1594 but he was simply too ill to comment merely telling Robert of their import, papers 'to be nowe diligentlie perused'. In February 1595 Burghley refused personal replies to the lord deputy: 'without prescribing to him any direction until her Ma[jes]ty shall direct the same'; 'I send yow a Copy of my privat letter, which may be affirmed or controlled by a more Generall letter from the Connsell'. Burghley's particular views – mostly relating to the squandering of money – had to be heard in the context of the Queen's and Council's views when they were opened with trepidation in Dublin, presumably with his son's own increasingly large number of letters sent in the Dublin packet. On occasion, despite Burghley's regular receipt of Irish letters until his death, he was informed by his son of the Queen's wishes: in December of 1595, 'I am glad that hir Ma[jes]ty us disposed to send some monny into Irland where suerly there is great want a matter dangerous to be known to ye rebells . . . I send yow a form for a warrant wherin hir Ma[jes]ty may do well to allow some good rownd some'.[241] A month later, Burghley sent news of Ireland of 'great Dannger'.[242] Burghley and Cecil clearly supported Sir John Norris in his quarrels with the lord deputy into which they were drawn: 'I wish my Lord [Russell] had such skill or good Luck in his government as ther neded no advertisement or advise but from hym self'.[243]

Russell, Burghley's irritant, was recalled in 1597. The Cecils meanwhile cultivated Geoffrey Fenton, obtaining a crucial place for him on the Irish council. Emboldened by his new closeness to Cecil and Sir John Norris, in early 1596 Sir Geoffrey Fenton loyally attacked the lord deputy in a letter to the Cecils. He implied (as ever in Ireland) that Russell had an inflated view of his administrative powers and was acting high-handedly. Fenton's lengthy petition to the Privy Council called for a strict ordering of both the Secretary's and surveyor general's offices which may, again, have been a mirror of the Cecils' own plans for ordering the Queen's secretarial matters:

> The Queen in her special instruction dated Greenwich 26, 1585, appointed that her chief secretary in Ireland should have the making of all bills, warrants, and other writings to pass by the signature of the lord Deputy or other head

[240] Letter No. 27.
[241] Letter No. 73.
[242] Letter No. 75.
[243] Letter No. 91.

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governors there; but this is usurped from him by the deputies countenancing their private secretaries.[244]

In the margin of the manuscript is Fenton's instruction to Cecil that 'The Lord treaso[re]r's or your H[onour's] letter effectuallie written to ye new L Dep[uty] will suffyse for this', asking for the specific inclusion of a clause challenging any man's pretence or challenge 'to the same'. This makes the equation between Russell's removal and opening the way for Fenton as a powerful force in the Irish administration. Fenton and Norris were appointed by the Queen with the Cecils' strong support to investigate claims against the lord president of Connacht, Sir Richard Bingham – the captains' cabal having defeated him in his home territory.[245] Essex had cultivated Bingham, governor of Connacht since 1585, a 'licensed grotesque' whose lawlessness had saved the Crown money but whose disdain for the common law had earned repeated and lengthy investigations.[246] While Bingham was resuscitated with the earl's assistance, Norris's pre-eminence and explicit Cecilian favour was coupled with Fenton's control of paper.

But it was the Queen, not merely faction, who posed impediments (as in Calais in May 1596 and the Low Countries in late 1596) to ready supply, calling forth yet again Burghley's exasperation, 'if she shall still rest uppon stryct poyntes as I have noted she hath doone in all these Irish charges'.[247] Burghley saw that money, or at least the appearance of care, was vital in suppressing the rebel support. When the Queen finally proclaimed O'Neill and O'Donnell traitors in July 1596 he continued the theme 'therefor hir Ma[jes]ty must be forced for a present farder chardg, to proceede more rowndly with force than with words'.[248] These were very strong words, moving the Queen with profound emotion where Burghley could not 'expresse the grief to thinke of the dangerous estate of hir ma[jes]ties' Armie in Ireland', with money squandered and supply vanished, 'what great danger this maie be I doe trembell to utter, consideringe theie [the army] will force the Countrie with all manner of oppressions, rather than furnishe', an accurate assessment of how the Queen's parsimony was wasting her alliances as fast as her military resources.[249] Former close allies to the Crown, especially among the Old English families in the Pale, were

[244]Modernized spelling: *Acts of the Privy Council, 1597*, ed. J.R. Dasent (London, 1890–1964), 393.
[245]See Rapple on Bingham: *Martial Power*, 250–300.
[246]Ibid. 297.
[247]Letter No. 91.
[248]Letter No. 99, 16 July 1596.
[249]Letter No. 103.

now worryingly and anxiously seen to be moving into the penumbra of the rebels themselves.[250]

Burghley's reliance on Howard and Norris obliquely reflects Burghley's pointing away from Essex as the sole military adviser par excellence; he remained consistently loyal throughout Norris's long journey through the Scillies into Ireland, and after his arrival in April 1595, continued to be so, despite obstacles from the new Lord Deputy, Russell, in Dublin. Norris was, alone, 'reasonable'. Burghley's preference for Norris as the Queen's leading land commander doubtless rankled Essex. His theme was established in Letter No. 14 which carries throughout the letters here.[251] The sampling of these letters bears out Irish causes as definitively disorganized: there were 'allredy to manny lose men' in 1593.[252] In 1595, when Norris and Russell fought over nominations, Burghley cast about for suitable military leadership, 'there are noo Capt. in bogland than ar to serve with the ii M [2,000 men] whereof regard wold be had what shall become of them'.[253] Many of the 1595 Low Countries' captains who had moved with Norris into Ireland had no connection with previous Irish conflict, office-holding, or family affiliation there. The existing Irish captains were older, of long experience, and held considerable numbers of offices, lands, and local influence, or were of great family. In the summer of 1595 these Normandy troops were broken up and assigned to separate services as designated by the Irish Council.[254] Sir John Norris's anger with the lord deputy's decision to reduce the Irish companies from 19 to 12 in early 1595 was a battle over official powers.[255]

> And so I return to yow Sir Jhon Norrices letters wherby I see a manifest disiunction betwixt the L[ord] depute and hym and in on part I note that Sir

[250]Ruth Canning, 'James Fitzpiers Fitzgerald, Captain Thomas Lee, and the problem of "secret traitors": Conflicted loyalties during the Nine Years War, 1594–1603', *Irish Historical Studies*, 156 (2015), 573–594.

[251]For references to Sir John Norris's progress from Brittany to the Scillies and thence into Ireland: Letters Nos 13, 14, 17, 37, 40, 43, 48, 51, 54, 70, 76, 82, 91.

[252]Letter No. 9.

[253]Letter No. 40.

[254]This was a protracted process: see Burghley's directives to his son, Letter No 14, 7 Dec. 1593, in which the proposed move is debated in the Council and by the Queen. Sir John Norris's letters to Burghley dated 31 Oct. 1593, dated from Pontrieux: TNA SP 78/32/fols. 273r–274v; *L&A*, iv, Analysis: nos 277, 283, 397.

[255]The year before Russell had already moved to stop external nominations for Irish captaincies: Russell petitioned Cecil for the swift sending of money into Ireland in the packet of 12 Sept. 1594 in which he also asked for the Queen's further instructions on how to deal with the rebels, TNA SP 63/176/no. 16, fol. 47r. Six hundred men were sent in August, and Russell asked that no new captains be appointed as so many other petitioners begged places, *CSPI 1592–1596*, 264; TNA SP 63/175/no. 62.

> Jhon Norrice, was to bold to command the Companyes in the english pale for Wat[er]ford, with out assent of the deputie, for out of Monster he hath no sole authorite.

Then:

> 'I feare contynually evil desasters'.[256]

Yet, Norris was given the right to nominate 30 captaincies – a startling piece of patronage when the 1595–1596 lists of officers with 'foreigne service', then drawn under instructions by the Privy Council, are considered.[257] Norris's backing by the Cecils in Ireland from April 1595 had greater influence than the lacklustre Russell whose tepid Essexian connection capped an undistinguished military career. Nonetheless, the Irish situation was growing worse in particular areas, and in early January 1596 Burghley knew the forces had to be increased and improved.[258] By March, Russell had attempted to control correspondence on all matters: 'I understand that my L[ord] Depute hath gyven commandment by his french man, that no letters are to be suffred to pass owt of Irland to me, but by his L[ord's] own warrant, what his L[ord] meneth hereby I know not thogh I can probably gess, for herein yow ar also included'. Men were leaving at a higher rate than were being sent, 'so [Peter] proby [in charge of the Chester and Irish posts] wryteth to me'. Russell complained to Burghley: 'all his family ar sought out by me'; his dark reply to Sir Robert: 'I wish they did not deserve to be sought owt'. Sir Robert had already received his father's caution of 'great Dannger' in Ireland received in early January 1596: 'I leave to yow the perusal and impartyng of these Irish bad letters to hir Ma[jes]tie and the Connsell'. The draft of the Queen's scathing letter to Russell about gross financial mismanagement and the squandering of treasure by her Irish servants ended with a paragraph in Sir Robert's

[256]Letter No. 76. The previous Letters Nos 74 and 75 convey the terrible Irish news in January 1596. Russell's and Norris's enmity here reached a new pitch: Norris contravened the lord deputy's warrant for raising troops – particularly where his only jurisdiction for doing do was as lord president of Munster – and had also overstepped his jurisdiction in treating with the rebels.TNA SP 63/185/no 11, fol. 27r–v. Animosity between these men dated from the time of Norris's appointment (Norris to Cecil, 4 June 1595, TNA SP 63/180/no. 9, fol. 43v; *CSPI 1592–1596*, 323–326, 323). Russell bore the brunt of the Queen's displeasure over the loss of the fort at Monaghan, on top of other charges of incompetence he was concerned to deny (ibid.; TNA SP 63/185/fol. 31r, 186/no. 6, fols. 14r–16r). The earl of Essex apparently vilified Russell at every turn, *HMCD*, ii, 197–198. In Feb. 1596 Russell alluded to Sir John and Sir Thomas Norris's continued presence in Dublin, away from their respective charges in Ulster and Munster, TNA SP 63/186/fol. 196v; *CSPI 1592–1596*, 472. The two men were allied in the efforts in Armagh during that summer.

[257]TNA SP 63/179/no. 31, fol. 68r, Norris to Cecil, 14 Apr. 1595, his first mention of Russell.

[258]*CSPI 1592–1596*, 446.

own hand warning the lord deputy against Irish councillors using war treasure for private patronage.[259]

The war council in 1597 of Essex, Raleigh, and Howard was charged with bringing order to musters, army administration, supply and transportation. Financial reform had to be attempted in Ireland. In April 1597 a cognate commission under letters patent was appointed to examine the Irish and Low Countries' war accounts. Its members included the chief financial officers of the realm: significantly both Cecils, Sir Thomas Egerton (lord keeper), Sir John Fortescue (chancellor of the Exchequer), Lord North (treasurer of the Household), Sir William Periam (chief baron of the Exchequer) and Thomas, Lord Buckhurst. They were to examine Sir Henry Wallop's Irish account 'at his own charge' for 'sundry great sums'.[260] Of these, only North, a Cecil friend and privy councillor from 1596, is mentioned here, negotiating apparel with James Jolles for Ireland.[261] Burghley's Irish laments on missing or misappropriated funds sent to various officers – lord deputies, the treasurer at war, Sir Henry Wallop, Norris and other regional commanders – dovetailed with anxieties over the Low Countries' slowness in repaying their debts to the Queen and Henry IV's manifest self-interest in preserving his crown during continued Spanish occupation in Brittany and elsewhere.[262] The deep-seated problems of finance and supply of men at arms was never resolved in a systematic way – later innovations such as Irish bills of exchange and downgrading treasurers to less costly paymasters (as with William Meredith in the Low Countries from 1597) seemed stuck in an existing system of Irish official patronage and mismanaged accounts by venal captains. While Burghley deplored the captain who deliberately 'spoiled' the good soldier, righting the finances of war proved impossible so long as the various supply systems relied on contractors' profiteering and captains' wastage of the Queen's resources. A pivotal point came in 1593 with the discovery that Sir Thomas Sherley's Low Countries' accounts, then in the process of being declared at the Exchequer (where Burghley's former secretary Vincent Skinner was now an auditor in the prests) for 1585/6, and after, revealed extraordinary systemic peculation, far in excess of what might usually be expected of a treasurer – Henry Maynard was also partially implicated. Investigation for massive embezzlement had far-reaching financial repercussions for the government, captains, and

[259]Letter No. 75.
[260]*CPR 39 Eliz I*, no. 285.
[261]Letter No. 134.
[262]For a typical example of Burghley's excoriation of Henry IV's motives see Letter No. 63.

merchants.[263] Massive losses led to a long series of financial investigations into declared accounts lasting two decades – and included Sherley's bankruptcy once his inadequate lands were liquidated. Thence, the Low Countries' account ran under a lesser officer, William Meredith as paymaster in June 1597.[264] The Irish accounts would include bills of exchange after Wallop's death in 1599 (and final staggering indebtedness was calculated), as well as being remitted to a paymaster rather than a treasurer at war.

The war council's amity soon broke into enmity: Essex's first serious explosions seemed to occur within the military cabal of the council of war in 1597. Placing him in opposition to the Cecils, however, must be done with great care. Essex's working papers vanished or were burned at his downfall so the actual reforms he may have anticipated in Ireland and elsewhere can only be speculation. Indeed, until 1598 Essex seems curiously absent from the one arena which gave Burghley greatest anxiety: the letters here suggest that Essex's continental ventures were heavily offset by Irish rebellion by the time of Burghley's death, a position Essex could not reverse afterwards once Franco-Spanish peace was made without further large-scale relief for the Low Countries. Relief, such as that required in the catastrophic French loss of Amiens to the Spanish in 1597, was, however heavy, fitful, and crisis-driven. If Essex wished to support Henry IV in a massive campaign to rid Brittany and Normandy entirely of Spanish military he was unable to secure it before Robert Cecil went to France in February 1598. His vicious attack on the Queen in November 1597, turning his back on her, was probably the moment when she, and Burghley, realized the earl was incapable of trust.

Ireland, the Queen's 'second realm' posed intractable problems of loyalty, command, debatable alliances, and shifting borders; perhaps the dominance of Ireland in Burghley's calculation was simply that not a single European ally, no crowned head or army, would come to her aid. Events following the death of Philip II soon after Burghley's death in September 1598 bore out his instinct that, however the French, Dutch, and Spanish pursued an uneasy peace, Elizabeth, the great heretic queen, would not be spared continual Spanish aggression and Spanish cultivation of her rebels O'Neill and O'Donnell.

[263]Letters Nos 113 and 114. Sherley was importuning Cecil for favours into 1597 when the full extent of his wrongdoing was revealed; imprisoned with his goods and properties sold, his case implicated other suppliers such as William Beecher or Becher (see Letters Nos 113, 114), a City merchant Sherley sued on his account for nearly £19,000. *HMCS*, *viii*, 447–448. For Sherley, see ibid. 36, 177, 237, 313, 339, 367.

[264]*CPR 39 Eliz I*, no. 286.

The trajectory of opposition to Essex's coalescing support for the revived continental military strategies of Leicester and others in the 1580s forms a subtle but indelible counterpoint to the Lord Treasurer's private anxieties. Burghley, by contrast, saw 'no lykhood of peace' in July 1596 only the necessity of sending more money into Ireland; in August 1597 he rushed to his son the warrants for Irish apparel.[265] A day later he implored his son to send the Irish and Berwick warrants immediately 'ffor both theise hold the Quene's service in suspence untill by these warrants I may procede'.[266] Letter No. 132 is solely concerned with the form of warrants to be sent for Irish apparel as paid for out of the Exchequer by letters under Privy Seal, whereby the forces in Ireland are shown to have increased by 1,000 men over the August 27 warrants urged on Cecil by his father.[267] This last letter points to an escalation in military commitment towards the subjugation of the Irish rebellion. Moreover, Burghley stressed that the increase in payment was to be taken out of the new bands' pay, a usual procedure. A group of merchants appointed by the Crown had agreed to procure the necessary supplies for a certain price which would increase the Queen's profit by one-third of a penny.[268] Among the final letters are three strong motions by Burghley for the better ordering of Irish supply and musters.[269]

Burghley's mounting fears over the Irish systemic faults were derived from his encyclopaedic understanding of the places and offices the Tudor conquest had entailed, and his chosen military leader, John Norris, he saw as an Irish placeholder removed from direct control of the Irish council: 'For the boglish, I think if uppon the last direction Sir Jhon norrice shall be come awey, yet my opinion Contynueth for retyring the forces to the Isles, for which lyk comission wuld be gyven to Sir Jhon Norryce electu.'[270] In the Queen's 'establishment' out of the council in Dublin chaos reigned: in December 1593, Burghley sought to bring the war account into line with the sinecures and payments of offices, doubtless in the growing disorders coming to view in Sherley's accounts as well as the catastrophic shortfall in the ordinary revenue (cess) in the Pale.[271] 'And for the questions what somme of money might be reasonablie required I think 5 or 6000 £ [pounds] varie nedefull so

[265]Letters Nos 99, 124.
[266]Letter No. 125.
[267]Letter No. 132.
[268]Ibid.
[269]Letters Nos 134, 135, 137.
[270]For the threat to Sir John Norris's forces at this juncture, Wernham, *After the Armada*, 521.
[271]See Burghley's metaphorical reference above in Letter No. 10, 7 Dec. 1593, where Ireland was certainly a cause of 'fowle' weather with the Queen.

as Sir Henry Wallopp be moved to procure payment of the overplus of the Quene's ordinarie Revennue due there above al ordinarye ffees for officers of the Realm payd.[272] In the first case, Norris's 'revocation' was halted in the Scillies with Burghley's approval charged on a separate account. Burghley's estimates for future Irish expenses against the rebels, under Norris or any other commander, would produce a large shortfall in the ordinary revenue. Wallop's accuracy became pivotal for the first time since the Desmond rebellion in 1583 and he was completely unaware. When news of Tyrone's rising together with the rebel Maguire hastened the desire to relocate Norris and his officers to Ireland, Burghley sent his son the journal of the Irish marshal, Sir Henry Bagenal, in 1593 for a sense of the overall situation – which would coalesce into open rebellion and war soon thereafter.[273] Wallop's estimates and accounts were so parlous as to require his presence at court with a private meeting with Burghley.[274] Their conference had little effect thereafter in a worsening situation where treasure went missing and supplies disappeared.[275] Sir Robert Gardener, chief justice of the Queen's Bench in Ireland, was summoned in early 1596 to make sense of the Irish account: 'I send yow herwith ii bundells of Ireland letters and wrytyngs containing a chaos of matters to be Metamorphosed as I thynk into some perfection';[276] the Queen was too furious to receive Gardener.

The deepest fear, civil war, the entire second realm rising against the Queen, looked possible in October 1596.[277] Two thousand further men sent in October had no money for pay. Burghley's conclusion:

[272]The matter of paying the patentees of Ireland out of deteriorating Irish revenues was put to Burghley by the Irish treasurer at war Sir Henry Wallop (then at Hampton Court) on 6 Dec. 1593, when he expressed frustration that the entire revenues from Connacht went to Sir Richard Bingham, and those of Munster to Sir Thomas Norreys. *CSPI 1592–1596*, 190; TNA SP 63/172/no. 37. The expenses for these standing allowances were balanced against an extraordinary payment of five to six thousand pounds in December 1593 sent to pay the troops and garrisons. A Privy Council brief in Willis's hand, endorsed by Cecil discussed the question of proceeding with a campaign against the rebel Maguire, TNA SP 63/172/no. 43, fols. 234r–v, 235v. Cecil was waiting for the Queen's assent. But winter was not good for such a campaign as victualling and supplies were at a premium and very expensive. Money: (fol. 234v) 'of necessitie some money would be sent to Ireland, for all that was last sent is distributed the souldiers imprest'. This undated document is filed as early Dec. 1593.

[273]Letters Nos 27, 9, 8.

[274]Letters Nos 15, 33, 37, 38.

[275]Letters Nos 81, 82, 99.

[276]TNA SP 63/186/no. 79, fol. 249r, Burghley to Cecil, 22 Feb. 1596; and for Sir Robert Gardener, see Andrew Thrush and John P. Ferris (eds.), *The House of Commons, 1604–1629*, 6 vols (Cambridge, 2010), IV, 337–338.

[277]*HMCS*, vi, 356, Russell's letter to the Queen, 28 Aug. 1596.

'And thearebie the multitude of the Q[ueen s] loiall subiectes in the English pale tempted to Rebell'.[278]

In 1597 Burghley's growing exasperation was less with Essex's aggressive move to support continental war than with generally incompetent financial officers and military officers. His irritation in 1597 and 1598 was openly dismissive of English as well as Irish tactics. The extent to which Burghley's upset was rhetorical is open to question, for he was in no haste to send money to Ireland to be squandered. Burghley outlined his summary of the debacle: 'but I lament yt, to see the great wastes of people of the Inglishe, and of Armor and municion, and of the Contries charges in Leveinge to be soe great as it is'.[279] Burghley died shortly before the disastrous Battle of the Yellow Ford, the assault to provision troops at Lough Foyle within striking distance of Tyrone's troops in late summer 1598. Then followed outright barbarity by the English troops when supply arrived soon thereafter in September. Money had been inadequate for feeding and clothing his men. Munition was disappearing. The new lord deputy, Thomas 3rd Lord Burgh, had warned of this repeatedly: he wrote in desperation for more arms in early October 1597 just before his death. Burghley noted that he was stalled in responding to this need because of inadequate information, a tactic his son would use later with Essex's ill-fated army in 1599. Remarking on the 'decaie', presumably accounted for by dead pays and deaths among the soldiers with false accounting or theft: 'I knowe not howe the Capteins are excusable for their Armors and weapons which properlie do not die of anie disease'.[280] Maurice Kyffin, muster master, accused Sir Ralph Lane, muster master general, in a private letter to Cecil for 'still certifying my checks as his own' without due correction from above, 'living here in the midst of bribery and extortion', abetted by Burgh.[281] Burgh received a blistering letter from Cecil, as did Wallop who was perturbed by Burghley's 'offence' at his failures to administer the army. Robert Cecil undoubtedly echoed his father's calculations while on his French embassy, for in March 1598 he wrote (with John Herbert) of Henry IV's renewed plea to the Queen for enough resources to expunge his territories of Spanish troops:

> We finding in them this speech, did plainly let them know that her Majesty's fleets at sea and armies which have been sent to make a diversion of the enemy's forces, besides many other great charges in Ireland and elsewhere, have so much increased on her, as she would be well advised how to engage

[278] Letter No. 103.
[279] See Letter No. 127.
[280] See Letter No. 127.
[281] Lane to Cecil, *CSPI 1596–1597*, 391. For Kyffin (1555–1598), see *ODNB*.

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herself suddenly for others, especially seeing lieu of all that she had purchased for them, she never was yet remboursed of one half penny.[282]

A briefing paper for the embassy noted that those of the 'Religion' were panicking Henry IV away from the peace he so clearly desired but would not admit to during negotiations; meanwhile the *noblesse de robe* and other officeholders were desperate to pick up on peacetime revenues. Only the pro-Spanish nobility were to be watched as they pretended to love peace, but loved Spanish power more.[283]

Wallop's account was in complete disarray; another weapon for the Cecils to use with the Queen against him. He could not send anything for the Exchequer year ending September 1597, which caused Burghley great distress as he, with others, investigated his losses. Tyrone and his confederates had taken control of Ulster entirely, with massive inroads into Connacht, this partly because of Sir Richard Bingham's sequestration. Thus, two large musters were deemed imperative in the summer of 1598. Burghley, already very weak, castigated the Queen and Privy Council for their 'preposterous connsell' in arranging victuals after the troops had been sent.[284] Of the musters, he could not fathom why Lincolnshire men were being sent to Plymouth, and from Cornwall to Bristol by land 'which maie be done with ease by sea, wheare the other must marche over all the Land'.[285] The victuals arrived after Burghley died, in September 1598.

Cecil asked Essex, as earl marshal, in June 1598 for warrants for ordnance to be sent into Ireland: 'I have thought it my part to advertise you thereof that you may please to give direction for such things as appertain to the despatch, which being only incident to your lordship's place [master of the Ordnance in succession to Sir George Carew], I am forced to trouble you with this letter, which otherwise I would have foreborne in respect that I understand of your lordship's dislike to be cumbered with anything not necessary'.[286] A radical shift at Burghley's death was already anticipated; Essex's apparent lack of interest here must be offset by the hundred horse sent from Carmarthenshire for the Irish offensive – the Welsh supply was timely and connected to the earl's own influence. But the earl had not held a major office of state until 1597 when he exercised control over military direction arguing for the high aristocratic office following Lord Nottingham's

[282] *HMCS*, viii, 110, Cecil and Herbert to the Privy Council, 27 Mar. 1598.
[283] *HMCS*, viii, 7–9.
[284] See Roger Houghton to Cecil, 25 Mar. 1598, *HMCS*, viii, 102.
[285] Letters Nos 134, 137.
[286] *HMCS*, viii, 285, Cecil to Essex. Burghley had received the warrants as lord lieutenant of Lincolnshire, Hertfordshire and Essex, 18 July 1598, ibid. 264.

recent elevation to an earldom. During early 1598 Essex continued to champion the Low Countries' causes as most significant for England, while pro tem Secretary because Cecil was in France.[287] A hint emerges of Essex's fatigue and upset over the continued Franco-Spanish peace effort as Ireland took highest priority in Burghley's and the Queen's calculations. Cecil's remark suggests Essex found the work of reforming the military hard, if not impossible, particularly as Burghley's last missives pledge commitment to the Irish wars. Burghley was consumed by the defeat of the Queen's rebels. Ireland remained firmly outside the earl's sights as Burghley died, truly 'not necessary'.[288] Essex went into a long absence from court and Council lasting until September 1598.[289]

After lengthy treatises by his innermost circle decrying Spanish peace as disastrous and ideologically abhorrent, the current moved strongly in another direction: 'it is possible to comprehend how Essex became so easily and unswervingly convinced that a Cecilian faction plotted to divert the succession of the crown to Spain, and was so quick to identify the secretary – with unparalleled access to the Queen and power on the council – as England's deadliest enemy'. Essex's concept of Cecil had begun to conflate his secretarial dominance of the Queen, a weak tyrant whose establishment rejected the Essexians, with the despotic power of the Spanish crown, thus a mere *Irish* war against Spanish-backed rebels took energy from the wider case against the growing authoritarianism of his own Queen. Essex's alliance with Dutch republican rejection of the archdukes conformed to this 'hardened' direction at the very end of Burghley's life.[290] Alexandra Gajda's reconstruction of Essex's policies at this time grounded in pro-continental war ideological tracts frame Burghley's last letters as tacitly and resolutely opposed to Essex.

[287]Gajda, *The Earl of Essex*, 98–99.

[288]Gajda, *The Earl of Essex*, 101 on Essex's failure in Low Countries' policy as a platform for war against Spain, which may have caused Cecil to be cautious in approaching the earl. The earl dismissed Ireland: 'a miserable, beggarly *Irish* war'. Gajda's discussion of the treatises pro-peace and pro-war, noted Essex's partisans continued strong language about the despotism of Philip II. When the Spanish king died a month after Burghley, the Irish war continued. Cecil, the Queen and others supported peace on the continent with the Archdukes Albert and Isabella. Gajda discusses these treatises, Cecil's comment on the 'coldness' of England's Dutch allies, with the eventual establishment of the archdukes in Brussels, friendly to Elizabeth, ibid. 103–107. This turn represented the final, bitter, continental policy defeat before Essex's isolation from the Council and before his taking the Irish command in Apr. 1599.

[289]Ibid. 98–99. Essex was made master of the Ordnance in 1597, a position he used to better relations with Noel de Caron, and with the Queen's principal military there, to no avail.

[290]Ibid. 107.

P.M. Handover commented on Burghley's death that 'a monolith had fallen':[291] it left the Queen and Essex, particularly, inconsolable. The earl's political career would not recover from his *lèse-majesté*. Indeed, the patronage and intellectual tone of his coterie would rail against Cecil and the Queen, bringing Essex's failure in Ireland into open rebellion, events which cannot have been adumbrated in Burghley's incessant Irish policies in the last months of his life. Nonetheless, the letters here illustrate the financial weight of his calculations and those of his son moving against further continental commitments, as championed by Essex and some of his followers. The Cecils were clearly working on the Queen's psyche over the potential loss of her second realm and the attendant chaos in her Protestant estate. The extent of their direction cannot be underestimated here.

The Queen would not hear Burghley's name spoken and was often in tears in the months after his death. But the psychological effect on Cecil himself must have been the greatest. He would have been both relieved and deeply bereft on his father's peaceful death. But there would have been an extraordinary change in the way in which he worked and negotiated the court. Cecil, of course, inherited the firm control of paper and policy his father had bequeathed. But as the 'polarization(s)' of court, Ireland, Council and personal enmities grew worse, Cecil seemed to withdraw without his father's more social and avuncular presence (despite the great infirmity of his last years). These letters illustrate the extraordinary piling up of work, policy, and influence. Together they give a glimpse of an extraordinary dynastic succession in English, indeed 'British' administration. Whether the verdict of Essex's followers rings true, that there was a strong verge to a more absolutist control of the royal prerogative, is not within the remit of this edition. What can be said in conclusion is that if there was the distance Burghley urged so often that councillors and prince must have, it was occasionally occluded for observers; indeed, at times it appeared to disappear in the years after 1598.

The Provenance of CUL MS Ee.3.56

The correspondence between Burghley and Cecil forms a single volume catalogued as Cambridge University Library Manuscript Ee.3.56. It measures 7⅞ inches by roughly 12 inches (20 cm × roughly

[291] Handover, *The Second Cecil*, 179.

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30 cm), bound in quarter-calf, with the spine bearing metal letters, 'ORIGINAL LETTERS'. The numbering of each letter was made on the upper right of the first page of each letter, without any foliation. It came to Cambridge University Library by way of the Royal Library in 1715 through the collection of Bishop John More, one of the greatest benefactors of the University's collections. He had owned it since at least 1697 when it was first catalogued in his collection. These are the basic facts of the volume's known existence. The collection of the manuscripts as bound gives the impression that whoever found the original Burghley-to-Robert Cecil manuscripts together may have done so from a massive archive and bound the papers in a somewhat provisional, even hasty, manner. Their chronology is imprecise, suggesting that the present volume was not meant to be its final and complete form but rather a temporary container for a unique cache of papers.

The present edition is not the first printing of many of the manuscripts here. Twenty-two were published in 1732 by Francis Peck in his *Desiderata Curiosa*[292] and with forty-four by Thomas Wright in 1838.[293] Neither editor had recourse to the massive Cecilian archives elsewhere which remained uncalendared and uncatalogued until the 1850s and after. Nor were these editors really interested in or able to place the letters within these wider archival remains: their sole purpose was to present largely unadorned primary documents together with often unrelated materials. As Peck's title suggests, the pieces were, by the 1730s, a 'curiosity' among other remains: funerary monuments, Burghley's will, manuscripts then in circulation including two lives by contemporaries, probably secretaries, one of which Peck transcribed and printed. There must have been a market for Burghley materials for an edition of the so-called 'Anonymous Life' (far more accessible) was done by Arthur Collins, also in 1732.[294] Wright's glib commentaries suggest that his interest was part antiquarian and part entertainment. He may have made his transcriptions as a student at Trinity College,

[292] Francis Peck, *Desiderata Curiosa: or, A Collection of Divers Scarce and Curious Pieces . . . Volume the First. Containing, I. The complete Statesman, exemplified in the Life and Action of Sir William Cecil, Lord Burghley, Lord High Treasurer of England in Queen Elizabeth's Time; largely setting forth both his public and private Conduct. With many Notes from his own MS. Diary, and other Authors [together with 29 other tracts named on the title–pages and] many other Memoirs, Letters, Wills, and Epitaphs; amounting in all to above 150 curious Articles; all now published from original MSS, communicated by eminent Persons* (London, 1732).

[293] Thomas Wright, *Queen Elizabeth and Her Times: A Series of Original Letters, Selected from the Inedited Correspondence of the Lord Treasurer Burghley, the Earl of Leicester, the Secretaries Walsingham and Smith, Sir Christopher Hatton . . .* 2 vols (London, 1838), II.

[294] Smith, *The 'Anonymous Life'*; Arthur Collins, *The Life of that Great Statesman William Cecil, Lord Burghley, Secretary of State in the reign of King Edward the Sixth, and Lord High Treasurer of England in the Reign of Queen Elizabeth* (London, 1732).

Cambridge in the 1820s working in the Dome Room of the Old Schools where the volume of letters had been placed since 1756. How he located the volume or knew of it is unknown.[295]

Scholars have used the letters in CUL MS Ee.3.56 but without extended annotations of the Cecils' transfer of dynastic power with reference to the extensive official record both men left. Conyers Read's work on Burghley in the 1960s was the first work where the papers were brought to notice. Paul Hammer and Stephen Alford consulted the originals in their work on the major players in late Elizabethan political culture as evidence of the Cecils' role in the 1590s.[296] The letters have never been edited nor their content contextualized in a wider Cecilian and late Elizabethan sense of their material production. The reason is partly geographical and their relatively obscure placement away from the main Cecil archives at Hatfield, the British Library and the National Archives. By contrast, CUL Ee.3.56 is an archival outlier.

The Cambridge volume was catalogued as part of Bishop John Moore's library at Ely Place in Holborn in 1697 by Edward Bernard as number 9229.[297] Moore's collection, by instruction in his will of 1714, was not to be broken up. Hence this volume went with it to Cambridge when King George I purchased and donated the entire collection as a gift to Cambridge University, part of a truly 'national collection', at the urging of Viscount Townshend the University's chancellor.[298] CUL MS Ee.3.56 bears the original bookplate designed by John Pine in 1737 for what was called the Royal Library as the Moore collection given by the king was known. Moore's library may have been accessioned then or later when the collection was mixed into the existing Library holdings in 1756, for the volume also bears the number 43, an earlier accession mark possibly dating from Moore's ownership.[299] The clean pages of

[295]Jayne Ringrose, 'The Royal Library: John Moore and his books', in Peter Fox (ed.), *Cambridge University Library: The Great Collections* (Cambridge, 1998), 78–89.

[296]Stephen Alford, *Burghley: William Cecil at the Court of Elizabeth I* (New Haven, CT, and London, 2008), 315–331; Hammer, *Polarisation of Elizabethan Politics*.

[297]*Catalogi Librorum Angliae et Hiberniae in unum Collecti cum Indice Alphabetico*, ed. Edward Bernard (London, 1697), 375. See also CUL MS Oo.7.50 2 for Edward Tanner's additional notes for books and manuscripts after 1697 in Moore's collection.

[298]After protracted debate on its price and importance with the 2nd earl of Oxford, Edward Harley, and his librarian Humfrey Wanley, see Ringrose, 'The Royal Library', 87.

[299]There were great riches in what the king had purchased for the Royal Library. John Moore, bishop of Ely, was said to have amassed 30,755 volumes, of which 28,965 were books, and 1,709 were manuscripts. In 1702 Bishop William Nicolson of Carlisle described it as filling five rooms with additional closets in Ely Place in Holborn. Burghley's extraordinary letters cannot have occasioned particular interest in a library which included an 8th-c. MS of Bede's 'Historica Ecclesiastica'.

the volume attest to its rarely being consulted with only a small filament of dirt at the very edges of the creamy stock paper used by Burghley.

The first person to use the volume at Cambridge was probably the Revd Thomas Baker, non-juring fellow of St John's College, and indefatigable transcriber of the University's manuscript collections.[300] Baker or a friend (possibly his protégé Zachary Grey) found the volume amidst the deep chaos of the Royal Library in the 1720s probably with the aid of Bernard's *Catalogi*. No plans remain for the physical arrangement of the Moore bequest, but it was a shambles. Baker copied from the volume itself likely kept in his rooms at the indulgence of Conyers Middleton, University Librarian.[301] These transcriptions, in his idiosyncratic hand, fill eighteen consecutive pages, his marginal notes on the transcriptions refer to 'Manu. W.B' or, occasionally, 'Manu. G. B'.[302]

Baker sent one copy to John Strype (1643–1737) the ecclesiastical historian whom he greatly admired, then in his mid eighties, going blind and no longer hunting for new materials having abandoned his projected biography of William Cecil. When sending the copy to Strype on August 9, 1729, Baker wrote:

> I have lately met with a small Volume of original Letters, from 1592 to 1598, from Lord Burleigh to his Son Sir Robert Cecill, which belonged to the late Bishop of Ely, (Dr. Moore) you may probably have seen these already, however

[300]Thomas Baker, 1656–1740, non-juror in 1687, deprived 1717, but remained a fellow until his death, made 42 folios of manuscript copies, and contributed heavily to *Athenae Cantabrigiensis*. According to his nephew and executor Richard Burton writing to Philip Williams, senior fellow of St John's: 'XXIIII Folio Volumes are bequeathed to Lord Oxford [from whom these were bought by the British Museum and are catalogued in the Harleian MSS., see pp. 107–108] XV Folios and III Quartos to the University Library, to the College Library all such Books, printed or manuscript as he had, and were wanting there. From whence the College seems to claim every Book in my Uncle's Study, of which they have not the same Edition, which in my Opinion is extending the Word a little too far', Robert Masters, *Memoirs of the Life and Writings of the Late Rev. Thomas Baker, B.D. of St. John's College in Cambridge, from the papers of Dr. Zachary Grey* . . . (Cambridge, 1784) 86.

[301]David McKitterick, introduction, in Fox, *Cambridge University Library*, 9: 'In the eighteenth century, and thanks especially to Conyers Middleton, who in 1721 was appointed to care for Moore's books, increasing emphasis was placed on the care and study of the early printed books.'

[302]Collins's volume makes a complete 'Burghley-Cecil' publication, with the life, some letters, inscriptions; Peck, inexplicably, includes with the *Anonymous Life* of William Cecil ('The Complete Statesman') and his letters to Robert, other letters from Bishop Chaderton, an account of Sir Robert Cecil's death and that of Prince Henry, before moving on briskly to some letters of Thomas Hobbes, an account of a Saxon massacre of some Danes, and an exhumation of 'Some Great Person'. One writer called the entire publication badly 'mangled', *ODNB*.

> I will send you a Copy of the last Letter, rather as a Curiosity than of Use. By that you will judge whether you have seen the rest.[303]

This enclosure would become CUL MS Ee.3.56, No. 138, the final letter in the volume in its present condition. Baker seemed to think Strype knew of the letters: the word 'probably' speaks to Moore's long acquaintance with Strype and the Bishop's high regard for him. David McKitterick's invaluable tracking of the Moore bequest shows the two men were very close by this stage, Moore providing manuscripts for Strype's *Cranmer* of 1693. Strype praised his patron in 1711:

> And besides, You have got me the sight of other valuable Manuscripts. Whereby I must gratefully acknowledge the considerable Improvements I have made in my Searches into the Historical affairs of this Church, when it first began to reform Abuses, and to vindicate it self from *Rome*, and as it happily proceeded under our two first Protestant Princes'[304]

In effect, Baker was assuming Strype had seen the letters for he would have known of his great debt to Moore. Strype had been an occasional recipient of Baker's copies since 1709. Doubtless Strype gave some answer to Baker's question but it has not survived. The two men worked together in 1730 editing the final version of the last volume of Strype's *Annals* for publication with Baker's student, Zachary Grey, compiling the index.[305] Strype printed two letters, Nos 66 and 138, in the final volume in the 1731 *Annals*, probably from this collaboration with Baker and Grey.[306]

Strype's assiduous compilations and arrangement of manuscripts relating to Elizabeth and her church, drew him to Moore's library from 1697. The question as to what the letters and their binding looked like at this juncture may be asked, for several reasons. The present volume may not have been exactly the volume which Moore had purchased or been given some time before 1697. Baker describes the manuscript as 'small'. Edward Bernard in his *Catologi* of Moore's library in 1697 records no. 9229 as 'A large volume of original letters of the Lord Treasurer Burleigh to his son Sir Robert Cecil'. Whether the

[303]Printed in Masters, *Memoirs*, pt. 1, 58–59.

[304]David McKitterick, *Cambridge University Library, A History: The Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries* (Cambridge, 1986), 84, see also 81–86.

[305]Masters, *Memoirs*, pt. 1, 58, 66–67.

[306]Strype printed the last Burghley holograph, CUL Ee.3.56, no. 138, in his *Annals of the Reformation and Establishment of Religion, and Other Various Occurrences in the Church of England, During Queen Elizabeth's Happy Reign* (London, 1725–1731) iv, 343: 'This was transcribed from volume of Original Letters of the L. Burghley to his Son, Sir Robert Cecil, remaining among the MSS of Dr. More, late Lord Bishop of Ely, now in the Cambridge Library', which follows the original on the dorse in Henry Maynard's hand: 'My L[ord's] last letter that ever he [The Lord Burghley] wrote with his own hand'.

volume was large in number of manuscripts, or small in dimensions, is subjective. Excisions and fragments of lost letters do beg the question when and how CUL MS Ee.3.56 was left in its present state. Whether the letters were numbered when Baker transcribed them (or he numbered them himself) is not known – no formal table of contents fronts the volume. Letter No. 119 is a partial clue as it was cut out after the numbering.[307] The tiny fragment of the dorse of Letter No. 119 remaining in CUL MS Ee.3.56 is dated 9 July 1597. There may well have been others cut out for which no dorse or date remains.[308]

If the numbering in this volume was done at the point of accession to the Royal Library in 1715, which there is little reason to suppose, there were further removals and oddities which Baker may have noticed in 1729. There remains a fragment of an excised letter between Nos. 34 and 35 which bears the date '24 Dec. 1594';[309] a fragment in the crease between Nos. 65 and 66 reads 'My l[ord] about Provisions' in Robert Cecil's hand where the dorse for No. 65 is intact. Thus two letters, one certainly from Burghley to Cecil, were removed after the present binding. Immediately before No. 97 a piece of paper approximately half an inch wide runs from top to bottom without writing; a similar strip between Nos. 113 and 114 runs about four inches (10cm) from the top to the middle of the crease. These last two papers may have been part of a re-bound volume. A strange note on the dorse of No. 33 reads 'I think Sath God', with a doodle – similar to those found in Volume 120 of the Lansdowne Manuscripts in Strype's hand – but this is not certain. There is a list of Scottish nobles on the dorse of No. 40 done in pencil, but when it was done or why is unknown as it does not relate to the letter's contents. Pencil marks are found on letter 124. A much later hand, not secretarial, adds the address to letter No. 115. A very tiny '53' has been written in a way unique to these letters on the upper right side of letter No. 56. The accessioning handwriting on the bookplate is the same as, for example, the Moore copy of Bede's *Historica Ecclesiastica*. A stray note on No. 1, the 1564 letter to William Phayre, looks very much like John Strype's handwriting: 'A pacquett of old matters', is a rather odd note for a man whose life was full of such packets, but doubtless written before the letters were bound.

[307] Baker's transcriptions in CUL MS Mm.1.43 have a table of contents on the first page (p. 1) of the copies given on pp. 2–19 called 'Letters [Original] to from Lord Burghley'.

[308] A tiny fragment of the dorse remains: '9 July 1597'. The Lansdowne MSS are full of references to the affair of Dr. Baro's incendiary sermon at Cambridge, including letters in Vol. 80 from John Jegon, then vice-chancellor of the University.

[309] Maynard to Cecil, 23 Dec. 1594, *HMCS*, v, 16–17, 46 notes Burghley was unable to write, but gave his opinion to the Queen on how the forthcoming embassy to the Hanse, Danzig, could be funded by the Merchant Adventurers.

Baker wrote a second letter, probably also in 1729, to the Revd Francis Peck, an antiquarian of Stamford Baron, who was then undertaking an edition whose precise purpose remains unclear; a vastly expensive and idiosyncratic magpie volume containing Cecil-related materials. *Desiderata Curiosa* would appear in 1732 with Baker's transcriptions from the present volume.[310] The letters were first published not by Strype but the obscure Peck, a project which had Strype's full endorsement. Baker's copies of twenty-two of the CUL MS Ee.3.56 letters from Burghley to Cecil would be printed in Peck's immensely grand volume, more suitable for an editor whose frontispiece announced he was 'natus' in Stamford. Peck never saw the original manuscripts, and used Baker's copies, thanking him for his role in providing the twenty-two letters and together with more sent by Baker: 'all which (as also Sir Peter Warburton's letter to the Lord Burghley and Anonymous to Bishop Jegon) the said Mr. Baker most kindly gave me leave to write out from his own manuscript copy'.[311]

The provenance of CUL MS Ee.3.56 prior to it being listed in Bishop Moore's library can only be speculated upon, as there are no specific details provided in the manuscript itself. The volume may have been put together by John Strype, who bound together correspondence associated with his publishing enterprises. For example, the correspondence for a projected 'life' of Dr Samuel Knight was bound. This was later found in a house belonging to Knights' heirs which had been bought by John Percy Baumgartner who gave it to Cambridge University Library in the 1860s and these can be seen in CUL Add. MSS 1–10 today. Further insights into how Strype arranged his papers can be seen from his will. This set out in detail for his executrix how he had organized the bundles of papers and 'dealboxes' in his possession. On one side of his study were 'all the rest of the Manuscripts loose Papers or bound in Pastboard remaining in any place of my Study in Chest or Box or elsewhere do belong to me'.[312] Perhaps Strype sold the 'pacquett' to Moore during his financial

[310] I am assuming Peck received the copies at the same time Baker sent no. 138 to Strype. He tended to send things in batches.

[311] Masters, *Memoirs*, pt. 1, 60: 'Mr. Baker sent Mr. Strype likewise a long Account of Dr. Peter Baro, Margaret Professor of the University of Cambridge, and of his Family, which is barely mentioned in his fourth Volume of the Annals of Queen Elizabeth . . . These letters were afterwards published by Mr. Peck in Desid. Curiosa, Lib V, and the Account of Dr. Baro shall have a place in the Appendix.' Peck's letter of Bishop Jegon, printed in *Desiderata Curiosa* is no. XXXI in Book V and dates from 1601. It appears in the middle of the Burghley transcriptions for no apparent reason. Baker's dedication is found in *Desiderata Curiosa*, Preface, p. v.

[312] TNA PCC PROB 11/686/455.

difficulties in the 1690s and to gain access to other treasures at Ely Place in the bishop's collection.

While CUL Ee.3.56 is not precisely bound in pasteboard, its calf-skin binding covers cardboard, a rather rudimentary structure, strong, with the bifolium letters unfolded, some missing dorses, Burghley's small red seals broken and removed (as the letters were unfolded by Cecil or his secretary), and arranged carefully into the book. They were handled with great care. Their slightly haphazard chronology, removals and seemingly odd inclusions suggest that whoever chose the papers perhaps created a provisional volume for copying and circulation. Indeed, they might have been bound once only before 1697 with no further re-binding. CUL MS Ee.3.56 bears little resemblance to bindings of Strype's letters, for example.[313]

Nonetheless, Strype did have access to the greatest number of Burghley's manuscripts anywhere outside the State Paper Office (and possibly Hatfield House). He was sometime vicar at St Mary's Church at Low-Leyton in Essex, where the Hickes family at Ruckholt were the local squires. They were among the descendants of Sir Michael Hickes, Lord Burghley's patronage secretary. Sir Michael either took these papers or was given them following Burghley's death, probably 1599–1600, perhaps to work on what may well have been his biography of Burghley, the manuscript published twice in 1732 as the 'Anonymous life', written in the late 1590s.[314] His descendant, Sir William, 2nd baronet, still owned these papers at Ruckholt when Strype went there in 1669 which, after a fashion, he came to 'own'.[315] A great many of the papers were never opened in Strype's lifetime, as can be seen today by their numberings in the famed Lansdowne Manuscripts, volumes 1–122, in the British Library to which their eponymous owner's executors sold them in the early 1800s. Other than jottings, doodles and long partial notes including filing in his complex cipher, Strype's organization of the papers is guesswork – probably chronologically. After Ruckholt was torn down in 1724 it is safe to assume the remaining papers came to Strype.

Richard Chiswell, sometime printer to the Royal Society was also Strype's printer, notably of the unprofitable *Cranmer* in 1694 (using the Hickes' papers) after which further joint ventures between the two

[313]These bindings may have been re-done later when after Baumgartner's bequest.

[314]Smith, *The 'Anonymous Life'*.

[315]Thereafter Sir James West bought them from Strype's estate and added to them, as did Sir William Petty who purchased them from West's estate, the collection having burgeoned to ten times the size of the original 121 vols of Sir Michael Hickes's – and Strype's – archive. These were sold to the British Library in 1804 where they were catalogued 1812–1819 and bound in their present form as the Lansdowne Manuscripts.

men ceased.[316] Chiswell claimed to have bought the entire collection from Sir William Hickes in 1682.[317] There followed a seriously disputed division of the ownership and use of the manuscripts set down at length in Strype's 1737 will – at some point Chiswell promised a sum of £50 to Strype in return for clean transcriptions and annotations for publication on the understanding that Chiswell remained trustee. Chiswell did not pay and Strype did not yield the papers – if he had custody of them. CUL MS Ee.3.56 may have been made up out of Sir William Hickes' manuscripts by Strype, sent thence to Chiswell for printing but retained to make good Strype's debt, and sold to Moore to realize his loss.[318] There had once been good reason for trust: Chiswell – who bought a great deal at the 1687 Ailesbury sale – together with Strype purchased a rare copy of a translation of Eusebius' *Ecclesiastical History* which Strype used when compiling materials on martyrology. Chiswell had already collaborated on a magnificent and virtuosic edition, the vast two-volume *Works* of John Lightfoot edited by Strype in 1684. Either Strype or Chiswell could have sold these manuscripts to the bishop; Chiswell out of spite having no further use for them, Strype to gain further favour with Moore and because he was resolved on pain of legal action by Chiswell to keep them out of print. But this is all speculation.

This speculation links the largest collection of Burghley's papers with Moore at a time when the Hickes' papers were going somewhat underground at least until Chiswell died in 1711 after which they appeared with frequency in the *Annals of the Reformation*. The rift with Chiswell in 1694–1696 may have prompted Strype's renewed search for papers in fear that Chiswell would go to law over the papers already in Strype's possession at Ruckholt, papers which he never yielded up, a fear reflected in his will over forty years later.

The provenance of the letters and how they came into Moore's possession may not have been connected with Strype's enterprises. Moore, or one of his agents, might have bought the volume at the Ailesbury sale in November 1687. The vast auction of the library of Robert Bruce, earl of Ailesbury was arranged by his widow, the dowager countess Anne, an heir of Burghley's through the Exeter line. Some of these books and papers were possibly part of the Burghley

[316] Richard Chiswell (1639–1711), an eminent London printer, was named in 1681 by the Royal Society as printer for five vols of the *Transactions*. See Charles A. Rivington, 'Early printers of the Royal Society, 1663–1708', *Notes and Records of the Royal Society*, 1984, 1–27, 12.

[317] Strype owned a copy of the Lawrence Nowell-Burghley atlas, today BL Additional MS 62540 which he bought from Hickes and sold to Chiswell in 1682. See BL Stowe, 1056 catalogue of James West's collection, bought from Strype's estate.

[318] *Tudor Church Reform: The Henrician Canons of 1535*, ed. Gerald Lewis Bray (Woodbridge, 2005), lxiii. See also Strype's will, TNA PCC PROB 11/686/455.

House library at the house in the Strand where Burghley and Sir Robert Cecil both lived in the 1590s. David McKitterick's work on Moore's collections notes that he did buy at the 'Cecil' collection auction. The Ailesbury sale catalogue announced the contents as unique in two ways:

> The first is, that it comprises the main part of the Library of that famous Secretary William Cecil, Lord Burghley: which consider'd must put it out of doubt, that these Books are excellent in their several kinds and well-chosen. The second is, That it contains a greater number of Rare Manuscripts than ever yet were offered together in this way, many of which are rendred the more valuable by being remarked upon by the hand of the said great man.[319]

'Remarked upon' does not describe original letters, of course, and Burghley made notes on nearly everything he read.

A third possibility, other than Strype and Chiswell's dispute or the Ailesbury sale, appears in Strype's correspondence received 1694 to 1696 from Robert Martin, rector of two Stamford churches. Strype was then serious about writing a life of Burghley and asked his old acquaintance about Burghley House manuscripts owned by the earl of Exeter, especially of any in Burghley's hand; the earl was the descendant of Burghley's elder son, Thomas Cecil (1542–1623), the second baron Burghley (later earl of Exeter, 1605). Martin's cagey replies survive, a dozen of them. Strype somehow knew Martin had a connection with the steward in the earl's household. Martin and Strype were friends from St Catharine's College, Cambridge in the early 1660s. Martin, with his Bertie family affiliation in Stamford, occupied a vastly different position, as he put it 'in the Shades'. By 1696 he used his replies to educate the metropolitan Strype, of Stow's *London*, to the more politically complicated local legacy of William Cecil. Strype, in turn, wanted to know of John, 5th earl of Exeter, the provenance of royal gifts out of the Dissolution to the Cecil family in the area, a topic which understandably caused umbrage.[320] Martin criticized Burghley at every turn with the vehemence of a country Tory: his livings had been seriously depleted, by that 'puritan

[319] *Bibliotheca illustris, sive, Catalogus variorum librorum in quâvis linguâ & facultate insignium ornatissimae bibliothecae viri cujusdam praenobilis ac honoratissimi olim defuncti [William Cecil] libris rarissimis tam typis excusis quàm manuscriptis*, [London, 1687?], 262.

[320] Clearly the provenance of the estate lands still caused sensitive feelings in the earl, for this was the only blot on the great man's memory, a suspicion which he assured Martin through his Steward lived on by reason of 'Papisticall Recriminacion', No. 143, Baumgartner MS, CUL, Add. 2. Answers came slowly from Burghley House, No. 144, of 13 Sept. 1694. In Dec. 1694 the mystery of Nassabergh hundred was finally pried from the earl: as Martin commented on the reverse of his letter, 'you may gett all the proper Satisfaction, as to every one of your Queryes from the Mr. of the ye Rolls'.

Demagog you so admire' buying up or gaining royal gifts of former monastic lands. The former glebe now provided Burghley's heir, the probably crypto-Catholic Exeter, with money for vast improvements to his ancient house, at the expense of the clergy, and forced him to be in receipt of a pension from Dr Busby's fund. Worse, Martin knew Strype and his manuscripts made him indispensable in Low-Leyton by his histories in the height of William III's early reign, patronized by Archbishop Tenison, and Moore's patrons, the Finch family – of the 2nd earl of Nottingham – pilloried by Martin for their lavish new £40,000 house at Burley-on-Hill, a former Cecil property. Martin saw Burghley as their model in all things corrupt. 'For his share in the Reformation, my little Reading tells me How great a patron he was of the puritanicall party', noting Burghley's contradiction of the archbishop of Canterbury, an example he drew from a 'Chronicle' of the neighbourhood in his possession. Their distance was theological.

While trying to erode Strype's apparent adoration of the first Lord Burghley, Martin distanced himself fastidiously from Moore who often visited the neighbourhood; Martin knew of him and his estranged family: Presbyterians; his brother had gone mad from business losses.[321] Strype was not pursuing this line of inquiry idly. Martin dutifully supplied the inscriptions on Burghley's tomb in St Martin's Church, a description of Burghley's arms on the town gate, and of Burghley House itself: 'a Fayr house (perhaps the best in England) within a quarter of a mile' then under significant renovations, the earl was in need of money.[322]

Yet this fascinating correspondence would be peripheral save that Martin reported a unique volume worthy of note: Exeter's steward 'tells me that he has severall Letters by him of that Great Man's own writing my Lord has and One book of Manuscripts, but I think of pryvat concerns', in addition to several possible local leads. Here, speculation may point in a different direction.[323] Moore was present in Stamford and, despite the bishop's strong Whig association, the earl may have overcome his hostility to William III and his regime by parting with the manuscripts at the right price. The earl showed little nostalgia for his ancestor. Strype may have alerted Moore to the volume. Martin's description of a particular volume, however vague, could describe CUL MS Ee.3.56.

If Exeter himself sold the volume (perhaps the one mentioned by Martin) to Moore, the manuscripts or bound volume may have remained in Cecil hands until 1676 with the demolition of Exeter

[321] CUL Add. MS 2, no. 147, 16 Jan. 1694/5.
[322] Ibid. no. 145.
[323] Ibid. no. 146, 27 Dec. 1694.

House (formerly Burghley House) in London. The volume or letters may have been part of 'an old pacquett' remaining there, perhaps sent to Burghley House at Stamford with Sir Thomas's possessions after late 1598 or thereafter, particularly in 1676.[324]

The original immense Cecilian archive was scattered following Robert Cecil's death. The Salisbury line of Robert Cecil and the Exeters from his brother Thomas, though distantly related, went into something of a decline during the years of the manuscript searches and purchases in the age of Strype, Chiswell, Moore, and Baker and were unyielding of access to their papers. Presumably what was left at Exeter House in the Strand in 1676 went to Burghley House. Nearly two hundred volumes of Burghley's and Cecil's papers would remain at Westminster after their respective deaths in 1598 and 1612, the origin of the State Paper Office under the titular guardian Sir Thomas Wilson. Robert, by then earl of Salisbury, took many thousands of personal papers to Hatfield where they were bound in guard-books beginning in 1615 by Captain Thomas Brett where they were inaccessible in Strype's day.[325] It is possible that the less accessed and accessible library at Burghley House in Stamford was the resting place of a stray bound volume of Burghley's letters found at Exeter House in the Strand and moved there in 1676 or before. In this way, the volume may have left the metropolis at the exact moment the great public auctions began, with that of Lazarus Seaman. In Stamford, as Martin notes, Moore was in the neighbourhood; Strype noted interest was ripe in the great lord; and Exeter may have sold him the volume sometime in 1695–1696.[326]

A final possibility is that the papers remained in the possession of the descendants of Robert Cecil. Their London home, Salisbury House, was demolished in 1694, so at about the time the Cambridge volume of letters came into Moore's possession and when Strype was searching for Cecil manuscripts. A meticulous study of the building and changes to the fabric of the 1st earl of Salisbury's great town house suggest that members of the Cecil family had not lived there for many decades before its demolition. Nonetheless, again, the descriptor of 'an old pacquett of matters' could account for their being discovered after many years. The Exeter House connection with the Salisbury line was by this juncture more tenuous despite intermarriages. Moore's agents, on the other hand, may have been searching for materials. In any case, it is nearly impossible to separate the manuscripts and their

[324]See above, pp. 78–79.

[325]Unpublished essay by the Hatfield House Library, Robin Harcourt Williams.

[326]Manolo Guerci (2009) 'Salisbury House in London, 1599–1694: The Strand palace of Sir Robert Cecil'. *Architectural History*, 52 (2009), 31–78.

binding from the close circle of collectors and antiquarians in the orbit of Moore and Strype who were so assiduous in seeking manuscripts from new sales or old libraries.

This is the skeleton history of how these letters by Burghley to his younger son came to the University of Cambridge. It points to two radically different uses of them: the parochial, domestic Burghley of antiquarian fame, removed from the synthetic context of other papers and actors, a 'curiosity'. Meanwhile, the 'state' papers version of a masterful policy maker and adviser sitting at the apex of patronage and officialdom, with close care of the Queen's church, would have had more appeal to Strype in his *Annals*.

Editorial Conventions

While CUL MS Ee.3.56 contains a wide variety of scripts, Lord Burghley's and Henry Maynard's hands dominate. Burghley's spiky italic hand varied according to debility and vitality. Yet he followed precise patterns in his script, adding 'm' and 'n' frequently in dashes across their place in a word, for example, 'so[m]e' or 'co[m]e', which have been expanded silently throughout for readability. Similarly, 'lres', l[ette]res, has been expanded with the use of square bracket to distinguish it from close abbreviations such as 'lo[rd]' or 'lls' to 'lords', also expanded with square brackets. Burghley's writing in haste meant a very large number of words were given abbreviations and, in general, these have been expanded throughout with square brackets for consistency, for example in Letter No. 3: 'The Fr[ench] amb[assador] req[ui]reth me to adress hym to yow, so as hir Ma[jes]ty may receave his l[ette]res and message'. The use of square brackets here shows where expansions have been significant. Original spelling has been expanded silently in words where square brackets might cause unreadability, 'poyntes' instead of 'po[y]ntes', for example; 'ye' has been silently expanded to 'the' throughout and Burghley's invariable use of 'yt'(thorn) to 'that'. On other occasions Burghley superscripted suffixes occasionally, such as 'er' in 'over': 'a nombre of Aldermen will gyve over ther clokes', where 'er' has also been silently expanded in 'Aldermen', and 'm' in 'nombre'. Similarly, the so-called 'swash e' at the end of 'clokes' has been expanded. These 'es' additions at the ends of words have all been expanded throughout the transcriptions. 'Q[ueen]' has been expanded as has 'Archb[isho]p'. 'Mr.' and 'Dr.' have been left as they are also the modern usage. Capitalization has been retained as in the original. Excessive modernization in silent expansions of Burghley's hand would present a radical change from his original texts.

Maynard wrote in a classical secretarial hand. The reader will see patterns in his texts, as amanuensis taking notes when Burghley was too tired or unable. Nonetheless, even on these hurried occasions Maynard added vowels and endings to words, whereas Burghley's notation was generally terse. In the case of both hands identical editorial standards have been used. The use of 'ff' has been retained in all cases. Their common use of the abbreviation 'Ma[jes]tie' is always expanded thus. Ampersands have been left as in the original. Original spelling has been retained in Maynard's and others' additions throughout, including the endorsements and addresses.

All dates are Old Style as in the original manuscripts. The New Year has been taken in all of the letters as March 25. Where needed, Old Style dates have been given in French correspondence. All names have been transcribed as written. Place names have been written as transcribed and expanded and modernized only where necessary, for example, 'Fr[ance]'. Greek and Latin have been translated or paraphrased. Foreign languages have not been italicized but are left as in the original. The 1560 Geneva Bible has been used throughout.

Money has been transcribed as in the original: 'l' as librae, 's' as solidae, and 'd' as denarii, with the modernized numbers added in square brackets.

The letters have been transcribed in the original order found in the volume. Chronological confusion has been noted elsewhere. As the volume is neither paginated nor foliated, where Burghley wrote on more than one side [p. 2] or [p. 3] have been used within the lineation. Almost all of the letters are bifolium with Burghley writing beginning on the front of the first side. Only one letter, No. 14, exceeds the length of four sides. The manuscripts have not been lineated. Additional punctuation has been added to, particularly in the case of full stops. There are two occasions where he used '/' in Letter No. 1 and as noted at n. 389. These additions are faithful to the originals. Where Burghley inserted a dash in the manuscript or comma, these have also been preserved. His use of colons is also as in the originals.

Paragraphing has been added on occasion for ease of reading, particularly where sentences have been added to texts (in the latter case, the paragraph is full out rather than indented). Interlineations have all been given as superscripts. For ease of reading on the occasions when interlineations were more than one line deep over corrected sentences, the superscripts and the cross-out lines have been expanded.