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**'THE POLITICAL CAREER OF EDWARD SACKVILLE,
FOURTH EARL OF DORSET (1590-1652)'**

BY

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ABSTRACT

Title: 'The Political Career of Edward Sackville, fourth Earl of Dorset (1590-1652)'
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This dissertation seeks to illuminate early Stuart political history by a study of one important public figure. The fourth Earl of Dorset was a member of Charles I's Privy Council, Lord Chamberlain to Queen Henrietta Maria, and Lord Lieutenant of Sussex and Middlesex. He attended all the Parliaments of the 1620's, and sat in the Short and Long Parliaments. He was active in Court and Council throughout the 1630's, and sided with the King in the Civil War. He consistently advocated harmony and reconciliation in a period of growing polarisation. This study investigates Dorset's perception of early seventeenth century political developments, his response to them, and the reasons why he and other moderates failed to prevent civil war. It thus contributes to current debates both on the early modern peerage, and on the origins and nature of the English Civil War.

The first chapter looks at Dorset's life and career up to the age of thirty. In Chapter Two a discussion of his rapid rise to political prominence during the 1620's explores the reasons for his success and the nature of his motivation. Chapter Three investigates Dorset's activities as a Privy Councillor and as the Queen's Lord Chamberlain in the 1630's. It analyses in turn the sources of his political power; his record as a patron; his relationships with other leading Caroline politicians; his view of the Personal Rule; and his growing alienation from Charles I. Dorset's religious attitudes are reconstructed in Chapter Four, and the extent to which they determined his political behaviour is evaluated. Chapter Five assesses Dorset's strength as a local magnate, and discusses his landed estates, his career as Lord Lieutenant of Middlesex and Sussex, and his electoral influence. Chapter Six examines Dorset's attitudes to the breakdown of 1640-2 and to the Civil Wars. It shows how these motivated his involvement in peace negotiations, and considers why such negotiations failed. Dorset's sufferings at the hands of Parliament's finance committees are described in Chapter Seven, and the material cost of his Royalist allegiance is assessed. The Conclusion summarises the broader significance of Dorset's life and career.

FOR MY MOTHER AND FATHER

STATEMENT

This dissertation is the result of my own work, and includes nothing which is the outcome of work done in collaboration.

It does not exceed 80,000 words inclusive of appendices, but exclusive of footnotes and bibliography.

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Colin Davis' comments on Chapters Four and Six opened up a number of important lines of thought, especially on the nature of moderate politics in the early 1640's. Mr Peter Salt alerted me to much useful evidence, lent me several microfilms and wrote a detailed commentary on the first half of Chapter Six. Dr Kevin Sharpe made many helpful suggestions for Chapters Four and Six. Dr John Adamson passed on numerous references, lent me various materials and read an early version of Chapter Six. Mr Ian Atherton has been a very generous source of information and wise advice on all aspects of Dorset's career, especially his religious attitudes.

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I have left my overriding debt until last. Without my parents' constant encouragement and support over the years this dissertation would never have come to be written. I dedicate it to them, with love and gratitude.

D.L.S.

ABBREVIATIONS

<u>A.O.</u>	<u>Acts and Ordinances of the Interregnum</u> , ed. C.H. Firth and R.S. Rait (3 vols., London, 1911)
<u>A.P.C.</u>	<u>The Acts of the Privy Council of England, 1542-1631</u> , ed. J.R. Dasent <u>et al.</u> (46 vols., London, 1890-1964)
B.L.	British Library
Bod. Lib.	Bodleian Library
B.R.O.	Berkshire Record Office
<u>C.C.A.M.</u>	<u>Calendar of the Proceedings of the Committee for the Advance of Money</u> , ed. M.A.E. Green (3 vols., London, 1888)
<u>C.C.C.</u>	<u>Calendar of the Proceedings of the Committee for Compounding with Delinquents, 1643-60</u> , ed. M.A.E. Green (5 vols., London, 1889)
<u>C.D.</u>	<u>Commons Debates, 1621</u> , ed. W. Notestein, F.H. Relf and H. Simpson (7 vols., New Haven, 1935)
<u>C.D., 1629</u>	<u>Commons Debates for 1629</u> , ed. W. Notestein and F.H. Relf (Minneapolis, 1921)
<u>C.J.</u>	<u>Journals of the House of Commons</u> (London, 1803)
C.L.R.O.	Corporation of London Records Office
<u>Complete Peerage</u>	G.E. C[okaynel], <u>The Complete Peerage</u> (New edition, ed. V. Gibbs <u>et al.</u> , 14 vols., London, 1910-59)
<u>C.S.P.D.</u>	<u>Calendar of State Papers Domestic for the Reign of Charles I</u> , ed. J. Bruce <u>et al.</u> (23 vols., London, 1858-97)
<u>C.S.P.V.</u>	<u>Calendar of State Papers Venetian</u> , ed. R. Brown <u>et al.</u> (40 vols., London, 1864-1940)
C.U.L.	Cambridge University Library

<u>D.N.B.</u>	<u>Dictionary of National Biography</u> , ed. L. Stephen <u>et al.</u> (63 vols., London, 1885-1900)
E.S.R.O.	East Sussex Record Office
H.L.R.O.	House of Lords Record Office
H.M.C.	Historical Manuscripts Commission
K.A.O.	Kent Archives Office
<u>L.J.</u>	<u>Journals of the House of Lords</u> (London, 1846)
MP	Main Papers of the House of Lords (at the H.L.R.O.)
N.R.O.	Northamptonshire Record Office
P.R.O.	Public Record Office, Chancery Lane
P.R.O. (Kew)	Public Record Office, Kew
<u>Proceedings, 1625</u>	<u>Proceedings in Parliament, 1625</u> , ed. M. Jansson and W.B. Bidwell (New Haven, 1987)
<u>Proceedings, 1628</u>	<u>Proceedings in Parliament, 1628</u> , ed. M.F. Keeler, M.J. Cole and W.B. Bidwell (6 vols., New Haven, 1977-83)
SC	Strafford Correspondence (at the S.C.L.)
S.C.L.	Sheffield Central Library
SP	State Papers (at the P.R.O.)
<u>S.T.C.</u>	<u>A Short-Title Catalogue of Books Printed in England, Scotland and Ireland and of English Books Printed Abroad, 1475-1640</u> , ed. A.W. Pollard and G.R. Redgrave (2nd edition, ed. W.A. Jackson, F.S. Ferguson and K.F. Pantzer, 2 vols., London, 1976-86)
<u>S.T.C. (Newspapers)</u>	<u>British Newspapers and Periodicals, 1641-1700: A Short-Title Catalogue of Serials Printed in England, Scotland, Ireland and British America</u> , ed. C. Nelson and M. Seccombe (New York, 1987)
T.T.	Thomason Tracts (at the B.L.)

Wing

A Short-Title Catalogue of Books Printed
in England, Scotland, Ireland, Wales and
British America and of English Books
Printed Abroad, 1641-1700, ed. D. Wing
(3 vols., New York, 1945-51)

W.R.O.

Warwickshire Record Office

Throughout this dissertation, quotations from primary sources are as in the original, except that I have extended the standard abbreviated forms and adapted some extreme punctuation to modern usage.

All dates are in Old Style, except that the year is regarded as beginning on 1 January rather than on 25 March.

INTRODUCTION

Edward Sackville, fourth Earl of Dorset (1590-1652) was a prominent figure in early Stuart England. He was a member of Charles I's Privy Council, Lord Chamberlain to Queen Henrietta Maria, and Lord Lieutenant of Sussex and Middlesex. He attended all the Parliaments of the 1620's, and sat in the Short and Long Parliaments. He was active in Court and Council throughout Charles I's Personal Rule during the 1630's, and eventually sided with the King in the Civil War. He was an articulate and informed witness of dramatic political events for over thirty years, consistently advocating harmony and moderation at a time of growing polarisation. Yet he has been very little studied. This dissertation will examine how Dorset perceived early seventeenth century political trends, how he responded to them, and why he and so many other moderates ultimately failed to prevent the outbreak of civil war. It thus stands at the intersection of two different historiographical discussions. Dorset's career illuminates both recent re-assessments of the early modern English nobility as a major political force, and the much older debates on the origins and nature of the English Civil War. This introduction will briefly review the present state of these controversies and indicate how Dorset bears on them. It concludes with a summary of the sources on which the dissertation is based.

In recent years, historians have begun to rediscover the English nobility. For many decades the activities of the English elite were studied almost exclusively by genealogists and antiquarians. Then, when peers at last received a full-scale professional treatment, in Lawrence Stone's The Crisis of the Aristocracy, 1558-1641 (Oxford, 1965), they appeared as a declining feudal caste, unable to adapt to the rapid economic, social and political changes of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Financial decay accelerated their loss of political supremacy to a rising gentry. Initial attempts to revise Stone's interpretation, most notably by Paul Christianson and J.E. Farnell,¹ met with very effective criticism.² A rather more telling challenge to the picture of a declining nobility has recently emerged in the work of Sheila Lambert on 'the

1. P. Christianson, 'The Peers, the People and Parliamentary Management in the First Six Months of the Long Parliament', Journal of Modern History, XLIX (1977), 575-99. J.E. Farnell, 'The Social and Intellectual Basis of London's Role in the English Civil Wars', ibid., 641-60. See also C. Roberts, 'The Earl of Bedford and the Coming of the English Revolution', ibid., 600-16; and J.S. Flemion, 'The Nature of Opposition in the House of Lords in the Early Seventeenth Century: A Revaluation', Albion, VIII (1976), 17-34.
2. See especially D. Hirst, 'Unanimity in the Commons, Aristocratic Intrigues and the Origins of the English Civil War', Journal of Modern History, L (1978), 51-71. See also J.H. Hexter, 'Power Struggle, Parliament and Liberty in Early Stuart England', ibid., 1-50, especially 12-24; and T.K. Rabb, 'Revisionism Revised: The Role of the Commons', Past and Present, XCII (1981), 55-78, especially 72-4.

opening of the Long Parliament', and of John Adamson on the Parliamentary nobility during the 1640's.³ Their arguments are broadly compatible with the findings of Helen Miller for the reign of Henry VIII, and those of John Cannon and Jonathan Clark for the eighteenth century.⁴ All this research suggests that the social and political influence of the early modern English nobility was much more pervasive and endured for far longer than has hitherto been supposed. The ability of peers to manipulate political developments was reinforced by a hierarchical value-system in which they were the King's rightful advisers and the natural rulers of provincial society. The picture of noble dominance painted by mediaevalists such as

3. S. Lambert, 'The Opening of the Long Parliament', Historical Journal, XXVII (1984), 265-87. J.S.A. Adamson, 'The Peerage in Politics, 1645-9' (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Cambridge, 1986). See also the other works by Adamson listed in the Bibliography. It is worth adding that Stone's more recent work has slightly qualified his earlier vision of a decaying peerage: see L. Stone and J.C.F. Stone, An Open Elite? England, 1540-1880 (Oxford, 1984), especially pp. 397-426. For a critique, see D.N. Cannadine, The Pleasures of the Past (London, 1989), pp. 194-205.
4. H. Miller, Henry VIII and the English Nobility (Oxford, 1986); J. Cannon, Aristocratic Century: The Peerage of Eighteenth Century England (Cambridge, 1984); J.C.D. Clark, English Society, 1688-1832 (Cambridge 1985). Similarly, the English peerage during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries is slowly being rescued from 'the woolly and wistful world of Waugh and Wodehouse': Cannadine, Pleasures of the Past, p. 197. See especially idem, Lords and Landlords: The Aristocracy and the Towns, 1774-1967 (Leicester, 1980), and also his forthcoming general history of the modern peerage.

K.B. McFarlane did not end with the fifteenth century.⁵ Rather, it may be helpful for historians to remember mediaeval categories and agendas for at least two centuries thereafter. At one level, my own research should be placed within this historiographical context: by analysing Dorset's importance both at the centre and in the localities, this dissertation offers a case study of noble influence in action, so providing a particular instance of a general theory. But it explores in addition a hitherto neglected dimension of noble politics. Accounts of the early seventeenth century peerage have concentrated on those who led the opposition to Charles I and supported Parliament in the Civil War, on figures such as the Earls of Essex and Northumberland, and Viscount Saye and Sele. By contrast, this dissertation investigates the career of a moderate Royalist peer, by no means uncritical of Charles I, but in the end staunchly loyal to the Crown.

The dissertation also seeks to contribute to the older, more complex and more fragmented controversy over early Stuart political history. The first half of the seventeenth century needs all the elucidation it can get: the nature of political

5. See especially his highly influential Ford Lectures, delivered in 1953 and published posthumously as K.B. McFarlane, The Nobility of Later Mediaeval England (Oxford, 1973).

behaviour, the relationship between faction and ideology, and the interaction of religious and secular motives during these decades all remain highly contentious. Above all, historians of this period are fundamentally divided between those who believe that the polity was bound to collapse because structural weaknesses rendered it ungovernable and unable to wage war; and those who argue that this was an inherently strong system, welded together by ideologies of consensus, and only destabilised by the follies and mismanagement of one King: Charles I.⁶ An analysis of Dorset's career in central and local politics over three decades opens up a new perspective on these broad issues. It suggests that the second interpretation is generally the more persuasive: time and again, Dorset's paradigm of a balanced polity, in which the interests of Crown and people were naturally symbiotic, was rendered unworkable by Charles I's policies and decisions.

The dissertation addresses in turn four specific areas of debate among seventeenth century historians.⁷ First, Professor

6. A synopsis of current debate along these lines is probably more helpful than one based on the labels 'revisionist', 'anti-revisionist', 'post-revisionist', etc. See the perceptive remarks in G. Burgess, 'Early Stuart Revisionism: An Anatomy', Historical News, LVIII (May 1989), 1-3.
7. The complex historiography on which this paragraph is based is discussed more fully in the appropriate chapters.

Russell's work has stimulated discussion over whether the 1620's saw deepening ideological conflict, or merely factional disputes within a basic ideological consensus. Because Dorset sat in all the Parliaments of the 1620's (in the Commons in 1621, and then in the Lords from 1624), we are able to assess whether he was motivated primarily by ideological commitment, or factional allegiance, or self-interest (Chapter Two). By setting Dorset's parliamentary activities in the context of wider political developments, I will argue that these motives were certainly not mutually exclusive, and could coincide to a far greater extent than has been recognised. Second, historians are at present sharply divided over whether Charles' Personal Rule was 'a halcyon decade', or a period of increasing polarisation which culminated in civil war. Dorset was prominent in Court and Council throughout the 1630's, and closely connected with various leading politicians. His correspondence enables us to recover the perspective of an informed and influential moderate on a decade which remains both under-studied and highly controversial (Chapter Three). Dorset's career reveals the crucial importance of Court office in giving access to the sovereign, and so reminds us that the early Stuart political system shared much with its mediaeval and Tudor predecessors. His experiences also show how much in a personal monarchy depended on the character of the monarch. Dorset was able to observe Charles I's political behaviour at first hand, and his letters indicate a gradual alienation from the King. Third, historians have yet to achieve a consensus

about the dynamics of local politics and administration. In particular, the extent to which noble Lords Lieutenant were able to control their Deputy Lieutenants and to manipulate parliamentary elections is far from clear. Dorset's career as a local magnate, especially in Sussex and Middlesex, suggests that noble influence remained considerable, and that it is mistaken to analyse provincial government in terms of a 'crisis of the aristocracy' (Chapter Five). Fourthly, an examination of Dorset's career sheds light on the continued debates over the outbreak of civil war. I will try to assess how far Dorset's allegiance to the King was motivated by religious considerations, and the degree to which these can be distinguished from constitutional loyalties (Chapter Four). A case study of Dorset is also helpful in explaining why moderate attempts at brokerage and mediation failed, and why the hotheads on both sides were able to drive England into civil war (Chapter Six). The final part of the dissertation analyses Dorset's persistent involvement in peace negotiations after 1642, and considers the material cost of his Royalist allegiance (Chapters Six and Seven).

This dissertation is based on manuscripts from nearly

thirty record repositories in Britain, Europe and America.⁸ There are abundant references to Dorset in the central government records at the Public Record Office, especially in Chancery, Exchequer and the State Papers. Much further information about his career in high politics may be found in the Additional, Egerton, Harleian, Sloane and Stowe Manuscripts at the British Library, and in the Rawlinson and Tanner Manuscripts at the Bodleian Library. The sources at the House of Lords Record Office greatly assist a reconstruction of his parliamentary activities. By far the most important of the many local and private collections consulted are the Sackville family papers at the Kent Archives Office: these are invaluable for all aspects of Dorset's life and career. Extensive use is also made of assorted correspondence, diaries, accounts, deeds, etc. held in various other libraries, county record offices and private archives. In addition, I draw frequently on printed primary sources. These include the journals of both Houses of Parliament; many contemporary tracts, pamphlets, sermons and newsbooks; and a number of printed letters, memoirs and speeches. Lastly, I refer throughout this dissertation to a wide variety of general and specialist secondary works.

8. Full details of the sources described in this paragraph may be found in the Bibliography.

CHAPTER ONE: EARLY YEARS, 1590-1620

This opening chapter tries to make sense of the first (and much less well documented) half of Edward Sackville's life. It will look, first, at Sackville's ancestry, at the advantages which it gave him, and at the promising progress which it helped him to make until his early twenties. We will see that his ties with his mother's family, the Howards, were just as important as those with the Sackvilles. The second section will examine how his world fell apart in the mid-1610's as the end of Howard ascendancy coincided with two disastrous setbacks leaving Sackville exiled, disgraced and finally imprisoned. The last section of the chapter will chart how Sackville began to recover from these body-blows after 1616: how he emerged at Court, secured local government office, joined the Virginia Company, and served in Europe. The chapter concludes with an assessment of his position in 1620, as he stood on the threshold of his political career.

I

Edward Sackville, fourth Earl of Dorset, was the product of a union between new riches and ancient nobility. He was born in 1590, the second surviving son of Robert Sackville,

second Earl of Dorset (1561-1609) and Lady Margaret Howard (1561-91), daughter of Thomas Howard, fourth Duke of Norfolk.¹

The Sackvilles were long established Sussex gentry who only achieved national significance during the reign of Elizabeth I. They claimed descent from Richard de Saqueville, of Saqueville near Dieppe, who had accompanied William the Conqueror to England in 1066.² The family remained obscure for much of the Middle Ages, until a combination of ability and good luck catapulted Sir Richard Sackville (c. 1507-66) to prominence. He happened to be the son of Anne Boleyn's aunt Margaret, and this link with Elizabeth I - potentially damaging in the later years of Henry VIII and under Mary - gave him an entrée to Court circles after 1558.³ Elizabeth's tutor, Roger Ascham, praised Sackville as a 'worthie gentleman', an 'earnest

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1. The exact date of his birth is uncertain: C.J. Phillips, History of the Sackville Family (2 vols., London, 1930), I, 294. The four children of the second Earl of Dorset and Lady Margaret who survived infancy were: Richard, third Earl of Dorset (1589-1624); Edward, fourth Earl of Dorset (1590-1652); Cicely; and Anne: ibid., I, 252. For the Sackville family tree, see Appendix 1.
 2. For the early history of the Sackville family, see ibid., I, 1-131.
 3. Ibid., I, 132-3.

favorer and furtherer of God's true religion', and a 'faithfull
 servitor to his Prince and Countrie'.⁴ He was also a man of
 considerable financial acumen: he made 'his career and fortune
 in the administration and disposal of ex-monastic lands' and
 was 'nick-named "Fill-Sack" by reason of his great wealth and
 the vast patrimony which he left to his son'.⁵ This included
 'the whole of the land lying between Bridewell and Water Lane
 from Fleet Street to the Thames' which Sir Richard purchased
 for £641 5s. 10½d. in 1564.⁶ His acuity and good connections
 secured a string of offices in his last years: Privy Councillor
 from 20 November 1558; M.P. for Sussex in 1559 and 1563;
 Chancellor of the Exchequer from February 1559; ambassador-
 extraordinary to Vienna in February 1566.⁷

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4. Roger Ascham, The Scholemaster, or a plaine and perfite way of teachyng children the Latin tong (London, 1570), sig. B iii [v] (S.T.C., 832).
 5. The House of Commons, 1509-58, ed. S.T. Bindoff (3 vols., London, 1982), III, 246. See also The House of Commons, 1558-1603, ed. P.W. Hasler (3 vols., London, 1981), III, 314-5; Phillips, History of the Sackville Family, I, 128-30.
 6. Phillips, History of the Sackville Family, I, 139-45. See also V. Sackville-West, Knole and the Sackvilles (London, 1922), p. 43.
 7. House of Commons, ed. Bindoff, III, 246-7; House of Commons, ed. Hasler, III, 314-5; Phillips, History of the Sackville Family, I, 132-3, 146-7; G.R. Elton, The Parliament of England, 1559-1581 (Cambridge, 1986), pp. 152, 170.

After Sir Richard's death on 21 April 1566,⁸ the family's rise accelerated during the long and distinguished career of his eldest son, Thomas Sackville, Baron Buckhurst and first Earl of Dorset (1536-1608).⁹ Buckhurst first achieved fame as the co-author (with Thomas Norton) of The Tragedie of Gorboduc, performed in January 1562 and printed three years later.¹⁰ Besides its literary significance as 'the first English blank-verse tragedy',¹¹ this play also had a serious political message. It reminded auditors of 'the chaos and ruin which result from a disputed succession' and may therefore be seen as part of the campaign urging Elizabeth I to marry.¹² This pre-occupation with politics was equally apparent in Buckhurst's second work, the Induction to the Mirror for Magistrates

8. Phillips, History of the Sackville Family, I, 147.
9. For accounts of Buckhurst's career, see ibid., I, 180-237; Sackville-West, Knole and the Sackvilles, pp. 44-59; and P. Bacquet, Un contemporain d'Elisabeth I: Thomas Sackville (Geneva, 1966).
10. Thomas Sackville and Thomas Norton, The Tragedie of Gorboduc (London, 1565), S.T.C., 18684. For a modern edition, see The Works of Thomas Sackville, Lord Buckhurst, ed. R.W. Sackville-West (London, 1859), pp. 1-92. For a critical assessment, see N. Berlin, Thomas Sackville (New York, 1974), pp. 80-119.
11. M.A.R. Graves, 'Thomas Norton the Parliament Man: An Elizabethan M.P., 1559-1581', Historical Journal, XXIII (1980), 17-35, at 29. See also Sackville-West, Knole and the Sackvilles, p. 52; Berlin, Thomas Sackville, pp. 101-3.
12. Graves, 'Thomas Norton', 29-30. See also Elton, Parliament of England, pp. 358-9.

(1563), and it explains why he ultimately 'abandoned poetry for politics and administration'.¹³ Buckhurst's second career proved spectacularly successful. He became M.P. for Westmorland in 1558, possibly through the influence of his distant relative the second Earl of Cumberland, who was hereditary sheriff of the county. The following year he sat for 'his family's local borough', East Grinstead, and in 1563 the patronage of another relative, Sir Thomas Smythe, secured his election for Aylesbury.¹⁴ A series of distinguished offices and titles followed: Sackville became Baron Buckhurst on 8 June 1567; ambassador to France in 1571-2; Privy Councillor on 2 February 1586; Knight of the Garter on 24 April 1588; Chancellor of the University of Oxford on 17 December 1591; Lord Treasurer on 15 May 1599 (an appointment renewed for life on 17 April 1603); Lord Steward on 19 February 1601; Earl Marshal on 26 December 1601; and finally, on 13 March 1604, first Earl of Dorset.¹⁵ Elizabeth I granted him Knole (near

13. Thomas Sackville, Induction to the Mirror for Magistrates (London, 1563), S.T.C., 1248. For a critical assessment, see Berlin, Thomas Sackville, pp. 44-59. G.R. Elton, England under the Tudors (2nd edition, London, 1974), p. 445.
14. House of Commons, ed. Bindoff, III, 247-8; House of Commons, ed. Hasler, III, 316-7.
15. Phillips, History of the Sackville Family, I, especially 182-8, 194, 207-8, 211, 213-4. See also Complete Peerage, IV, 422-3. For Buckhurst's creation as first Earl of Dorset, see P.R.O., C 66/1618/1 (Chancery Patent Rolls).

Sevenoaks, Kent) in June 1566, and between 1603 and 1608 he transformed the mediaeval manor house into a vast and palatial residence.¹⁶ This lifetime of public service was ended, appropriately enough, by an apoplexy suffered during a Privy Council meeting on 19 April 1608.¹⁷ His funeral was held in Westminster Abbey on 26 May; George Abbot, shortly to become Archbishop of Canterbury, preached the sermon.¹⁸

These Anglican obsequies were faintly ironic because for much of his life Buckhurst's religious attitudes had been distinctly ambivalent. In 1563-4 he visited Rome and became involved in negotiations to secure Elizabeth I's conversion.¹⁹

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16. Phillips, History of the Sackville Family, I, 182, 216. For details of this rebuilding of Knole, see, for example, K.A.O., Sackville MS, U 269/A1/1 (accounts of the first Earl of Dorset, 1607-8).
 17. Phillips, History of the Sackville Family, I, 230. For a contemporary account, see B.L., Microfilm M 485 (Cecil MS, Hatfield House), Vol. CXCV, fol. 10r (Nevill Davis to the Earl of Salisbury, 21 May 1608). For a copy of Buckhurst's will, dated 11 August 1607, see K.A.O., Sackville MS, U 269/T84/1.
 18. George Abbot, A Sermon Preached at Westminster, May 26 1608, at the funerall solemnities of Thomas, Earle of Dorset (London, 1608), S.T.C., 38.
 19. The story of these negotiations may be found in The Collected Papers of Frederic William Maitland, ed. H.A.L. Fisher (3 vols., Cambridge, 1911), III, 180-5.

On 25 February 1566, Guzman de Silva, Spanish ambassador in Rome, informed King Philip II of Spain that 'Thomas Sackville was formerly in Rome, about a year and a half ago; when he left here he was a heretic, but has now reformed'.²⁰ Clearly, before the papal bull of excommunication in April 1570²¹ there was no necessary contradiction between loyalty to the Queen and pro-Catholic sympathies. But in Buckhurst's case these sympathies continued well into the 1580's. On 21 March 1586, barely six weeks after Buckhurst's appointment to the Privy Council, Thomas Morgan described him as 'long since well enough disposed to' Mary Queen of Scots.²² For a senior member of the government to harbour such feelings was surely exceptional. Yet it was characteristic of Buckhurst to tolerate Catholics even when their political allegiance was suspect, and it is in this context that we may place the marriage alliance between the Sackvilles and the Howards.

In January 1572, Buckhurst was among the commissioners at

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20. Quoted in Phillips, History of the Sackville Family, I, 181, 237.
21. For the text of this bull, see The Tudor Constitution, ed. G.R. Elton (2nd edition, Cambridge, 1982), pp. 423-8.
22. P.R.O., SP 53/17/32 (Thomas Morgan to Mary Queen of Scots, 21 March 1585/6).

the trial of Thomas Howard, fourth Duke of Norfolk.²³ But he also had private dealings with Norfolk, and later claimed that while in prison the Duke had promised him various Sussex lands in recompense for previous loans.²⁴ Norfolk's condemnation for treason invalidated these transactions and it is possible that his only daughter's dowry acted as a substitute. At any rate, in February 1580 Buckhurst's eldest son Robert married Lady Margaret Howard.²⁵ The marriage agreement apparently does not survive, but it is clear that Lady Margaret remained a practising Catholic. In 1583 we find her attending mass;²⁶ three years later Thomas Morgan described her as 'a devout gentlewoman'.²⁷ When she died in childbirth on 19 August 1591, the Jesuit Robert Southwell composed a 'lament' for this

23. Phillips, History of the Sackville Family, I, 189.

24. K.A.O., Sackville MS, U 269/C3/3 (copy of testimonial, 1578).

25. Phillips, History of the Sackville Family, I, 246. Buckhurst's earlier plan to marry his son to Lord Burghley's daughter Elizabeth Cecil evidently fell through, although the reasons for this are not clear: see B.L., Lansdowne MS 17 (Burghley Papers, 1573), fols. 39r-40r.

26. P.R.O., SP 12/164/48 (declaration of George Lawe, 20 December 1583).

27. P.R.O., SP 53/18/13 (Thomas Morgan to Mary Queen of Scots, 24 June 1586).

'glorious braunch' 'of Howarde's stemm'.²⁸ However, Lady Margaret's younger son Edward was then fifteen months old,²⁹ and so her religion cannot have decisively influenced his upbringing. Furthermore, Robert Sackville quickly remarried a Protestant, Anne Spencer of Althorp, on 4 December 1592.³⁰

The pedigree of the young Edward Sackville was thus a remarkable one. His two grandfathers came from opposite ends of the Elizabethan political spectrum: Thomas Sackville, a Sussex gentleman, who through ability, canniness and good fortune attained high office and the peerage; and Thomas Howard, scion of an ancient noble house, who by political misjudgement lost his life and temporarily disgraced his family. As the descendant of a condemned traitor, Edward Sackville's blood was held to be corrupt and he therefore technically stood outside the law. However, the first Parliament of James I passed 'an act for the restitution in blood of William Howard, youngest son of Thomas, late Duke of

28. Robert Southwell, The Triumphs over Death, or a consolatorie Epistle for afflicted minds in the affects of dying friends (London, 1596), sig. E 3 [r-v] (S.T.C., 22972).

29. See above, pp. 9-10.

30. Phillips, History of the Sackville Family, I, 247. This second marriage proved unhappy: see, for example, P.R.O., SP 14/38/65 (Robert Sackville, second Earl of Dorset to Archbishop Bancroft, 27 December 1608).

Norfolke, and of the children of the Lady Margaret Sackville, daughter of the said Duke'.³¹ The negative side of Edward Sackville's Howard ancestry was thus eliminated at a stroke. This act encountered no opposition in either House, and its timing probably owed much to James I's rehabilitation of the fourth Duke of Norfolk's younger brother Henry Howard, whom he appointed Privy Councillor and created first Earl of Northampton in 1603, and also of Norfolk's son Thomas, who became Lord Chamberlain and first Earl of Suffolk.³² Buckhurst and Northampton ranked only just behind Robert Cecil among the most powerful figures of early Jacobean England. For their grandson and great-nephew, Edward Sackville, the omens could scarcely have been more favourable.

It is therefore no surprise to find that during his teens and early twenties Sackville made very promising progress. On 26 July 1605, aged fifteen, he and his elder brother Richard matriculated at Christ Church, Oxford.³³ The following year,

31. L.J., II, 291, 293-4, 305; C.J., I, 204, 207, 211, 224. For a discussion of acts for restitution in blood, see Elton, Parliament of England, pp. 303-9.
32. See L.L. Peck, Northampton: Patronage and Policy at the Court of James I (London, 1982), pp. 21-4. Also Complete Peerage, IX, 674-7; XII, i, 462-6.
33. A. Wood, Athenae Oxonienses, ed. P. Bliss (New edition, 5 vols., London, 1813-20), III, 312-4.

Sackville contributed a twelve-line Latin verse to an Oxford collection which celebrated the visit of King Christian IV of Denmark.³⁴ On 20 May 1606, the first Earl of Dorset and Robert Sackville transacted an advantageous marriage agreement with Sir George Curzon of Croxhall (Derbyshire), whereby Edward Sackville was betrothed to Curzon's daughter and heiress, Mary.³⁵ The marriage, which had taken place by 2 March 1612,³⁶ brought Sackville lands in Derbyshire and Staffordshire.³⁷ Even the sudden deaths of his grandfather (19 April 1608) and father (27 February 1609) did not visibly impede his progress.³⁸ The second Earl of Dorset left his younger son various jewels together with 'contingent remainders [of land] in tail male',³⁹ a bequest which, together with his wife's dowry, greatly strengthened his financial position. A few months later, on 13 May 1609, Sackville was granted 'a licence

34. B.L., Royal MS 12 A LXIV (Charites Oxonienses in Adventu Christiani IV Daniae Regis, 1606), fols. 16v-17r.

35. K.A.O., Sackville MS, U 269/T69/1 (marriage agreement of 20 May 1606).

36. P.R.O., C 66/1936/46.

37. K.A.O., Sackville MS, U 269/T69/1.

38. For the death of the first Earl of Dorset, see above, p. 14. For that of the second Earl, see P.R.O., SP 14/44/6 (John Chamberlain to Dudley Carleton, 3 March 1608/9). See also Phillips, History of the Sackville Family, I, 230-6, 249-51.

39. P.R.O., PROB 11 (Prerogative Court of Canterbury, copies of probated wills), 113/23.

to travell ... for three yeares with three servantes [and] three horses'.⁴⁰ The exact nature and destination of this trip remain mysterious, but it may well have been a form of 'grand tour'. Sackville was certainly back in England by 26 November 1611.⁴¹ His travels probably took him to France, and this would explain why he was chosen to greet the French ambassador, the Duc de Bullion, at Gravesend in April 1612.⁴² Clearly, by the age of twenty-two, Edward Sackville was beginning to emerge in public affairs.

II

Then, almost overnight, this changed dramatically. In 1613 and 1615, Sackville's career suffered two massive setbacks which left him disgraced, exiled and ultimately imprisoned. This second section will examine these two crises in detail. Then, in the final section, we will explore how his career began to recover after 1616.

40. P.R.O., SO 3/4 (Signet Office Docquet Book, 1608-10), unfol., 13 May 1609.

41. E.S.R.O., G 23/2 (lease by Edward Sackville to the Earl of Northampton, 26 November 1611).

42. B.R.O., Trumbull Miscellaneous Corr., Vol. IV (Trumbull Corr., 1612-13), fol. 46r.

The first misfortune occurred when Sackville fought and killed Edward, Lord Bruce of Kinloss in a duel outside Bergen-op-Zoom (near Antwerp) in August 1613. This encounter was one of the minor sensations of Jacobean England, and manuscript copies of Lord Bruce's challenge and of Sackville's reply circulated unusually widely.⁴³ To appreciate the full impact of this fight, we must remember that it came at a time when duels between English noblemen had become disturbingly frequent. From about 1610, James I actively tried to curb the practice.⁴⁴ However, as Lawrence Stone has written:

43. For examples, see B.L., Add. MS 4149 (Birch Collection, copies of State Papers), fols. 210r-211r; Add. MS 18644 (combat between Dorset and Lord Bruce, August 1613); Add. MS 22587 (copies of State Papers), fol. 25v; Add. MS 29586 (Miscellaneous Hatton-Finch Papers, 1541-1726), fols. 2r-3v; Add. MS 44848 (copies of State Papers), fols. 177r-179v; Hargrave MS 226 (Miscellaneous historical papers), fols. 245r-249v; Harl. MS 4761 (Miscellaneous State Papers), fols. 127r-132v; Harl. MS 6854 (Papers on State Affairs, 1575-1693), fols. 3r-14v; Lansdowne MS 213 (Miscellaneous historical tracts), fols. 71r-74v; Bod. Lib., MS Ashmole 781 (Miscellaneous Collections), pp. 67-70; MS Lyell Empt. 23 (Account of duel, August 1613); MS Tanner 82 (Miscellaneous Letters and Memorials), fols. 81v-87v; C.U.L., MS Ee.v.23 (Commonplace Book of John Peck), pp. 409-12; Library of the Inner Temple, Petyt MS 538, Vol. XVIII (Miscellaneous Collections), fol. 244r-v. There are only the most minor variations between these manuscripts. Accessible printed editions may be found in Phillips, History of the Sackville Family, I, 297-300; and Sackville-West, Knole and the Sackvilles, pp. 91-6.

44. L. Stone, The Crisis of the Aristocracy, 1558-1641, (Oxford, 1965), p. 247.

it was the events of 1613 ... which really alarmed the King and galvanised the government into serious action. In that year Sir Edward Sackville, future fourth Earl of Dorset, fought and killed Edward, Lord Bruce of Kinloss; Francis, Lord Norris challenged Sir Peregrine Bertie for the second time; Grey, Lord Chandos challenged Lord Hay; Robert, Earl of Essex challenged Henry Howard; Francis, Earl of Rutland challenged both Philip, Earl of Montgomery and Henry, Lord Danvers. It looked as if the English nobility, like fighting cocks in a ring, were about to indulge in wholesale mutual slaughter.⁴⁵

Contemporaries therefore saw the Sackville-Bruce conflict as part of a more general problem.⁴⁶ Yet in one sense it was uniquely important, for of all these quarrels it alone ended in death. According to the English common law, Sackville was therefore guilty of murder.⁴⁷ This brought the whole question of duelling to a head, and on 4 February 1614 James issued 'a proclamation against private challenges and combats, with articles annexed for the better directions to be used therein, and for the more judiciall proceeding against offenders'.⁴⁸

45. Ibid.

46. See, for example, the accounts by Nicholas Charles, Lancaster Herald, in B.L., Cotton MS Julius C III (letters to Sir Robert Cotton), fol 87r; and by John Chamberlain in P.R.O., SP 14/74/56 (John Chamberlain to Dudley Carleton, 9 September 1613).

47. V.G. Kiernan, The Duel in European History (Oxford, 1988), p. 82.

48. P.R.O., C 66/1980/9. See also SP 14/126/27 (John Chamberlain to Dudley Carleton, 17 February 1613/4). The text of this proclamation may be found in Stuart Royal Proclamations: Vol. I. Royal Proclamations of King James I, 1603-25, ed. J.F. Larkin and P.L. Hughes (Oxford, 1973), 302-8.

Thus, quite apart from its damaging effect on Sackville's career, the duel had a broader significance which makes it worth examining in detail. Happily, the abundant references in contemporary newsletters permit a remarkably full reconstruction of Sackville's activities during 1613.

Sackville and Lord Bruce had been great friends; indeed, so close a friendship between an Englishman and a Scot in the years immediately after the Union of the Crowns was sufficiently rare to cause comment.⁴⁹ We do not know for sure why they fell out. H.E.D. Blakiston's suggestion that 'the quarrel may have arisen out of Sackville's liaison with Venetia Stanley, afterwards wife of Sir Kenelm Digby'⁵⁰ has been discredited.⁵¹ It seems more likely that Lord Bruce resented Sackville's advances to his sister, although this too is not certain.⁵² At any rate, on 7 January 1613, John Thorys reported that 'Mr Edward Sackville and my Lo[rd] Bruce should have gon to fight on Calais sands, but my Lord Bruce was stayd

49. See, for example, F. Osborne, Traditionall Memoyres on the Raigne of King James [I] (London, 1658), p. 80 (Wing, O 515).

50. D.N.B., L, 89.

51. E.W. Bligh, Sir Kenelm Digby and his Venetia (London, 1932), pp. 88-105.

52. See Phillips, History of the Sackville Family, I, 295-6.

at Dover. Mr Sackville and his second, Sir Henry Cumpto[n], escaped over at Newhaven'.⁵³ James I 'tooke up' the quarrel early the following week and it subsided for a few months.⁵⁴ However, on 13 May, John Chamberlain wrote ominously:

During the [Princess] Elizabeth's lieing at Caunterburie for wind the Lord Brus of Kinlos began to renew speach with Ed[ward] Sackville about the old quarrell, and geving some fowle words though Sackville were without weapon ... yet the Lord bare away three or fowre goode buffets on the face and so without more harme they were parted and presently made frends by the lords. The Lord Brus is since gon into Fraunce they say to learne [to] fence.⁵⁵

A challenge was now inevitable. Early in August Lord Bruce told Sackville: 'Be master of your weapons and time; the place wheresoever I wait on you. By doing this you shall shorten revenge, and clear the idle opinion the world hath of both our worths'. Sackville replied on 10 August from 'Torgose, a town in Zealand', agreeing 'to give what satisfaction your sword can render you'.⁵⁶ Two days later Lord Bruce left Paris for the

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53. B.R.O., Trumbull Miscellaneous Corr., Vol. IV, fol. 2r. Sir Henry Compton was Sackville's brother-in-law: see Chapter Four, below, pp. 213-4; and Chapter Five, below, pp. 290, 295.
54. P.R.O., SP 14/72/13 (John Chamberlain to Dudley Carleton, 14 January 1612/3).
55. P.R.O., SP 14/72/129 (John Chamberlain to Dudley Carleton, 13 May 1613).
56. For these letters, see the sources cited in n. 43, above.

Spanish Netherlands.⁵⁷ The duel was fought, ankle-deep in mud, on the flats outside Bergen-op-Zoom on 24 August. We possess Sackville's detailed account of the fight written at Louvain on 8 September to his uncle, Thomas Howard, Earl of Suffolk.⁵⁸ Lord Bruce would clearly settle for nothing less than Sackville's death and told him that 'a little of [Sackville's] blood would not serve his turn'. Despite wounds in the arm, hand and chest, Sackville managed to level his rapier against Lord Bruce's throat and 'demanded if he would ask his life or yield his sword'. Bruce refused to do either and the fight resumed. Sackville, remembering Bruce's 'former bloody desire', lunged at him and twice ran him through 'on the left syde, not farre below the harte'.⁵⁹ Despite (or perhaps because of) treatment by various 'chirurgions', which included 'drawing' the two wounds into one 'by incision', Bruce died at

57. B.R.O., Trumbull MS 5 (Trumbull Corr., 1609-22), fol. 9r; Trumbull MS 25 (Trumbull Corr., 1609-25), fol. 26r.

58. The recipient of this letter may be identified from Sackville's note that it was intended for 'my Lord Chamberlain'. Suffolk was Lord Chamberlain of the King's Household from 4 May 1603 to 10 July 1614: Complete Peerage, XII, i, 464. For the text, on which the following account is based, see the sources cited in n. 43, above. Clearly this is a case of 'history written by the victor', and there are occasional touches of self-justification. But I have found no evidence which casts doubt on the basic reliability of Sackville's account.

59. B.R.O., Trumbull Minutes II (Trumbull Corr., 1615-16), fol. 24r.

about midnight on 27 August.⁶⁰ Sackville, by contrast, made a rapid recovery and was soon 'paste danger'. However, he immediately sought sanctuary in the monastery at Bergen-op-Zoom 'to avoide the danger of the severe lawes of these countries [the Spanish Netherlands] against duells'.⁶¹ Sackville left the monastery early the following month,⁶² passed through Liège,⁶³ and by 8 September was at Louvain.⁶⁴ A few days later he travelled to Flushing and sailed for England,⁶⁵ where news of the duel was already spreading rapidly.⁶⁶

Initially, Sackville met with a favourable reception. Sir Henry Peyton wrote on 22 September that 'Mr Sackavile feeleth yet no violence of his Ma[jes]ty's displeasure, though his

60. Ibid.

61. Ibid.

62. B.R.O., Trumbull MS 39 (Throckmorton Corr., 1609-13), fol. 86r. See also P.R.O., SP 14/74/56 (John Chamberlain to Dudley Carleton, 9 September 1613).

63. K.A.O., De L'Isle and Dudley MS, U 1475/C9/255 (Sir John Throckmorton to Viscount Lisle, 8 September 1613). See also B.R.O., Trumbull MS 39, fol. 87r.

64. See above, p. 25.

65. K.A.O., De L'Isle and Dudley MS, U 1475/C9/258 (Sir John Throckmorton to Viscount Lisle, 12 September 1613).

66. See, for example, B.L., Cotton MS Julius C III, fol. 87r; H.M.C., Manuscripts of the Earl of Mar and Kellie: Supplement (London, 1930), pp. 53-4.

frendes feared he shoulde have done; the fayre cariage and equall hassarde maketh even his adversaryes speake favourably'. He added that 'these concurrencys of mischiefs by duell doe hasten a long intended lawe agaynste them, which his Ma[jes]ty is now about to publishe by edicte'.⁶⁷ But Peyton's assessment proved too optimistic. Sackville had hoped to perform in a masque to celebrate the wedding of his cousin, Frances Howard, to Robert Carr, Earl of Somerset, but was taken off the list. John Chamberlain 'mervayle[d] he wold offer himself, knowing how litle gracious he is, and that he hath ben assaulted once or twise since his return'.⁶⁸ Sackville dismissed such allegations as untrue: the only possible explanation was 'that one night ryding home to his lodging thair came a fellow behind him and stroke his horse and afterwards ran away, which he takes to have bene done by some drunken fellow'.⁶⁹ However, 'the truth [was] that Archbald Primrose came to Mr Sackvile his chamber and told him that thair was one Bruce [who] had resolved to kill him'.⁷⁰ Despite

67. B.R.O., Trumbull MS 39, fol. 65r. See also above, pp. 8-9.

68. P.R.O., SP 14/75/28 (John Chamberlain to Dudley Carleton, 25 November 1613). For the background to the wedding between Frances Howard and the Earl of Somerset, see Peck, Northampton, pp. 38-40.

69. P.R.O., SP 14/75/34 (Duke of Lennox to Sir Thomas Lake, 5 December 1613).

70. Ibid.

his bravado, Sackville took this threat from Lord Bruce's family sufficiently seriously to leave for 'the cuntrey'.⁷¹ At that point, his Howard connections temporarily came to the rescue. Sackville's uncle, the Earl of Suffolk, was Frances Howard's father, and his influence as Lord Chamberlain and father of the bride gained Sackville a place at the tilt which celebrated her wedding. Suffolk wrote to Sir Thomas Lake on 8 December:

For Edward Sackvill's being a Runner at Tilt, it seemes by yow the King is distasted withall; for which I pray yow to speake with my L[ord] of Somersett to desire his Ma[jes]tie to give him leave to do honor to his cosens marriadge, when there is so few that will be willing to take his place if he go out.⁷²

These representations to James' favourite were successful, and on 1 January 1614 Sackville participated in the wedding tilt at Westminster.⁷³ Briefly, it seemed that Sackville's links with the Howards had secured his rehabilitation.

71. Ibid.

72. P.R.O., SP 14/75/37 (Earl of Suffolk to Sir Thomas Lake, 8 December 1613). For Lake as a client of the Howards, see S.R. Gardiner, History of England, 1603-42 (12 vols. in 10, London, 1883-4), II, 231; Peck, Northampton, pp. 84, 86.

73. B.L., Harl. MS 5176 (Political and heraldic papers), fol. 217r.

But this proved illusory: within days Sackville was preparing to leave England again. On 10 January 1614 he told William Trumbull, the English Agent in Brussels, that the Archduke Albert, ruler of the Spanish Netherlands, 'showld make mee infinitely much his servant if hee pleased to give mee a pardon for the late offence I committed in his territoryes: if itt bee faisable I desire you to procure itt for mee with speede because perhaps I would shortly come into those places againe'.⁷⁴ Trumbull approached the Archduke's secretary, Philip Pratz,⁷⁵ and Sackville was officially pardoned for 'duelling and homicide' on 7 July.⁷⁶ By then he was already in Europe. The precise date of his departure is uncertain. On 26 January he was granted 'a licence to travell ... for three yeares with [blank] servantes, [blank] horses and 50^{li} in money'.⁷⁷ He was still in London early in March,⁷⁸ but probably left shortly afterwards for he claimed on 14 August

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- 74. B.R.O., Trumbull Miscellaneous Corr., Vol. V (Trumbull Corr., 1612-14), fol. 5r.
 - 75. B.R.O., Trumbull Miscellaneous Corr., Vol. VI (Trumbull Corr., 1614), fol. 51r.
 - 76. The full text of this pardon may be found in Phillips, History of the Sackville Family, I, 301-3.
 - 77. P.R.O., SO 3/5 (Signet Office Docquet Book, 1610-14), unfol., 26 January 1613/4.
 - 78. B.R.O., Trumbull MS 29 (Trumbull Corr., 1613-31), fol. 1r.

1615 to have been 'abroad almoste twenty months'.⁷⁹ The very length of this exile indicates how seriously the duel had damaged Sackville's reputation at home.

We know that Sackville remained in France and the Netherlands until September 1615. It was, perhaps, in these months that he wrote a gnomic inscription in the album amicorum of Charles de Bousy: 'Vanish Feare, since they who fall low must dy as well as they that tumble headlong from the Scky'.⁸⁰ The wry fatalism of these words possibly reflected Sackville's mood as he surveyed his ruined career. His movements during the rest of 1614 are obscure, but by April 1615 he was at Lyons. Here he managed to secure the release of Sir Edward Herbert (later Lord Herbert of Cherbury) whom the governor of Lyons, the Marquis de St Chaumont, had mistakenly imprisoned for raising troops in Savoy.⁸¹ The following morning, Herbert

79. B.R.O., Trumbull Miscellaneous Corr., Vol. VII (Trumbull Corr., 1615-17), fol. 67r.

80. B.L., Sloane MS 3415 (Album Amicorum of Charles de Bousy, 1603-38), fol. 55r. Sackville's aphorism is undated and the link with his exile in 1614-15 must therefore remain unproven. See also M. Rosenheim, 'The Album Amicorum', Archaeologia, Second Series, LXII (1910), 251-308, especially 289.

81. P.R.O., SP 78/63/149 (Sir Edward Sackville's Relation concerning Sir Edward Herbert, April 1615). See also The Autobiography of Edward, Lord Herbert of Cherbury, ed. S.L. Lee (London, 1886), pp. 166-71.

told Sackville that:

I had received a great affront, and that I intended to send [the Marquis] a challenge, in such courteous language that he could not refuse it: Sir Edward Sackville by all means dissuaded me from it; by which I perceived I was not to expect his assistance therein, and indeed the next day he went out of town.⁸²

Sackville, we may conclude, had had enough of duels.

Nevertheless, the disgrace of his own duel gradually lifted, and by the late summer of 1615 Sackville was planning to return to England. In early August he moved from Paris to Spa, within the bishopric of Liège.⁸³ There he wrote to William Trumbull on 12 August:

I must into England for my frends will noe longer loose my company (and I am made beleve likewise thatt the King desires my returne to wittness to mee by some effect hee is noe longer displeased with mee for my late misfortune with my Lord Bruse).⁸⁴

Sackville then requested a licence 'to pass over the Archduke's country [the Spanish Netherlands] ... for the dispatch I have

82. Autobiography of Lord Herbert of Cherbury, ed. Lee, p. 171.

83. B.R.O., Trumbull Miscellaneous Corr., Vol. VII, fol. 65r.

84. Ibid., fol. 66r.

of some affayres in those parts'.⁸⁵ He repeated this request two days later:

The 8 of September after the English count [i.e. Old Style] is the utmost period thatt discretion limitts my arrivall in England. Therefore lett mee once more beseeche you to gett mee a licence bee itt only for fourteen dayes to pass through the Archduke's country to Caliz [Calais], for if I take the way of the Low Countryes [the Northern Netherlands], yett wilbee very chargable to mee in respect of the multitude of English and garrisons thatt I am to pass through and meete with.⁸⁶

However, on 16 August Sackville informed Trumbull that 'I have altered my resolution for I will sooner home then I thought and by a neere way. I will therefore save you the payns of sollicitinge the Archduke's licence'.⁸⁷ Instead, Sackville 'desire[d] an other effect of curtesy from' Trumbull, namely a loan of 'forty pounds sterling or fifty' to cover 'horses and other commodityes'.⁸⁸ The money was sent and on 21 August Sackville left Spa for Brussels.⁸⁹ Contrary to his earlier plan, this involved passing through the Spanish Netherlands. He travelled without licence,⁹⁰ and was protected by the

85. Ibid.

86. Ibid., fol. 67r.

87. Ibid., fol. 68r.

88. Ibid.

89. Ibid., fol. 69r.

90. Ibid.

Trumbulls, who offered him 'kind intertaynment'.⁹¹ Sackville then moved secretly through Antwerp⁹² to Flushing,⁹³ whence he sailed for England on 18 September.⁹⁴

The English political landscape had changed considerably during the twenty months which Sackville had spent abroad. The death of Northampton (15 June 1614),⁹⁵ the scandals of the Essex divorce and the Overbury murder, and the fall of Somerset (1615-16) had combined to end the Howards' ascendancy. On 23 April 1615, George Villiers was sworn Gentleman of the King's Bedchamber, so launching the extraordinary career which was to dominate the last decade of James' reign.⁹⁶ These events deprived Sackville of the important advantage which membership of the Howard clan had hitherto given him. From 1615, power and influence came to depend on personal standing with the King and more especially with his new favourite. Not surprisingly,

91. Ibid., fol. 74r.

92. Ibid.

93. K.A.O., De L'Isle and Dudley MS, U 1475/C9/429 (Sir John Throckmorton to Viscount Lisle, 17 September 1615).

94. K.A.O., De L'Isle and Dudley MS, U 1475/C9/433 (Sir John Throckmorton to Viscount Lisle, 23 September 1615).

95. Peck, Northampton, p. 64.

96. R. Lockyer, Buckingham (London, 1981), p. 20.

it took Sackville some while to adjust to the new political topography.

Barely four weeks after his return, Sackville's failure to recognise that the Howard era was over dealt a blow to his career almost as serious as the duel. This followed the Overbury murder scandal.⁹⁷ Sir Thomas Overbury had violently opposed the marriage between Sackville's cousin, Frances Howard, and the Earl of Somerset, and sent various threats to Somerset. In April 1613 Overbury was imprisoned in the Tower, ostensibly for refusing an embassy.⁹⁸ The following September he was found dead. Suspicion grew that Overbury had succumbed to more than 'a cold caught through sitting too long at an open window'.⁹⁹ In October 1615 his keeper, Weston, was brought to trial in Star Chamber where, after application of the peine forte et dure, he admitted to feeding Overbury poisoned tarts

97. It is worth noting that Gardiner's account of this scandal is one of his finest pieces of reconstruction: Gardiner, History of England, II, 175-87, 331-63. For a fuller (but not significantly different) version, see B. White, Cast of Ravens: The Strange Case of Sir Thomas Overbury (London, 1965).
98. Gardiner, History of England, II, 175-8; White, Cast of Ravens, pp. 36-54.
99. Gardiner, History of England, II, 333. See also White, Cast of Ravens, pp. 76-81, 99-110.

and implicated the Earl and Countess of Somerset.¹⁰⁰ Weston was sentenced to death, but members of the Howard-Somerset faction claimed that his statements were untrue.¹⁰¹ On 25 October, as Weston awaited execution at Tyburn, a group including Sackville, Sir John Holles and Sir John Wentworth asked 'questions of [him] in some disorderlye manner'. This was thought to impugn the Star Chamber's verdict and so they 'were committed by the Lords of the Counsayle, and Hollis and Wentworthe were fined in the Starre Chamber, all the rest were only imprisoned'.¹⁰² The attempt by Sackville and others to discredit Weston's evidence and so clear the Earl and Countess of Somerset had failed miserably. Within weeks of his return from exile, Sackville found himself in prison. Although he was released in December,¹⁰³ the days when the Howards led a charmed life in politics were clearly over. The Earl and

100. Gardiner, History of England, II, 338-42; White, Cast of Ravens, pp. 111-17.

101. Gardiner, History of England, II, 342; White, Cast of Ravens, pp. 117-19.

102. P.R.O., SP 14/86/16 (George, Lord Carew to [Sir Thomas Roe], 24 January 1615/6). For other contemporary accounts, see The Letters of John Holles, 1587-1637, ed. P.R. Seddon (Thoroton Society Record Series, Vol. XXXI, 1975), 93; The Life, Letters and Writings of John Hoskyns, 1566-1638, ed. L.B. Osborn (New Haven, 1937), p. 74; C.S.P.V., XIV (1615-17), 61-2. See also the accounts in Gardiner, History of England, II, 342; White, Cast of Ravens, pp. 117-18.

103. P.R.O., SP 14/86/16. See also Letters of John Holles, ed. Seddon (Vol. XXXI), 99.

Countess of Somerset were tried in May 1616, convicted and imprisoned in the Tower. A few days later, in an act which symbolised the redistribution of political power, James offered to grant Somerset's manor of Sherborne to George Villiers.¹⁰⁴

For Sackville, newly released from prison, these were unpropitious events. His earlier precocious progress had been abruptly halted. At fifteen he had entered Oxford knowing that his grandfather and great-uncle were among the most powerful men in England; at twenty-two he had made an excellent marriage and been chosen to greet the French ambassador. Now, at twenty-five, his grandfather and great-uncle were both dead; his Howard ancestry had turned from an asset to a liability; and his career had sustained two body-blows which resulted in his disgrace, exile and imprisonment.

104. Gardiner, History of England, II, 352-63; Lockyer, Buckingham, p. 27. The Earl and Countess of Somerset were released in 1622. They then lived in retirement at Chiswick until their deaths in 1645 and 1632 respectively: White, Cast of Ravens, pp. 189-90.

III

Small wonder, then, that for much of 1616 Sackville's activities are lost in obscurity. Indeed, given the magnitude of these setbacks, it is perhaps more surprising to find some signs of a recovery towards the end of that year. Sackville's installation as Knight of the Bath on 2 November clearly marked his re-admission to Court circles.¹⁰⁵ This was not, apparently, jeopardised by his rowdy behaviour in the City of London a week later. John Chamberlain reported that

On Saturday [9 November] the Knights of the Bath were entertained by the Lord Mayor at Drapers Hall with a supper and a play, where some of them were so rude and unruly and caried themselves so insolently divers wayes but specially in putting citizens wives to the squeake, so far forth that one of the sheriffes brake open a doore upon Sir Edward Sackvile, which gave such occasion of scandall, that they went away without the banket though it were redy and prepared for them.¹⁰⁶

But this episode cannot have harmed Sackville's reputation at Court, for on 22 February 1617 he was among 'the principall persons' in a masque to honour the French ambassador, De La

105. B.L., Harl. MS 5176, fol. 222v; Bod. Lib., MS Willis 58 (Miscellaneous Collections), fol. 207r.

106. P.R.O., SP 14/89/21 (John Chamberlain to Dudley Carleton, 14 November 1616).

Tour.¹⁰⁷ Thus, by the start of 1617, Sackville had made up at least some of the ground lost in the five years since he had greeted a previous French ambassador at Gravesend.

A series of official appointments from the summer of 1617 onwards affords further evidence of Sackville's gradual return to favour. On 16 July he was among those employed by the Privy Council to bring Sir Edward Coke's daughter Frances into custody.¹⁰⁸ Coke wanted her to marry Buckingham's younger brother Sir John Villiers, and threatened force when she refused. Frances' mother, Lady Hatton, obtained conciliar protection for her daughter until the dispute was resolved in September (in Coke's favour).¹⁰⁹ The previous week, Sackville had secured his first local government appointment, to the

107. P.R.O., SP 14/90/79 (John Chamberlain to Dudley Carleton, 22 February 1616/7).

108. P.R.O., SP 14/92/101 (George Gerrard to Dudley Carleton, 22 July 1617); Diary of Lady Anne Clifford, ed. Sackville-West, p. 73.

109. For the background to this episode, see Gardiner, History of England, III, 84-100. It is worth adding that Sackville almost certainly harboured a personal dislike of Coke after he acted as prosecuting counsel at Weston's trial in October 1615.

Sussex commission for sewers.¹¹⁰ During the late summer of 1617 he again visited Europe, probably in an attempt to regain a jewel entrusted to William Trumbull as security for Trumbull's earlier loan.¹¹¹ He stayed at Spa and Brussels, but

110. P.R.O., C 181/2 (Crown Office Entry Book of Commissions, 1606-20), fol. 292r. This commission was renewed many times: see, for example, C 181/3 (Crown Office Entry Book of Commissions, 1620-9), fols. 133r, 166v, 209v; C 181/4 (Crown Office Entry Book of Commissions, 1629-34), fols. 18r, 32r, 46v, 53v, 73v, 106r; C 181/5 (Crown Office Entry Book of Commissions, 1635-45), fols. 69r, 144r, 205v.

111. See above, p. 32.

discovered that Trumbull had already sold the jewel.¹¹² We do not know whether Sackville ever recovered it, but by 31 October he was certainly back in England.¹¹³ His appointments to local government commissions multiplied thereafter. From 27 November

112. The story of Sackville's attempts to recover this jewel is rather complicated. It seems that he originally intended to let Trumbull sell it: B.R.O., Trumbull Miscellaneous Corr., Vol. VII, fol. 2r. However, on 18 March 1617 he requested its 'spedy and safe' return, 'since I rather desire the iewell agayne then any mony for it': ibid., fol. 143r. Trumbull's failure to send the jewel probably explains why Sackville decided to visit Europe that summer. On 25 June, the Privy Council granted 'a passe for Sir Edward Sackville, knight, to goe to the Spawe [Spa] for the recovery of his health, to take with him foure servantes ... to stay there sixe monethes': A.P.C., 1616-17, 271. He was still in England on 16 July, but probably departed shortly afterwards, and by 13 August was at Spa. Here he again changed his mind about the jewel, and instructed Trumbull to 'lett all the stones bee taken outt by a juellor skillfull and honest: which don pray lett him putt them as they use commonly to doe in a box on red wax, for I intend to make of them and more I have a hatt band': B.R.O., Trumbull Miscellaneous Corr., Vol. VIII (Trumbull Corr., 1618), fol. 75r. Unfortunately, Trumbull had already sold the jewel, and on 20 August Sackville wrote urgently: 'Pray gett him thatt hath bought the jewell to keepe itt in his hands butt a month or six weekes and I will at my comminge by you buy itt agayne'. He added: 'If the desire cannott bee effected, then lett mee desire you it may bee don away to some such as will nott bring itt into England, for itt was given and I wOULD nott have itt seene there': ibid., fol. 80r. Sackville did not specify who gave him the jewel; possibly it was one of those which his father had left him (see above, p. 19). At this point, Sackville's surviving correspondence with Trumbull ends. Presumably he travelled to Brussels and resolved the matter in person: there was thus no need to write further, and the jewel's fate is therefore uncertain.

113. Sackville spent 31 October 'playing at cards with' his cousin, Charles Howard: Diary of Lady Anne Clifford, ed. Sackville-West, p. 79.

1617 Sackville sat on the City of London commissions of gaol delivery¹¹⁴ and of oyer and terminer,¹¹⁵ while on 2 December he was appointed to the Newgate commission of gaol delivery.¹¹⁶ Similar appointments for Middlesex followed during the next two years: to the commission of oyer and terminer on 12 March 1618¹¹⁷ and to the commission of the peace in February 1619.¹¹⁸ While it is unclear how active Sackville was on these various commissions, the fact that he was appointed (and re-appointed) indicates the government's readiness to entrust him with administrative responsibility.

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114. P.R.O., C 181/2, fol. 301r. For renewals, see ibid., fols. 324r, 351r; C 181/4, fol. 66r; C 181/5, fols. 58v, 153v, 157r, 207r, 213v.
115. P.R.O., C 181/2, fol. 302r. For renewals, see ibid., fols. 303r, 323r; C 181/3, fols. 21v, 46v, 75v, 102v, 132r, 182r, 211r, 234v, 242v; C 181/4, fols. 15r-v, 33v, 66r, 103r, 127v, 151r, 170v, 188r; C 181/5, fols. 2r, 25r, 58v, 90r, 119v, 153v, 157r, 185v, 207r, 213v.
116. P.R.O., C 181/2, fol. 303v. For renewals, see ibid., fol. 345r; C 181/3, fols. 22v, 74v, 101v, 132r, 182r, 211r, 234r, 242v; C 181/4, fols. 32v, 103r, 127v, 151r, 170v, 188r; C 181/5, fols. 2r, 25r, 119v.
117. P.R.O., C 181/2, fol. 304v. For further details, see Chapter Five, below, pp. 318-9.
118. A.P.C., 1617-19, 369. For further details, see Chapter Five, below, p. 319.

Apart from these commissions, Sackville's activities during 1618 remain largely murky. We know that in March-April 1619 he was 'dangerously ill' with a 'fever' which 'turned to an ague'.¹¹⁹ However, he had apparently recovered by 4 May, when he filed a bill of complaint in Chancery against John and Elizabeth Strachie, who were claiming an annuity of £20 from Sackville's manor of Brambletye.¹²⁰ Sackville denied their claim but, despite the advocacy of Sir James Whitelocke,¹²¹ lost the action and was obliged to pay the annuity together with £10 legal costs and £300 in arrears.¹²² But otherwise, we have to wait until the early summer of 1620 before we gain our next glimpses of Sackville, in the records of the Virginia Company.

119. Diary of Lady Anne Clifford, ed. Sackville-West, pp. 90, 96.

120. P.R.O., C 3/324/8 (Chancery proceedings, Series II).

121. Sir James Whitelocke's Liber Famelicus, ed. J. Bruce (Camden Society, First Series, Vol. LXX, 1858), 70-1.

122. P.R.O., C 33/137 (Chancery Entry Book of Decrees and Orders, 1619-20), fols. 616v, 1164r-v, 1603v; C 33/138 (Chancery Entry Book of Decrees and Orders, 1619-20), fols. 695r-v, 1317v, 1686v; C 33/139 (Chancery Entry Book of Decrees and Orders, 1620-1), fols. 43v, 577v, 824v-825r, 1070r; C 33/140 (Chancery Entry Book of Decrees and Orders, 1620-1), fols. 46r, 333r, 602r-v, 886r, 1168r-v.

This Company had been re-organised in 1618 and was further re-vitalised after Sir Edwin Sandys became its Treasurer in April 1619.¹²³ Although the Company disintegrated rapidly in 1622-3, in 1620 it seemed a very attractive enterprise. Moreover, Sackville's elder brother, Richard, third Earl of Dorset, had held shares in it since 1618.¹²⁴ He sold ten of these to Sir Henry Mainwaring on 15 May 1620,¹²⁵ possibly to pay off debts.¹²⁶ A week later, Mainwaring re-sold five of these shares, worth £12 10s. each, to Sackville,¹²⁷ who immediately became busily involved in the Company's affairs. He attended the Virginia Court (which was open to all shareholders) on 31 May, 23, 26, 27, 28 June and 12 July.¹²⁸ On 28 June, Treasurer Sandys nominated Sackville and seven others for membership of the Company's Council: they were 'gentlemen and

123. The background to these developments is fully discussed in W.F. Craven, The Dissolution of the Virginia Company (New York, 1932), pp. 47-104.

124. The Records of the Virginia Company of London, ed. S.M. Kingsbury (4 vols., Washington, D.C., 1906-38), III, 82.

125. Ibid., III, 61.

126. Certainly the third Earl was selling lands for this reason as early as 1617: see Chapter Five, below, pp. 362-3.

127. Records of the Virginia Company, ed. Kingsbury, I, 359, 364; III, 61. For the value of these shares, see W.F. Craven, The Virginia Company of London, 1606-1624 (Williamsburg, Virginia, 1957), p. 17. There were 650 adventurers in all: ibid., p. 19.

128. Ibid., I, 364-5, 369, 373-4, 379, 382-3, 399.

cittizens who for their worth and extraordinary paines well merited that place'.¹²⁹ The Court confirmed this 'by errecon of hands' that afternoon.¹³⁰ Sandys' nomination surely helps to explain why Sackville was later fiercely loyal to him: he owed Sandys a personal debt, and had a vested interest in the survival of his régime.¹³¹ A fortnight later (12 July) Sackville was among the Virginia Councillors sent to protest against the Privy Council's introduction of a monopoly on tobacco duties, which was bound to harm imports of the colony's staple crop.¹³² As we shall see, this may be one reason why Sackville spoke against monopolies in the 1621 Parliament.¹³³ In the meantime, however, his growing involvement in the Virginia Company was sharply interrupted by another visit to Europe.

129. Ibid., I, 379.

130. Ibid., I, 383.

131. See Chapter Two, below, pp. 65-7.

132. Records of the Virginia Company, ed. Kingsbury, I, 404; Craven, Dissolution, pp. 221-30.

133. See Chapter Two, below, pp. 54-5.

It is often stated that Sackville fought at the battle of the White Mountain (29 October 1620), in which the Habsburg forces defeated those of the Elector Palatine outside the walls of Prague. This romantic story apparently originated with Rushworth¹³⁴ and has been widely repeated.¹³⁵ But it is apocryphal. Certainly Sackville and his elder brother were both committed to the defence of the Palatinate. In March 1620, the third Earl of Dorset offered to pay £1,000 per annum for the next five years to fund an expeditionary force to Bohemia.¹³⁶ Sackville offered to lead a company himself, and on 21 June was granted a licence 'togeather with such voluntary souldiers as shalbe willing to goe over in his company for the service of his Majesty's sonne in law in defence of the Palatinat ... to imbarque themselves in any shipps or vessells he shall provide for their transportation'.¹³⁷ Similar companies, under the overall command of Sir Horace Vere, later fought at White Mountain, and this presumably fostered the

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134. J. Rushworth, Historical Collections of private passages of State (8 vols., London, 1680-1701), I, 14-15 (Wing, R 2317).
135. See, for example, Wood, Athenae Oxonienses, ed. Bliss, III, 312-4; D.N.B., L, 89; Rosenheim, 'Album Amicorum', 289-90.
136. P.R.O., SP 14/113/33 (Sir Francis Nethersole to Dudley Carleton, 21 March 1619/20). Unfortunately, the Earl's money ran out after only one year: SP 14/118/19 (Richard Sackville, third Earl of Dorset to the Privy Council, 10 December 1620).
137. A.P.C., 1619-21, 225.

belief that Sackville's did so too. But in fact he resigned his commission within days. On 28 June, John Chamberlain reported 'a deale of discontent' among the assembled forces:

First the Lord Lile hath left his hold, and by the Princes meanes Sir John Wentworth is lept into his place, which hath so far distasted Sir Edward Sackvile to see him preferred to a companie of 250 (whereas he was to have but 200) that he likewise quitted the service, and gave up his commission.¹³⁸

Chamberlain also reported a rumour that Sackville was 'upon resuming again upon offer to be made equall', but it is clear that he did not.¹³⁹

Sackville was, nevertheless, active in Europe during the second half of 1620, but on an informal, unofficial basis. In July he received 'a licence to travell for one yeare with ten servantes and 100^{li} in money'.¹⁴⁰ Early in August, the King employed him to convey a message to Sir Edward Cecil, who was

138. P.R.O., SP 14/115/112 (John Chamberlain to Dudley Carleton, 28 June 1620). See also SP 81/17/94 (Sir Thomas Roe to Elizabeth, Queen of Bohemia, 30 June 1620). For evidence of a previous quarrel between Sackville and Sir John Wentworth, see Diary of Lady Anne Clifford, ed. Sackville-West, p. 77.

139. P.R.O., SP 14/115/112. See also SP 14/116/1 (Rowland Woodward to Sir Francis Windebanke, [?] 1 July 1620); SP 81/17/105 (memorandum by Sir Henry Vane, 1 July 1620).

140. P.R.O., SO 3/7 (Signet Office Docquet Book, 1620-4), unfol., July 1620.

assembling a company in the United Netherlands under the aegis of the Prince of Orange.¹⁴¹ This gesture was surely indicative of growing royal trust. Sackville became friendly with Cecil,¹⁴² and at the end of August followed his company to Wesel in the Rhineland. Here they came face to face with Habsburg forces commanded by Don Luis de Velasco. The truce between the Spanish and the Dutch had not yet expired, and in early September

certaine English voluntaries ([such] as my L[ord] Gerrart and Sir Edward Sackfield, who tooke with them Sir Ed[ward] Cecyll for companie) went to visit ... Don Loys de Velasco in his camp; where it was thayr hap to arrive uppon a day of muster, by which meanes they did see a goode part of the armie, and make a most contemptible report of it as not exceeding 6,000 foote and 1,000 horse.

They found the Habsburg forces 'poore, disordered, fearfull, sad, and in such ill ease both General and soldiers that they would never have believed it had they not seene it'.¹⁴³ A few weeks later the armies decamped without engaging, and by 30

141. C. Dalton, The Life and Times of General Sir Edward Cecil, Viscount Wimbledon (2 vols., London, 1885), I, 331.

142. See, for example, P.R.O., SP 84/97, fol. 64v (Sir Edward Herbert to Dudley Carleton, 15 September 1620).

143. Ibid., fol. 53v (Dudley Carleton to Sir Francis Nethersole, 10 September 1620). See also Cecil's own account: B.L., Microfilm M 485, Vol. CXXVIII, fol. 71r (Sir Edward Cecil to the Earl of Salisbury, 4 September 1620): 'Wee found a great diference betwixte our Army and theres, for ours is full of discipline and glory, theres full of disorder, poverty and dednes'.

October Cecil had returned to The Hague 'with Sir Ed[ward] Sackfilde in his companie'.¹⁴⁴ As the battle of the White Mountain was fought on 29 October, this proves conclusively that Sackville was not present. He probably returned to England sometime in November. A Chancery order of 17 October described him as 'pre-occupied in the King's service';¹⁴⁵ but a further order of 28 November omitted this phrase,¹⁴⁶ which suggests that Sackville was in England by that date. His service in Europe, even without a formal military commission, demonstrates his commitment to the Protestant cause. It explains, further, why the Privy Council appointed him to a special committee 'for [the] recovery and proteccion of the Pallatinatt' on 24 January 1621;¹⁴⁷ and it helps to explain why he vociferously urged supply for the Palatinate during the 1621 Parliament.¹⁴⁸ Unlike many of his contemporaries, Sackville had first-hand experience of the European situation. But he was not involved in actual fighting, and the story that he was at White Mountain is a romantic myth.

144. P.R.O., SP 84/97, fol. 173r (Dudley Carleton to Sir Robert Naunton, 30 October 1620).

145. P.R.O., C 33/139, fol. 43v; C 33/140, fol. 46r.

146. P.R.O., C 33/140, fol. 333r.

147. A.P.C., 1619-21, 335. See also B.L., Microfilm M 485, Vol. CCLIII, item 7 (memoranda relating to the Palatinate, 1620-1).

148. See Chapter Two, below, pp. 55-8.

Where, then, did Sackville stand at the end of 1620? Clearly he had recovered at least some of the ground lost in 1613-16. Although the fall of the Howards had permanently removed one of the major advantages of his earlier years, he had managed to overcome the stigmas of his duel and his behaviour at Weston's execution. He was beginning to emerge as a courtier, a local administrator and a colonial entrepreneur. The King was prepared to entrust him with a private message to a general serving in Europe. Nevertheless, Sackville was a man whose expectations of life had not been fulfilled. At eighteen, his paternal grandfather was Lord Treasurer of England; his great uncle was Lord Privy Seal and Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports; his uncle was Lord Chamberlain of the King's Household.¹⁴⁹ All three were Privy Councillors. As Sackville attained his majority the prospects seemed limitless. Throughout his adolescence and early manhood success came easily. When his luck ran out in the mid-1610's, the sudden experience of royal disfavour must have been traumatic. Sackville's killing of Lord Bruce in a duel and his querying of a Star Chamber verdict deeply offended the King, and it took some years for the rift to heal. Although his public reputation began to recover after 1616, at thirty Sackville had yet to prove his usefulness in royal service. By 1620 he had

149. Peck, Northampton, pp. 64-5. See above, pp. 13, 18, 25, 27.

largely surmounted the negative aspects of his past, but he still had little positive to recommend him. Neither James nor Buckingham yet saw Sackville as an obvious candidate for preferment: he held no major office, no longer had powerful Court contacts, and concealed beneath his charming manner a tendency to be outspoken and even violent. Ten years later, this picture was utterly transformed. At thirty-nine, Edward Sackville was fourth Earl of Dorset, Lord Chamberlain of Queen Henrietta Maria's Household, an influential Privy Councillor, and Lord Lieutenant of Sussex and Middlesex. In 1620 he looked back on a decade of setbacks and struggles; in 1629 he looked forward to a decade as one of the pivotal figures of Charles I's Personal Rule. How he achieved this astonishing turnaround, what obstacles he faced and how he overcame them, will form the subject of the next chapter.

CHAPTER TWO: DORSET AND THE POLITICS OF THE 1620'S.

Parliamentary history, it has been argued, can only be fully understood when set in the context of 'the wider world'. In Professor Russell's words,

in England in the 1620's, the majority of important political events took place outside Parliament ... Parliaments, if they are to be seen in perspective, should not be seen as the makers of the major historical events of the 1620's, but as ad hoc gatherings of men reacting to events taking place elsewhere. Major political decisions were usually taken at Court, and other major political events tended to take place in the country, well away from the Palace of Westminster.¹

This thesis is highly persuasive, yet, as Richard Cust has recently reminded us, it is extremely difficult to demonstrate in practice. If 'we are still much better informed about parliamentary politics and legislation than the workings of the Court or the main institutions of central government', then this surely owes as much to the nature and accessibility of sources as to the interests of historians.² A further problem is that much historical writing seeks less to construct syntheses than to redress balances. Thus, Kevin Sharpe's

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1. C. Russell, Parliaments and English Politics, 1621-1629 (Oxford, 1979), p. 1.
 2. R. Cust, The Forced Loan and English Politics, 1626-1628 (Oxford, 1987), p. 1.

recent essay on the Caroline Court is a wholly convincing treatment of a neglected subject, but never attempts to integrate the histories of Court and Parliament.³ A truly 'Revisionist' account of the 1620's would be a massive undertaking, and is perhaps only possible either for particular issues, such as the Forced Loan, or for particular individuals, such as Edward Sackville, fourth Earl of Dorset. This chapter attempts the latter. It is therefore not an analysis of Dorset's parliamentary career during the 1620's, but a reconstruction of his role in the high politics of that decade, both in and out of Parliament. I will focus on three questions within a broadly narrative structure. What were Dorset's relations with his patrons, especially the Duke of Buckingham, and how did they affect his political behaviour? What was the mixture of ideological commitment, factional allegiance and self-interest in determining his action, and how far did these coincide or conflict? What was the source of Dorset's growing political influence: how much did it owe to royal or ducal favour, and how much to the offices which Dorset held? In attempting answers, we will move far beyond the precincts of the Palace of Westminster, although it is there that our story finds both its end, and its beginning.

3. K. Sharpe, 'The image of virtue: the court and household of Charles I, 1625-1642', in The English Court from the Wars of the Roses to the Civil War, ed. D. Starkey (London, 1987), pp. 226-60.

In the 1621 Parliament, the then Sir Edward Sackville was returned as M.P. for Sussex.⁴ He immediately established himself as an active figure in the Commons: records survive of at least seventy-seven speeches during the two sessions of 1621, and he also served on twenty-eight committees.⁵ Sackville apparently spoke on all the Commons' major concerns: patents and monopolies, aid to the Palatinate, the impeachment of Lord Chancellor Bacon, abuses in courts of law, the projected marriage of Prince Charles. Throughout, he wished to support the King by financing his foreign policy, deflecting all blame from him, and preserving his prerogative intact. Although ideology must not be ignored, it is impossible to understand this strategy fully without examining Sackville's extra-parliamentary career, and especially his desire to secure office by winning government approval.

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4. Return of Members of Parliaments of England, 1213-1702 (2 vols., London, 1878), I, 453. The other M.P. for Sussex was Christopher Nevill.
 5. The total of Sackville's speeches is derived from C.D., passim. The total of committee appointments is derived from C.J., I, 507-655.

By far the best documented of Sackville's speeches in the 1621 Parliament is that delivered on 14 February.⁶ This speech is worth detailed analysis, not only because it treats a number of issues besides its central concern with supply, but also because it was important in establishing Sackville's reputation as a parliamentary speaker. It must have been fresh in John Chamberlain's mind when he wrote to Dudley Carleton on 17 February that 'besides those speakers I named the last weeke, Sir Ed[ward] Sackvile hath spoken once or twice very well'.⁷ Earlier, on 6 February, Sackville had moved for a select committee to examine the patent for gold and silver thread and lace, so that 'His Majesty might be freed from scandal in granting of these patents'.⁸ On 14 February, he began by reiterating that he would 'say any thing that may lend an hand

6. Contemporary MS copies of this speech, fuller than the versions given in C.D., II, 85-6, 90, may be found in B.L., Add. MS 14031 (Dialogue concerning Parliaments, etc.), fols. 8-9; Add. MS 33051 (Newcastle Papers, Vol. CCCLXVI), fols. 109-10; Harl. MS 6021 (Miscellaneous Historical Tracts), fols. 44-8. Also Bod. Lib., MS Tanner 89 (Misc. collections), fols. 144-5. There are only very slight variations between these copies. The following quotations are taken from B.L., Add. MS 14031 because it is the most consistently legible, but identical wording could be adduced from any of the others. The number of copies suggests that the speech circulated widely.
7. P.R.O., SP 14/119/103 (John Chamberlain to Dudley Carleton, 17 February 1620/1).
8. C.D., II, 50. See also ibid., IV, 19-20; C.J., I, 510. For stress on how blame for patents and monopolies was carefully deflected from the King, see Russell, Parliaments, pp. 98-9.

to unloade my countrie of that greate burthen yt now labures under by reason of that infinite number of monopolies which like soe many leaches exhaust the vitall spiritts and soe presse downe those partes which ought to enioy free respiracon.'⁹ Sackville then turned to the Palatinate. He told the Commons that the King had appointed 'a selected number of noble men and some gentlemen' to consider aid, and that this committee had deemed 25,000 foot and 5,000 horse, costing £300,000, to be the minimum necessary.¹⁰ Sackville was confident that 'there are few members in this howse that to this holie warr (as I may iustlie stile yt) would not as willingly and as hartilie contribute the service of their persons as the assistance of their purse', but he warned the Commons that 'yf wee attend any longer, tyme will be past, soe as all we then doe will be soe out of season, as yt cannot produce any greate or good effect'.¹¹ If supply were postponed much longer, 'all wee can then doe will be noe more worth then a Phisition after death. Sure such a dulnes must needs be

9. B.L., Add. MS 14031, fol. 8r. As we saw in Chapter One, above, p. 44, Sackville's opposition to the tobacco monopoly may help to explain this passage.

10. Ibid. For this committee, see P.R.O., SP 14/119/21-3 (appointment of Council of War, 13 January 1620/1). Sackville was appointed to it on 24 January, and signed its report on 11 February: SP 14/119/93 (report of Council of War, 11 February 1620/1). See Chapter One, above, p. 48.

11. B.L., Add. MS 14031, fol. 8r.

occasion of much weaknes, yf yt admit noe worse construccion'.¹² This 'worse construccion' was presumably subversion of either the Protestant cause or the King's authority. Sackville concluded with praise for Princess Elizabeth ('the memorie of her virtue ... remaines remarkable caractred in the hearte of everie honest man') and for King James, 'he that was borne to commaund'.¹³ Here we have explicit support for the Crown, a vigorous call for aid to the Palatinate, and a denunciation of monopolists: what was Sackville up to?

It is perfectly possible that Sackville meant every word, and that his motivation was ideological. As we saw in the previous chapter, he was probably genuinely committed to defence of the Palatinate. But we also saw that Sackville's political position in 1620-1 was still far from secure. It is therefore equally feasible that he wished to establish himself in the government's eyes as an effective supporter of the Crown. This second motive emerges quite clearly in a letter from Sir George Goring to Buckingham of 15 March 1621.¹⁴

12. Ibid., fol. 9r.

13. Ibid.

14. B.L., Harl. MS 1580 (Letters and Papers of State, temp. Jac. I), fols. 422-3, printed in C.D., VII, 579.

Goring reports that he had bluntly asked Sackville if he had ever been 'buisy in any underhand proceedings' against Buckingham. Sackville replied

that in all this time he never intended any thinge more then by all his indeavours to expresse him selfe your lordship's servant ... To conclude, my lord, he is soe much toucht with the sence of suffering in your good oppinion as he coniured me to write this by way of a stopp to your farther beleefe till your lordship's comminge to towne which he shall carefully watch and then attende you with that which he is confident will cleere him before soe iust a iudge.¹⁵

Certainly Sackville's speeches throughout this Parliament can be explained by a desire to stand well with the Crown. During the crucial foreign policy debate on 26-27 November, he urged the Commons to 'give some present supply towards the keeping of that which is left us in the Palatinate'. Members should 'bestow such a sum on the King as will suffice for the present supply of the wants of those soldiers that now are in the Palatinate ... It is unfit to speak or discourse of any thing else till this be effected'.¹⁶ In particular, the House should avoid urging the King to declare war on Spain; if this proved necessary 'then will the King without question, understanding of our affections and inclinations, proclaim a general war

15. Ibid.

16. E. Nicholas, Proceedings and Debates of the House of Commons in 1620 and 1621 (2 vols., Oxford, 1766), II, 210, 220. See also C.J., I, 648, 650.

against him, and then shall we have our desires'.¹⁷ The Commons should grant the King immediate supply, and trust his judgement thereafter.

A week later, on 3 December, Sackville strongly opposed the Commons' petition advising James on Prince Charles' marriage: 'we have all this Parliament been chary not to touch upon any point of the King's prerogative, much less the King's undoubted prerogative, which is the bestowing of his son'.¹⁸ The royal prerogative was entitled to as much respect as parliamentary privilege:

It is the privilege of Princes to marry where they list: and, since we are so careful of our own privileges, he would not have us seek to limit our Prince. He would not have this House do as Phaeton did, take in Hand the Rule of a Chariot which appertains not to us; lest it cause as great a confusion here as the other is said an inflammation of the whole world.¹⁹

The Commons' petition on the Prince's marriage enraged James; had Sackville's advice been followed a major confrontation might have been avoided.²⁰ His loyalty certainly did not pass

17. Nicholas, Proceedings and Debates, II, 220. See also C.J., I, 650.

18. C.J., I, 655.

19. Nicholas, Proceedings and Debates, II, 269.

20. Cf. Russell, Parliaments, pp. 135-6.

unnoticed by the government. On 7 December, Sir George Calvert told Buckingham of 'the good services and endeavours, which I have observed both in Sir Edward Sackville, Mr. Chancellour of the Dutchie, and Sir Henry Fane, who are the principall men that upon all occasions stand up for the King'.²¹ Sackville's parliamentary performance had apparently dispelled doubts about his loyalty to the King and Buckingham.

There is no proof that Sackville was a paid client of either Buckingham or Cranfield, or that he owed his election to their influence. He may have been following the lead of his elder brother, the third Earl of Dorset, who was an ally of Buckingham in the Lords.²² Certainly he reminded the Commons on 12 May of the need to consult the Upper House over the Protestation of Edward Floyd,²³ while three days later he was sent to inform the Lords about the case of the Bishop of Llandaff.²⁴ It is more probable, however, that Sackville's overt support for the Crown was at least partly designed to further his candidacy for the French embassy. On 14 July 1621,

21. B.L., Harl. MS 1580, fols. 166-8, printed in C.D., VII, 625.

22. Russell, Parliaments, p. 113.

23. Nicholas, Proceedings and Debates, II, 64.

24. Ibid., II, 83. See also C.D., II, 373; III, 271.

Chamberlain informed Carleton that the existing ambassador, Sir Edward Herbert, had been recalled and that Sackville would succeed him.²⁵ The Venetian ambassador, Girolamo Lando, likewise reported on 23 July that 'Sir [Edward] Sackville is selected as ordinary ambassador in place of Mr. Herbert'.²⁶ But Herbert proved tenacious, and according to John Donne told Sackville 'not to presse the King to fix any certain time of sending him, till he was come over, and had spoken with the King'.²⁷ Sackville concluded that 'Sir Edward Herbert meanes to go again', which was apparently correct: although the Venetian ambassador again reported on 16 December that he had been 'appointed to the embassy of France', Sackville never became ambassador.²⁸ Nevertheless, the fact that during most of 1621 he was a leading contender for a plum diplomatic posting must go some way towards explaining his vociferous support for the Crown.

25. P.R.O., SP 14/122/23 (John Chamberlain to Dudley Carleton, 14 July 1621). For Sackville's earlier help to Herbert at Lyons in 1615, see Chapter One, above, pp. 30-1.

26. C.S.P.V., XVII (1621-3), 87.

27. J. Donne, Letters to Severall Persons of Honour written by John Donne, sometime Deane of St Paul's London (London, 1654), p. 155 (Wing, D 1865). Donne was a reliable source on developments in Paris for Rowland Wood, one of his best friends, was on the embassy staff there. I owe this information to Professor Russell.

28. Ibid. C.S.P.V., XVII (1621-3), 179. For Sackville's later account of these events, see below, p. 68.

Sackville's desire to secure the French embassy was not purely pragmatic, however. He seems to have been genuinely committed to an anti-Spanish, pro-French and pro-Venetian foreign policy. Throughout 1621, he was actively involved in raising troops for the Venetian Republic. On 19 March, Girolamo Lando reported that Sackville had accepted 'practically all the conditions laid down by your Excellencies', and enclosed a contract by which Sackville agreed 'to levy 1,500 to 4,000 men in the King's dominions', 'to claim the title of colonel only and obey the superior commanders, on the understanding that they shall not be English', 'to serve on sea or land, against anyone except the King of Great Britain', and 'to receive fifty ducats a month for himself and his officers'.²⁹ The Venetians certainly thought they were getting value for money: on 2 April, Lando wrote that Sackville 'seems more eager than ever to serve your Serenity and desires nothing beyond honour. Everyone praises him highly. He will not mind if other soldiers serving your Excellencies receive higher pay'. On 10 April, Sackville was appointed to wait on the Venetian ambassador.³⁰ Sackville apparently never led the troops into battle, but his agreement to raise them does suggest a genuine commitment to supporting

29. C.S.P.V., XVI (1619-21), 605-9.

30. C.S.P.V., XVII (1621-3), 3-6, 13.

France and Venice against Spain. His wish to become ambassador to France was consistent with such a commitment.

The positive aspects of Sackville's foreign policy were more visible than the negative: it was unwise in 1621 to be too vociferously anti-Spanish. The same caution is evident on domestic issues, especially the impeachment of Lord Chancellor Bacon. On 17 March, Sackville attacked the witnesses of Bacon's acceptance of bribes: 'These are not compatible witnesses: [first] for that they speak but to charge another to discharge themselves; for, after the Devil had tempted Eve to eat the Apple, God called not the Devil, who was the cause of it, to witness it, but Adam'.³¹ But it is evident from the Commons Journal that Sackville would not support Bacon at all costs, declaring that he 'would bite off his Tongue, and throw it to the Dogs, before [he] would speak for the Lord Chancellor, if he were once found guilty'.³² Sackville's relationship with Bacon is unclear. On 3 January 1622, Thomas Meautys told Bacon that Sackville was 'very zealous ... to doe you service, in any perticular you shall commaund him, to my Lord Marquess [of Buckingham] (though it weere with some

31. Nicholas, Proceedings and Debates, I, 185. See also C.D., II, 239-40.

32. C.J., I, 561.

adventure)'.³³ Sackville approached Buckingham on Bacon's behalf, and reported the outcome in a letter received on 11 March 1622. The negotiations principally concerned Bacon's continued possession of York House, which Buckingham was anxious to purchase. Sackville warned Bacon not to make a stand on this matter, and advised him how best to play his hand:

If Yorke Howse weere gonn, the towne weere yours, and all your straytest shackles cleane of, besides more comfort then the citty-ayre only: The Marquess wowlde bee exceedinge glad, the Treasaurer [Cranfield] had itt, this I know; yett this you must nott know from mee: Bargayne with him presently, uppon as good conditions as you can procure, soe you have direct motion from the Marquess to lett him have itt.³⁴

Bacon followed this advice, surrendered York House to Buckingham, and was permitted to return to London.³⁵ He gratefully remembered Sackville in his will, leaving him 'my ring, with the crushed diamond, which the King that now is [Charles I] gave me when he was Prince'.³⁶ What light do these negotiations throw on Sackville's speech of 17 March 1621? For

33. Lambeth Palace Library, MS 936 (Gibson Papers, Vol. VIII), item 156.

34. Ibid., item 77.

35. See S.R. Gardiner, History of England, 1603-1642 (12 vols. in 10, London, 1883-4), IV, 277-9.

36. The Letters and the Life of Francis Bacon, ed. J. Spedding (14 vols., London, 1857-74), VII, 542.

Menna Prestwich, Sackville was 'an unrelenting enemy of Bacon', but also 'a smart intriguer' who later 'confused the trail' by posing as Bacon's friend.³⁷ But why on earth should Sackville have condemned the witnesses against Bacon in 1621, and risked his favoured position with Buckingham in 1622, for the sake of a man he hated? His actions simply are not those of an 'unrelenting enemy'. Rather, Sackville looks like a friend who also had an eye to his own political fortunes. He wanted to help Bacon, but not to the detriment of his own career.³⁸ This is the only interpretation which makes sense of both halves of Sackville's speech on 17 March. His condemnation of false witnesses was surely designed to assist Bacon, but Sackville's overriding loyalty was to the Crown rather than to one of its corrupt servants.³⁹

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37. M. Prestwich, Cranfield: Politics and Profits under the early Stuarts (Oxford, 1966), p. 293.
38. A further reason for Sackville's defence of Bacon may have been his brother's lead in the Lords: Russell, Parliaments, p. 113. The third Earl's attitude might be explained by the fact that Bacon had acted as his legal adviser some twelve years earlier: B.L., Microfilm M 485 (Cecil MS, Hatfield House), Vol. CXXV, fol. 22r (Robert Sackville, second Earl of Dorset to Robert Cecil, first Earl of Salisbury, 31 January 1608/9).
39. Exactly the same priority was seen in Sackville's denunciation of the corrupt Chancery judge, Sir John Bennet, on 20 April: Nicholas, Proceedings and Debates, I, 282-3. See also C.D., II, 302; III, 28; IV, 238; V, 82.

The negotiations over Bacon suggest that Sackville's performance in Parliament had gone a long way towards securing Buckingham's favour by the spring of 1622. However, this promising progress was temporarily halted early in 1623 by a major row within the Virginia Company. In March 1622, Red Indians had massacred over three hundred men, women and children in the Virginia settlements. A year later, Captain Nathaniel Butler wrote 'The Unmasked Face of our Colony of Virginia as it was in the winter of the year 1622', claiming (probably correctly) that the Company's officers, especially the Treasurer Sir Edwin Sandys, had responded quite inadequately to this disaster.⁴⁰ Sandys' enemies, led by the Earl of Warwick, Sir Nathaniel Rich and Alderman Johnson, immediately petitioned the King to investigate the Company's affairs. Sackville denounced these 'traytours to the

40. The text of Captain Butler's paper may be found in The Records of the Virginia Company of London, ed. S.M. Kingsbury (4 vols., Washington, D.C., 1906-38), II, 374-7. The background to this episode is fully discussed in W.F. Craven, The Dissolution of the Virginia Company (New York, 1932), pp. 195-258. See also N. Malcolm, 'Hobbes, Sandys and the Virginia Company', Historical Journal, XXIV (1981), 297-321, especially 299-301; and H.C. Wilkinson, The Adventurers of Bermuda (2nd edition, London, 1958), pp. 169-72. I owe this last reference to Christopher Thompson. I am also most grateful to Mr Thompson for discussing the Virginia Company with me.

Company',⁴¹ and was dangerously outspoken when the King and Privy Council heard the case on 17 April. John Chamberlain related that:

There is a great faction fallen out in the Virginia Companie. The heades of the one side are the Earle of Southampton, the Lord Ca[ve]ndish, Sir Ed[ward] Sackville, Sir John Ogle, Sir Ed[win] Sandes with divers others of meaner qualitie: on the other side are the Earle of Warwicke, Sir Thomas Smith, Sir Nathaniell Rich, Sir Henry Mildmay, Alderman Johnson, and many more. On Monday they were before the King with their accusations and allegations, where Sir Ed[ward] Sackville caried himself so malapertly and insolently that the King was faine to take him downe sowndly and rowndly, but I heare that by meanes of the Lord Treasurer he made his peace the next day.⁴²

Sackville was deeply grateful, and wrote to Cranfield on 17 April:

Lett these few lines (witnesses more permanent then soe many verball professions) speake my thankfullness, and in

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41. Records of the Virginia Company, ed. Kingsbury, IV, 112. Sackville had earlier reported the contents of this petition to an 'Extraordinary Court' of the Company held on 12 April: ibid., II, 347; Craven, Dissolution, pp. 258-60.
42. P.R.O., SP 14/143/22 (John Chamberlain to Dudley Carleton, 19 April 1623). For other contemporary accounts, see SP 15/43/10 (Lionel Cranfield to Secretary Conway, 18 April 1623); C.S.P.V., XVIII (1623-5), 28. Sackville had first bought shares in the Virginia Company in May 1620, thirteen months after Sandys became Treasurer: see Chapter One, above, pp. 43-4. Thus, behind his vigorous defence of Sandys there lay a vested interest in the survival of the existing régime.

my name sweare, thatt I will nott live to forgett the favor: and to bee able to make any returne, would bee to mee, a blessinge as greate as I cowlde wish.⁴³

Thus by April 1623 Sackville could also look to Lord Treasurer Cranfield as a patron. The reconciliation with the King may have been less complete than it seemed, however, for shortly afterwards Sackville decided to go abroad. On 24 April the Privy Council signed 'a passe for Thomas Sherly, gentleman, to passe over into France about some speciall businesse concerning Sir Edward Sackville, knight'.⁴⁴ Then, on 23 May, Sackville himself was granted a licence to travel for three years.⁴⁵

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43. K.A.O., Uncatalogued Cranfield Papers, Sir Edward Sackville to Lionel Cranfield, 17 April 1623. This letter appears to be the earliest proof of a patronage link between Sackville and Cranfield. Mrs Prestwich's statement that their friendship 'became apparent only in the 1630's' (Cranfield, p. 293) is thus erroneous.
44. A.P.C., 1621-3, 472. Shirley was a close friend of Sackville's, and witnessed his will on 23 March 1625: K.A.O., Sackville MS, U 269/T83/5 (holograph will of Edward Sackville, fourth Earl of Dorset). See also A. Fletcher, A County Community in Peace and War: Sussex, 1600-1660 (London, 1975), pp. 49, 52-3, 326, 352.
45. P.R.O., SP 14/145/27 (Licence to Sir Edward Sackville, 23 May 1623). Sackville was abroad during the official investigation of the Virginia Company which began in November 1623 and which led to its dissolution in May 1624. For an account of this, see Craven, Dissolution, pp. 315-8. However, he remained in touch with Sir Edwin Sandys and later promoted him (unsuccessfully) in the Kentish election of 1625: see Chapter Five, below, pp. 305-6.

It is unclear when exactly Sackville left England,⁴⁶ but on 5 September we find him in Lyons, writing a long letter to Cranfield.⁴⁷ Sackville remained preoccupied with the French embassy. He described how 'itt pleased the Duke of Buckingham, nott long after the desolvinge of the last assembly in Parlament, freely, and of himselfe to proffer onto mee the Embassadorship of France, a resolution then beinge taken to recall home the now Resyant there'. But just as Sackville was ready to depart, 'on a suddayne, unexpectedly the resolution altered, and Sir Edward Herbert was anew confirmed'. He now wrote to ask Cranfield 'thatt you wilbee pleased uppon the remove of any of those who are imployed in Spayne or France or the Low Countryes, to remember his Maiesty and the Duke of Bukkingam, whatt iust title I have to expect some reparation in thatt kind'. He would not, he concluded, 'bee ambitious of this vacation if I were worthy of home imployment'. Ironically, it was to be 'home imployment' which soon rescued Sackville's career and superseded forever his claim to a foreign embassy. He was at Florence when news reached him that

46. As the letter cited in the next note shows, the Venetian ambassador's report of 6 October that 'a gentleman named Sackville ... has left here for Italy' was probably written some weeks after the event: C.S.P.V., XVIII (1623-5), 126-8. The Venetians continued to see Dorset as an ally: the ambassador, Alvise Valaresso, added, 'there are rumours that he is going to Venice to offer his services'.

47. K.A.O., Uncatalogued Cranfield Papers, Sir Edward Sackville to Lionel Cranfield, 5 September 1623, from which the following quotations are taken.

his elder brother had died on 27 March 1624, and that he was now fourth Earl of Dorset.⁴⁸

This inheritance suddenly gave Dorset an assured status at home. Perhaps deliberately, he did not risk damaging his future by hurrying back to attend the Parliament which impeached his patron, Cranfield. Only on 27 April did the Venetian Secretary at Florence, Valerio Antelmi, report his departure. Dorset was, he said,

stuffed [gonfio] with detestation and hatred of the Spaniards, and once he has reached England he is determined to do everything to hurt them. He has always displayed the greatest devotion towards your Serenity, and told me that he had once wished to command a body of his countrymen if you needed such services.⁴⁹

Dorset only attended the Lords on 28 and 29 May, by which time

48. For the third Earl of Dorset's death, see P.R.O., C 142/405/153 (Inquisition Post Mortem of Richard Sackville, third Earl of Dorset); SP 14/161/50 (Sir Francis Nethersole to Sir Dudley Carleton, 29 March 1624); B.L., Egerton MS 784 (Diary of William Whiteway, 1618-34), fol. 40v. For his will, see B.L., Add. MS 5701 (Miscellaneous Sussex Collections), fols. 54-121.

49. C.S.P.V., XVIII (1623-5), 283. See above, pp. 60-2. I am grateful to Professor Russell for alerting me to the fact that Dorset's deep hostility to Spain was unusual in a future Royalist. This animosity gave way to a strong isolationism during the 1630's: see Chapter Three, below, pp. 184-91.

Cranfield's fate was already sealed.⁵⁰ Dorset's position was immeasurably stronger than twelve months before: he had returned too late to face hard choices over Cranfield, while his overt hostility to Spain perfectly coincided with the new mood of Buckingham and Prince Charles.

Almost immediately, Dorset began to carve a niche for himself at Court. His affection for France made him a natural choice to greet French ambassadors and escort them to royal audiences. Thus in November 1624, he met Villavilliers at Gravesend,⁵¹ while on 20 December, Effiat reported that Dorset had accompanied him to an audience with the King at Whitehall.⁵² Even more important, Dorset was among the noblemen chosen in December to meet and accompany Henrietta

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50. L.J., III, 414, 420, 423. It appears from Notes of the Debates in the House of Lords in 1624 and 1626, ed. S.R. Gardiner (Camden Society, Second Series, Vol. XXIV, 1879) that Dorset did not speak on these occasions.
51. J. Finett, Finetti Philoxenis: Som Choice Observations of Sir John Finett, Knight (London, 1656), pp. 141-2 (Wing, F 947). See also J. Nichols, The Progresses, Processions, and Magnificent Festivities of King James I (4 vols., London, 1828), IV, 1008.
52. P.R.O., PRO 31/3/60 (Baschet's French Transcripts: reports by French ambassadors), fol. 304r-v. For Dorset's meeting with the Duc de Bullion in 1612 see Chapter One, above, p. 20.

Maria to England in January 1625.⁵³ When she finally arrived on 12 June, Dorset was in the reception party at Dover.⁵⁴ These frequent contacts with the French need to be remembered when we come to explain Dorset's appointment as Lord Chamberlain of the Queen's Household in July 1628.⁵⁵

It seems that Dorset was not very active in the Parliament of 1625. He attended the Lords on fourteen occasions, eight of them during the Oxford session.⁵⁶ His main concern must have been the bill to facilitate land sales by his elder brother's executors: this received three readings in each House, but does

53. P.R.O., SP 14/176/15 (John Chamberlain to Dudley Carleton, 4 December 1624).

54. B.L., Add. MS 34217 (Miscellaneous State Papers, letters, etc., Jas. I - Chas. I), fol. 44v. For the background, see Gardiner, History of England, V, 333. It is also possible that Dorset visited Paris in March 1625: Miscellaneous State Papers, 1501-1726, ed. P. Yorke (2 vols., London, 1778), I, 571-2. This trip may however have been pre-empted by Dorset's attendance at the funeral of James I: P.R.O., LC 2/6 (Details of the funeral of King James I, 1625), fol. 34r.

55. See below, pp. 99-100.

56. L.J., III, 435, 437, 438, 440, 452, 469, 470, 472, 473, 474, 475, 485, 486, 488.

not appear on the Parliament Roll.⁵⁷ Otherwise, we have records of only one Dorset speech: a report from a Lords select committee appointed to investigate the petition of Thomas Haynes.⁵⁸ This sparse evidence tells little about his political stance. Much more intriguing is a letter from the Venetian ambassador of 26 August:

Parliament is dissolved without recall, the interests of the Duke's safety having prevailed over the needs of the Crown and public affairs ... It is said that the King was influenced by his intention to maintain his honour and authority supreme ... The Earl of Dorset, a friend of the Duke and not mistrustful of the Spaniards, contributed largely to decide the King.⁵⁹

This appears to be the only evidence that Dorset advocated Parliament's dissolution. As we have seen, he was anxious to retain Buckingham's favour, and this was feasibly a strategy to protect the Duke. Equally, the dispatch also asserts that Dorset was not hostile to Spain, which is almost certainly incorrect; are the comments on Parliament any more reliable?

57. Proceedings, 1625, pp. 88, 95, 104, 105. Only two private acts appear on the Parliament Roll of 1625, both for the Duchy of Cornwall. Record-keeping in 1625 was disrupted by the plague and by the transfer of the Parliament to Oxford. I am most grateful to Professor Russell for this information. The land sales following the third Earl of Dorset's death are discussed more fully in Chapter Five, below, pp. 263-8.

58. Proceedings, 1625, p. 179.

59. C.S.P.V., XIX (1625-6), 146-7.

This letter poses the classic problems of a unique source, and its statements must ultimately remain unproven.

It is a little easier to reconstruct Dorset's activities during the 1626 Parliament. He had been installed as a Knight of the Garter in December 1625, a clear sign of the King's favour.⁶⁰ It is not surprising, therefore, to find him frequently acting as Buckingham's ally in the Upper House the following year. On 25 February, he spoke against imposing a limit of two proxies on each peer, wishing the rule 'to be as aunciently'.⁶¹ On 2 May, he insisted that Buckingham should be prosecuted in the Lords, not the Commons: 'To accuse the Duke here, the right way. To the Commons is to accuse as of not

60. Bod. Lib., MS Ashmole 1132 (Papers relating to the Order of the Garter), fol. 122r. See also B.L., Add. MS 27962 D (Salvetti Correspondence, Vol. IV, 1625-7), fol. 111v; Add. MS 37998 (Sir Edward Walker's papers relating to the Order of the Garter), fol. 56r; Trinity College Library, Cambridge, MS 0.7.3 (Diary of Edward Whitby), fol. 3r. For an account of Dorset's expenses at his installation, see K.A.O., Sackville MS, U 269/A171/1 (account of payments made following Dorset's installation as a Knight of the Garter, December 1625).

61. Debates in the House of Lords, ed. Gardiner, 114. Since Buckingham held thirteen proxies, while Dorset already held only two, the latter's argument cannot have been motivated by self-interest: H.L.R.O., Peers' Proxy Book I (Parliament of 1626). See also E.R. Foster, The House of Lords, 1603-1649: Structure, Procedure and the Nature of its Business (London, 1983), pp. 19-22, 273; Gardiner, History of England, VI, 68; and R. Lockyer, Buckingham (London, 1981), p. 310.

competent judges, etc., and sought to prejudge the cause, and a high cryme, and next to the cryme of treason the highest'.⁶² Dorset's strategy was identical on both these occasions: a concern with correct procedure masked an emphatic defence of Buckingham's interests. This was even more apparent during the attempted impeachment. On 8 May, Dorset argued that Buckingham's testimony should stand, while on 17 May he urged that 'hereafter noe aggravacions to be brought in together with the articles [of impeachment]. This to be prevented by some order'.⁶³ But we should beware of seeing Dorset as simply Buckingham's puppet. He was ambivalent about Digges' words at the joint conferences on 8-10 May, and therefore, by implication, about the King's imprisonment of him: 'I have d[elivere]d the words [of Digges]; lett him be the interpreter himselfe. But I conceaved them not to be treason. Yett I then thought them soe ambiguous, that he woulde be troubled for

62. Debates in the House of Lords, ed. Gardiner, 163.

63. Ibid., 180, 204.

them'.⁶⁴ Furthermore, on the Bristol case, Dorset defended the privileges of peers in opposition to Charles and Buckingham: 'The former precedents to be rules to guyde ourselves by. He [Bristol] is only accused, not charged, [er]go, to come and sytt in his place as others have done ... Yf noe charge appears against him, to sende an officer for him, and then he may come and take his place'.⁶⁵ The common denominator of Dorset's contributions in the 1626 Parliament was thus a defence of the privileges of peers and of the Upper House.⁶⁶ This usually, but not always, implied a defence of Buckingham.

64. Ibid., 199. See also L.J., III, 627. Digges had declared: 'The last of the charges that are prepared [against the Duke of Buckingham] will be an injury offered to the person of the late King of blessed memory, that is with God; of which as your lordships may have heard heretofore, so you shall anon have further information. But upon this occasion, I am commanded by the Commons to take care of the honour of the King our sovereign that lives; and long may he live, to our comfort and the good of the Christian world; as also of his blessed father that is dead, on whom, to the grief of the Commons and their distaste, the Lord Duke, they conceive, unworthily did cast some ill odour of his own ways; whereas, anciently, servants were wont to bear, as indeed they ought, their master's faults, and not to cast their own on them undeservedly': L.J., III, 596. This created the impression that Digges regarded Charles as an accessory to the murder of his father: see Russell, Parliaments, p. 306.

65. Debates in the House of Lords, ed. Gardiner, 50-1. See also Russell, Parliaments, p. 313.

66. This concern appears to have been general in the Upper House: Russell, Parliaments, p. 312.

It was, however, Dorset's support for the Duke which stuck in the minds of contemporaries. By 24 June, it was already rumoured that Dorset was to become a Privy Councillor.⁶⁷ Edward Whitby likewise recorded that 'there was speech that Bridgwater and the Earle of Dorset should be made privy counsellors for taking the D[uke's] part in the parl[iament] howse'.⁶⁸ Dorset was sworn of the Privy Council on 22 July, prompting the French ambassador, Duplessis, to write: 'Les Comtes de Salisbury et D'Orsay qui avoient pris le party du Duc de Buquingham dans le Parlement ont esté faits Conseillers d'Estat'.⁶⁹ More than any other single event, his appointment to the Privy Council established Dorset as a client of Buckingham. But as in the 1626 Parliament, this did not mean that he slavishly supported the Duke on every issue. When Duplessis described him on 3 August as among the 'créatures du Duc de Bouquingham', he projected a French category, developed by Cardinal Richelieu, onto the rather more fluid English

67. The Court and Times of Charles I, ed. T. Birch (2 vols., London, 1848), I, 116.

68. Trinity College Library, Cambridge, MS O.7.3, fol. 5r.

69. A.P.C., June-December 1626, 117. P.R.O., PRO 31/3/64, fol. 122r.

situation.⁷⁰ Similarly, the Venetian ambassador's view of Dorset as 'Buckingham's dependent' suggests a financial tie for which there is no evidence.⁷¹ These foreign perceptions must be treated with caution. What Dorset's promotion does clearly prove is that he enjoyed Buckingham's favour, and was valued as an adviser to the Crown.

That Dorset was also valued as a reception officer for French dignitaries is once again evident from the Memoirs of the Marshal de Bassompierre, Ambassador Extraordinary to England in September-November 1626. On 24 September, at Greenwich, 'the Earl of Dorset ... came to speak to me from the King, and having made me get into the King's barge, brought me close to the Tower of London, where the King's carriages were waiting for me, which carried me to my lodgings, where the

70. P.R.O., PRO 31/3/64, fol. 131r. Roger Lockyer runs into similar problems when he tries to project the Spanish category of valido onto Buckingham's position: R. Lockyer, 'An English Valido? Buckingham and James I', in For Veronica Wedgwood, these Studies in Seventeenth Century History, ed. R. Ollard and P. Tudor-Craig (London, 1986), pp. 45-58. For Richelieu's system, see G. Parker, Europe in Crisis, 1598-1648 (London, 1979), pp. 57-8.

71. C.S.P.V., XIX (1625-6), 520.

said Earl left me'.⁷² Dorset dined with Bassompierre on 14 October and 11 November; he escorted him to a Privy Council meeting on 25 October; and he 'played at primero' with Henrietta Maria, Buckingham and the ambassador on 27 October.⁷³ This was a role which Dorset had made his own. When the Earl of Carlisle escorted Bassompierre to an audience with Henrietta Maria on 30 September, Sir John Finett noted that 'some were of opinion that the Earle of Dorset should have been more properly his conductour'.⁷⁴ In late November it was even rumoured that either Dorset or Carlisle would shortly be appointed Ambassador Extraordinary 'to be sent into France'.⁷⁵ But neither ever went. During the winter of 1626-7 Anglo-French relations steadily deteriorated, and by the start of 1627 it was not an ambassador that was to be dispatched to France, but a military expedition.

72. Memoirs of the Embassy of the Marshal de Bassompierre, ed. G.W. Croker (London, 1819), pp. 15-16. See also P.R.O., LC 5/1 (Sir John Finett's Notebook), fol. 121r; B.L., Add. MS 38854 (Hodgkin Papers, Vol. IX: 'miscellaneous accompts', 1430-1772), fol. 21r.
73. Memoirs of Bassompierre, ed. Croker, pp. 68, 77-8, 82-3, 106. Primero was a gambling card-game, very popular from about 1530 to about 1640, in which four cards were dealt to each player, each card having thrice its ordinary value.
74. P.R.O., LC 5/1, fol. 121r. It is worth adding that this implied no rivalry between the two peers, for Dorset and Carlisle were on the friendliest of terms. See, for example, P.R.O., SP 16/145/84 (Dorset to [James, Earl of Carlisle], [? 29 June] 1629).
75. Court and Times of Charles I, ed. Birch, I, 174.

It would be quite wrong, however, to see Dorset as a consistent Francophile. He remained very friendly with successive Venetian ambassadors, and his words to Alvisе Contarini in particular reveal a growing hostility towards France. On 4 September, three weeks before Bassompierre's arrival, Dorset accompanied Contarini to an audience at Nonsuch. During the long coach journey

Lord Dorset told me that France deceived everybody, she was entangled in her own cares; her policy towards this country was insincere, and she sought to give satisfaction to the Spaniards, while the Most Christian was constantly complaining of the seizure of his ships, although they were bound for Spain with provisions and other munitions.⁷⁶

How far was Dorset expressing views shared by Charles and Buckingham? Contarini concluded thus:

I have not spared your Excellencies any of these opinions as they come from a man of consideration, who has a seat in the Council and depends entirely on Buckingham, who may be said to father all these maxims, which are well adapted to his personal views but not to those of the State.⁷⁷

The Venetian was almost certainly correct to attach importance to Dorset's statements. It seems likely that by the autumn of 1626 Buckingham was considering war against France, and that

76. C.S.P.V., XIX (1625-6), 528.

77. Ibid.

the reception of Bassompierre amounted to playing for time until the King had the financial resources to fight both France and Spain.⁷⁸

It is in this context that Dorset's robust attitudes towards the Benevolence and the Forced Loan should be seen. On 4 September he told the Venetian ambassador

that war must be maintained with the property of the subject, all being bound to contribute when it is just, and if in the last Parliament the people had agreed to the promised contributions they would have paid much less than the King will eventually compel them to disburse.⁷⁹

In late October, when Privy Councillors went into the provinces to raise money for the Forced Loan, Dorset acted in close alliance with Buckingham. 'Some Londoners' told Joseph Mead

78. See Russell, Parliaments, pp. 327-9; Lockyer, Buckingham, pp. 349-52. For the final breakdown of the negotiations with Bassompierre, see B.L., Add. MS 36530 (Miscellaneous State Papers, 1581-1644), fols. 59-62.

79. C.S.P.V., XIX (1625-6), 528. Cf. Cust, Forced Loan, p. 29. It is worth noting that Dorset's position had mediaeval precedents behind it. See G.L. Harriss, 'Mediaeval Doctrines in the Debates on Supply, 1610-1629', in Faction and Parliament: Essays in Early Stuart History, ed. K. Sharpe (Oxford, 1978), pp. 73-103, especially pp. 96-7. I am grateful to Professor Russell for advice on this point.

that at Hicks Hall, when some denied to subscribe the loan, the Duke should say, "Sirrah, take heed what you do. Did you not speak treason at such a time?" The Earl of Dorset, asking a fellow who pleaded he was unable, what a trade he was of, and being answered a tailor, "Come, come", saith he, "one snip will make amends for all", and other such like,⁸⁰ which they say, was not wont to be in days of yore.

This last phrase may indicate that Dorset's attitude was perceived as uncharacteristically harsh. Certainly, in late November he urged the King to imprison those peers who refused the loan, lest their example 'infect the rest of the kingdom'.⁸¹ Early in 1627, when the Privy Council discussed alternative means of raising money, 'Earle Dorsett promised all dilligens and fayt[h]fullnesse to any way the Kinge should propounde'.⁸² Dorset's deep respect for the royal prerogative had led him to believe that the King could levy taxes without Parliament's consent. His awareness that Anglo-French relations were rapidly deteriorating can only have strengthened this conviction.

80. Court and Times of Charles I, ed. Birch, I, 163. Cf. Cust, Forced Loan, p. 101.

81. Court and Times of Charles I, ed. Birch, I, 177. Cf. Cust, Forced Loan, pp. 55-6.

82. B.L., Hargrave MS 321 (Miscellaneous Collections on Trade), fol. 140r. Cf. Cust, Forced Loan, p. 77.

Despite his evident loyalty over the Forced Loan, there are signs that Dorset's relations with Buckingham cooled slightly in the spring of 1627. On 12 April an anonymous diarist noted: 'That a Parliament. The Duke will lay all the blam[e] on dorsett, holland and conway'.⁸³ Joseph Mead was informed the next day that 'it is muttered as if his grace [the Duke of Buckingham] were discontented with the Earl of Dorset, who hath not been well these six weeks, and with the Lord Conway'.⁸⁴ This episode is obscure, but it may be that Dorset briefly made himself unpopular by advocating a Parliament. Possibly he realised that the Forced Loan could only be a temporary expedient. But if there was a rift, it soon healed, and during the Ile de Rhé expedition Dorset's fidelity to Buckingham was clearly apparent.

83. P.R.O., SP 16/60/10 (anon. diary of public events, April 1627). This diary is dated to 1628 in Proceedings, 1628, VI, 110. In P.R.O., SP 16 it is filed under 1627, which seems much likelier because:

1. the reference to Buckingham's displeasure with Dorset perfectly fits with the newsletter of 13 April 1627 cited in the next note.
2. the phrase 'that a Parliament' suggests a rumour that a Parliament was to be summoned. By 12 April 1628, Parliament had already been sitting for nearly a month.

84. Court and Times of Charles I, ed. Birch, I, 218. Dorset's illness may have been serious: on 3 April Sir John Hippesley asked Edward Nicholas if Dorset was dead, as had been reported: P.R.O., SP 16/59/23 (Sir John Hippesley to Edward Nicholas, 3 April 1627).

This fidelity was expressed in two ways. First, Dorset supplied arms for the campaign: four horse on 4 May, sixty arquebuses on 31 May.⁸⁵ Second, and more important, he wrote Buckingham two long letters reporting developments in his absence. Never before had Dorset put himself so completely at the Duke's disposal. He declared on 21 August:

I beseeche you ... to lett me know whatt you desire should bee advised, uppon all occasions, and when I know your will (if I faynt or falsify the obayinge of itt) lett mee [be] whipt with doble stripes.⁸⁶

Then, in a revealing passage, Dorset continued:

Heer want noe means to vindicate our honor, our religion, our estate, butt minds depraved and debauched other are nott sensible or diabolikly disposed to hinder and distract these courses, thatt in all probability tend to happiness: In a word, under that confidence which a frend dare speake to an other, of your worth and nobleness: My lord, I feare ordinary and customary wayes will nott furnish those meanes which honour and necessity require. Yett to advise other withoutt your warrant, I will nott presume.⁸⁷

Although Dorset here accepted the possibility of radical departures from political convention, he also struck some

85. Court and Times of Charles I, ed. Birch, I, 222. A.P.C., January-August 1627, 308.

86. P.R.O., SP 16/74/62 (Dorset to the Duke of Buckingham, 21 August 1627).

87. Ibid. I am most grateful to Professor Russell for alerting me to the signs of caution in this passage.

characteristic notes of caution. The King's policies served the public interest 'in all probability', but not definitely; uncustomary methods might be necessary, but Dorset was very guarded as to their precise nature. Thus, despite his condemnation of the King's opponents, Dorset's position was not unambiguously hard-line. Finally, Dorset assured Buckingham that his place in the King's affections was undiminished:

The King never did (while your eye or eare could bee a witness) demonstrate more trust, love, zeale, care and affection to your person [and] to your undertakeinges then hee doth dayly (nay howrely) nowe in your absence.⁸⁸

Notwithstanding its reservations, this letter does mark a new stage in Dorset's relationship with Buckingham, or at least a stage which cannot be demonstrated earlier. For here Dorset explicitly offered to become Buckingham's mouthpiece on the Privy Council and relayed crucial information from England to the absent Duke.

It is likely that Buckingham most valued the latter service, which was even more prominent in Dorset's second letter, on 28 September. He hoped that his friendship with Buckingham permitted complete honesty:

88. Ibid.

Under the protection of thatt favor, which first wonn mee to bee yours, and from thatt love my hart hath ever vowed to beare you: I take the liberty to speake my thoughts freely to you ... I am your frend, such the world esteems me, and such my noble lord, you shall ever find mee. This is the title I more glory in, then the all I else possess, give the[re]fore both eare and beliefe unto whatt I shall say.⁸⁹

Dorset begged Buckingham to return home as soon as possible:

There is a kind of languishing in all proceedings heere: As coulors are ever best iudged by there opposites, soe by your absence, I perceave how necessary your presence is, for the advancement of all actions. I cannott accuse any in particular, of fayling in there endeavors, they all seeme to intend your good: yett when apart I consider of whatt importance fresh supplyes weere, and how slow a motion hath bene used in the provision of them, am I by you to bee blamed, if I feare thatt all future succors will arrive, both in time and number, farr short, ether your expectation or desert.⁹⁰

The most urgent problem was financial. Money was 'the foundation both of subsistance att home and progress abroad', yet 'the revenew of the Crowne is for some years anticipated the last collection of the loanes to be expected both payd and expended'.⁹¹ Dorset advised Buckingham to avoid the risks of war and disease: 'Forbeare to provoke the Fates any farther, and beleewe, itt is yett in your power to governe the starrs,

89. B.L., Add. MS 22548 (Miscellaneous autograph letters, 1588-1831), fol. 14r.

90. Ibid., fol. 14r-v.

91. Ibid.

if in time you please to make a right use of them'.⁹² Once again, he concluded with reassuring news of the King's favour:

I speake nott this, I protest, outt of the least diffidence I have of his Maiestyes constant love towards you, for as I hope for salvation, I sweare, I think never servant had soe reall a master, nor frend soe true an other, hee doth more study your prosperity and safety for your owne sake, then for his owne ambition and glory.⁹³

Buckingham finally set sail for home on 8 November.⁹⁴ Although he did not persuade the Duke to return immediately, it is clear that by the autumn of 1627 Dorset was one of his most trusted allies. Absence from Court had been the downfall of earlier favourites, and Dorset's two newsletters (which may be from a much longer sequence) contained valuable information about developments at home as well as assurances that Buckingham's position was secure.

That Dorset was widely perceived as wielding influence with both King and Duke is apparent from Sir Thomas Wentworth's approaches to him in October-December 1627. Wentworth had been

92. Ibid., fol. 15r.

93. Ibid., fol. 15v.

94. Lockyer, Buckingham, p. 402.

confined for refusing to pay the Forced Loan,⁹⁵ yet notwithstanding Dorset's hard line on that issue, Wentworth's agent, Sir Arthur Ingram, reported on 30 October that he would 'God willing, speak with my Lord of Dorsett' about his release.⁹⁶ Dorset apparently reacted favourably, for on 26 November Sir William Wentworth told his brother that 'my lorde of Dorset sayes if your petition receive any stoppe, hee will speake to the Kinge himselfe, which if hee doe Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer will second it'.⁹⁷ Then followed a slight delay: Ingram to Wentworth, 1 December:

I delivered the same [petition] to my lord of Dorsett who immediattly went into the King and staying some littell whill brought me outt word thatt itt should bee dyspached. Butt I attending him often sines for the dyspach thereof have r[ecieved] no other answer butt sartaynly itt will bee donn, desiring me to have a litle paciens.⁹⁸

Finally, on 27 December, Dorset was able to inform Wentworth

thatt the King hath perioded his indignacon touard all those gentlemen hee hath stiled refractoryes. Last night by advice of the whole board itt was resolved to take of the restraynts and within a day or two the shreefe shall

95. S.P. Salt, 'Sir Thomas Wentworth and the Parliamentary Representation of Yorkshire', Northern History, XVI (1980), 130-68, esp. 165-6.

96. The Wentworth Papers, 1597-1628, ed. J.P. Cooper (Camden Society, Fourth Series, Vol. XII, 1973), 272.

97. Ibid., 279.

98. Ibid., 281.

have discharges of thee former commands. I am glad in contemplation of the generall, butt more particularly thatt you are att liberty.⁹⁹

It is ironic that Dorset, one of the toughest advocates of the Forced Loan, should have been instrumental in the release of a leading refuser. Possibly he was motivated by the fact that he and Wentworth were distant relatives by marriage: Wentworth's first wife was the niece of the widow of Dorset's elder brother. Alternatively, he may have recognised Wentworth's potential as a royal agent in Yorkshire, or perhaps he simply wished to avoid permanent rifts within the political nation.¹⁰⁰ At any rate, this episode suggests that by the end of 1627 Dorset was perceived to be among the most influential Privy Councillors, enjoying direct access to Charles and Buckingham.

How far does this explain Dorset's behaviour during the 1628 Parliament? Certainly he remained deeply committed to the royal prerogative, and ultimately condemned the Petition of Right as an unacceptable encroachment on the King's powers. Equally, Dorset was anxious to secure an accommodation between all parties, a via media between a 'just prerogative' and 'just

99. Ibid., 283.

100. See Salt, 'Sir Thomas Wentworth', 147, 166. Also below, p. 94. I am most grateful to Peter Salt for his advice on this episode.

liberty'.¹⁰¹ Dorset opposed anything which threatened to upset the natural balance of the polity: in 1628 the greatest threat appeared to come from the Petition of Right, and most of Dorset's hostility was therefore directed against that. Clearly, as a Privy Councillor and friend of Buckingham, Dorset was not an entirely free agent, and thus we cannot analyse his speeches in this Parliament as though they constituted a personal credo. Nevertheless, for a man who had vehemently advocated the Forced Loan and vigorously pledged his loyalty to Buckingham, he made some surprisingly cautious statements about recent royal policies. One important clue to Dorset's complex position may lie in his defence of the privileges of the Upper House and Privy Council. Perhaps his calls for accommodation owed as much to a belief that peers were the natural mediators between King and people as to personal moderation.

Unfortunately, it is very difficult to isolate a motive for some of Dorset's speeches. For instance, on 22 March Buckingham informed the Lords that Thomas Wyloughby, servant to Lord de la Warr, had been arrested contrary to privilege. He urged a strong punishment, and Dorset 'seconded the motion of the Duke. That it may be referred to be examined and

101. Proceedings, 1628, III, 47.

reported'.¹⁰² He both supported the Duke and defended the privileges of the Upper House. Where several considerations pointed in the same direction, it is impossible to determine which was uppermost in Dorset's mind.

This becomes even more problematic during the debates on the Petition of Right. Dorset's initial response to the Commons' grievances was to insist that correct procedure be followed. On 9 April, following a conference of both Houses, he moved for the originals of the records cited to be consulted: 'The King's counsel to peruse the records. If they [illegible] to be [sic] bring the records hither themselves'.¹⁰³ Thereafter, he dwelt much more explicitly on the need for reconciliation, moving on 15 April 'for an accommodation for the King and for the subject'.¹⁰⁴ He wished 'to take it into a consideration how to preserve such a prerogative as belongs to a monarch and to secure the subject in his person and goods ... that a middle way be taken that his Majesty's right be preserved and the people's liberties'.¹⁰⁵

102. Ibid., V, 89.

103. Ibid., 182-3.

104. Ibid., 232.

105. Ibid., 235, 237.

It needs stressing, however, that there was no necessary contradiction between urging conciliation and supporting Buckingham. Minutes later, the Duke moved 'to take the way to accommodation ... I move nothing from his Majesty nor by [illegible] to prejudice the cause of one side or other, but to do good offices between both parties'.¹⁰⁶ This desire for accommodation appears to have been universal in the Lords, and Dorset could defend his patron, the Upper House and reconciliation without a trace of inconsistency.

This was even more apparent on 21 April, when Buckingham moved 'to determine whether the King may commit or not, to be the first question'. Dorset supported him thus:

None will say the King cannot commit without cause. Question whether not commit for a time without cause shown. No man ever committed by the King or his Council, and no cause shown, was ever delivered if opposed by the King's Council, etc. No man thus committed was ever delivered until the King's hand was taken off. Power not wholly to be taken from the King and yet the subject to be secured; not to be taken but for a time, etc.¹⁰⁷

In one brief speech, Dorset managed to support Buckingham, emphasise the role of the Privy Council, defend both the King's

106. Ibid., 233, 235.

107. Ibid., 312-3.

prerogative and the subject's liberties, and advocate reconciliation. This was also true of Dorset's contribution the next day:

The King cannot commit for any cause triable at common law, but for reason of state he may. The King [to be] trusted. If he abuse it, habet deum ultorem. The King has as much right to legem terrae for matters of state as the subjects for their rights ... The Council to be judges of the reason of state.¹⁰⁸

These speeches reveal a nexus of interlocking assumptions rather than any one dominant concern.

One of those assumptions was the symbiosis of royal authority and noble rights. This was particularly evident on 6 May, when the Earl of Lincoln's case raised the question of whether peers should be sworn in courts of law. Dorset was

of opinion that it has been allowed our ancestors and that we deserve it as they had it. That it is the right of this House. But what I shall say will be that we might enjoy it in the vacancy of a Parliament. That is to wait

108. Ibid., 324. Cf. L.J. Reeve, 'The Secretaryship of State of Viscount Dorchester, 1628-1632' (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Cambridge, 1983), p. 57. I am most grateful to Professor Russell for alerting me to the fact that the words 'habet deum ultorem' are a slightly misquoted phrase from Henry de Bracton, and from one of James I's favourite passages. Bracton's actual words were 'deum expectet ultorem': see Bracton on the Laws and Customs of England, ed. S.E. Thorne (4 vols., Cambridge, Mass., 1968-77), II, 33.

upon the King after we have voted it here, whereby we give good respect to his Majesty. Otherwise I fear we shall not enjoy what we now resolve of.¹⁰⁹

Just as the Privy Council advised the King on reason of state, so the Crown was the natural guardian of noble privileges, which were a dead letter without its protection.

The crucial Lords debates on the Petition of Right took place between 9 and 26 May.¹¹⁰ Dorset initially hoped that some modifications would make the Petition acceptable to Charles, and moved on 9 May

that such particulars as might give dista[s]te to his Majesty might be left out. That the words in the petition are good and well suited and those I dislike not. That we might so present the matter in question, that we may have a gracious answer with a gracious heart.¹¹¹

But the King's letter of 12 May, in which he declared that he would never let his power be impeached, made compromise very difficult.¹¹² The Lords resolved to bring the Petition 'within the compass' of the King's letter, but the Commons stood firm

109. Proceedings, 1628, V, 387. Buckingham apparently did not speak on this matter.

110. See Russell, Parliaments, pp. 371-4.

111. Proceedings, 1628, V, 403.

112. For the King's letter, see ibid., III, 372-3.

on the issue of imprisonment without cause shown.¹¹³ On 14 May, Dorset supported Buckingham's call for the Lords to maintain their earlier resolution, and concluded:

I hear no reason yet to recede. To suspend the decision of right at this time and to take the King's word. If the letter be laid aside, then we do petere principium; to decline that. Whether the King may not commit without showing cause per legum terrae. To decline this and sweeten the petition to the letter. I am of opinion that the King may by the law of the land commit for matter of state without showing cause.¹¹⁴

Equally, Dorset wished to protect only those prerogative powers exercised for the good of the State: on 15 May he argued for 'the power to be given to the prerogative left as it may be for the good, not for the hurt, of the commonwealth'.¹¹⁵ Furthermore, Dorset never argued that those imprisoned without cause shown could be detained indefinitely, and on 17 May asserted that they could be relieved having brought a habeas corpus.¹¹⁶ This statement may help to explain his sympathetic attitude towards Sir Thomas Wentworth, examined above.¹¹⁷ On 19 May came another signal that Dorset was dissociating himself from certain emergency policies adopted in 1626-7: 'I do not

113. Ibid., V, 412, 423.

114. Ibid., 429.

115. Ibid., 439.

116. Ibid., 457.

117. See above, pp. 86-8.

think it will fall into the breast of any honest man so far to reserve sovereignty of power to the King, that a man may again suffer in that kind before complained of'.¹¹⁸ His conviction that 'that sovereign power only [should be] reserved which is for the good and happiness of the people' was proposed by the Lords as a saving clause, but flatly rejected by the Commons.¹¹⁹ Dorset, frustrated that the peers were now back 'where we were at the first', stated his position with unusual clarity on 24 May: 'The petition ... does touch the prerogative ... And if I did not believe that this petition will give the King and monarchy a greater blow than any power from beyond seas, I would not be so earnest'.¹²⁰ This former advocate of the Forced Loan continued:

I was ever of opinion that whatsoever is in that petition concerning the loans, billeting of soldiers, and martial law is the subjects' right. But what concerns commitment without cause expressed generally does touch the King's prerogative. And if this addition be not in, it puts out both eyes of monarchy. Yesterday in the King's Bench a man was returned for refusing to contribute to the musters (upon a habeas corpus). Answered: because there is no law

118. Proceedings, 1628, V, 465.

119. Ibid., 491, 508, 520-1.

120. Ibid., 522.

for it. ¹²¹ So you see the King's prerogative is necessary.

Dorset had clearly distanced himself from his earlier advice on the loan, but he remained determined to preserve the royal prerogative of imprisonment for reason of state. All attempts at compromise had failed, and the rhetoric of a middle way between the King's prerogative and the people's liberties was, for once, tacitly abandoned. Nevertheless, it was essential to maintain harmony in the Lords, and on 26 May Dorset and Buckingham moved that all differences over the Petition 'be forgotten'. Henry Elsynge noted: 'Agreed per omnes, una voce. All to be forgotten - this to be entered in every man's heart, not in the book'.¹²²

With this last contribution we again confront the problem which has haunted us all along: how can we analyse motivation precisely when several different considerations inclined Dorset in the same direction? Did he deliberately act in alliance with Buckingham, or was he concerned to prevent rifts between peers? The evidence simply does not permit a definite answer.

121. Ibid., 524. Cf. R. Tuck, '"The Ancient Law of Freedom": John Selden and the Civil War', in Reactions to the English Civil War, 1642-1649, ed. J.S. Morrill (London, 1982), pp. 137-61, esp. pp. 146-7.

122. Proceedings, 1628, V, 534.

Yet we can draw some tentative conclusions from Dorset's speeches in these debates, especially where they echo opinions analysed earlier. First, as in the 1621 Parliament, he wished to preserve some prerogative powers independent of Parliament and the common law. In particular, the King's discretionary power of imprisonment without cause shown was necessary for national security. Second, these powers should be exercised for the good of the people, and were therefore entirely compatible with the subjects' liberties. Hence a 'middle way' between the two was theoretically possible. The crucial difficulties arose over whether Charles was exercising his powers in the national interests, or whether he was infringing his subjects' rights, and it is hard to see that Dorset ever reached a coherent answer to this problem. His inconsistencies over the Forced Loan illustrate this perfectly. Possibly Dorset felt that certain departures from 'customary wayes' were justified in national emergencies, but should only be temporary expedients. Thus the loan was necessary to raise money rapidly, but could not be pursued indefinitely, while prisoners committed without cause shown were always relievable by habeas corpus. Thirdly, as in 1626, Dorset consistently defended the privileges of peers. In the Privy Council, they determined reason of state and so tempered the King's power of imprisonment; in the Lords, they were the natural mediators between Crown and people. To safeguard the nobility thus went some way towards reducing the tensions in the body politic. Finally, how important was Buckingham's influence? It is

impossible to prove that Dorset spoke on the Duke's instructions: given almost daily contact, these would presumably have been communicated verbally. It is interesting that never during the debates on the Petition did Dorset take a significantly different line from Buckingham; equally, his utterances are also intelligible in terms of his own characteristic attitudes.

Apart from a brief report on the case of Lord Morley, Dorset fell silent until 14 June, when he and Suffolk confirmed Buckingham's statement that the King had ordered the publication of Roger Maynwaring's two sermons: 'The Duke of Buckingham and the Earls of Suffolk and Dorset protested on their honors that they have sines heard his Majesty affirm as much'.¹²³ The debate then broke down, with peers unable to face direct criticism of Charles. For many, this must have confirmed Dorset's closeness to Buckingham, and on 18 June John Rous described him as 'the Duke's great favourite'.¹²⁴ Whatever the precise political relationship between them, this public perception appears to have been universal.

123. Ibid., 557, 642.

124. The Diary of John Rous, ed. M.A.E. Green (Camden Society, First Series, Vol. LXVI, 1856), 17.

It therefore caused little surprise when, on 6 July, Dorset was appointed Lord Chamberlain of the Queen's Household.¹²⁵ This office had been held by Tillières until French diplomats were expelled in the summer of 1626, and left vacant thereafter.¹²⁶ Dorset must have been an ideal candidate: he was known to the Queen and had considerable experience of French diplomats, yet had supported the Ile de Rhé expedition and was trusted by Charles and Buckingham.¹²⁷ Thus he was a figure likely to prove acceptable to the French, who nevertheless had impeccable patriotic credentials. In the summer of 1628, Buckingham apparently sought another expedition to La Rochelle in the short term, but peace negotiations in the long term: Dorset's appointment was compatible with both options.¹²⁸ Judge Richard Hutton thought Buckingham's influence decisive: 'Le Erle de Dorset fuit fait Lord Chamberlen al Roigne ... et tout cest fuit procured per le Duke

125. For the appointment, see P.R.O., LS 13/169 (Board of Green Cloth Entry Book, 1627-42), p. 42. This office gave Dorset a stipend of £100 per annum: P.R.O., LR 5/57, 63 (Establishment lists of Queen Henrietta Maria's Household). I owe these last two references to Caroline Hibbard.

126. B.L., Add. MS 27962 E (Salveti Correspondence, Vol. V, 1627-9), fol. 151v. Cf. Russell, Parliaments, p. 323, n. 1.

127. See above, pp. 83-6.

128. See Russell, Parliaments, pp. 391, 393; Lockyer, Buckingham, pp. 449-51.

de Buck[ingham]'.¹²⁹ More often, however, the appointment was reported without comment, as an unsurprising development at Court.¹³⁰

His Lord Chamberlaincy of the Queen's Household was only one indication of Dorset's very considerable standing in Court and Council. On 24 July, Sir John Holles informed Bishop Williams of Lincoln that

Danby had almost missed his counselorship, Lindsey, Wilmote and Barrett were sworn, and he uncalled, and was mett going away chafing by my lord of Dorsett, who understanding the cause, tould Buckingham and the King how he found the man, Danby was presently sent for and sworne, the next day he sent his benefactor a gratuity of 1,000^{li}, which he refusing, advised him rather to lend it to the Tresorer for the King, which (as it is sayd) he did.¹³¹

Dorset's closeness to Buckingham is also evident from R. Anstie's letter of 21 August 1628. Anstie enclosed a package detailing a dispute with Cornelius Vermuyden, and asked Dorset to open it if Buckingham had already departed for Portsmouth:

129. C.U.L., Add. MS 6863 (Diary of Judge Richard Hutton, 1614-39), fol. 43r.

130. See, for example, P.R.O., SP 16/110/31 (Sir Robert Aiton to the Earl of Carlisle, 18 July 1628); B.L., Add. MS 64897 (Coke Papers, Vol. XXVIII, 1628), fol. 34r; Court and Times of Charles I, ed. Birch, I, 378, 382.

131. Letters of John Holles, 1587-1637, ed. P.R. Seddon, (Thoroton Society Record Series, Vol. XXXVI, 1986), 386.

'Yf my Lo[rd] Duke bee absente I beseeche you (for your full satisfaction of whatt I desire ffor the presente to bee done) to take into your handes my packett directed to his Lo[rdshi]pp and to breake itt open, ffor in itt is conteined nothing but whatt concerneth this businesse'.¹³² In short, by the late summer of 1628, Dorset was powerful enough to secure appointments to the Privy Council, and to handle Buckingham's business during his absence.

Two days after Anstie's letter, John Felton murdered Buckingham. In death, as in life, Dorset's loyalty was evident. He resented the disrespect at Buckingham's funeral:

the soldiers or companies of London were present; and, being by command to traile theire pikes, and beate dolefully for the Duke, they contrarily did beate up amaine with courage, and shouldered theire pikes. The Earle of Dorsett, they say, found faulte, but could not tell how to helpe it.¹³³

Dorset also realised that Buckingham's death had implications for his own position. The Duke was never replaced as favourite, and from August 1628 political influence rested on direct access to the King and Queen. On 24 November Dorset

132. P.R.O., SP 16/113/40 (R. Anstie to Dorset, 21 August 1628).

133. Diary of Rous, ed. Green, 31.

told the Earl of Carlisle that 'as mutations of Princes cause great changes and alterations in the ensuinge government, soe my lord you can well apprehend thatt the death of soe powerfull a man opened the way to new courses and new resolutions'.¹³⁴ Was Dorset sufficiently favoured by the King and Queen to survive his patron's death?

Lord Henry Percy, writing on 3 September, was sceptical: 'Dorset hath neither pleased the Queene, nor her Court, this iourney, soe that I beleeeve they will make him weary of his employment shortly'.¹³⁵ But Dorset persevered, and five days later Sir Edward Dering reported that he was 'almost never from the King'.¹³⁶ Between 3 September and 24 December, Dorset attended nineteen Privy Council meetings.¹³⁷ On 20 September he was appointed to the Commission for the Admiralty,¹³⁸ while

134. P.R.O., SP 16/529/40 (Dorset to the Earl of Carlisle, 24 November 1628).

135. P.R.O., SP 16/529/15 (Lord Henry Percy to the Earl of Carlisle, 3 September 1628).

136. K.A.O., Dering MS, U 350/C2/19 (Sir Edward Dering to Robert Dering, 8 September 1628). I owe this reference to Peter Salt.

137. This figure is derived from A.P.C., 1628-9, 124-277.

138. P.R.O., SP 16/117/40 (Commission for the Admiralty, 20 September 1628).

on 23-25 September he was present at the St George's Feast at Windsor Castle.¹³⁹ That this ubiquitous courtier and Privy Councillor retained royal favour is seen especially clearly in his appointment to the Lord Lieutenancy of Middlesex on 16 October.¹⁴⁰ His status as a public relations officer for the Court was likewise secure: when Archbishop Abbot returned to London in December 1628, it was Dorset who greeted him at Whitehall and escorted him to the King.¹⁴¹

It is only in this context that we can make sense of Dorset's activities in the 1629 Parliament. In his letter to the Earl of Carlisle on 24 November 1628, Dorset had high praise for the King, and hoped that the forthcoming Parliament would achieve the accommodation which had eluded its predecessor:

The happynes of this land is such, as itt never inioyed yett a King, soe capable of good counsayle, soe patient to heare truth, soe loving iustice, soe discerning right, and soe zealously affectinge the good of his people. These

139. Bod. Lib., MS Ashmole 1132, fol. 123r.

140. P.R.O., C 231/4 (Crown Office Docquet Book, 1616-29), fol. 258r. For Dorset's activities in this office, see Chapter Five, below, pp. 318-27.

141. Court and Times of Charles I, ed. Birch, I, 451. See also P. Heylyn, Cyprianus Anglicus (London, 1668), p. 195 (Wing, H 1699). I owe this last reference to Anthony Milton.

rare vertues give, more then bare hopes, thatt once agayne this kingdome shall flourish (notwithstandinge all our last seven years unfortunate undertakinge). Already his Maiesty hath given demonstration that hee covets nothing more then the love and good will of his people, and to thatt purpose itt is now all the business of the time soe to prepare things agaynst the nigh approaching sessions, as the end thereof may bee a day of Jubilee, by strikinge a covenant betweene soverayne and subiect of continuall peace and happiness.¹⁴²

This was a wholly characteristic utterance: because the King's powers were exercised for the good of his subjects, it was perfectly possible to be loyal to the Crown while also advocating reconciliation between King and people. Such a paradigm would collapse if ever the Commons believed that Charles acted pro bono suo not pro bono publico. This did not happen in 1629, but one step towards it was taken. Twice Dorset was blamed for acting illegally when in fact he was almost certainly following Charles' instructions. Thus, acts motivated by loyalty to the Crown had become instrumental in damaging relations between King and Parliament. What appeared a coherent set of priorities when Parliament met had become incompatible by the time of its dissolution.

142. P.R.O., SP 16/529/40. For further evidence of optimism among leading politicians, see L.J. Reeve, Charles I and the Road to Personal Rule (Cambridge, 1989), pp. 37-8.

Unfortunately, it is quite difficult to reconstruct Dorset's activities during this session. Many of the most useful House of Lords sources dry up in 1629. For example, we possess neither Henry Elsynge's rough notes, nor a volume of Manuscript Minutes.¹⁴³ No private diaries apparently survive.¹⁴⁴ Nevertheless, we know from the Lords Journal that Dorset attended ten of the twenty-two Lords sittings between 20 January and 2 March,¹⁴⁵ and was appointed to seven committees.¹⁴⁶ The latter included a committee to consider 'an act concerning apparel', and another to draft a petition to the King 'touching the precedency of foreign nobility'.¹⁴⁷ But I have yet to find evidence that Dorset made any speeches, and our most valuable records are those for the Lower House.

Fear of religious innovation dominated this session. On 4 February, the Commons investigated the pardon granted to Richard Montagu, suspecting that this had been done without

143. See Debates in the House of Lords, 1621-8, ed. F.H. Relf (Camden Society, Third Series, Vol. XLII, 1929), v.

144. M.J. Cole, 'Checklist of Holdings of the Yale Center for Parliamentary History', Albion, IX (1977), 2-39, at 32-4.

145. L.J., IV, 5, 8, 16, 18, 22, 24, 30, 31, 33, 43.

146. Ibid., 6, 19, 25, 27, 31, 34, 37.

147. Ibid., 19, 27.

royal permission. Sir Robert Phelps reported that the Attorney General 'had met with a great Lord and Privy Councillor, the Earl of Dorsett, who asked him if the pardon for the Bishop of Chichester were drawne, and desired him to dispatch it'.¹⁴⁸ It then transpired, however, that Lord Carleton had sent the Attorney General 'a warrant under the King's hand to commande him to drawe the pardon'.¹⁴⁹ Dorset's apparently dangerous act was entirely supported by the King.¹⁵⁰ This was almost certainly true again ten days later, when the Commons examined the case of the Clerkenwell Jesuits. This episode is discussed fully below, but should be briefly mentioned here.¹⁵¹ Four Jesuits discovered in the Earl of Shrewsbury's mansion at Clerkenwell were imprisoned in December 1628, but released in February 1629. The Commons demanded an investigation, and on 14 February Sir Thomas Hoby reported that Dorset had 'sent the keeper [of Newgate] word, that his Majesty's pleasure was that they should be delivered'.¹⁵² Sir

148. C.D., 1629, pp. 39-40. See also Bod. Lib., MS Rawlinson A 107 (Parliamentary Collections, 1629), fols. 44v-45r.

149. C.D., 1629, pp. 39-40.

150. Charles was, however, furious that the Attorney General had revealed these proceedings, and dismissed him: C.S.P.V., XXI (1628-9), 551.

151. See Chapter Four, below, pp. 239-41.

152. C.D., 1629, p. 75. See also Bod. Lib., MS Rawlinson A 107, fol. 63v.

John Eliot wished all blame to be 'fixed on that great Lord, the Earl of Dorset, who I fear hath too much soiled his fingers in this business'.¹⁵³ Dorset's intense loyalty to the Crown, accentuated by the need to retain favour after Buckingham's death, makes it highly unlikely that he would have acted without authority in so serious a matter. It seems far more plausible that Dorset again conveyed royal instructions, as in the Montagu case. If so, then on two occasions Dorset's unflagging obedience to Charles had caused him to heighten the Commons' terror of 'innovation of religion'. The King's will, far from promoting reconciliation with his subjects, as Dorset hoped, had in fact prevented it. With the dissolution of Parliament on 10 March, Dorset's ideals, so often reiterated in theory, had broken down in practice.¹⁵⁴

153. C.D., 1629, p. 77. See also Bod. Lib., MS Rawlinson A 107, fol. 64v.

154. Cf. Russell, Parliaments, p. 416.

What general conclusions are we to draw from this case study of Dorset in the high politics of the 1620's? First, the evidence surely bears out Professor Russell's thesis that we can only understand parliamentary history in the context of 'the wider world'. For example, Dorset's support for the Crown in the 1621 Parliament is partly explained by his desire to secure the French embassy. Similarly, a comparison of parliamentary and non-parliamentary evidence reveals marked inconsistencies in Dorset's attitude towards the Forced Loan, while his activities in the 1629 Parliament can only be understood in terms of a deep personal loyalty to Charles I already evident in Court and Council. The permanent elements in politics included friendships and factional alliances: these were reflected in Parliament, but continued outside it. Thus, in reconstructing Dorset's career, it has been necessary to chart his relationship with Buckingham: the parliamentary arena is only one of several in which this may be done.

Equally, we need to remember events at Westminster when we explore 'the wider world': Dorset's parliamentary performances in 1621, 1626 and 1628 were crucial in gaining royal favour and high office. Until August 1628, it is likely that Buckingham's patronage was the most important source of Dorset's growing political influence, but this in turn yielded the offices in Court and Council which helped Dorset to survive the Duke's death. Dorset's career demonstrates that the nobility had an

assured status denied to the gentry, and his inheritance of the earldom in 1624 brought a decisive up-turn in his political fortunes. Another reason for Dorset's success was the sheer versatility of his contribution to high politics: he greeted ambassadors, mobilised payment of the Forced Loan, acted as informant to Buckingham, and promoted accommodation in Parliament with equal aplomb, and this energy and agility helped to make him one of the most influential of all Privy Councillors by 1629.

Such a combination of talents is one reason why it is extraordinarily difficult to analyse motivation precisely. In particular, it is virtually impossible to distinguish ideological commitment, factional allegiance and self-interest except where these became incompatible, and one had to take priority over the others.¹⁵⁵ Several times, we have seen Dorset making speeches which supported Buckingham, yet were also wholly explicable in terms of his own commitment to the royal prerogative, to his order, and to constitutional reconciliation. It is some reflection on the political culture of the 1620's that Dorset saw no contradiction between these aims: a royal prerogative exercised for the good of the

155. For a discussion of similar problems in the analysis of Dorset's religious attitudes, see Chapter Four, below, pp. 255-7.

commonwealth was safeguarded by a nobility which, in the Privy Council and the Upper House of the Great Council, promoted the natural harmony of Crown and subjects. Dorset clung to these basic assumptions throughout the decade, and apparently believed that allegiance to Buckingham advanced both his ideals and his career. Only in the Bristol case did his defence of noble privileges override loyalty to the Duke.

The events of 1627-9 showed that these ideals were under increasing stress. Charles' use of his prerogative powers of taxation, billeting and imprisonment were widely perceived as an infringement of his subjects' liberties. Torn between loyalty to the Crown and a wish to pursue the 'middle way', Dorset expressed contradictory views of the Forced Loan. It seems that in a national emergency he supported policies from which he subsequently distanced himself. Likewise, it was only when the Petition of Right attacked the King's power of imprisonment for reason of state that Dorset thought national security at risk and openly condemned it. In that sense, the royal prerogative might be exercised for the people's safety, even if they did not realise it. But Dorset never ceased to believe that royal powers and popular rights were naturally compatible, provided that each party understood and respected the other. His optimistic approach to the 1629 Parliament shows that his basic political beliefs were unchanged. What ultimately made those beliefs unworkable was the gulf between

Charles' conception of his prerogative powers, and his subjects' perception of the use to which he put them. In March 1629, Dorset had not yet contemplated this scenario, although its effects were already being felt.

This brings us, finally, to the lively debate over how far the conflicts of the 1620's anticipated, or even caused, the civil wars of the 1640's. In his recent study of the Forced Loan, Richard Cust stresses 'the continuity and thematic unity in much of the ideological conflict of the early seventeenth century. The same issues re-emerged time and again, and were still causing division on the eve of the Civil War. Indeed, in this sense the causes of the Civil War can be said to have extended back beyond the immediate situation out of which it arose'.¹⁵⁶ Reviewing Cust's book, however, Professor Russell has written that 'continuity between one crisis and the other is less straightforward than is here suggested ... The lines of 1642 were drawn over very different ground from those described here'.¹⁵⁷ What light does Dorset's career throw on this controversy? It seems that the underlying reasons why relations between Crown and Parliament were under stress in

156. Cust, Forced Loan, p. 337.

157. C. Russell, 'Serious Money' (review of Cust, Forced Loan), History Today, XXXVIII (March 1988), 53-4.

1627-9, and finally disintegrated in 1640-2, were essentially the same. Though war may have been the occasion of the difficulties of the late 1620's, the real problem lay in the gradual breakdown of trust between Charles I and many of his leading subjects. This owed much to the King's personality, which was a factor that Dorset's ideals simply did not comprehend. Wedded to a belief that the King's prerogative naturally benefitted his subjects, he never realised that his loyalty to Charles could undermine relations with the Commons. This was why he approached the 1629 Parliament with such optimism, yet by his own actions contributed to its failure. Dorset's desire for balance and conciliation, and his deep commitment to royal prerogative powers were as evident in 1629 as in 1621, and he expressed them again, compellingly, in the crisis of 1640-2.¹⁵⁸ To this extent, there was a clear continuity in Dorset's attitudes. But by 1642 we can detect a wariness of Charles I's political instincts wholly absent earlier.¹⁵⁹ Between the dissolution of Parliament on 10 March 1629 and the King's raising of his standard on 22 August 1642,

158. See Chapter Six, below, especially pp. 355-73.

159. See Chapter Six, below, p. 356. The contrast between Dorset's letter to the Earl of Carlisle on 24 November 1628 (P.R.O., SP 16/529/40) and that to the Earl of Salisbury on 27 June 1642 (B.L., Microfilm M 485, Vol. CXXXI, fol. 182r) is very striking.

Dorset, like many others in the political nation, had over a decade in which to 'see more clearly into [the King's] intents and actions'.¹⁶⁰ It is to Dorset's career in those years that we now turn.

160. This phrase comes from Charles I's proclamation of 27 March 1629. See Stuart Royal Proclamations: Vol. II. Royal Proclamations of King Charles I, 1625-46, ed. J.F. Larkin (Oxford, 1983), 226-8.

CHAPTER THREE: DORSET AND THE PERSONAL RULE OF CHARLES I.

The years of Charles I's Personal Rule saw the usual three 'points of contact' between ruler and ruled reduced to two: political muscle came to depend almost exclusively on influence within Court and Privy Council. Although his parliamentary performances had helped Dorset to secure the posts of Privy Councillor and Lord Chamberlain of the Queen's Household, these offices in turn ensured that the absence of Parliaments did not harm his political standing. They permitted him direct and frequent access to both King and Queen, at a time when Charles I's kingship was increasingly perceived as 'distant' rather than 'intimate'.¹ Dorset's career during the 1630's thus offers a case study of what Kevin Sharpe has called 'the politics of access and influence'.² It also illustrates the complex overlapping between Court and Council, in terms of both

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1. For this distinction in early modern English kingship, see D. Starkey, 'Introduction: Court history in perspective', in The English Court from the Wars of the Roses to the Civil War, ed. idem (London, 1987), pp. 1-24, esp. pp. 7-10.
 2. K. Sharpe, 'The image of virtue: the court and household of Charles I, 1625-1642', in The English Court, ed. Starkey, pp. 226-60, at p. 248.

politics and personnel.³ My general argument in this chapter will be that insofar as influence in Court and Council can be distinguished, Dorset's position as Lord Chamberlain of the Queen's Household was the more important buttress of his power. For Dorset, as for many noble courtiers since the early Middle Ages, personal access to the sovereign and his wife was the key to political influence. The sections which follow will show, first, that Dorset was one of Charles I's most assiduous Privy Councillors, but that his effectiveness in this role derived largely from his position at Court. Second, we will look in detail at Dorset's various activities as the Queen's Lord Chamberlain. I will demonstrate that his prominence at Court extended well beyond Henrietta Maria's Household, and that Dorset was widely known to be a point of access to the King as well as the Queen. On many occasions, he conveyed the King's instructions to the Secretaries of State, the Privy Council, or lesser royal officials. The third section will suggest that Dorset's trusted position at Court was the crucial reason for his considerable success as a patron. Fourthly, I will examine Dorset's friendships, and argue that he refused to ally consistently with any one faction, including the Queen's. Rather, he cultivated links with men of diverse opinions,

3. See in particular Starkey, 'Court history in perspective', pp. 11-14. For a restatement, see *idem*, 'A Reply: Tudor Government: The Facts?', Historical Journal, XXXI (1988), 921-31, esp. 927-9.

including some of Henrietta Maria's most inveterate opponents, and became an expert bridge-builder in an increasingly polarised Court. The fifth section contains an analysis of Dorset's private correspondence with the Earl of Middlesex, a hitherto largely neglected source which offers an important sidelight on the politics of the Personal Rule. These letters are particularly important because they reveal Dorset's growing alienation from Charles I. First-hand experience of this secretive and fickle monarch gradually changed Dorset's attitude from the uncritical admiration of November 1628 to the deep mistrust of June 1642.⁴ I will conclude this study of Dorset's career during the 1630's by highlighting the personal failings of Charles' kingship, and suggest that the early Stuart polity, like its mediaeval and Tudor predecessors, acutely lacked safeguards against an inept or deranged monarch.

I

To emphasise the importance of Dorset's Court position is not to deny that he was among the most active Privy Councillors

4. See the problem posed in Chapter Two, above, pp. 112-13.

during the Personal Rule. He attended 538 of the 1,104 full Privy Council meetings held between 10 March 1629 and 13 April 1640.⁵ The volume of conciliar business increased dramatically in these years: as Kevin Sharpe has observed, 'the 1630's might well be known for the winning of the initiative by the English Privy Council'.⁶ To cope with this, hitherto ad hoc bodies were formalised into standing committees of the Council, the most important of which dealt with foreign affairs, Irish affairs, ordnance, trade, and foreign plantations. Dorset sat for varying lengths of time on each of these, most consistently

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5. The annual totals of his attendances were as follows: 44 of 96 meetings in 1629 (counting from 10 March); 34 of 83 in 1630; 33 of 90 in 1631; 38 of 79 in 1632; 51 of 102 in 1633; 45 of 89 in 1634; 39 of 90 in 1635; 48 of 82 in 1636; 82 of 131 in 1637; 58 of 111 in 1638; 66 of 131 in 1639; 13 of 36 in 1640 (counting to 13 April). These totals do not include meetings of standing committees or ad hoc sub-committees of the Privy Council. Figures to 30 June are derived from A.P.C., passim; those thereafter from P.R.O., PC 2 (Privy Council Registers), Vols. 41-52, passim.
6. K. Sharpe, 'The Personal Rule of Charles I', in Before the English Civil War, ed. H. Tomlinson (London, 1983), pp. 53-78, at p. 65.

on the last three.⁷ He was also appointed to thirty-one ad hoc committees during the Personal Rule:⁸ these handled a multiplicity of business, which defies categorisation. They ranged from those 'to execute the office of Lord High Admiral',⁹ or 'for making saltpetre and gunpowder',¹⁰ which

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7. He was a member of the committee for foreign affairs in 1634-5: P.R.O., PC 2/44, p. 1; of the committee for Irish affairs in 1628-9: A.P.C., 1628-9, 276; of the committee for Ordnance in 1632-40: PC 2/42, p. 6; PC 2/43, p. 3; PC 2/44, p. 1; PC 2/47, p. 1; PC 2/49, p. 1; PC 2/51, p. 1; of the committee for trade in 1628-9 and 1634-40: A.P.C., 1628-9, 276; PC 2/44, p. 3; PC 2/47, p. 1; PC 2/49, p. 1; PC 2/51, p. 1; and of the committee for foreign plantations in 1634-9: PC 2/43, p. 1; PC 2/47, p. 1; PC 2/51, p. 1. Unfortunately, the deliberations of these standing committees have passed almost entirely unrecorded. For their development during the 1630's, see P. Haskell, 'Sir Francis Windebanke and the Personal Rule of Charles I' (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Southampton, 1978), chapter 3. See also Sharpe, 'Personal Rule', pp. 64-5.
 8. This total is derived from C.S.P.D., Vols. 3-16, passim.
 9. This committee was frequently renewed after the assassination of Buckingham - for example, P.R.O., SP 16/225/44 (Admiralty commission, 20 November 1632). But it does not appear on the flyleaf of the Privy Council Register, and therefore cannot be classed as a standing committee.
 10. P.R.O., SP 16/196/1 (saltpetre commission, 1 July 1631).

considered many different problems over several years,¹¹ to those established for a very specific purpose, for example to reprieve certain 'able bodied ... offenders in felonies' and use them 'in discoveries and other forraine imployments',¹² or 'to appoint a Provost Martiall or Provost Martialls'.¹³ Similar heterogeneity is apparent in the various petitions referred for investigation and report to particular groups of Privy Councillors. Dorset was appointed to twenty-four such committees between March 1629 and April 1640: the petitions came from people as diverse as Dr Paul Micklethwaite, Master of the Temple, the Vintners of the City of London, and William, Lord Eure,¹⁴ and they indicate the great variety of business passing before the Privy Council in these years. In sum, the

11. For examples relating to the Admiralty commission, see, inter alia: P.R.O., SP 16/236/72 (Lords of the Admiralty to Sir William Killigrew, 15 April 1633); SP 16/284/10 (Admiralty Register, 3 March 1634/5); SP 16/301/97 (Charles I to Lords of the Admiralty, 16 November 1635); SP 16/318/38 (Lords of the Admiralty to Attorney General Bankes, 7 April 1636); SP 16/338/3 (Charles I to Lords of the Admiralty, 24 December 1636). For examples relating to the saltpetre commission, see, inter alia: SP 16/292/3 (appointment by committee, 3 June 1634); SP 16/303/56 (Mayor of Norwich to committee, 4 December 1635); SP 16/305/65 (Mayor of Norwich to committee, 30 December 1635).
12. P.R.O., SP 16/232/97 (commission, 22 February 1632/3).
13. P.R.O., SP 16/238/55 (commission, [? 11 May] 1633).
14. P.R.O., SP 16/247/1 (petition of Paul Micklethwaite, D.D., 1 October 1633); SP 16/259/84 (petition of the Vintners of the City of London, January 1633/4); SP 16/294/15 (petition of William, Lord Eure, 20 July 1635).

statistics of Dorset's activities as a Privy Councillor demonstrate his versatility and energy as a leading figure in central government.

How were these various Privy Council committees, standing and ad hoc, actually constituted? Who or what determined their composition? The institutional records of the Privy Council cannot answer these questions in every case, for they record decisions made and actions taken rather than debates or discussions.¹⁵ Nevertheless, some clear patterns do emerge. Sometimes the petitioner succeeded in having his grievance referred to Privy Councillors of his choice.¹⁶ Other petitions were referred to an appropriate Council committee already in existence.¹⁷ Still other appointments are explained by Dorset's offices, especially his Lord Chamberlaincy of the Queen's Household. For instance, when William Newton petitioned Henrietta Maria in October 1638 to seek the King's permission to build 'in nooks and angles' 'upon part of the

15. For an analysis of these evidential problems, see G.R. Elton, England, 1200-1640 (London, 1969), pp. 75-81.

16. See, for example, the petition of Sir Henry Ferrers, 26 April 1638: P.R.O., SP 16/388/36.

17. See, for example, the petition of Captain Thomas Bardsey, 14 January 1636/7, referred to the commissioners for the Admiralty: P.R.O., SP 16/343/82.

feilds neere Lincolnes Inne', it was natural that his request was referred to Dorset and to the Queen's Attorney, Sir John Finch.¹⁸ But the references of some petitions fall into none of these categories, and the reasons for Dorset's appointment remain obscure.¹⁹

This is even more the case with royal commissions to groups of Privy Councillors. The absence of obvious explanations for many of the appointments prompts one to speculate whether Dorset worked particularly closely with certain other Councillors. Were commissioners selected who were known to get on with each other, so as to expedite business? Conversely, might they have been chosen because they represented a variety of interest groups and ideological positions, in order to build as many different viewpoints as possible into conciliar decisions? Certainly, there was some consistency in the Privy Councillors who worked alongside Dorset on the ad hoc committees and on the references of petitions. On Dorset's thirty-one committees, he was appointed

18. P.R.O., SP 16/403/87 (petition of William Newton, 16 October 1638). For Sir John Finch, see G.E. Aylmer, The King's Servants: The Civil Service of Charles I, 1625-1642 (London, 1961), p. 94.

19. See, for example, the petition of James Maxwell and several coachmen to the King, 3 December 1638: P.R.O., SP 16/404/14.

with Secretary Windebanke twenty-two times, the Earl of Arundel twenty-one times, Secretary Coke nineteen times, the Earl of Manchester eighteen times, Lords Portland and Cottington seventeen times each, and Viscount Wimbledon sixteen times. On his twenty-four references of petitions, he was appointed with Lord Keeper Coventry seventeen times, Secretary Windebanke sixteen times, Lord Cottington twelve times, the Earl of Manchester eleven times, Archbishop Laud ten times, Secretary Coke nine times, and the Earl of Arundel eight times.²⁰ Five Councillors appear on both these lists of Dorset's most regular colleagues: Coke, Windebanke, Arundel, Cottington and Manchester. But these names are hardly very surprising, for they are those of the two Secretaries of State during the 1630's and of three senior officers of State: the Earl Marshal, the Lord Privy Seal, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The frequency with which these individuals crop up simply reflects their official position and dominance of conciliar business. This is demonstrated by the fact that by 1636, four of them (Arundel, Coke, Windebanke and Cottington) formed the common core of the five standing committees of the Privy Council analysed earlier.²¹ From this evidence, it seems that neither

20. These figures are derived from C.S.P.D., Vols. 3-16, passim.

21. For the membership of these standing committees in 1636-7, see P.R.O., PC 2/47, p. 1. Cf. Haskell, 'Windebanke', p. 106 and Appendix C.

of the hypotheses about committee membership advanced above is accurate. Rather, Councillors were bolted onto a hub of particularly industrious men, consisting of the two Secretaries and three senior officers of State. The fact that Dorset commonly worked alongside these people does not prove that he either agreed or disagreed with them on matters of policy.

It is interesting that the outlook of this nucleus often tended to be antagonistic towards Archbishop Laud. For example, when Laud demanded lenient treatment for those soap makers who did not submit their wares to the inspection of the Soap Company in the summer of 1635, he was opposed by Cottington, Windebanke and Arundel.²² Laud also counted Dorset among 'the great opposers' of his attack on the soap monopoly.²³ Exactly the same line-up occurred again in November 1635, when the Star Chamber split over the case of Pell versus Bagg.²⁴ Sir James Bagg had allegedly advised Sir Anthony Pell to bribe the Lord Treasurer into paying £6,000

22. For the background to this episode, see S.R. Gardiner, History of England, 1603-1642 (12 vols. in 10, London, 1883-4), VIII, 71-6.

23. The Works of William Laud, ed. W. Scott (7 vols., Oxford, 1847-60), VII, 158-9.

24. For the background to this case, see Gardiner, History, VIII, 89-91.

which was due to him. Laud bitterly denounced Bagg, but Cottington defended him, and was joined, among others, by Windebanke, Juxon, Arundel, Manchester, and Dorset.²⁵ But once again, we must beware of seeing factional alignments as in any way consistent or immutable. The case of Pell versus Bagg was especially divisive because it coincided with the struggle between Laud and Cottington over the vacant Lord Treasurership. Laud strongly backed Wentworth against Cottington. This time, Dorset, with the Queen's backing, sided with Laud and Wentworth.²⁶ As so often, Dorset's loyalty to Henrietta Maria was more obvious than his alignment with a particular faction.²⁷

The fluidity of factional groupings becomes even more apparent in other Star Chamber sentences during the Personal

25. For the sentence, which was passed against Bagg by the casting vote of Lord Keeper Coventry, see P.R.O., SP 16/301/13, 27, 56 (Secretary Windebanke's notes of proceedings in Star Chamber, 4, 6 and 11 November 1635). See also Gardiner, History, VIII, 90. Perhaps with his heredity it is not surprising that Dorset was prepared to turn a blind eye to corruption in high places.
26. For a more detailed analysis of Dorset's support for Wentworth to become Lord Treasurer, see below, pp. 138-40. For the background, see also Gardiner, History, VIII, 67-92.
27. For a fuller discussion of Dorset's ambivalent relationship with Laud, see Chapter Four, below, pp. 226-38.

Rule. These merit detailed analysis, particularly because they are among the very few surviving records of speeches made in the Council. They suggest that Privy Councillors did not consistently vote with a particular group of colleagues, but were free to reach their own verdict on the merits of each case. Furthermore, Councillors voted as equals, and there is little evidence that a few leading figures tried to sway the others into supporting them. For example, on 24 January 1634, John More was tried in Star Chamber for building 'seven dwelling houses, seventeen coachhouses and thirteen stables upon a brick wall' rather than on an old foundation.²⁸ Lord Chief Justice Heath proposed a £1,000 fine, and £1,000 more if the defendant did not pull the buildings down 'betwene this and Easter'. Cottington proposed a fine of £2,000, with £1,000 more if the buildings were not demolished, and was supported by Arundel, Laud and Dorset. The majority preferred Heath's sentence, and defeated the powerful combination of Arundel, Cottington and Laud.²⁹ Dorset's harshness entirely accords with his activities as a 'commissioner for restraining buildings'.³⁰ When this committee had met two days earlier,

28. P.R.O., SP 16/259/36 (Secretary Windebanke's notes of proceedings in Star Chamber, 24 January 1633/4).

29. Ibid.

30. For an abstract of this commission, see P.R.O., SP 16/258/46.I.

Dorset had moved 'for a proclamation, to stop buildings heereafter, that none shalbe admitted to compound'.³¹ He was consistently hostile to unauthorised building, and this explains his tough line in the case of John More.

By contrast, Dorset found himself in rather different company, and on the side of leniency, in the case of Nicholas Bacon versus Sir Henry Anderson et al., heard on 24 November 1637. This case is somewhat obscure, but it seems that Anderson was accused of using violence against Anne Mercer and others. Together with Cottington, Lord Chief Justice Bramston, Secretaries Windebanke and Vane, Lord Newburgh and Juxon, Dorset urged that the defendants be acquitted, and Bacon fined £40 'pro falso clamore'. Against this, Finch, Manchester and Laud wanted Anderson to be fined £100.³² Unfortunately, the final sentence does not apparently survive; nor is it entirely clear why Dorset defended Anderson. But this case does tell

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31. P.R.O., SP 16/258/46 (Secretary Windebanke's notes of business in the committee for buildings, 22 January 1633/4).
32. P.R.O., SP 16/372/32 (Secretary Windebanke's notes of proceedings in Star Chamber, 24 November 1637). See also Bod. Lib., MS Rawlinson C 827 (Minute Book of proceedings in Star Chamber, 18 May 1636 - 14 June 1638), fols. 188v-189r.

against any view of Dorset as a consistent hard-liner,³³ and also demonstrates the mutability of Star Chamber voting patterns.

It seems that Privy Councillors decided their sentences on the intrinsic merits of each case. Thus, when Sir Henry Mynne was tried on 9 February 1638 for allegedly calling Sir William Sherard, Lord Leitrim, 'a base informinge lord', Dorset was alone in supporting Laud's call for the payment of £1,000 damages, as well as a fine of £1,500. He thus found himself at odds with such usual associates as Cottington, Coke, Arundel and Lindsey, all of whom advocated a £1,000 fine and no damages.³⁴ Dorset's position was determined by the evidence given in court: he condemned Mynne 'for his irrelevant [illegible] and ... for his words as provocacon to fight'.³⁵ He reached his own opinion of the case, without following the voting of other Privy Councillors.

33. See, for example, Hallam's unsubstantiated claim that Dorset was 'the most brutal' of Charles' Councillors: H. Hallam, The Constitutional History of England (London, 1870), p. 321, n. 2.

34. P.R.O., SP 16/381/65 (Secretary Windebanke's notes of proceedings in Star Chamber, 9 February 1637/8).

35. Bod. Lib., MS Rawlinson C 827, fol. 203r.

Dorset's deep loathing of any personal insult to the King and Queen was clearly apparent in the case of the Attorney General versus Pickering, tried on 30 May 1638. Pickering was accused of calling 'the Queen a papist, and the King a papist in hart and conscience'.³⁶ Dorset joined Finch, Windebanke, Coke and Newburgh in adding a whipping to Cottington's sentence of a £10,000 fine, pillorying and imprisonment, and declared that of no King could the charge be made 'soe wickedly and falsely as of his Ma[jes]tie'.³⁷ Once again, the evidence points us back to the central significance of Dorset's deep personal loyalty to Charles I and Henrietta Maria. In the following chapter, I will argue that we can only understand Dorset's speeches at the first trial of William Prynne (February 1634) and the second trial of Bishop Williams of Lincoln (February 1639) in terms of his position as Lord Chamberlain of the Queen's Household.³⁸

An analysis of Dorset's career as a Privy Councillor thus suggests a number of broader conclusions about the nature of politics during the Personal Rule. First of all, the story is

36. P.R.O., SP 16/391/85 (Secretary Windebanke's notes of proceedings in Star Chamber, 30 May 1638).

37. Ibid. See also Bod. Lib., MS Rawlinson C 827, fol. 244r.

38. See Chapter Four, below, pp. 220-2, 233-8.

seldom as clear as we might wish. The sources for the Privy Council record collective decisions; they rarely indicate the opinions of individual Councillors. We know about Dorset's attendances, about his appointments to committees, and about the petitions referred to him; occasionally we also find him among the signatories of committee reports. But his actual utterances only regularly survive in Star Chamber minutes, especially those taken by Secretary Windebanke. By contrast, the sources do clearly reveal the staggering range of business which the Council handled. If the 1530's established the 'omnicompetence of statute', the 1630's demonstrated the omnicompetence of the Privy Council. This dominance owed much to the cohesiveness and compatibility of the Privy Councillors. Dorset's case shows quite plainly that the bitterness and duration of factional divisions must not be exaggerated. Rather, a small core of dynamic men consisting of the two Secretaries and three senior officers of State influenced every area of the Council's work, and they were assisted for particular items by active but less ubiquitous Councillors, such as Dorset. Voting in Star Chamber sentences proves that there were no consistent factional alignments: each case was assessed and adjudicated on its own merits. Insofar as external considerations influenced Dorset's judgement, these were not loyalties to other Privy Councillors, but his duties to the King and especially the Queen. This also explains why certain petitions were referred to him. In short, Dorset's career bears out David Starkey's argument that Council and

Court were intimately related:³⁹ we cannot fully understand Dorset's activities in the Privy Council unless we examine his role at Court, and it is to this that we now turn.

II

In the previous chapter, we discussed the circumstances of Dorset's appointment as Lord Chamberlain of the Queen's Household in July 1628, and briefly examined his role as a reception officer for Henrietta Maria.⁴⁰ In this chapter, we will analyse the importance of this office under six main headings: remuneration in cash and kind; responsibility for the Household and its servants; control of access to Henrietta Maria and its political significance; petitions and requests to Dorset in this capacity; Dorset as a messenger or agent for the Queen; and theatrical duties. Throughout, I shall seek to demonstrate the centrality of Court office in the politics of the 1630's.

39. For the most recent statement of this, see Starkey, 'A Reply', 927-9.

40. See Chapter Two, above, pp. 70-1, 77-8.

Dorset's stipend as Lord Chamberlain of the Queen's Household was £100 per annum.⁴¹ He was granted the generous 'diet' of a ten-dish table for both 'dinners' and 'suppers', chosen from an extensive range of meat ('beef', 'mutton', 'veale'), poultry ('capon', 'chicks', 'larks', 'cocks', 'pigeons') and fish ('lyng', 'codd', 'pyke', 'carpe', 'whittings'), all washed down with either 'beer' or 'gascoign wine'.⁴² He was allocated two coaches 'on the Queenes remove'.⁴³ His official apartment in the Palace of Whitehall consisted of 'eighteen roomes, one kitching and cellar in the new Chapel Court',⁴⁴ while 'the higher storie' of Nonsuch Palace contained 'fower roomes for the Lord Dorsett'.⁴⁵ In

41. P.R.O., E 101/438/7 (Queen's Household Establishment list, March 1629/30), fol. 2r; E 101/438/14 (Queen's Household Establishment list, June 1632), fol. 2r; LR 5/57, 63 (Queen's Household Establishment lists, April 1629) [I owe these two references to Caroline Hibbard]; LR 5/67 and LR 9/20 (Queen's Household vouchers). See also B.L., Egerton MS 1048, fols. 186-7 (undated list of Queen's Household servants, signed by Dorset); Stowe MS 561 (Queen's Household Ordinances, 1627, 1631).
42. P.R.O., LS 13/30 (list of diets and liveries granted to the Queen's Household). This diet was worth £1,095 per annum: see Aylmer, King's Servants, p. 169.
43. P.R.O., LS 13/30.
44. B.L., Lansdowne MS 736 ('A Survey or Ground Plot of His Majesty's Palace of Whitehall'), fol. 12v. Cf. Sharpe, 'Image of virtue', pp. 229-30.
45. P.R.O., E 317/SURREY/41 (Parliamentary Survey of Surrey), fol. 2r. See also LR 2/298 (Parliamentary Survey of Surrey, Vol. III), fol. 17r.

addition to his regular remuneration, board and lodging, Dorset was also reimbursed for ad hoc expenses incurred in the course of his duties. Much the biggest sums were 'for defraying the charge of provision of dyett, wages and other necessities of the Hous[e]hold of the Prince [of Wales'] highnes': to cover this, Exchequer payments were warranted for £5,000 on 20 August 1630,⁴⁶ for £310 4s. 7d. on 29 October 1631,⁴⁷ and for £621 11s. 3d. on 20 December 1632.⁴⁸ Thereafter, we find a sequence of payments to cover money 'disbursed to divers artificers for wares by them delivered and worke done for the use of his Ma[jes]ties dearest sonnes the Prince, and the Duke of Yorke': £740 6s. 5d. warranted on 24 January 1634,⁴⁹ £2,659 17s. 1d. on

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46. P.R.O., Ind. 1/6747 (Privy Seal Office Docquet Book, 1626-31), unfol., August 1630. Payments were made in four instalments: see P.R.O., E 403/1743 (Exchequer of Receipt, Pells Issue Book, 1630-1), unfol., 14 October, 8 November 1630, 29 March, 1 April 1631.
47. P.R.O., Ind. 1/6747, October 1631. For a copy of the warrant, see SP 16/202/29. Payment was made on 8 February 1631/2: E 403/1745 (Exchequer of Receipt, Pells Issue Book, 1631-2), unfol.
48. P.R.O., Ind. 1/6748 (Privy Seal Office Docquet Book, 1631-7), unfol., December 1632. For the payments, in two instalments, see E 403/1746 (Exchequer of Receipt, Pells Issue Book, 1632-3), unfol., 26 January, 8 March 1632/3.
49. P.R.O., Ind. 1/6748, January 1633/4. For the payments, in three instalments, see: E 403/1748 (Exchequer of Receipt, Pells Issue Book, 1634-5), unfol., 9 May, 4 July 1634; and E 403/1749 (Exchequer of Receipt, Pells Issue Book, 1635-6), unfol., 21 April 1635.

11 December 1635,⁵⁰ £1,817 7s. 3d. on 4 May 1637,⁵¹ and £1,911 19s. 8d. on 19 March 1638.⁵² All this demonstrates, first, that Dorset gained a considerable amount in material terms from his position, and second, that tenure of a senior Court office could involve the temporary outlay of very large sums of money.

As Kevin Sharpe has recently argued, the 1630's saw a determined attempt to regulate the royal Households, to enforce order, and promote ritual and ceremony.⁵³ Most books of 'Household Ordinances' dealt primarily with the King's Household, then more briefly with the Queen's, and it is often

50. P.R.O., Ind. 1/6748, October 1635. For a copy of the warrant, see SP 16/303/103. For the payments, in three instalments, see: E 403/1750 (Exchequer of Receipt, Pells Issue Book, 1636-7), unfol., 18, 19 February, 15 June 1636.
51. P.R.O., Ind. 1/6749 (Privy Seal Office Docquet Book, 1637-46), unfol., May 1637. For a copy of the warrant, see SP 16/355/64. For the payment, see E 403/1751 (Exchequer of Receipt, Pells Issue Book, 1637-8), unfol., 22 May 1637.
52. P.R.O., Ind. 1/6749, March 1637/8. For a copy of the warrant, see SP 16/386, bound in front of fol. 1r. For the payment, in five instalments, see: E 403/1752 (Exchequer of Receipt, Pells Issue Book, 1638-9), 15, 22 June, 6 July, 26 October, 2 November 1638. For Robert Pye's certificate for this, and the payments cited in the previous note, see E 403/2415 (Register of certificates relating to pensions and salaries, 1637-67), fol. 12v.
53. Sharpe, 'Image of virtue', pp. 230-48, esp. pp. 230-1, 242-5. See also L.J. Reeve, Charles I and the Road to Personal Rule (Cambridge, 1989), pp. 195-6.

difficult to determine the extent of Dorset's responsibility for them.⁵⁴ On at least one occasion, however, he was clearly instrumental in re-organising the staff of the Queen's Household. He appears as the signatory of an undated list of 'orders for the Queenes Wayters Chamber concerning such persons as are allowed to eate there'.⁵⁵ In their detail and precision, these orders exactly reflected the formality characteristic of the Caroline Court. They began by listing those 'allowed dyet' 'in her Ma[jes]t[ie]s Chamber': 'two Gentlemen Ushers of the Privie Chamber; two Cupbearers; two Carvers; two Sewers; one Gentleman Usher Dayly Wayter; two Groomes of the Privie Chamber ... and every one of theise to have one man and noe more'. Then followed a series of regulations designed to eliminate waste and exclude hangers-on: 'That noe meate be by any given away ... That noe man bring a guest but the Carver ... That noe servants be suffred to come into the Chamber but such as are allowed'. Corruption was a particular problem, and it was ordered 'that the pages doe see that noe meat be imbeaselled away neither in the carryeing downe or when it cometh into the Chamber, but that it be kept

54. See, for example, P.R.O., LC 5/180 (Household Regulations, 1630).

55. Library of the Inner Temple, Petyt MS 538, Vol. XX (Miscellaneous collections), fol. 691r.

for the table'.⁵⁶ These orders directly paralleled developments in the King's Household,⁵⁷ and concluded with an explicit invocation of royal authority: 'These orders are a true coppie of the orders shewed unto the King and Queene and ... by them allowed'.⁵⁸ In short, as Lord Chamberlain of the Queen's Household, Dorset was an agent of the Court reforms which were so marked a feature of the Personal Rule.

Another important Household responsibility was that of certifying that particular individuals really were the Queen's servants, and therefore entitled to certain privileges. For instance, on 20 January 1629, Dorset informed Attorney General Sir Robert Heath of the King's pleasure that a Privy Seal be drawn whereby twenty named members of the Queen's Household would 'be discharged and freed from paying any subsidies or any other contributions belonging to his Ma[jes]tie'.⁵⁹ These servants were then given certificates, signed by Dorset, confirming their status and exempting them from subsidy

56. Ibid.

57. Sharpe, 'Image of virtue', esp. pp. 236-9.

58. Library of the Inner Temple, Petyt MS 538, Vol. XX, fol. 691r.

59. P.R.O., SP 16/132/49 (Dorset to Attorney General Heath, 20 January 1628/9). For the warrant, see SO 3/9 (Signet Office Docquet Book, 1627-30), unfol., May 1629.

payments.⁶⁰ Similarly, when one of the Queen's servants had 'some occasions to passe [over] the seas and embarque himselfe' at Dover in September 1632, Dorset wrote a letter of recommendation to the Lieutenant of Dover Castle, Sir Edward Dering, affirming 'his dependancy on her Ma[jes]ty, the which relacon I conceive will encline yow to do him all kindenes and favor'.⁶¹ Furthermore, Household servants could not be arrested or imprisoned without a direct royal warrant. For example, in September 1630, Dorset certified that Allan Botteler was a cupbearer to the Queen,

by vertue of which place he is to enjoye all such priviledges as to theire Ma[jes]ties servants doe belong: And therefore I doe hereby advise all his Ma[jes]ties officers ... to be very cautious how they doe any act to the prejudice of the sayd Capt[ain] Botteler, that maye any waye infringe the priviledges of their Ma[jes]ties servants.⁶²

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60. For four surviving examples, see P.R.O., E 179/274/58 and SP 16/530/53 (certificates to Household servants, 1629).
61. Cleveland Public Library, Ohio, John G. White Special Books Collection, Q 091.92 B6442 (letters of Sir Edward Dering, 1629-34), unfol. (Dorset to Sir Edward Dering, 27 September 1632). I am most grateful to Peter Salt for this reference, and for lending me a microfilm of the MS.
62. H.L.R.O., MP, 15 April 1642. This certificate is dated 13 September 1630. Botteler kept it with him like a talisman, and in April 1642 attached it to a petition to the House of Lords begging release from imprisonment. He was duly discharged: L.J., IV, 722. Exactly the same is true of Dorset's certificate for Herbert Finch, sewer to the Queen, dated 8 May 1635: H.L.R.O., MP, 28 April 1642. For his release, see L.J., V, 25.

Such certificates tended to develop into a standard form,⁶³ yet they reveal quite clearly that in addition to the general oversight of the Queen's Household evident in his list of orders, Dorset also exercised a personal responsibility for the welfare and protection of each of the Queen's servants.⁶⁴

It is, however, on questions of access and intimacy, rather than of remuneration or responsibility, that much recent debate has focused.⁶⁵ An analysis of Dorset's career strongly suggests that this emphasis is correct. His ceremonial role as a reception officer for the Queen⁶⁶ reflected his political role as a controller of access to the Queen's person. The symbolism of keys as a mark of authority, analysed by Kevin Sharpe with reference to the King's Lord Chamberlain, the Earl

63. See, for example, P.R.O., SP 16/238/58 (certificate for Edmond Fortescue, 9 May 1633).

64. See also Dorset's authorisation of payments to members of the Household: P.R.O., E 101/438/11, 13, 15; E 101/439/3; LR 5/63 (lists of acquittances due to the Queen's servants).

65. See the agenda laid down by David Starkey, especially in his introduction to The English Court, pp. 4-5. For a critique, see G.R. Elton, 'Tudor Government', Historical Journal, XXXI (1988), 425-34.

66. See Chapter Two, above, pp. 70-1, 77-8, and, more generally, below, pp. 155-6. For an example from June 1633, see C.U.L., Add. MS 6863 (Diary of Judge Richard Hutton), fol. 66r-v.

of Pembroke, finds an exact parallel in Dorset's case.⁶⁷ On 27 January 1637, he was listed among those granted 'keyes of the new altered lockes at Whitehall'.⁶⁸ At a time when the Court was becoming increasingly private and withdrawn, and attempts were being made to prevent 'undue procurement of keys', such a grant was all the more critical.⁶⁹ Furthermore, Charles I's uxoriousness gave access to Henrietta Maria real political significance, and it is on this, more than any other single factor, that Dorset's importance during the 1630's rests.

This was most clearly apparent in Dorset's correspondence with Wentworth during the latter's absence in Ireland.⁷⁰ Loss of direct access to the King and Queen had threatened earlier careers, and Dorset now became the channel of communication between Henrietta Maria and Wentworth. This was particularly important in 1635, when the choice of Portland's successor as Lord Treasurer became a live political issue. In a letter of

67. Sharpe, 'Image of virtue', pp. 231-2.

68. P.R.O., LC 5/134 (Lord Chamberlain's warrant book, 1633-40), p. 145. For details of Dorset's key of office, hanging from the frame of his portrait at Knole, see V. Sackville-West, Knole and the Sackvilles (London, 1922), p. 89.

69. Cf. Sharpe, 'Image of virtue', p. 244.

70. For Dorset's relationship with Wentworth during the 1620's, see Chapter Two, above, pp. 86-8.

12 March 1635, Dorset described the final stages of Portland's illness, and urged Wentworth to take his place. The Lord Deputy was admirably qualified, not least because he enjoyed the Queen's favour:

How fairly your lordship stands in the Queenes opinion, judge by this relation I give you: Two dayes since, Fame rumouring your Death, with sorrow she protested, that then the King had lost a brave and faithful servant, one whom she loved, valued and esteemed. Your Brother can witness I speak a Truth, and I shall never fail to act my part in founding your name with all the attributes I believe itt justly deserves.⁷¹

Rumours of Wentworth's death were, of course, greatly exaggerated, and he replied on 19 May 1635:

I doe understand with much comfort of her Ma[jes]ties gracious mentioning of me upon the rumor of my death; I doe consider it in silence and gratitude, as indeed it doth highly merit that I should. And this life which hitherto God is pleased to lend me, cannot be better layed downe then where it shall please her Ma[jes]tie to command it ... If your Lo[r]dshlp ... would be pleased to represent my dutyfull acknowledgement of her Ma[jes]ties Princely Grace towards me, and that in the fullest manner, I should take it as a great favour.⁷²

Yet he did not wish to become Lord Treasurer, having 'neither a mind nor a body disposed to undertake soe heavy a chardge'.⁷³

71. S.C.L., SC, Vol. VIII, fols. 234-5 (Dorset to Wentworth, 12 March 1634/5).

72. S.C.L., SC, Vol. VIII, fols. 235-6 (Wentworth to Dorset, 19 May 1635).

73. Ibid.

Wentworth's refusal was probably crucial in bringing Henrietta Maria round to Cottington's side, an explanation neglected by Gardiner.⁷⁴ This in turn helps us to explain why Cottington appeared much the strongest candidate by October 1635.⁷⁵

A second instance of Dorset's relaying messages between Henrietta Maria and Wentworth was over the plight of Lady Carew, the impoverished widow of George, Lord Carew, formerly President of Munster. Her exact circumstances are not entirely clear, but certainly Dorset's initial approach on the Queen's behalf, begging Wentworth to relieve her distress,⁷⁶ was met by a curt assurance that if Lady Carew would 'but doe that which belongs to her part', then Wentworth would 'not be found

74. See Gardiner, History, VIII, 87. He uncharacteristically failed to clinch his point that the Queen was put off by Wentworth's 'invincible probity'. It is much more likely that she stopped promoting Wentworth for the Lord Treasurership because Dorset had told her that he would never accept it.

75. Gardiner, History, VIII, 91. However, the King's choice of Bishop Juxon on 6 March 1636 indicated Laud's growing power, and revealed the limits of Henrietta Maria's influence: ibid., 140-2. Cf. Sharpe, 'Image of virtue', p. 257. See also R.M. Smuts, 'The Puritan Followers of Henrietta Maria in the 1630's', English Historical Review, XCIII (1978), 26-45, esp. 35.

76. S.C.L., SC, Vol. XIV, fol. 241r (Dorset to Wentworth, 27 December 1634, received 11 February 1634/5).

awanting in [his] indeavors for her satisfaction'.⁷⁷ It seems that Lady Carew was unable to enjoy the benefits of a royal grant in Ireland - possibly because of Wentworth's challenges to existing property rights.⁷⁸ At any rate, when Dorset wrote again at the end of the year, it was 'in obedience to her Ma[jes]ties command', and his tone was unusually forceful: 'Truly my lord, in the assisting of her your lordship will doe a thing most acceptable to the Queen, who much desires that my Lady Carew may reape the benefitt of his Ma[jes]ties grant'.⁷⁹ Wentworth, anxious not to antagonise the Queen, replied effusively that 'if the good lady have not what she expects, I protest it is not in me to help it, for did it concerne my life I could be noe more ready to serve her then I am', and asked Dorset 'humbly [to] represent unto her Ma[jes]tye that I am ready to doe all that can with reason be desired from me, with all the alacrity in the world'.⁸⁰ Although the legal details of this case are somewhat obscure, it does show - like the

77. S.C.L., SC, Vol. VIII, fols. 191-2 (Wentworth to Dorset, 19 February 1634/5).

78. This is, however, only speculation. For the background, see H.F. Kearney, Strafford in Ireland, 1633-41 (Manchester, 1959), pp. 69-84.

79. S.C.L., SC, Vol. VIII, fol. 335r (Dorset to Wentworth, [?] December 1635).

80. S.C.L., SC, Vol. VIII, fol. 336r (Wentworth to Dorset, 12 January 1635/6).

affair of the Lord Treasurership - that Wentworth was very anxious to retain royal favour, and recognised Dorset as a vital conduit through which he could pour his pledges of loyalty and service.

Access could, of course, be refused as well as granted, and this also had political significance. For instance, the attendance of English people at the Queen's Chapel remained a delicate issue throughout this period, and when Charles I decided to curb it in March 1630, he commissioned Dorset to 'take speciall care' to enforce the ban 'according to such direccions as he hath received from His Majestye'.⁸¹ Joseph Mead reported that Dorset, 'highly approving this gracious message from his Majestye, said he would act his part therein to the full; and if any should grow stubborn, would have them turned out per force, and exposed to the law; for which forwardness of his, the residue of the Lords applauded him'.⁸²

81. A.P.C., 1629-30, 303-4.

82. The Court and Times of Charles I, ed. T. Birch (2 vols., London, 1848), II, 68. This is entirely consistent with the Protestant religious views which will be discussed in Chapter Four, below, pp. 214-29. For the religious connotations of the term 'forwardness' in early modern England, see P. Collinson, 'Puritans, Men-of-Business and Elizabethan Parliaments', Parliamentary History, VII (1988), 187-211, especially 192-5.

Likewise, when the Privy Council clamped down on the delivery of unauthorised books to Court and Council, it was ordered that none should be delivered to the Queen, 'but upon warrant of the Earle of Dorsett'.⁸³ The conduit was as important when closed as when open.

Dorset's position as Henrietta Maria's Lord Chamberlain ensured that he received many petitions and requests from various individuals and institutions. Three examples will show the range of their grievances. First, in September 1629, 'divers freemen of London usinge the arte of jewellinge' complained to Dorset that Francis Simpson, the Queen's Jeweller, had employed 'in the Cittie divers strangers in private chambers to do the worke belonginge to your petitioners'. They claimed that Dorset had given them leave to proceed against Simpson, but the latter had meanwhile secured a Privy Council order 'to take up workmen, att all times thereafter for his Ma[jes]t[ie]s service; under cover of which he now protecteth the strangers at his pleasure; not imployinge any of your suppliants, soe that your petitioners' grievance is

83. P.R.O., SP 16/380/38 (Order of the Privy Council, 31 January 1637/8).

now more than ever'.⁸⁴ By contrast, Simpson insisted that Dorset had signified Henrietta Maria's pleasure that he and the strangers 'be suffered quietly to worke'.⁸⁵ The dispute came before the Council on 27 January 1630, and the Queen's servants won the day: all craftsmen, certified by Dorset, were permitted 'quietly and without interruption to worke in and exercise the said arte of jewelling, so long as they shall be imployed for her Majestie's service'.⁸⁶ This tale has two morals: first, that royal service remained an effective way to breach established monopolies; and second, that such cases moved easily between the two interlocked institutions of Court and Council.

Clearly, no petitioner could expect Dorset to give help detrimental to the interests of the Queen's Household. It therefore seems unlikely that the second request, from 'the President and Society of the Colledge of Phisitions in London' in November 1633, was successful. This closely resembled the London jewellers' petition. It complained that 'divers

84. P.R.O., SP 16/150/86 (London jewellers' petition to Dorset, [? 21] September 1629).

85. P.R.O., SP 16/530/97 (petition of Francis Simpson to the Privy Council, [? November] 1629).

86. A.P.C., 1629-30, 249.

phisions of late havinge putt themselves ... under protection of the Queenes Maiestyes service ... doe freelye practise phisicke'. Trusting to Dorset's 'disposition to the preservinge of all regularitye and good order', the President requested permission to take legal action against the unlicensed physicians'.⁸⁷ Unfortunately, I have not yet discovered the outcome of this dispute. It appears not to have come before the Privy Council, possibly because the London jewellers' case had already established the likely outcome of such a course.

These cases show that royal service could give individuals a considerable degree of freedom, and unless Dorset or the Queen gave permission for a legal action, outsiders had little means of redress. But the Lord Chamberlain's protection was not automatic, as a petition from William Longland in November 1635 shows. Longland claimed that a Gentleman Usher to the Queen, Robert Pitts, owed him £100, but refused to repay it. Finding himself 'disabled legallie to prosecute and therefore destitute of other remedie for recoverie of his true and iust debt', Longland begged Dorset to 'vouchsafe [him] such

87. Library of the Royal College of Physicians, College Annals, Vol. III, fol. 131r. I am most grateful to the Librarian of the Royal College of Physicians for sending me a transcript of this letter.

favourable leave and licence for obteyninge his said debt, as in cases of like nature is usuall'.⁸⁸ Dorset wrote at the bottom: 'Lett Mr. Pitts see this peticon and satisfy the peticoner within one weeke or else shew mee very good cause why leave should not bee granted as is desired'.⁸⁹ This proves that the legal immunity of Household servants did not mean that they could freely abuse others: they were answerable to Dorset and, ultimately, the Queen.

All these examples, from Wentworth to William Longland, illustrate the various business coming into the Queen's Household from outside - be it loyal pledges from the Irish Lord Deputy, or a ban on English visitors at Henrietta Maria's Chapel, or attempts to secure legal redress against members of her Household. Dorset operated as a kind of one-man clearing house for all these diverse matters. Conversely, he also regularly acted as a messenger or agent for the Queen: he handled business emanating outwards from the Household, and it is to this that we now turn.

88. Longleat House, Wiltshire, Harley Papers, Vol. II (select autograph letters, 1613-1772), fol. 60r.

89. Ibid.

Our first example shows Dorset conveying Henrietta Maria's wishes to all legal officers, and develops the point that royal servants did not necessarily have everything their own way. In May 1637, Sir Robert Willoughby complained to the Queen that his wife, 'being sworne your Ma[jes]ties servant', had lived with one John Garneir for two years, but that 'though the abuses be unsufferable yet the Justices of Peace dare not take any course against them because they ar your Ma[jes]t[i]es servantes'. He sought 'the legall course of his Ma[jes]ties lawes to rite his wronges donn by the said parties'.⁹⁰ Appended is the following memorandum by Dorset:

[The Queen] is not only pleased, but requires that all lawful courses bee taken to right the peticoner, and punish this notorious and scandalous kind of life, unto which all Justices of Peace, and other officers, are required to bee ayding and assisting, and are further commanded that they take good bonds from the sayd Garnier never more to frequent the company of the sayd Lady Willoughby to her disgrace, his ruine, and the ignominy of all good government.⁹¹

This bid to improve morality at Court was only one of many occasions on which Dorset acted as Henrietta Maria's mouthpiece. A second example will serve to illustrate the diversity of these. In the summer of 1639, Edward Bradbourn,

90. P.R.O., SP 16/355/66 (petition of Sir Robert Willoughby, [?] May 1637).

91. P.R.O., SP 16/355/66.I (memorandum by Dorset, 4 May 1637).

silkman to the King and Queen, 'suferd much in his reputacon and in his trade' when two ounces of copper were discovered in some of his gold and silver laces. Dorset informed the Privy Council that the Queen 'was pleased to take knowledg of the sayde Bradbourn's well deserving in hir service, of his faire and honnest dealing in his trade', and the matter was referred to a committee consisting of Dorset, Cottington and Windebanke.⁹² On 26 July, Dorset reported to the full Council that the two ounces of copper had been used by 'the casuall errour of some of [Bradbourn's] servantes', and he was duly acquitted.⁹³ Like the Willoughby case, this item demonstrates the rigorous concern with morality which characterised the Court in these years.⁹⁴ It also shows, once again, how much of Dorset's business and influence as a Privy Councillor derived from his position as Henrietta Maria's Lord Chamberlain.

Furthermore, there were many times when Dorset acted on the Queen's behalf, or as her legal agent, without conveying an explicit message from her. For example, on 16 June 1631 we

92. P.R.O., SP 16/426/51 (Order of the Privy Council, 26 July 1639).

93. Ibid.

94. Cf. Sharpe, 'Image of virtue', esp. pp. 237-40.

find him writing to the Mayor and corporation of Sandwich, urging them to make 'all diligent search for a packett of value lately miscaried which was for her Ma[jes]ties use, and directed unto Mr. Robert Oxwick'.⁹⁵ This episode is very obscure, but it does show the immense range of business which could exercise the Queen's Lord Chamberlain. More fully documented are the various property transactions which Dorset made in Henrietta Maria's name. Those concluded early in the Personal Rule appear to have been on an ad hoc basis, with authority to negotiate being granted afresh for each separate transaction.⁹⁶ But on 4 April 1638, Dorset, together with the Earl of Holland (High Steward of the Queen's Revenues), Sir John Finch (the Queen's Attorney) and Sir Richard Wynne (the Queen's Treasurer), was empowered 'to make leases of lands, tenements, etc., formerly entrusted to them for the Queen's use

95. K.A.O., Borough of Sandwich MS, Sa/ZB2/86 (Dorset to the Mayor and corporation of Sandwich, 16 June 1631). Robert Oxwick appears to have been a London merchant: for this identification, see SP 16/229/51 (petition of Robert Oxwick et al., [? 1632]).

96. See in particular P.R.O., E 156/7, 10 (Exchequer Original Letters Patent: indentures relating to the Queen's possessions, 1629-30).

or any part of them for twenty-one years or under'.⁹⁷ In these situations, Dorset acted almost as Henrietta Maria's private solicitor.

Enough has been said to show that Dorset's duties as Lord Chamberlain of the Queen's Household were extensive and time-consuming, and exactly mirrored those of the Lord Chamberlain of the King's Household. One final responsibility common to both offices was that for theatrical entertainments. Dorset played a crucial role in the establishment of the Salisbury Court theatre in 1629: George Gresley reported that he leased the 'stables and out howses' behind 'his howse in Salisbury Courte' 'unto the Maister of the Revels, to make a play howse for the chyldren of the Revells'.⁹⁸ The Queen's company performed there until May 1636, when the players were dispersed

97. P.R.O., Ind. 1/4225 (Docquet Book of warrants for the Great Seal, 1638-41), fol. 23v; C 66/2846/7 (Chancery Patent Rolls). For a lease under this warrant, see William Salt Library, Stafford, Salt MS 528 (indenture with Christopher Graves on Henrietta Maria's behalf, 24 March 1640/1). For details of Finch and Wynne, see especially Aylmer, King's Servants, pp. 84, 94, 362-3. For Holland, see ibid., pp. 92, 132, and below, pp. 172-3.

98. B.L., Harl. MS 7000 (State Papers, 1620-31), fol. 265r. For the lease, see B.L., Add. Charter 9290 (indenture between Dorset and John Herne, 15 July 1629).

because of the plague.⁹⁹ This 'left the howse in Salisberry Court destitute', 'soe that had not my Lo[rd] of Dorsett taken care to make up a new company for the Queene, she had not had any at all'.¹⁰⁰ The new company apparently thrived, and Dorset was responsible in particular for the 'front of house' arrangements. Thus, on 18 December 1638, Georg Weckerlin wrote that he 'had spoken to the Earle of Dorsett for a place to see the play at Denmarke Howse, whether for the same end his Ma[jes]tie and the Queene went'.¹⁰¹ The title of the play is unrecorded, but we do know of three plays dedicated to Dorset in his capacity as Queen's Lord Chamberlain: William Davenant's The Iust Italian (1630), Thomas Heywood's Loves Maistresse, or the Queens Masque (1636), and Joseph Rutter's The Cid: A

99. P.R.O., PC 2/46, p. 143. See also G.E. Bentley, The Jacobean and Caroline Stage (7 vols., Oxford, 1941-68), II, 423-4.

100. P. Cunningham, 'The Whitefriars Theatre, the Salisbury Court Theatre and the Duke's Theatre in Dorset Gardens', The Shakespeare Society's Papers, IV (1849), 89-109, at 96-7. See also Bentley, Jacobean and Caroline Stage, II, 684. For Dorset's funding of the Queen's players in October 1637, see P.R.O., LR 5/66 (Queen's Household vouchers, 1634-8), unfol., 10 October 1637.

101. B.R.O., Trumbull Miscellaneous Correspondence, Vol. LXI (Diary of Georg Weckherlin, 1633-42), unfol., 18 December 1638.

Tragicomedy, out of French made English (1637).¹⁰² The epistles dedicatory to these plays are a further indication that Dorset performed his theatrical duties very enthusiastically, and this goes a long way to explaining his violent condemnation of William Prynne's Histriomastix in February 1634.¹⁰³

102. William Davenant, The Iust Italian (London, 1630), sig. 2 (S.T.C., 6303). Cf. K. Sharpe, Criticism and Compliment: The Politics of Literature in the England of Charles I (Cambridge, 1987), pp. 55, 88-9. For a critique of Sharpe's interpretation, see M. Butler, 'Early Stuart Court Culture: Compliment or Criticism?', Historical Journal, XXXII (1989), 425-35, esp. 429-34. Thomas Heywood, Loves Maistresse, or the Queens Masque (London, 1636), sig. A1 (S.T.C., 13352). Joseph Rutter, The Cid: A Tragicomedy, out of French made English (London, 1637), sigs. A2-A3 (S.T.C., 5770). Rutter was tutor to Dorset's two sons, Richard and Edward, and claimed in his epistle dedicatory that part of the play had been written by them. The boys once entertained the King and Queen in a short pastoral, performed while Henrietta Maria's regular company was dispersed: The King and Queenes Entertainement at Richmond ... September 12 1636 (Oxford, 1636), pp. 28-9, 31 (S.T.C., 5026). I am unpersuaded by Martin Butler's claim that this was a 'martial masque' containing veiled criticism of the King: M. Butler, Theatre and Crisis, 1632-1642 (Cambridge, 1984), p. 33. For Rutter's elegy on the wife of another Dorset client, Sir Kenelm Digby, see B.L., Add. MS 30259 (Collection of verses on Lady Venetia Digby), fols. 14-17. For a parallel discussion of several other works dedicated to Dorset in his capacity as Henrietta Maria's Lord Chamberlain, see Chapter Four, below, pp. 251-3.

103. See Chapter Four, below, pp. 220-2.

The activities we have examined so far all reflect the extensive official duties of the Queen's Lord Chamberlain. One might suggest, paraphrasing Bagehot, that Dorset was required to serve, to guard and to entertain. But, just as this office explains much in Dorset's career as a Privy Councillor, so it also had much broader ramifications for his position at Court. In less official, but equally important ways, Dorset was very much a servant of the King as well as the Queen.

This is immediately apparent when we remember that on many Court occasions, Charles and Henrietta Maria operated as an inseparable double-act. For instance, on 29 July 1630, John Flower reported that 'on Monday last, the King and Queene came from Nonsuch in the fornoone to St. James with a select companie of Lordes and Ladies, where they weere sumptuouslie feasted at dinner and supper by the Earle of Dorsett'.¹⁰⁴ At such times the Court became a cohesive entity, with no visible distinction between the King's and Queen's Households. Likewise, following the royal visit to Oxford in 1636, Dorset thanked the Vice-Chancellor, Dr Baily, for giving 'speedy accomplishment of all their Ma[jes]ties desires': he wrote as a

104. P.R.O., C 115/M30/8072 (John Flower to Viscount Scudamore, 29 July 1630). I owe this reference to Ian Atherton.

prominent courtier, not specifically as the Queen's Lord Chamberlain.¹⁰⁵ Dorset's favour with the King must have been further strengthened by his membership of Charles' beloved Order of the Garter. In particular, the King greatly developed the annual feasts of St George, and we know from seating-plans that Dorset attended at least six of these, in 1630-2 and 1635-7.¹⁰⁶ On St George's Day 1632, Dorset was among nine Knights of the Garter commissioned by the King to 'peruse all statutes and ordinances of the Order of the Garter', to ensure that current practice was right and proper.¹⁰⁷ He was also assiduous in his payments for 'pious uses' and 'plate' due when

105. Bod. Lib., MS Rawlinson D 912 (documents relating to the University of Oxford), fol. 82r. For the public reading of this letter at Oxford, see Laud's Works, ed. Scott, V, 153-4, 156.

106. For the background to this, see Sharpe, 'Image of virtue', pp. 241-2. B.L., Add. MS 37998 (Sir Edward Walker's papers relating to the Order of the Garter), fols. 33r, 48r; Bod. Lib., MS Ashmole 1132 (papers relating to the Order of the Garter), fols. 124r, 126r, 133r, 285r. I have not yet found the plans for 1636 or 1639, but we know from P.R.O., LC 5/193 (Feasts of St George, 1638-88), fols. 154v, 155r, that he did not attend the feasts in 1638 and 1640. On these occasions, the Knights of the Garter always sat in order of installation, placing Dorset next to the Earls of Carlisle, Salisbury, Holland and Berkshire. The plans would tell us more had the Knights chosen their dinner-time companions!

107. B.L., Add. MS 37998, fols. 35-6; Bod. Lib., MS Ashmole 1132, fol. 285r.

a Knight of the Garter died.¹⁰⁸ In short, Dorset's membership of this Order helped to place him at the heart of the Caroline Court, taking him well beyond the confines of the Queen's Household.

This enables us to develop the points made above about Dorset as a royal reception officer and controller of access.¹⁰⁹ He naturally accompanied French ambassadors into the Queen's presence, and in 1629-30 even leased part of Salisbury Court to Fontenay for £300 per annum.¹¹⁰ But this role was not restricted to the Queen's service, or to French ambassadors: in August 1636, Dorset conducted the papal agent, George Con, to an embassy with the King,¹¹¹ while the following October, 'the Spanish ambassador, accompanied by the Earl of Dorset, went to have his first public audience at Oatlands of

108. Bod. Lib., MS Ashmole 1132, fols. 38r, 39r, 134r. The Chapter Acts of the Dean and Canons of Windsor, 1430, 1523-1672, ed. S. Bond (London, 1966), p. 150.

109. See above, pp. 137-8. Also Chapter Two, above, pp. 70-1, 77-8.

110. B.L., Harl. MS 7000, fol. 265r; P.R.O., C 115/M30/8067 (John Flower to Viscount Scudamore, 27 February 1629/30). I owe the second reference to Ian Atherton. Compare the reception of Bellièvre in November 1637: K.A.O., De L'Isle and Dudley MS, U 1475/C118/2 (Georg Weckherlin to the Earl of Leicester, 31 August 1637).

111. B.L., Add. MS 15389 (transcripts from papal registers: reports by George Con), fol. 190v.

both their Majesties, who received him graciously in the same room'.¹¹² Dorset was seen as a point of access to Charles as well as to Henrietta Maria. On 31 August 1637, John Scudamore reported to Lord Scudamore that he 'went to visite my Lord of Dorsett with a purpose to have him present me to the King, but t'was too late'.¹¹³ This demonstrates that office in the Queen's Household led to influence in the Court as a whole.

Another important measure of Dorset's proximity to the King is the frequency with which he relayed Charles' wishes to the Privy Council. This was evident from the very start of the Personal Rule: on 29 March 1629, Dorset told Lord President Conway

that his Ma[jes]tie hath lent unto my Lord Chamberlain [the Earl of Montgomery] the prise ship called the St. Ann with her ordnance, tackling and furniture to be imployed ... in the West Indes for one yeare, and his pleasure is that your lord[shi]p signifie as much to the lords of the Councell to the end they may give orders to the Commissioners of the Admiralty for her delivery accordingly.¹¹⁴

112. C.S.P.V., XXIV (1636-9), 77, 80.

113. P.R.O., C 115/M13/7264 (John Scudamore to Viscount Scudamore, 31 August 1637). I owe this reference to Ian Atherton.

114. P.R.O., SP 16/139/66 (Dorset to Lord President Conway, 29 March 1629).

Here Dorset conveyed a message regarding another senior Court official. Other instructions concerned the agenda of business at Council meetings, for example those to Secretary Windebanke dated 14 November 1638:

His Maiesty is pleased on Sunday next to leave the busines betweene Cap[tain] Crispe and his adversaryes: and his pleasure is thatt Sir Henry Marten have notice to attend there alsoe, whom his Ma[jesty] is informed cann attestate much to the discovery of the truth in this case.¹¹⁵

Dorset's role as a messenger from King to Council sometimes enabled him to give really effective help to petitioners. Thus, when Thomas Windham of Bristol complained to him on 20 October 1630 that 'ingrossers' were 'takeinge upp ... a great quantity of salt ... all alongst the coast',¹¹⁶ Dorset almost certainly raised the matter personally with the King. For on 17 March 1631, he told the commission on fees of 'his Ma[jes]ties pleasure' that they 'shall informe themselves' of

115. P.R.O., SP 16/401/73 (Dorset to Secretary Windebanke, 14 November 1638). See also SP 16/399/20 (Dorset to Secretary Windebanke, 27 September 1638). The full Privy Council meeting referred to was presumably that held on 18 November 1638: PC 2/49, p. 547.

116. P.R.O., SP 16/174/63 (Thomas Windham to Dorset, 20 October 1630). Complaints against this and similar abuses were especially widespread in 1629-30: see J. Walter, 'Grain Riots and popular attitudes to the law', in An Ungovernable People, ed. J. Brewer and J. Styles (London, 1980), pp. 47-84; also J. Walter and K. Wrightson, 'Dearth and the social order in early modern England', Past and Present, LXXI (1976), 22-42, esp. 26-7.

the details of the case,¹¹⁷ and on 5 July conveyed Charles' wish that those accused in Windham's petition 'bee warned to attend [the commission] and answeare the severall charges against them'.¹¹⁸ It therefore appears that in the Caroline Court, political influence owed at least as much to personal standing and proximity to the monarch as to the powers conferred by a particular office. Status at Court was in turn the mainstay of Dorset's strength as a Privy Councillor.

Dorset's prominence within the Court also explains why he was frequently tipped for further offices. In January 1630, the Venetian ambassador listed him among 'the pretendants' to succeed Buckingham as Lord High Admiral.¹¹⁹ As a leading commissioner for the Admiralty this was entirely plausible, but the post remained in commission until the Earl of Northumberland's appointment in April 1638.¹²⁰ Edward Nicholas reported in April 1631 that Dorset was to be the ailing Earl of

117. P.R.O., E 215/58E (Minute Book of commission on fees, 1631), unfol., 17 March 1630/1.

118. P.R.O., E 215/161 (Dorset's instructions to commission on fees, 5 July 1631).

119. C.S.P.V., XXII (1629-32), 263-4.

120. Gardiner, History, VIII, 338-9.

Suffolk's successor as Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports,¹²¹ an office for which his local muscle in Sussex would surely have qualified him,¹²² but he was thwarted by Suffolk's unexpected recovery.¹²³ Finally, the Earl of Northumberland even suggested in April 1640 that Dorset would shortly replace Wentworth as Lord Deputy of Ireland.¹²⁴ The provenance of these reports is often difficult to establish. But they do show that Dorset's standing at Court made him a plausible candidate for a variety of high offices.

The strength of Dorset's position was also seen in the choice of his wife as governess to the King's sons, and of his chaplain as their tutor. Hitherto a shadowy figure, Mary, Countess of Dorset was appointed governess to the Prince of Wales in July 1630, replacing the Countess of Roxburgh whose

121. W.R.O., Feilding of Newnham Paddox MS, CR 2017/C48/9 (Edward Nicholas to Lord Feilding, 13 December 1631).

122. For a fuller analysis of this, see Chapter Five, below, pp. 268-304.

123. Theophilus Howard, second Earl of Suffolk, who was Dorset's cousin, did not in fact die until 3 June 1640: P.R.O., SP 16/456/20 (death certificate of the Earl of Suffolk, 3 June 1640).

124. K.A.O., De L'Isle and Dudley MS, U 1475/C85/11 (Earl of Northumberland to the Earl of Leicester, 2 April 1640).

Catholicism had disqualified her for the office.¹²⁵ In the words of John Flower: 'there is another chosen for that charge, the Countess of Dorsett, wife to the Earle of Dorsett, Lo[rd] Chamberlaine to the Queene, and she is come to S[ain]ct James', having seldome beene a courtier before, but allwaies soe much honoured for hir virtues, as everie one is glad that she is in that place'.¹²⁶ The Countess quickly 'settled into hir charge',¹²⁷ yet the King reverted to Lady Roxburgh as governess to Princess Mary in November 1631.¹²⁸ The appointment of a Catholic governess was thus acceptable for daughters, but not for sons. Hence in October 1633, the infant Duke of York was also entrusted to Lady Dorset,¹²⁹ and she and the Earl led the

125. Gardiner, History, VII, 142.

126. P.R.O., C 115/M31/8126 (John Flower to Viscount Scudamore, 10 July 1630). I owe this reference to Ian Atherton. For the Countess of Dorset's appointment, see P.R.O., LC 5/132 (Lord Chamberlain's warrant book, 1627-31), fol. 104r. See also C.S.P.V., XXII (1629-32), 382; P.R.O., PRO 31/3/66 (Baschet's French Transcripts: reports by French ambassadors), fol. 162v.

127. P.R.O., C 115/M31/8128 (John Flower to Viscount Scudamore, 17 July 1630). I owe this reference to Ian Atherton.

128. P.R.O., LC 5/132, fol. 139r. The Countess of Dorset was merely a godmother: B.L., Egerton MS 784 (Diary of William Whiteway, 1618-34), fol. 85v.

129. P.R.O., C 115/M31/8162 (John Flower to Viscount Scudamore, 19 October 1633). I owe this reference to Ian Atherton.

guests at his christening in November.¹³⁰ The earliest years of the two boys were very comfortable, and provisions delivered to the Countess for them included 'a cradle of crimson damasque with gold and silver fringe', and 'six payre of fine Holland sheets each payre containing twenty-four elles and six payre of pillowbeeres'.¹³¹ In sum, the appointment proved a great success, and indicated that the Earl and Countess of Dorset were among the most trusted of all courtiers.

This is also clear from the choice of Dorset's chaplain, Brian Duppa, as tutor to the Prince of Wales and the Duke of York. Present at Court as a Lenten preacher from 1627,¹³² Duppa was appointed tutor in March 1635 on the death of Dr Mason, Dean of Salisbury.¹³³ Almost immediately, he received a

130. Bod. Lib., MS Tanner 114 (miscellaneous letters and papers), fol. 120r-v. See also Ceremonies of Charles I: The Note Books of John Finet, 1628-1641, ed. A.J. Loomie (New York, 1987), p. 144.

131. P.R.O., LC 5/134 (Lord Chamberlain's warrant book, 1634-41), pp. 152, 246. For other examples, see ibid., pp. 174, 224, 257. See also LC 5/136A (miscellaneous warrants), pp. 48-9; SP 16/412/32 (warrant to Countess of Dorset, 5 February 1638/9).

132. P.R.O., LC 5/132, unfol. lists of Lenten preachers for 1627-32; LC 5/134, unfol. list of Lenten preachers for 1635, and p. 454.

133. P.R.O., LC 5/134, p. 55.

delightful illustration of Charles' wish to restrict access to the Court, in the form of

a letter to Dr. Duppa, the Prince's Tutor, that the King was displeased with the number of children hee found at Richmond at his last beeing there, and that hee would have none to stay there but those of quality, which were particularly allowed, and all others to bee removed.¹³⁴

Duppa responded with a letter to Thomas Meautys, clerk to the Privy Council, requesting that 'all citizens and Londoners' be banned from 'their dayly and weekely recourse betwixt their dwellings in the country within tenn miles of any of their Ma[jes]ties houses of residence'.¹³⁵ Like his patron, Duppa was required to limit access to the royal family, and his appointment further extended the Dorset 'connection' at the very heart of the Caroline Court.¹³⁶

134. Ibid., p. 87. Cf. the remarks in J. Richards, '"His Nowe Majestie" and the English Monarchy: the kingship of Charles I before 1640', Past and Present, CXIII (1986), 70-96, esp. 78-9.

135. P.R.O., SP 16/333/35 (Duppa to Thomas Meautys, 8 October 1636).

136. For Duppa's favourable report of the Prince of Wales' development, see P.R.O., SP 16/428/104 (Duppa to [? Mr Windham], 18 September 1639). For an analysis of his religious attitudes and their significance, see Chapter Four, below, pp. 244-5.

III

Dorset's exalted position, founded on high office and enhanced by his sovereign's trust and favour, explains why he was so often able to help petitioners. It is now time to analyse his patronage activities more systematically. In this section, we will look at the assistance he gave to members of the Queen's Household; to several regular clients and associates; and to a few individuals whose identity is otherwise obscure.

One of the most accurate gauges of successful patronage in this period is the frequency with which a courtier or councillor procured warrants or letters missive in the Signet Office. All orders issued under the King's Great Seal originated in the Signet Office, but not everything sealed with the signet subsequently passed under the Privy Seal and the Great Seal. The Docquet Books of the Signet Office thus constitute an unusually complete record of executive action - in R.W.K. Hinton's words, 'a better index of the work of

government than the Patent Rolls'.¹³⁷ They tell us who procured a particular grant or warrant or order from the Secretaries of State, and Dorset's name crops up very regularly.

First of all, there is a series of items relating to members of the Queen's Household: discharges to twenty-one named servants from paying parliamentary subsidies;¹³⁸ a warrant to pay Mary Smith, servant to Henrietta Maria, £3 daily for life;¹³⁹ a grant of lands to the Queen's Vice-Chamberlain, Sir Robert Killigrew;¹⁴⁰ a warrant for an annuity of £50 to

137. R.W.K. Hinton, 'The Decline of Parliamentary Government under Elizabeth I and the Early Stuarts', Cambridge Historical Journal, XIII (1957), 116-32, at 119. See also The Tudor Constitution, ed. G.R. Elton (2nd edition, Cambridge, 1982), pp. 117-28; idem, England, 1200-1640, pp. 34-45; Aylmer, King's Servants, pp. 16-17; F.M.G. Evans, The Principal Secretary of State (London, 1923), esp. pp. 198-9 for details of the vast range of business which the Signet Office handled by the end of the sixteenth century. For the development of the Signet Office from the high Middle Ages, see H.C. Maxwell Lyte, Historical Notes on the Use of the Great Seal in England (London, 1926), pp. 117-40.

138. This is discussed fully above, pp. 135-7.

139. P.R.O., SO 3/9, October 1629.

140. P.R.O., SO 3/10 (Signet Office Docquet Book, 1630-4), unfol., October 1631. See also Ind. 1/6747, October 1631. For a copy of the warrant, see SP 16/202/29.

John Chalenor, messenger in ordinary to the Queen;¹⁴¹ a payment of £50 to Louise Planchy, coiferesse to Princess Mary;¹⁴² and various warrants to grooms of the Queen's Household.¹⁴³ All these procurements arose quite naturally out of Dorset's responsibilities as Henrietta Maria's Lord Chamberlain.

Less official and more personal are the cases where Dorset helped his own clients and associates. For example, in December 1630, Dorset secured a warrant to pay Sir Henry Hungate £1,000 for the surrender of a clerk's place in Chancery.¹⁴⁴ Hungate was known to be close to Dorset, for when Thomas Southwell requested payment of costs incurred in the King's service, he added that 'Sir Henry Hungate promised me to solicit your lord[shi]p therin'.¹⁴⁵ There was a similar link with Richard Bigg, for whom Dorset procured a licence to

141. P.R.O., SO 3/10, February 1631/2.

142. P.R.O., SO 3/10, May 1632. See also Ind. 1/6748, May 1632.

143. P.R.O., SO 3/11 (Signet Office Docquet Book, 1634-8), unfol., January, October 1638.

144. P.R.O., SO 3/10, December 1630. See also Ind. 1/6747, December 1630. For a copy of the warrant, see SP 16/185/19.

145. P.R.O., SP 16/194/7 (petition of Thomas Southwell to Dorset, 15 June 1631).

prosecute those who evaded tobacco duties in March 1635.¹⁴⁶ Bigg was clearly a long-standing client, for on 25 January 1641 he witnessed the marriage agreement between Dorset's eldest son and Frances Cranfield.¹⁴⁷ Another case was George Worley. In his will of 23 March 1625, Dorset left him 'fifty pounds in mony, to bee payd within one month after my decease, and ... an annuity of ten pownds per annum duringe his life outt of the mannor of Croxall'.¹⁴⁸ Thirteen years later, in April 1638, the Countess of Dorset procured a letter missive under the signet granting George Worley - presumably his son - 'a scholar's place' at Sutton's Hospital.¹⁴⁹ These three procurements must therefore be seen in the context of other links over a number of years, and they indicate why Dorset was widely coveted as a highly effective patron.

146. P.R.O., SO 3/11, March 1634/5. See also Ind. 1/6748, March 1634/5; Ind. 1/4224 (Docquet Book of warrants for the Great Seal, 1630-8), fol. 95v. For a copy of the warrant, see SP 16/284/56.

147. K.A.O., Sackville MS, U 269 E298/1 (marriage agreement between Richard, Lord Buckhurst and Frances Cranfield, 25 January 1640/1). See also M. Prestwich, Cranfield: Politics and Profits under the Early Stuarts (Oxford, 1966), pp. 541-6; and Chapter Six, below, pp. 358-9.

148. K.A.O., Sackville MS, U 269 T83/5 (original will of the fourth Earl of Dorset, 23 March 1624/5), fol. 3r.

149. P.R.O., SO 3/11, April 1638.

Three further instances of long-standing clientage may be adduced from outside the purely administrative record. Dorset strongly supported Sir Robert Cotton when his library was closed and searched after the discovery of an allegedly seditious paper.¹⁵⁰ He signed the report stressing Cotton's 'most affectionat desires and readines unto his Majesties service',¹⁵¹ and when Cotton died in May 1631, 'the Earle of Dorset ... came within half an hower after Sir Robert his death to condole with Sir Tho[mas] Cotton his sonne, for his death, and to tell him from his Ma[jes]tie that, as he loved his father, soe hee would continue his love to him'.¹⁵² The connection between Cotton and the Sackvilles was well established before this, however. In February 1624, the third Earl of Dorset wrote warmly to Cotton,¹⁵³ while a few years later Sir Kenelm Digby informed Cotton that 'I was yesterday att the Court, where there was honorable mention of you att my Lord of Dorsetts and in presence of my Lord Tresurer; which occasion I failed not to take hold of to do you all the right I

150. For the background to this episode, see K. Sharpe, Sir Robert Cotton, 1586-1631 (Oxford, 1979), pp. 143-6; Gardiner, History, VI, 139-41; Reeve, Road to Personal Rule, pp. 158-64.

151. A.P.C., 1630-1, 123-4. For the appointment of this commission on 12 July 1630, see P.R.O., SP 16/170/49.

152. B.L., Harl. MS 7000, fol. 310r.

153. B.L., Cotton MS Julius C III (letters to Sir Robert Cotton), fol. 320r.

could; and truly I must tell you that I finde very good inclinations towardses you'.¹⁵⁴ While there is no evidence that either Dorset or his brother borrowed from Cotton's library,¹⁵⁵ it is clear that they were friendly with him over a long period.

This was also true of Sir John Strangewaies, one of the leading Dorsetshire gentry. Strangewaies was imprisoned in January 1627 for refusing to pay the Forced Loan.¹⁵⁶ However, on 17 July, Dorset informed the Privy Council of the King's pleasure that Strangewaies 'should have ... libertie for five weeks' so as to recover his health.¹⁵⁷ This gave him valuable time to prepare his case, and Strangewaies was finally released on 2 January 1628.¹⁵⁸ Optimistically, he turned to Dorset again seven years later. William Whiteway recorded that in

154. B.L., Cotton MS Vespasian F XIII (Miscellaneous autograph letters), fol. 312r-v. Digby's letter is unfortunately not dated. For Cotton's friendship with Digby, see Sharpe, Sir Robert Cotton, p. 216.

155. Neither appears on the various surviving lists of borrowers - especially B.L., Harl. MS 6018.

156. A.P.C., 1627, 38-40. For the warrant for Strangewaies' arrest, see B.L., Egerton MS 2978 (Heath and Verney Papers, Vol. I), fol. 18r.

157. A.P.C., 1627, 424.

158. A.P.C., 1627-8, 217.

November 1634 'Sir John Strangewaies, desiring to keepe his Christmas in London, desired leave of the King by the Earles of Dorsett and Holland: but the King refused them and enjoined him to return and keepe house in the countrey'.¹⁵⁹ This shows that even patrons as powerful as Dorset were not always able to help against a stubborn King, but at any rate Dorset's success record was sufficiently impressive for regular clients to approach him on several occasions.

Another such client might be the poet and historian Thomas May, although the evidence here is not quite conclusive. In the late 1620's, a 'Mr. May' wrote to Sir Kenelm Digby protesting that he had never written a tract chastising the King, and asking him to explain this 'to that most honored Earle of Dorsett, whose favors in tymes past I have most thankfully acknowledged'.¹⁶⁰ This could well be Thomas May, whose first published work appeared in 1622,¹⁶¹ although the absence of a Christian name in the letter precludes a certain

159. B.L., Egerton MS 784, fol. 110r.

160. B.R.O., Trumbull Add. MS 31 (miscellaneous Trumbull correspondence and papers, 1612-34), unfol. The letter is undated, but internal evidence suggests that it was written during one of the Parliaments of the late 1620's.

161. Thomas May, The Heire an Excellent Comedie (London, 1622), S.T.C., 17713.

identification. We do know, however, that in September 1637 Dorset recommended Thomas May to the Lord Mayor and Aldermen of the City of London as 'honest and deserving' for the office of City Chronicler,¹⁶² and it is therefore plausible that May had sought his help on the earlier occasion.

Finally, there are a few instances of Dorset's patronage which remain difficult to explain. It is unclear, for example, why Dorset procured a licence for Lawrence Halsted and Abraham Chamberlain to alienate part of the manor of Sunning (Berkshire and Oxfordshire) within ten years,¹⁶³ for neither was in the Queen's Household, and Dorset apparently had no other dealings with them or with this manor. This is also true of Thomas Weberly of East Kirkby (Lincolnshire), for whom Dorset secured

162. C.L.R.O., Remembrancia of the Courts of Aldermen and Common Council of the City of London, VIII (1618-40), fol. 108r. The Earl of Pembroke also recommended May for this office: ibid., fol. 107v.

163. P.R.O., SO 3/9, December 1628; Ind. 1/6747, December 1628.

a discharge in May 1631.¹⁶⁴ His relative leniency at the trial of the first Earl of Castlehaven (25 April 1631)¹⁶⁵ may help to explain why Dorset procured a warrant to return certain jewels, plate and hangings to his son in January 1632,¹⁶⁶ but otherwise this too is mysterious. The fact that we cannot explain why Dorset gave help in every single case does not, however, gainsay his consistent success as a patron. It is due to inevitable gaps in the surviving evidence, and it is perhaps more surprising that we can in so many instances reconstruct Dorset's assistance to clients over a number of years. This is not to claim that he could wave a magic wand and make all their requests come true; but it is to argue that his influential position at Court enabled him to give really effective help to a wide variety of individuals in very diverse circumstances.

164. A.P.C., 1630-1, 327. It is just possible that this was related to an entry in the Privy Council Register for 11 May 1630 of 'a post warrant for the Earl of Dorset to ride post for His Majesty's service into the county of Lincolnshire, and to returne with like expedition, his Lordship to be furnished with six horses and a guide, all prizes reasonable and accustomed': A.P.C., 1629-30, 376. But this 'service' might equally well refer to fen drainage schemes, and the link with Weberly's discharge is speculative.
165. Dorset found him guilty of raping his wife, but not of sodomy with two men: P.R.O., KB 8 (Court of King's Bench, 'Baga de Secretis'), pouch LXIII, memb. 10. See also SP 16/207 (account of the trial and execution of the Earl of Castlehaven), fol. 6v.
166. P.R.O., SO 3/10, January 1631/2.

IV

I have argued that Dorset's strength as a Privy Councillor and patron derived from his prominence at Court, which in turn rested on his proximity to the King and his status as Henrietta Maria's Lord Chamberlain. I now want to consider whether we can explain Dorset's choice of friends in the same terms. How did Dorset fit into Henrietta Maria's circle? After all, in the Privy Council factional alignments were extremely fluid; was this also true of the Queen's Household, or did Dorset establish secure friendships with Henrietta Maria's leading associates? If so, what effect did these have on his political behaviour? Unfortunately, the incompleteness of the evidence prevents definite answers. What there is, however, strongly suggests two things: first, that prominence in Henrietta Maria's circle did not necessarily guarantee intimacy with her Lord Chamberlain; and second, that Dorset's friendships were by no means restricted to the Queen's allies.

In his study of 'the Puritan followers of Henrietta Maria in the 1630's', Malcolm Smuts has identified 'five ... leaders of the Queen's faction': the Earls of Holland and Northumberland, Lord Henry Percy, Watt Montagu and Henry

Jermyn.¹⁶⁷ Dorset appears to have had regular dealings only with the first two (fellow peers, after all), and these were not necessarily due to links through the Queen's Household. We saw in the previous chapter that an unknown commentator bracketed Dorset with Holland as friends of Buckingham in April 1627.¹⁶⁸ The following August, Dorset told the Duke that he 'never ... did butt love and honor' Holland.¹⁶⁹ His friendship with Holland thus preceded his appointment as the Queen's Lord Chamberlain, while much of their contact after October 1628 is explained by the fact that they were joint Lords Lieutenant of Middlesex.¹⁷⁰ Evidently, they sometimes operated together at Court during the Personal Rule, as in the case of Sir John Strangewaies examined above,¹⁷¹ but their friendship was in no way dependent on their both being in the Queen's circle.¹⁷²

167. Smuts, 'Puritan Followers', 27.

168. See Chapter Two, above, p. 82.

169. P.R.O., SP 16/74/62 (Dorset to the Duke of Buckingham, 21 August 1627).

170. P.R.O., C 231/4 (Crown Office Docquet Book, 1616-29), fol. 258r. Dorset's activities as Lord Lieutenant of Middlesex are analysed fully in Chapter Five, below, pp. 318-27.

171. See above, pp. 168-9.

172. For Holland's career in the 1630's, see B. Donagan, 'A Courtier's Progress: Greed and Consistency in the Life of the Earl of Holland', Historical Journal, XIX (1976), 317-53. Dorset receives only the briefest mention in this article (at 333, 335). See also Smuts, 'Puritan Followers', 30-1.

Dorset was also on friendly terms with Algernon Percy, tenth Earl of Northumberland. He leased part of Dorset House to him for five years from November 1633,¹⁷³ and the Countess of Northumberland died there in December 1637.¹⁷⁴ Clearly Dorset was close to these two leading lights of the Queen's entourage, but the friendships did not necessarily develop for that reason.

We have much less to go on for Lord Henry Percy, Watt Montagu and Henry Jermyn.¹⁷⁵ Percy's letter to the Earl of Carlisle on 3 September 1628 was implicitly hostile to Dorset, explaining that he 'hath neither pleased the Queene nor her Court this iourney',¹⁷⁶ and there appears to be no evidence of

173. Bod. Lib., MS Bankes 14/3 (survey of inhabitants of Salisbury Court, 1633).

174. P.R.O., SP 16/360/3 (funeral certificate of the Countess of Northumberland, 21 December 1637). I owe this reference to John Adamson.

175. For details of these three, see Smuts, 'Puritan Followers', passim.

176. P.R.O., SP 16/529/15 (Lord Henry Percy to the Earl of Carlisle, 3 September 1628). See Chapter Two, above, p. 102.

friendship between them thereafter.¹⁷⁷ Dorset was one of 'the great Court lordes' who feasted Watt Montagu and afforded 'him theire dayly companey' on his return to England in April 1637;¹⁷⁸ but this may simply have been required of him as Lord Chamberlain, for he apparently had little further contact with Montagu. Much the same is true of Henry Jermyn. When Jermyn was imprisoned in April 1633 for forwarding a challenge from Holland to Weston,¹⁷⁹ Dorset asked Secretary Coke how the King intended to proceed. But he did this as 'an office and service not displeasinge to the Queene'¹⁸⁰ - as Henrietta Maria's Lord Chamberlain, not as Jermyn's friend. It is difficult to know how firm a conclusion to draw from all this evidence: people in regular personal contact need not communicate on paper, and the argument from silence is rarely a cast-iron one. Nevertheless, one would expect close friendships to leave greater traces behind than is the case with Percy, Montagu and Jermyn. Taken

177. Lord Henry Percy's terse request to the Earl of Leicester in July 1640 to 'send my Lo[r]d of Dorsett a warrant for a buck at Penshurst' (K.A.O., De L'Isle and Dudley MS, U 1475/C86/12 [Lord Henry Percy to the Earl of Leicester, 16 July 1640]) is difficult to interpret, but does not necessarily suggest intimacy between Percy and Dorset.

178. P.R.O., C 115/N4/8612 (John Burghe to Viscount Scudamore, 12 April 1637). I owe this reference to Ian Atherton. See also Chapter Four, below, p. 239.

179. For this episode, see Gardiner, History, VII, 218.

180. B.L., Add. MS 64906 (Coke Papers, Vol. XXXVII, 1633), fol. 13r.

as a whole, these five examples suggest that Dorset was not necessarily intimate with those nearest to Henrietta Maria, and that where he did form strong friendships it was not necessarily because of any bond through the Queen's Household.

This holds true when we withdraw to the outer reaches of Henrietta Maria's entourage, as the examples of the Earl of Arundel and Sir Kenelm Digby will demonstrate. Thomas Howard, twenty-first Earl of Arundel, only became firmly associated with the Queen's circle from 1636-7, after the failure of his embassy to Vienna.¹⁸¹ But he and Dorset were cousins,¹⁸² and had been firm friends long before this. They were also experienced political associates, and served as joint Lords Lieutenant of Sussex from 1624.¹⁸³ Arundel made Dorset one of

181. Smuts, 'Puritan Followers', 38. Gardiner, History, VIII, 202. For Arundel's political career generally, see The Life, Correspondence and Collections of Thomas Howard, Earl of Arundel, ed. M.F.S. Hervey (Cambridge, 1921), and especially D. Howarth, Lord Arundel and his Circle (London, 1985).

182. They were both grandsons of the fourth Duke of Norfolk: Complete Peerage, I, 255; IV, 423.

183. P.R.O., C 231/4, fols. 169v, 180r; E 163/18/12 (Liber Pacis, 1626), fol. 107v. A political satire of c. 1640 even depicted them sitting side by side in the Upper House: Bod. Lib., MS Douce 357 (political satires, temp. Chas. I - Chas. II), fol. 37r. For a full discussion of Dorset as Lord Lieutenant of Sussex, see Chapter Five, below, pp. 268-87.

his executors in September 1641.¹⁸⁴ Their relationship owed nothing to Arundel's conversion to a French alliance, and when Dorset recounted this to the Earl of Middlesex in January 1637, he praised a relative and long-standing political ally, rather than a new member of the Queen's faction:

The Earle Marshall hath in this late imployment carryed himselfe as the issue of thatt ancyent and noble family [from which] hee is descended. Hee could nether bee corrupted nor deceavd. Hee hath left noe rootes for doubts to hang by nor place for hopes: the maske is pulled of the Austrian family.¹⁸⁵

Arundel's change of front won him Henrietta Maria's favour, but his friendship with her Lord Chamberlain - his cousin and ally - was already well established.

In the case of Sir Kenelm Digby, it seems that friendship with Dorset opened doors into the Queen's entourage, rather than vice versa. Digby was not active in the Queen's circle

184. P.R.O., PROB 11 (Prerogative Court of Canterbury, copies of probated wills), 202/241. I owe this reference to Sabrina Alcorn.

185. K.A.O., Uncatalogued Cranfield Papers, Dorset to the Earl of Middlesex, 20 January 1636/7. For a detailed analysis of this important cache of letters, see below, pp. 183-203.

until the mid-1630's,¹⁸⁶ but, as we have already briefly seen,¹⁸⁷ he had been closely associated with Dorset for several years before that. On 30 August 1629, Dorset wrote to Secretary Dorchester 'beseeching' him to 'present Sir Kenelme Digby unto his Ma[jesty]'.¹⁸⁸ Soon he was acting as Dorset's 'man-of-business', and in September 1632 approached Secretary Coke, 'to satisfy my Lord of Dorsets earnest demanding', requesting a naval post for Sir Beverley Newcomen, 'an inward frend of' Dorset's.¹⁸⁹ The following year, Digby thanked Dorset for 'the effectes of your goodnesse towards me which you expresse every day ... I sinke under the burthen, and ioy in doing so'.¹⁹⁰ This patronage seems to have been entirely

186. D.N.B., XV, 62; C. Hibbard, Charles I and the Popish Plot (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1983), pp. 40, 52-3; R.T. Petersson, Sir Kenelm Digby: The Ornament of England, 1603-65 (London, 1956), pp. 96-7.

187. See above, pp. 167-9.

188. P.R.O., SP 16/148/99 (Dorset to Secretary Dorchester, 30 August 1629). See also Chapter Four, below, p. 250.

189. P.R.O., SP 16/223/37 (Sir Kenelm Digby to Secretary Coke, 19 September 1632). See also B.L., Add. MS 64907 (Coke Papers, Vol. XXXVIII, 1633-4), fol. 24r. For another instance of Dorset's patronage of Sir Beverley Newcomen, see SP 16/284/10 (Admiralty Register, 3 March 1634/5).

190. New York Public Library, Morgan MS B (Letter Book of Sir Kenelm Digby, 1633-65), unfol. (Sir Kenelm Digby to Dorset, 14 June 1633).

personal, and not in any way dependent on links through the Queen's Household.¹⁹¹

There was thus no necessary connection between Henrietta Maria's circle of favourites and Dorset's choice of friends and clients. Indeed, there are signs that he was quite friendly with some of the Queen's most consistent opponents. Lord Treasurer Weston frequently angered Henrietta Maria by trying to curb her extravagance,¹⁹² yet when he was created Earl of Portland in February 1633, Dorset congratulated him most warmly:

Cowld wishes add any increase of happyness, itt is long agoe thatt I dare challeng you for my deptor, (for I have ever much ioyed in all advancements conferred on you) I showld now bee exceedinge glad if ... I might contribute thatt service unto any commands or desires of yours, thatt might deserve such an extreme form from [you] as to bee admitted into the number of those you valew frends: This I would acknowledge as a favor, butt itt wilbee a iustice to place mee in the list of those you hold for servants, since none is more really or sincerely yours then

Dorset.

He added a postscript: 'God bless you with health and your

191. For a further discussion of Dorset's friendship with Sir Kenelm Digby, see Chapter Four, below, pp. 248-50.

192. Gardiner, History, VII, 107. See also Smuts, 'Puritan Followers', 31, 34-5; Aylmer, King's Servants, pp. 62, 346; Reeve, Road to Personal Rule, p. 39.

endeavours with succes'.¹⁹³ The tone is so effusive that one might suspect insincerity - a pragmatic attempt to soften the Lord Treasurer's attitude to the Queen and her Household - were there not other solid evidence of friendship between the two men. In March 1635, Dorset visited Portland on his deathbed, and told Wentworth (to whom he had no reason to lie) that he

came from taking my last farewel of my Lord Treasurer, who, without miracle, cannot survive many howers. He dieth like a brave man, and a good Christian, and God hath given him both time and grace to make a happy end in the world.¹⁹⁴

We must conclude that Dorset genuinely liked Portland, despite his frequent conflicts with the Queen.

This is not the only example of Dorset's friendship transcending factional boundaries. Secretary Windebanke was another powerful adversary of Henrietta Maria, mainly because of his pro-Habsburg views,¹⁹⁵ yet he seems to have been close to Dorset. When Windebanke was imprisoned in 1636 for

193. P.R.O., SP 16/232/16 (Dorset to Lord Treasurer Portland, [?] February 1632/3).

194. S.C.L., SC, Vol. VIII, fols. 234-5 (Dorset to Wentworth, 12 March 1634/5).

195. Smuts, 'Puritan Followers', 31, 38; Aylmer, King's Servants, p. 346. For an analysis of Windebanke's foreign policy attitudes, see Haskell, 'Windebanke', chapters 5-6.

allegedly taking bribes from the Spanish ambassador, Dorset maintained that he was 'as innocent as the child new borne'.¹⁹⁶ By 1638, Dorset's letters to Windebanke used private nicknames, such as 'the Delphian Oracle' for Sir Henry Marten, Dean of the Arches.¹⁹⁷ The following year, Dorset communicated his 'favor and good intentions towards' Windebanke's son Thomas 'with greate earnestness and affection'.¹⁹⁸ As with the dying Portland, Dorset's actions bore out his friendly words: in the Short Parliament election at Hastings, Dorset's secretary John White acted as electoral agent for Windebanke's nephew and secretary, Robert Read.¹⁹⁹ Until 1637, while Arundel favoured a Habsburg alliance, one might be tempted to attribute Dorset's affection purely to their family relationship; yet here we find

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- 196. K.A.O., Uncatalogued Cranfield Papers, Dorset to the Earl of Middlesex, 1 October 1636. Cf. Haskell, 'Windebanke', p. 291. For the background to this episode, see Gardiner, History, VIII, 161-2.
 - 197. P.R.O., SP 16/399/20 (Dorset to Secretary Windebanke, 27 September 1638).
 - 198. P.R.O., SP 16/433/27 (Robert Read to Thomas Windebanke, 28 November 1639).
 - 199. P.R.O., SP 16/449/44 (John Ashburnham to Sir Edward Nicholas, 31 March 1640); SP 16/450/7 (deposition of Hastings aldermen, 1 March 1639/40); SP 16/469/82 (notes concerning Hastings election). See also A. Fletcher, A County Community in Peace and War: Sussex, 1600-1660 (London, 1975), pp. 245-6; J.K. Gruenfelder, 'The Election to the Short Parliament, 1640', in Early Stuart Studies, ed. H.S. Reinmuth (Minneapolis, 1970), pp. 180-230, especially p. 206. This election is discussed more fully in Chapter Five, below, pp. 302-4.

Henrietta Maria's Lord Chamberlain on consistently good terms with the consistently pro-Habsburg Windebanke, to whom he was unrelated. This is proof positive that Dorset could get on well with the Queen's most inveterate opponents, while remaining lukewarm towards some of her closest intimates.

All this is entirely consistent with what I argued earlier about the fluidity of groupings within the Privy Council. Just as Dorset assessed each issue on its own merits, without aligning himself regularly with any particular faction, so his circle of friends was one of his own choosing, not forced on him by the Queen or by ideological constraints. That personal affection was an important element in it is indicated by Dorset's enduring friendship with the disgraced Earl of Middlesex. By the mid-1630's, Middlesex was almost entirely isolated from the Court, and this permitted Dorset to confide in him as in few others.²⁰⁰ We now turn to this, the closest of all Dorset's friendships, for the correspondence which it fostered offers a unique insight into Dorset's private thoughts, and a hitherto largely neglected sidelight on the politics of the 1630's.

200. Cf. Prestwich, Cranfield, p. 538.

Kevin Sharpe has recently argued that Charles I's Personal Rule was in large measure 'a decade of calm and felicity'.²⁰¹ For men such as Clarendon, this perception was heightened by the horrific experience of the 1640's: in retrospect, the pre-war years seemed a golden period of peace, prosperity and order, much like the decade before 1914. But it was not all nostalgia. Several contemporary sources - for example John Burghe's letter to Viscount Scudamore in October 1637²⁰² - describe England's 'calmness' and 'quietness'. His correspondence with Middlesex shows that Dorset shared these beliefs, especially when he compared England with Europe:

God bless the King and continew him to reigne over us. Wee are a people [which] deserve[s] nott such blessinge if wee [do] nott dayly thank God for him. Our neighbour countrys wittness how happy wee are. Long may wee know itt by thatt dissimilitude.²⁰³

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201. Sharpe, 'Personal Rule', esp. pp. 53-4. Cf. the argument of idem, Criticism and Compliment, passim.
202. P.R.O., C 115/N4/861 (John Burghe to Viscount Scudamore, October 1637), quoted in C.W. Daniels and J.S. Morrill, Charles I (Cambridge, 1988), p. 74.
203. K.A.O., Uncatalogued Cranfield Papers, Dorset to the Earl of Middlesex, 1 October 1636.

Despite some private reservations about Charles,²⁰⁴ Dorset clearly associated him with an atmosphere of peace and harmony at home.

It was, however, vital to avoid all foreign policy entanglements if this idyllic situation were to last. Dorset precisely anticipated several recent historians in arguing that only war could bring the downfall of Charles' Personal Rule.²⁰⁵ This pacific outlook contrasted dramatically with the bellicosity of many in the Queen's circle. Whereas Henrietta Maria's 'Puritan followers' sought a French alliance 'as the arm of military intervention for the restoration of the Palatinate', and tried 'to overthrow those sympathetic to Spain or committed to peace',²⁰⁶ Dorset constantly urged caution and neutrality. In October 1636, as the pressure for war against Spain reached its height,²⁰⁷ he told Middlesex:

I conceive the King begins to beleieve hee hath bene much abused and deceived in all his treatys about the Palatinate, both by Spayne and the house of Austria in

204. See below, pp. 200-3.

205. See, for example, Sharpe, 'Personal Rule', pp. 74-8; C. Russell, Parliaments and English Politics, 1621-1629 (Oxford, 1979), p. 426.

206. Sharpe, 'Image of virtue', p. 257. See also Smuts, 'Puritan Followers', 36-40.

207. Smuts, 'Puritan Followers', 38.

Germany. Hee intends to take other courses, and would be revenged if hee knew how: But I hope sence of an other princes losses [a reference to the Elector Palatine] (losses neere in relation soever) will nott make him loose himselfe. I hope hee will measure his undertakinges and his engagements by his owne means and revenues, nott by the hopes of his peoples ayes or supplyes to furnish great armyes and expeditions.²⁰⁸

He made this point again very forcibly on 7 February 1637:

Trade now florisheth ... [The King] is in peace his kingdome in plenty ... Itt is too late to recover the palatine by force because wee have binn too long kept from riskinge thatt worke by France. God forgive those thatt shall advise the King to loose his docket and breeches to helpe a collaterall kinsman to his shirt ... I doe nott love those partiall, precipitate, square-eyed advizers that draw, strike, and leave the rest to fortune.²⁰⁹

Once an advocate of intervention in the Palatinate,²¹⁰ Dorset now believed that the moment had passed, and that an expedition could only harm England's interests.

These letters also help to explain Dorset's friendships with Arundel and Windebanke, and relative distance from some of Henrietta Maria's favourites. His commitment to peace gave him a broad range of contacts and ensured that he never aligned

208. K.A.O., Uncatalogued Cranfield Papers, Dorset to the Earl of Middlesex, 1 October 1636.

209. K.A.O., Uncatalogued Cranfield Papers, Dorset to the Earl of Middlesex, 7 February 1636/7.

210. See Chapter Two, above, pp. 55-8.

himself exclusively with the francophile party. His attitudes to foreign policy were never constrained by his position as Henrietta Maria's Lord Chamberlain. Rather, Dorset had a very clear-headed and realistic sense of England's interests. He knew that as a military power England simply was not in the same league as France or Spain. In September 1639, Dorset informed Middlesex that

there are now att the Downes three great fleetes: the Hollanders, the Spanyards and ours. I place them accordinge to there present power for if ether of the first two have a mind to disprove the King's dominance over these seas, they might as easily overthrow itt as dispute itt.²¹¹

Aware that the arguments advanced in John Selden's Mare Clausum (1636) would probably break down in practice, Dorset once again hoped that England would remain on the sidelines:

I hope the King will att most bee butt a spectator and stikler between, for I hope God hath nott soe deprived those thatt are entrusted as to advise thatt the King should ether confound the Spanyards or assist the Hollander to be greater at sea or the King of France att land. I pray God I may never live to see either of the two last the one to have more potency att sea or the other att land especially in the Low Countryes. They want nott minds to possess this fayre Iland. God keepe them from means proportionable.²¹²

211. K.A.O., Uncatalogued Cranfield Papers, Dorset to the Earl of Middlesex, [?] September 1639.

212. Ibid.

Dorset saw France and Spain as equally threatening, and did not believe that England could afford to ally with either of them. By September 1639, Henrietta Maria's Lord Chamberlain thought that 'the French ... are growne to thatt conscience and religion as they beleeeve all to bee lawfull thatt by power they cann doe. They are butt our overthwart neighbours and cann bid us in some parts ... God deliver this kingdome from ever being under there worse then Turkish tyranny'.²¹³ With remarkable prescience, Dorset realised that France would shortly replace Spain as the hegemonic power in Europe. England's interests would be best served by a policy of independence and mediation.

Dorset followed these ideas very closely in his own negotiations with foreign ambassadors. He sought amicable diplomatic relations with all powers, binding military agreements with none. Thus, he remained on excellent terms with successive Venetian ambassadors, and assured Gussoni in April 1632 'of his goodwill towards the most serene republic'.²¹⁴ He praised the victories of Gustavus Adolphus, but warned that 'England can do nothing in her present state except to unite herself to Sweden by the bonds of money

213. Ibid.

214. C.S.P.V., XXII (1629-32), 606-7.

contributions, and she is at present labouring at this with the utmost enthusiasm'.²¹⁵ The following month, Dorset hinted that 'the remainder of what France owes for the dowry' of Henrietta Maria might be used for this purpose.²¹⁶ England's aid to Sweden was confined throughout to grants of money,²¹⁷ while Dorset's hints that an English ambassador in ordinary might be sent to Venice came to nothing.²¹⁸ By contrast, Dorset was also friendly with that enemy of Venice, France and Sweden, the Spanish Resident, Juan de Nocolalde. When Anglo-Spanish relations grew strained in May 1633 over English funding of Sweden, Dorset was 'moved to mediate'.²¹⁹ But Nocolalde rejected 'the accommodation proposed by the Earle of Dorsett',²²⁰ primarily because Spain would not settle for less than definite promises of military assistance.²²¹ Here, then, are two instances where Dorset implemented the ideas which he expressed to Middlesex, promoting goodwill with all sides in

215. Ibid. This passage was in cipher in Gussoni's despatch.

216. Ibid., 619-20.

217. See Gardiner, History, VII, 207; Reeve, Road to Personal Rule, pp. 266-89.

218. C.S.P.V., XXII (1629-32), 644.

219. P.R.O., SP 16/239/71 (Secretary Windebanke to Lord Treasurer Portland, 31 May 1633). See also Reeve, Road to Personal Rule, p. 185, n. 75.

220. Lambeth Palace Library, MS 943 (Laud's Papers), p. 183.

221. See Gardiner, History, VII, 343.

the European conflict, but studiously avoiding military entanglements.

A passive foreign policy was all the more necessary because Charles' refusal to summon Parliament deprived him of the means to wage war. Dorset does not appear to have objected to the various financial expedients of the Personal Rule, and in October 1636 calmly informed Middlesex that 'summons are now goinge forth' for Ship Money.²²² The picturesque story that Dorset was never present in Council when Ship Money writs were issued²²³ is incorrect,²²⁴ while the fact that his Ship Money payments were £4 19s. Od. in arrears in April 1636²²⁵ was almost certainly accidental, and does not entitle us to add Dorset 'to the honoured name of John Hampden'.²²⁶ This former supporter of the Forced Loan now accepted Ship Money as an

222. K.A.O., Uncatalogued Cranfield Papers, Dorset to the Earl of Middlesex, 1 October 1636.

223. E. Brydges, Collins' Peerage of England ... Greatly Augmented (9 vols., London, 1812), II, 159.

224. See, for example, P.R.O., PC 2/45, pp. 71-5.

225. P.R.O., SP 16/319/90 (Ship Money arrears in Kent, April 1636).

226. C.J. Phillips, History of the Sackville Family (2 vols., London, 1930), I, 326.

inevitable result of the King's determination 'nott to come to parlaments in necessity or uppon necessity'.²²⁷

This ambition was thwarted by the two Bishops' Wars, which may help to explain Dorset's virulent dislike of the Covenanters. In April 1639, he declared that Hamilton deserved to lose his head ('meritara perdere la testa'),²²⁸ while the following September he told Middlesex that

all things thatt ... discont[ent]ed, rebellious minds cann aske is granted in Scotland, and yett they daily breath new libertyes and more and more study the dethroninge [of] there Souverayne ... They combine to alter even the fondamentall wayes of there parlament and covett to abolish the Lordes of the Articles and have ... two houses and every one his owne suffrage.²²⁹

Francis Harris believed that Dorset was motivated by 'some inveterate grudge, occasioned originally through some quarrel between Lord Bruce and him', which gave him a lasting hatred of

227. K.A.O., Uncatalogued Cranfield Papers, Dorset to the Earl of Middlesex, 1 October 1636.

228. B.L., Add. MS 15392 (Transcripts from Papal Registers: reports by George Con), fol. 104r.

229. K.A.O., Uncatalogued Cranfield Papers, Dorset to the Earl of Middlesex, [?] September 1639.

Scots.²³⁰ It is equally plausible, however, that he reacted violently because the Scottish rebellion shattered the peace which he had always sought, and on which the survival of Charles' Personal Rule depended.

Dorset thus had a very clear sense of what was needed to keep England in a state of calm and peace at home. Yet, as his letters to Middlesex also make plain, he did not believe that everything was rosy in the garden of the 1630's. His reservations were essentially three: that too many of Charles' ministers and servants were motivated by greed and self-interest rather than by loyalty to the Crown; that some of the policies associated with 'Thorough' were misguided; and that Charles' political instincts were sometimes unsound, and often impossible to fathom. We will now examine each of these in turn.

Kevin Sharpe has recently stressed 'the muted tone of factional rivalries' during the Personal Rule, and sees this as

230. Bod. Lib., MS Bankes 65/28b (Francis Harris to Lord Keeper Coventry, November 1638). For Dorset's duel against Lord Bruce of Kinloss, see Chapter One, above, pp. 21-6.

one aspect of the calm prevailing throughout England in these years.²³¹ But some of Dorset's remarks to Middlesex tell against this view. For example, in October 1636, we find him lamenting that there

was faction, and wee have too much of itt in Court: I wouuld for the King's service and the common good wee weere all of one mind. The people wouuld not then find soe many flatterers nor the King soe much opposition. Butt men are men and a Court wilbee a Court: if itt grow noe better pray God itt prove noe worse butt thatt all they who eate the King's dayly bread may serve him with single and sinceare harts and nott have there tops and branches florishinge heere while there roots are elsewhere.²³²

Dorset regretted that personal advancement was so often placed before the national interest: in September 1639, he told Middlesex that 'things of moment have too too great byas in our Court, and every one rather looks to save himselfe in his cok: boate then to steere the Ship of State aright'.²³³ This surely explains why Dorset was never associated with any one faction in either Court or Council. He served England's interests, and even eschewed the Queen's followers when their sabre-rattling threatened to lead 'the Ship of State' onto the rocks. Rather, Dorset cultivated links with men of diverse opinions, and

231. Sharpe, 'Image of virtue', pp. 255-6.

232. K.A.O., Uncatalogued Cranfield Papers, Dorset to the Earl of Middlesex, 1 October 1636.

233. K.A.O., Uncatalogued Cranfield Papers, Dorset to the Earl of Middlesex, [?] September 1639.

sought to reconcile them when they quarrelled. For instance, on 6 November 1630, Thomas Mainwaring informed Wentworth that 'we have anew peace made betwixt my Lo[rd] Tr[easur]er [Weston] and my Lo[rd] of Holland mediated by I know not how many, but the interview was made by my Lo[rd] of Dorsett at Wallingford Howse'.²³⁴ His catholic friendships and charming manner made Dorset an expert bridge-builder in a divided Court. Early in 1631

there fell an ill-favour'd quarrel 'twixt Sir Kenelm Digby and Mr. Goring, Mr. Jermin, and others at St. James' ... about Mrs. Baker, the Maid of Honour; and duels were like to grow of it, but ... the business was taken up by the Lord Treasurer, my Lord of Dorsett, and others appointed by the King.²³⁵

Dorset associated factional conflict with self-interest, and wished that courtiers would make their peace and get on with the business of serving England and the Crown.

234. S.C.L., SC, Vol. XIIc, fol. 161r (Thomas Mainwaring to Wentworth, 6 November 1630). For Dorset's friendships with Weston and Holland, see above, pp. 172-3, 179-80.

235. Epistolae Ho-Eliaanae: The Familiar Letters of James Howell, Historiographer Royal to Charles II, ed. J. Jacobs (London, 1890), p. 284. I owe this reference to Ian Atherton.

This outlook probably accounts for his ambivalence towards some of the policies of 'Thorough'. In the following chapter, I will argue that Dorset's relationship with Laud always remained distinctly uneasy.²³⁶ In the present chapter, I want to explore further his dealings with Wentworth.²³⁷ These seem to have become less amicable as the decade progressed. As early as April 1634, Dorset feared that 'most undeserved aspersions' cast 'by a malicious foole' had brought 'a great alienation in [Wentworth's] affection towards' him, and wrote to

make profession of affection ... Lett itt nott displease you to remember thatt in times past, when only to you I cowl'd address my respects, you had the expressions of much esteeme and rediness to serve you: I cowl'd nott then prophesy thatt increase of power and greatness, the which your owne vertues have since rayseed you unto.²³⁸

Dorset then made a wholly characteristic plea for unity in the King's service:

My thinks your Lo[rdshi]p and my selfe shoul'd easily agree, else thatt maxime in logik is false: qui in eodem tertio conveniunt, facile inter se conveniunt: your wayes, ends, reale constancy, to your and my great masters

236. See Chapter Four, below, pp. 226-38.

237. See above, pp. 138-42.

238. S.C.L., SC, Vol. XIV, fol. 26r (Dorset to Wentworth, 15 April 1634).

service, are the same: concurring therefore in these why
should wee nott ioyne indissolubly betweene our selves?²³⁹

Replying on 14 May, Wentworth recalled 'the favours and respects which your Lo[rdshi]p formerly expressed for me, at such time as his Majesty's displeasure made me most unhappy', and promised that he would 'infinitely covet to make myself in some degree worthy [of] your friendship, whereunto I bind myself with all faithfulness and truth'.²⁴⁰ This temporary rift may have been deliberately fomented by a malicious third party, or Dorset and Wentworth may genuinely have disagreed over some unknown matter. At any rate, on 12 July, Dorset 'receavd the wishd assurance of your Lo[rdshi]ps love', and promised 'truly ... to deserve itt'.²⁴¹ The episode was closed and friendly relations resumed.

Unfortunately, by the end of the 1630's, there are clear signs of further differences between the two men. On 22 May 1639, Wentworth's old enemy Sir Piers Crosby was tried in Star

239. Ibid.

240. S.C.L., SC, Vol. VIII, fol. 158r (Wentworth to Dorset, 14 May 1634). Wentworth presumably refers here to his imprisonment for refusal to pay the Forced Loan: see Chapter Two, above, pp. 86-8.

241. S.C.L., SC, Vol. XIV, fol. 133r (Dorset to Wentworth, 12 July 1634).

Chamber for alleging that the Lord Deputy had struck a sea-captain, Robert Esmond, so hard that he died shortly afterwards.²⁴² Wentworth was furious when he learnt that Dorset 'did not beleeeve one word' of the evidence against Crosby,²⁴³ and wrote forthrightly on 24 July:

You would perchance not have approved [of Crosby] if the cause had concerned your selfe, and I had well hoped your Lo[rdshi]p had soe good opinion (I might say knowledge) of me heretofore, as you would have been pleased to have beleeeved Sir Peers ... a trespasser in the practice.²⁴⁴

Four years earlier, Wentworth had taken advantage of Dorset's proximity to the Queen in a bid to secure royal favour;²⁴⁵ now he trusted that Dorset would not 'prophane the excellent wisdome and goodnesse of her Ma[jes]ty soe farr as to incline her gratiouse aspects towards a person that I can make appeare the wickedest creature liveing I thinke, that hath noe more, or rather soe little witt'.²⁴⁶ Dorset's behaviour may have owed

242. P.R.O., SP 16/421/142 (Thomas Smith to Sir John Pennington, 23 May 1639). For the background to this case, see C.V. Wedgwood, Thomas Wentworth, First Earl of Strafford, 1593-1641: A Revaluation (London, 1961), pp. 246-8; Kearney, Strafford in Ireland, pp. 62, 185, 194; Gardiner, History, IX, 70-1.

243. S.C.L., SC, Vol. X, fol. 339r (Wentworth to Dorset, 24 July 1639).

244. Ibid.

245. See above, pp. 138-42.

246. S.C.L., SC, Vol. X, fol. 339r.

something to the fact that the Queen's favourite, Holland, was a patron of Sir Piers Crosby.²⁴⁷ At any rate, Wentworth's arrogant letter only worsened matters, and Dorset was permanently alienated. In May 1640, the French ambassador, Montreuil, reported that 'Monsieur le Conte d'Holande, les Contes de Pembrok et Dorcet, ont parlé généreusement au Roy de la Grande Bretagne de la mauvaise conductte du lieutenant. Et il y a apparence, aians eu un si beau sujet, qu'il recouvrira plus aisément sa santé que son crédit'.²⁴⁸ By July, Dorset and Wentworth were openly at loggerheads on matters of policy. William Catherens informed William Pitt that 'the Kinge hath resolved to coyne 40,000^{li} in copper monny about which the Minte men are nowe at worke. The Earle of Dorsett and Sir Thomas Roe did stoutly oppose it, but the Lo[rd] Lieutenant hath prevayled, whoe nowe here in Towne is generally hated'.²⁴⁹ The following year, when Wentworth faced impeachment and execution, Dorset did not lift a finger to help him. Early in May, he informed the secretary to the Dutch embassy, Van den Burch, that Wentworth would 'have to lose his head', and that 'those who advised against it were traitors of the King and the

247. Wedgwood, Wentworth, pp. 247-8.

248. P.R.O., PRO 31/3/72, p. 158. I owe this reference to Professor Russell.

249. B.L., Add. MS 29974 (Family of Pitt Correspondence), fol. 311r. I owe this reference to John Adamson.

Realm' ('dat de depute thooft moet verliesen ende die sulks ontraden, dat die verraders zijn vanden Conink ende vant Rijck').²⁵⁰ Here, I think, is the key to why Dorset's relationship with Wentworth steadily deteriorated. The Lord Deputy's later policies seemed to place his own self-advancement ahead of the interests of Crown and Country. As we saw above, in Dorset's eyes this was unforgiveable. He deeply resented the ruthless arrogance which put Sir Piers Crosby on trial, and which underlay so much of 'Thorough' in Ireland. In 1634, he had assured Wentworth that the strongest bond between them was co-operation in the King's service. By 1640, Dorset's conviction that Wentworth was serving himself rather than his King had broken that bond irreparably.

I have argued throughout this chapter that Dorset was deeply loyal to Charles and Henrietta Maria. He put service to the Crown above factional loyalties; he spent much of his official career conveying and implementing royal instructions in both Court and Council; and he bitterly condemned any

250. Algemeen Rijksarchief, The Hague, Archives of the States General, MS 8391 (Journal of Van den Burch, Secretary to the Dutch ambassadors to England, 1641), unfol., 6 May 1641. I am very grateful to Simon Groenveld for giving me a transcript of this and other extracts from the Journal, and for providing me with a translation.

personal slight on the royal couple.²⁵¹ But most of the evidence for this comes from public sources, and it is hardly surprising that Dorset appeared impeccably loyal when, say, he spoke in Star Chamber. His letters to Middlesex are therefore particularly valuable because they indicate Dorset's private opinions of the King and Queen. These were far more shrewd and subtle than his public utterances would suggest.

At the trial of William Prynne in February 1634, Dorset praised Henrietta Maria as 'faire Cynthia; one whose vertues noe Orator is able to display, noe Poet able to sett out'.²⁵² In private, Dorset also admitted that the Queen was a highly effective political tactician. For example, when Holland was imprisoned in April 1633 for allegedly passing intelligence to France, Henrietta Maria interceded with Charles to secure his release.²⁵³ Dorset was impressed by her pragmatism, and

251. See above, p. 128. For Dorset's vitriolic attack on William Prynne, who had criticised the Queen's participation in stage plays, see Chapter Four, below, pp. 220-2.

252. See Chapter Four, below, p. 221.

253. For this episode, see Gardiner, History, VII, 217-9.

informed Middlesex that

in my noble Lord of Hollands disaster ... the worst is past, and all will bee well ere long. For the Queene remaynes constant to her ends, though she wisely shifts her sayles accordinge to the wind: shee is a Mercury thatt will prevayle, and her swete eloquence will charme Argoes eyes.²⁵⁴

This suggests that Dorset respected Henrietta Maria as much for her political skills as for her private virtues.

With her husband, it was an altogether different story. During the Personal Rule, Dorset's perception of Charles slowly shifted from the uncritical adoration of November 1628 to the profound mistrust of June 1642.²⁵⁵ As early as June 1633, we find Dorset saving the King's face after a major political blunder:

Before the King went into Scotland, the Lord Keeper, Sir Tho[mas] Coventry, had a warrant to seale a pardon for the forfeitures of the papists, which he refusing to do, as contrary to law, the King sent for him, called him his Maister, and tooke away the Greate Seale: but upon some words of the Earle of Dorsett, who said, he knew the King would not condemne any man without hearing him, they were restored unto him againe.²⁵⁶

254. K.A.O., Uncatalogued Cranfield Papers, Dorset to the Earl of Middlesex, [?] 1633.

255. See the problem posed in Chapter Two, above, pp. 112-13.

256. B.L., Egerton MS 784, fol. 94r.

Just as Dorset sought to heal divisions between courtiers, so he was anxious to preserve good relations between the King and his ministers. But it was sometimes an uphill struggle to protect Charles from himself, especially because he was such a difficult man to fathom. In June 1637, Dorset confided to Middlesex that he was uncertain precisely how Charles' foreign policy would develop: 'These mysterryes and arcana imperij are nott divulged to us thatt are of the Common nott the Cabinett Counseyll: Those only of the forrayne committee cann ascertainne [the King's] conclusions'.²⁵⁷ Charles was at once furtive and fickle, and in May 1637 a letter to Secretary Windebanke clearly revealed Dorset's exasperation:

His Maiestyes pleasure, is you shoulde this afternoone lett my Lords of the Councell know thatt, for some reasons best knowne to himselfe, hee will nott now have the cause betweene Sir Miles Fleetwood and one Mr. Tyrell a lawyer ... remitted to the ... board ... butt transmitts itt to the examination of the L[or]d Treasurer and the L[or]d Cottingham to appoynt a time to heare both parties allegations, and report there opinion thereof to himselfe.²⁵⁸

257. K.A.O., Uncatalogued Cranfield Papers, Dorset to the Earl of Middlesex, 20 January 1636/7. This was an unusually early use of the term 'Cabinet Council': see The Oxford English Dictionary, sub 'cabinet'. Dorset was not a member of the Privy Council committee for foreign affairs after 1635: see above, p. 118, n. 7.

258. P.R.O., SP 16/355/65 (Dorset to Secretary Windebanke, 4 May 1637).

Once again, Charles by-passed the full Privy Council, and restricted executive decisions to an inner coterie of trusted advisers. These are particular instances of the royal methods which alienated a large section of the nobility by 1640, and precipitated a 'crisis of counsel'. While Dorset's loyalty to the Crown ensured that he dutifully transmitted Charles' instructions, he was sometimes baffled as to the King's motives. On 9 August 1638, he instructed Mr Withers, Deputy Governor of the Somers Islands Company, to 'forbeare to signe any deputation unto Captaine Chadocke for being Deputy Governor for the Somer Ilands, for such is his Ma[jes]ties pleasure, for what causes I know not'.²⁵⁹ Charles was utterly inscrutable, and the following year Dorset complained to Middlesex that 'the King ... saith litle'.²⁶⁰ A month later, he referred to 'those thatt are entrusted ... to advise ... the King' with a detachment which suggested that he was no longer among them.²⁶¹ His exclusion from the innermost circles of policy-making was confirmed in July 1640 when Charles ordered the minting of

259. P.R.O. (Kew), CO 1 (Colonial Papers, General Series), Vol. IX, fol. 126r (Dorset to Mr Withers, Deputy Governor of the Somers Islands Company, 9 August 1638).

260. K.A.O., Uncatalogued Cranfield Papers, Dorset to the Earl of Middlesex, 17 August 1639.

261. K.A.O., Uncatalogued Cranfield Papers, Dorset to the Earl of Middlesex, [?] September 1639.

copper coin despite Dorset's 'stout' opposition.²⁶² By September 1640, Dorset was strongly urging the recall of Parliament.²⁶³ So it was that one of the leading officials of Charles' Personal Rule ultimately became an advocate of its abolition.

This is a truly savage indictment on Charles I's kingship. For it revealed the growing alienation of a nobleman utterly committed to the royal service, who instinctively placed the interests of Crown and Country above loyalty to any faction, however exalted, and whose political status in the Privy Council rested chiefly on his personal prominence at Court. Dorset's career reminds us just how much the early seventeenth century English polity shared with its mediaeval and Tudor predecessors. By 1700, office at Court and access to the sovereign had ceased to confer automatic political muscle: the watershed of the 1690's saw the main locus of power shift permanently to the Cabinet and the two Houses of Parliament.²⁶⁴ John Cannon has shown that although this did not necessarily reduce the nobility's political power, Court office was no

262. See above, p. 197.

263. See Chapter Six, below, pp. 344-6.

264. See, especially, the argument of A. McInnes, 'When was the English Revolution?', History, LXVI (1982), 377-92.

longer a central element in it.²⁶⁵ Thus, even if we accept Jonathan Clark's thesis that the nobility continued to dominate England's 'ancien régime',²⁶⁶ we must recognise that the source of that dominance had changed. Go back to Charles I's Personal Rule, and we are in a different world, a world akin to that of the early sixteenth century where the Court was, in Professor Sir Geoffrey Elton's words, 'the centre of politics ... [and] the true seat of power, profit and policy'.²⁶⁷ A career path such as Dorset's lay open to the English nobility at all times between the early Middle Ages and the end of the seventeenth century, and men as diverse as William de la Pole, Earl of Suffolk, Lord Chamberlain to Henry VI,²⁶⁸ the noble Gentlemen

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265. J. Cannon, Aristocratic Century: The Peerage of Eighteenth Century England (Cambridge, 1984), pp. 93-125. Fascinatingly, this chapter on the 'sinews' of noble power devotes twenty-four of its thirty-two pages to noble influence in Parliament and the Cabinet, but less than one page to the Court, from which it is clear that office there did not yield power elsewhere.
266. J.C.D. Clark, English Society, 1688-1832 (Cambridge, 1985), esp. pp. 93-118.
267. G.R. Elton, 'Tudor Government: The Points of Contact: III. The Court', reprinted in his Studies in Tudor and Stuart Politics and Government, Vol. III (Cambridge, 1983), 38-57, at 56-7.
268. D.A.L. Morgan, 'The house of policy: the political role of the late Plantagenet household, 1422-1485', in The English Court, ed. Starkey, pp. 25-70, esp. pp. 38-9.

of the Privy Chamber under Henry VIII,²⁶⁹ and Philip Herbert, Earl of Pembroke, Charles I's Lord Chamberlain²⁷⁰ were among those who took it. This avenue was all but closed by the early eighteenth century, a fact belatedly recognised by the suppression of many traditional Court offices under Victoria.²⁷¹ However, during Charles I's Personal Rule, the absence of Parliaments dramatically highlighted the surviving feudal elements in English government, and the 'revived Gothicism' of these years was simply the cultural expression of this basic constitutional fact.²⁷² The Crown and its noble entourage retained the political initiative.

269. See, especially, D. Starkey, 'Intimacy and innovation: the rise of the Privy Chamber, 1485-1547', in The English Court, ed. idem, pp. 71-118. For its broader political significance, see also idem, The Reign of Henry VIII: Personalities and Politics (London, 1985), esp. pp. 18-35; H. Miller, Henry VIII and the English Nobility (Oxford, 1986), pp. 78-87.

270. Sharpe, 'Image of virtue', esp. pp. 231-2.

271. Cf. Starkey, 'Court history in perspective', p. 1.

272. Cf. J.S.A. Adamson, 'The Baronial Context of the English Civil War', Transactions of the Royal Historical Society (forthcoming).

But 'personal monarchy'²⁷³ proved catastrophic when the monarch had a personality like Charles I's. Part of Charles' make-up always remained private, furtive, duplicitous, and it was this trait which time and again made him virtually impossible to serve. Dorset's predicament exactly parallels that of Hamilton and Traquair, Hyde and Falkland.²⁷⁴ One of Charles' most consistent shortcomings as a ruler was his poor treatment of those most loyal to him. As Professor Sir Geoffrey Elton has argued, the Court acted as a centre of stability because 'no one who subscribed to a few basic loyalties needed to feel left out, and there was no occasion for a political opposition'.²⁷⁵ Yet by 1640, Dorset - despite twelve years as Henrietta Maria's energetic and talented Lord Chamberlain, despite the appointments of his wife as governess to the King's sons and of his chaplain as their tutor, despite the dependence of his own power and patronage on Court office, despite his deep reverence for the institution of monarchy -

273. For the applicability of this term to the English polity in this period, cf. Sharpe, 'Image of virtue', pp. 226, 260.

274. For Hamilton and Traquair, see especially P.H. Donald, 'The King and the Scottish Troubles, 1637-41' (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Cambridge, 1988), chapter 2. For Hyde and Falkland, the best study remains B.H.G. Wormald, Clarendon: Politics, History and Religion, 1640-60 (Cambridge, 1951), passim. For further comparison between Dorset and Hyde, see Chapter Four, below, p. 258, and Chapter Six, below, p. 354.

275. Elton, Studies, III, 57.

nevertheless 'felt left out'. The problem in Caroline England was therefore not that the Court was isolated from the Country, but that the King was isolated from the Court. He was psychologically inaccessible even to those granted access to his person. The disastrous effect of this in a personal monarchy indicates how little the English body politic had altered since the days of Richard II or Henry VI. Dorset's career in the 1630's demonstrates that even the most loyal, trustworthy and diligent of courtiers ultimately felt estranged from a monarch who was aloof, fickle and impenetrable.²⁷⁶ His experience spotlights the personal failings of Charles' kingship. Because of those failings, Englishmen had to relearn the lesson of the fifteenth century, namely the English polity's acute lack of safeguards against an inept or deranged monarch. It would take two revolutions during the seventeenth century for such safeguards to be constructed.

276. To adopt David Starkey's categories, we may say that this was 'distant' monarchy with a vengeance: Starkey, 'Court history in perspective', pp. 7-10. See also Reeve, Road to Personal Rule, pp. 175-6.

CHAPTER FOUR: DORSET'S RELIGIOUS ATTITUDES.

The thesis that the English Civil War was 'the last of the Wars of Religion' derives much strength from the demonstration that most of those who mobilised in 1642 were motivated by religious convictions.¹ But what about the far more numerous moderates who strove to prevent the outbreak of conflict? Can religion also explain their political behaviour? Or were they political moderates precisely because they were not propelled by religious imperatives? Historians have rediscovered the 'Puritan Revolution' primarily by analysing the behaviour of those individuals driven to take up arms; now the same treatment must be applied to moderates on both sides, as well as to true neutralists. We need case studies of those who advocated unity and accommodation. In Chapter Six, below, I will argue that the fourth Earl of Dorset was an archetypal

1. For this thesis, see especially J.S. Morrill, 'The Religious Context of the English Civil War', Transactions of the Royal Historical Society, Fifth Series, XXXIV (1984), 155-78; idem, 'The Attack on the Church of England in the Long Parliament, 1640-1642', in History, Society and the Churches, ed. D. Beales and G. Best (Cambridge, 1985), pp. 105-24; and idem, 'Sir William Brereton and England's Wars of Religion', Journal of British Studies, XXIV (1985), 311-32. Dr Morrill's arguments are borne out by, inter alia, A. Fletcher, The Outbreak of the English Civil War (London, 1981); M. Fulbrook, Piety and Politics (Cambridge, 1983); W. Hunt, The Puritan Moment (Cambridge, Mass., 1983); and C. Hibbard, Charles I and the Popish Plot (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1983).

political moderate during the years 1640-1646: while he remained staunchly loyal to the Crown, he nevertheless insisted that the interests of King and Parliament were naturally harmonious and symbiotic, and tried constantly to secure an accommodation between them. Conflict between a King and his subjects was unnatural and abhorrent: a way had to be found out of 'this dark and inextricable labyrinth'.² How far can this desire for political accommodation be understood in terms of Dorset's religious beliefs? More generally, how important was religion in determining Dorset's political behaviour before the breakdown of 1640-1642? Can Dorset's religious views even be reconstructed satisfactorily? This chapter cannot claim to answer all of these questions. Rather, it is an attempt to recover some of Dorset's religious attitudes, to consider the various ways in which this might be done, and to indicate some of the evidential problems which such an attempt must face. I shall conclude with some broader remarks on the difficulties of establishing the religious views of leading politicians, and the relationship between politics and religion in early Stuart England.

2. B.L., Microfilm M 485 (Cecil MS, Hatfield House), Vol. CXXXI, fol. 182r (Dorset to the Earl of Salisbury, 27 June 1642). This letter is quoted more fully in Chapter Six, below, pp. 355-7.

Dorset's contemporaries differed dramatically in their perception of his religion. In September 1635, William Middleton, chaplain to Lord Feilding, reported a rumour that Dorset was 'strong for Precisians'.³ By contrast, in September 1640, the papal agent Carlo Rossetti described him as 'assai fautori nell' intrinseco dei Cattolici',⁴ while in February 1641 Sir Walter Erle opposed the re-enfranchisement of Seaford on the grounds that 'the Lord of the town [i.e. Dorset] [was] a Papist'.⁵ Such confusion was hardly surprising. Dorset was Lord Chamberlain to a Catholic Queen, and yet capable of patronising 'godly' ministers. His chaplain was a Laudian, but his steward may have had 'puritan leanings'.⁶ When hopeful clients dedicated their tracts to Dorset, they tended to praise his courtly and chivalric qualities - what Sir

3. Quoted in William Prynne, Canterburies Doome (London, 1646), pp. 429-30 (Wing, P 3917). I owe this reference to Anthony Milton.

4. P.R.O., PRO 31/9/19 (Transcripts from Rome Archives: reports by Carlo Rossetti), fol. 9r. For a further discussion, see Chapter Six, below, pp. 340-1. See also the report of the French ambassador, Fontenay, in August 1630, that Dorset 'n'est pas trop ennemy de nostre religion': P.R.O., PRO 31/3/66 (Baschet's French Transcripts: reports by French ambassadors), fol. 162v.

5. The Journal of Sir Simonds D'Ewes from the beginning of the Long Parliament to the opening of the Trial of the Earl of Strafford, ed. W. Notestein (New Haven, 1923), pp. 321-2. See also Chapter Six, below, pp. 340-1.

6. For these, see below, pp. 243-6.

Richard Baker called his 'publicke vertues'⁷ - rather than his religious sympathies. James Howell's 'elegy upon the most accomplish'd and heroick lord, Edward, Earl of Dorsett' praised 'his admired perfections' and 'his goodly person', but had virtually nothing to say about his religion.⁸ Most historians have followed Howell's example of silence, preferring to dwell on Dorset's constitutional views. What follows is an attempt to break this historiographical silence.

When Dorset died on 17 July 1652, he was declared intestate.⁹ There is therefore no will proved in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury which might indicate his religious attitudes. A holograph will dated 23 March 1624/5 does however survive among the Sackville Papers in the Kent Archives Office.¹⁰ Unfortunately, the preamble to this gives

7. Richard Baker, Meditations and Disquisitions upon the One and Fiftieth Psalme of David (London, 1638), sig. 3[v] (S.T.C., 1231).
8. James Howell, Ah, ha; Tumulus, Thalamus: Two Counter-Poems (London, 1654), sig. A (Wing, H 3054; B.L., T.T., E 228/1).
9. Letters of administration were granted to Nathaniel Thorold on 19 May 1653: P.R.O., PROB 6 (Prerogative Court of Canterbury, Act Books of Administrations), 1653-4, Vol. III, fol. 115r. See also P.R.O., E 126/5 (Exchequer, King's Remembrancer, Entry Book of Decrees and Orders, Series IV, 1639-54), fols. 322v-323r.
10. K.A.O., Sackville MS, U 269/T83/5.

very little away. It reads:

I ioyfully ressigne my sowle unto my creator, confident of
itts salvation through the mercy and mediation only of
that Lambe of God, which taketh away the sinns of the
world: vayled over with whose righteousness, my fayth is,
thatt by imputative iustice itt shall appeare immaculate
before the last tribunall, and receave through the
intercession of his passion admittance into eternall glory
therewith assuredness attendinge the resurrection of my
body, with beleefe of reunion, forever to remayne in
perpetuall bliss: Lord soe be itt.¹¹

Clearly Dorset rejected the doctrine of saintly intercession,
and this alone should dispel rumours that he was a 'papist'.
But equally, there is neither the assurance of election nor the
belief in man's innate depravity which commonly characterised
more 'godly' wills. Little in the preamble is individual: a
reliance for salvation on the merits, death and passion of
Christ was wholly conventional. Dorset's bequests - to his
wife, children and staff - were apparently not determined by
religious considerations. Interestingly, his two executors,

11. Ibid., fol. 1r. I am most grateful to Anthony Milton for
advice on the religious views expressed in this preamble.
It is worth noting, however, that even if the preamble
were less ambiguous, it might not necessarily be a
reliable indication of Dorset's religious attitudes. For
a discussion of this problem, see J.D. Alsop, 'Religious
preambles in early modern English wills as formulae',
Journal of Ecclesiastical History, XL (1989), 19-27.

Sir Henry Compton and Thomas Middlemore, were both Catholics.¹² But this was probably less important than the fact that both held extensive lands in East Sussex, where Dorset's own territorial base was concentrated.¹³ There are even likelier explanations for Dorset's choice. Sir Henry Compton was his brother-in-law, having married his sister, Cecily Sackville.¹⁴ Thomas Middlemore was a long-standing client of the Sackvilles: he was described in 1600 as 'belongeinge to' Dorset's father, and he frequently witnessed Dorset's own legal transactions.¹⁵

12. K.A.O., Sackville MS, U 269/T83/5, fol. 8r. For Compton, see Anthony Fletcher, A County Community in Peace and War: Sussex, 1600-1660 (London, 1975), pp. 97, 100. For Middlemore, see ibid., p. 98.
13. Compton lived at Brambletye, near East Grinstead: Fletcher, Sussex, pp. 28, 97. Middlemore lived at Rotherfield: ibid., p. 56. For Dorset's lease of lands in Withyham to Middlemore, see E.S.R.O., Add. MS 5729/15 (indenture between Dorset and Thomas Middlemore, 27 May 1628).
14. B.L., Harl. MS 1233 (Golgatha Regale: royal and other pedigrees), fol. 91v. This probably also explains why Compton had acted as Dorset's second in his duel against Lord Bruce of Kinloss in August 1613: B.R.O., Trumbull Miscellaneous Corr., Vol. IV (Trumbull Correspondence, 1612-13), fol. 2r. See Chapter One, above, p. 24.
15. P.R.O., SP 12/274/75 (R. Cooke to Mrs Mary Goche, 9 March 1599/1600). Middlemore acted as witness to Dorset's conveyance of lands in Alfriston to William Levett on 1 June 1618: E.S.R.O., G 23/4 (indenture between Dorset and William Levett, 1 June 1618). He also witnessed Dorset's transfer of Ditchling title deeds in January 1622: The Hickstead Place Archives, ed. J.A. Brent (East Sussex County Council, 1975), p. 56. In 1629, Middlemore witnessed Dorset's lease of lands in Salisbury Court to John Herne: B.L., Add. Charter 9290 (indenture between Dorset and John Herne, 15 July 1629).

It seems highly unlikely that Dorset chose Compton and Middlemore as his executors because he shared their Catholicism. While their religious views clearly did not dissuade him from choosing them, the positive reasons for his choice were probably that Compton and Middlemore were both powerful and established neighbours, that Compton was a close relative and that Middlemore was a trusted client and friend. In short, the religious views expressed in Dorset's will were in many ways conventional, and appear to have determined neither his choice of executors, nor the pattern of his bequests.

Much more helpful is Dorset's speech at the trial of Henry Sherfield.¹⁶ In February 1633, Sherfield, the recorder of Salisbury, was brought before Star Chamber charged with smashing a stained-glass window in St Edmund's Church, Salisbury, in defiance of Bishop Davenant's orders. The window depicted God as an old man measuring the world with a pair of compasses, and raising Eve out of the side of Adam. Sherfield allegedly declared that he 'did not like these painted windows in churches: they obscure the light, and may be a cause of much

16. For a general account of the Sherfield case, see S.R. Gardiner, History of England, 1603-42 (12 vols. in 10, London, 1883-4), VII, 254-8.

superstition'.¹⁷ The case split the Star Chamber. Laud, Neile and seven others urged the exemplary punishment of a £1,000 fine. Dorset, by contrast, took a more moderate line. Sherfield's action was not intrinsically evil. Dorset

considered what was done; a window in a church was broken, because of the image of God the father that was in it, in these places, in the head and feet of the representation of the deity. This, if it had been done by the proper Judge, had beene well done. If all unlawfull pictures and images were utterly taken out of the churches, I thinke it were a good worke; for at the best they are but vanities, and teachers of lies. For the antient of daies in Daniel, I take it this doth not give warrant to frame a picture of God like an old man; but it sheweth the eternity of God, that he was before all times and daies ... I wish there were noe image of God the father within the Church, nor without the Church.¹⁸

Likewise, Dorset argued that Sherfield's motives were essentially good. He noted 'the mind wherewith it was done'. Sherfield acted 'out of a little too much zeale. His conscience was tender. This, if it had beene guided well, would have beene worthy praise ... There is a difference betweene a fault done out of zeale, and the same thing done out of malice'.¹⁹ Sherfield's fault - and this gives an important insight into Dorset's religious views - was that he had acted

17. P.R.O., SP 16/178/58 (Webb's deposition).

18. Bod. Lib., MS Tanner 299 (Archbishop Sancroft's transcriptions), fol. 116v.

19. Ibid., fols. 116v-117r.

'without the Bishop of the place'.²⁰ Dorset vigorously defended 'the authority of the reverend prelates: for I take it, whensoever that authority goeth downe, or decayeth, the monarchy dieth with it: I thinke they are inseparably ioyned together'.²¹ As James I had put it, 'No Bishop, no King'. Dorset believed in a symbiotic order in Church and State. Sherfield's fault was mitigated by the fact that 'he is conformable': Sherfield 'did well and wisely' 'to proove himselfe a conformitant'.²² Dorset therefore would 'not sentence him for three or four papists, nor shall I forbear to sentence him for three or four schismaticks'.²³ He reserved the most severe penalties for those who did not conform to the canons and statutes of the established Church. By contrast, harsh punishment of so 'conformable' a man as Henry Sherfield could only endanger the ecclesiastical and social order:

The reason why I shall not sentence him is to avoyd the tumults of the rude ignorant people in the country where this gentleman dwelleth, where he hath beene a good governor, as hath beene testified, and is well knowne; and noe doubt hath punished drunkennes, and disorders, and then such persons shall rejoyce agaynst him and say, this

20. Ibid., fol. 117r.

21. Ibid.

22. Ibid.

23. Ibid.

you have for your paynes and government, this would be noe good reward for him.²⁴

Exactly like many defendants of 'primitive' episcopacy in 1641, Dorset feared the social consequences of a breakdown in ecclesiastical order. Equally, Sherfield himself, 'in going on his owne head without his ordinary to a worke of this nature' had upset the hierarchy of the Church.²⁵ It was for this reason, and not for any evil intrinsic in smashing the window, that Dorset wanted to punish Sherfield. He should 'make such acknowledgement to my lord Bishop of Sarum, and in such manner, as he shall thinke fitt'; but Dorset did not propose to fine him.²⁶ However, the influence of Laud and Neile in particular ensured that the Star Chamber sentenced Sherfield to a £500 fine, as well as a public acknowledgement of his fault.²⁷

24. Ibid., fol. 117r-v. For an examination of Sherfield's activities in Salisbury, see Paul Slack, 'Poverty and Politics in Salisbury, 1597-1666', in Crisis and Order in English Towns, 1500-1700, ed. P. Clark and P. Slack (London, 1972), pp. 164-203, especially pp. 183-7, 191.

25. Bod. Lib., MS Tanner 299, fol. 117v.

26. Ibid.

27. Ibid., fols. 121v-122r. For Laud's speech, see ibid., fols. 111v-115v.

Dorset's speech at the Sherfield trial clearly reveals a sympathy with the 'godly' attack on ornaments, images, alehouses and drunkenness. But a higher priority was the preservation of order in Church, State and society. Sherfield had acted on his own initiative, a case of insubordination which had to be punished. But too severe a sentence might encourage unruly elements to rebel against a 'good governor'. Dorset perceived the counter-productive consequences of a harsh sentence much more clearly than Laud, and he wished to support this 'godly' magistrate if at all possible. For Dorset, the most savage penalties had to be reserved for the seditious, for those who actively undermined the hierarchical order in Church and State - reserved, for example, for William Prynne.

Prynne's attacks on female actors in his book Histriomastix were widely perceived as libels against Queen Henrietta Maria, and in the autumn of 1633 he lay a close prisoner in the Tower, awaiting trial in Star Chamber.²⁸ In late September, he vainly petitioned the King for release from his thirty-four week-long imprisonment.²⁹ About a fortnight later, on 12 October 1633, Prynne wrote to Henry Sherfield,

28. For the general background to the Histriomastix case, see Gardiner, History of England, VII, 327-30.

29. P.R.O., SP 16/246/108 (petition of William Prynne).

asking him 'with as much convenient speed as you may to speake to my lord of Dorsett in my behalfe'.³⁰ I have as yet found no evidence for previous links between Prynne and Sherfield beyond common membership of Lincoln's Inn,³¹ or between Sherfield and Dorset, though it is just possible that Prynne might have been encouraged by Dorset's leniency to Sherfield the previous February. Prynne blamed Dorset for his imprisonment: 'You may tell his lordship that it is conceived that he was the chiefe meanes of helping me into prison, and therefore his lordship would doe himselfe a great deale of honor and right in helping of me out'. Prynne claimed that he had already sent Dorset 'an Answer or Apologie to the cheife passages excepted against in the Booke, wherein they are cleared from those misinterpretations that have been made of them contrary to their true scope and sense, which if his lordship hath perused, I hope he wilbe satisfied of my innocencie'. Prynne hoped that Dorset would then

acquaint his Majesty ... that it was far from my intention that anything in [Histriomastix] should give his Majesty, the Queen or State the least offence; and to desire his

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30. Hampshire Record Office, Jervoise of Herriard Park MS, 44 M69/5/XXXIX/88, from which the following quotations are taken. I am most grateful to John Adamson for showing me a Xerox copy of this letter.
31. Sherfield was admitted to Lincoln's Inn on 31 July 1598, Prynne on 16 June 1621: The Records of the Honourable Society of Lincoln's Inn: Admissions, 1420-1893 (2 vols., London, 1896), I, 127, 188.

Majesty in regard of my long imprisonment sustained for thirty six weekes or more ... that his Majesty would be graciously pleased to pardon and pass it by.

Whether Sherfield ever approached Dorset on Prynne's behalf remains uncertain, as does the truth of Prynne's claim that Dorset had engineered his imprisonment. What we can be sure of is that the letter did Prynne no good, for when his trial opened on 7 February 1634, Dorset savagely denounced him.

'It is time', Dorset began, 'to purge the ayre. Never did Justice bring such an oblation before us. Adam had a power to impose names upon all creatures: but were he now living, he could not tell how to entitle this booke'.³² Once again, Dorset's concern for order was most striking. Prynne was 'the damner of Prince, people and State'.³³ Christ had 'sent out his disciples with an ite, praedicate. Then holy men were advanced by humility. They taught obedience, to give unto Caesar that which is Caesar's ... that if there be bad princes wee must pray for them; if good, praise God for them. This was their commission'.³⁴ In stark contrast to his treatment of Sherfield, Dorset rejected Prynne's religious scruples.

32. Bod. Lib., MS Tanner 299, fol. 130v.

33. Ibid.

34. Ibid.

Whereas Sherfield's zeal had mitigated his offence, Dorset now feared that 'some criticall fellow will say Alas, all this was Mr. Prinnes zeale; it was the tendernesse of his conscience. This brittle conscienced brother will sweat at the sight of a surplice, tremble at a cappe, and rather suffer death than putt on womens apparrell'.³⁵ Prynn encouraged sedition: he 'invades heaven itselfe and flies upon the King's sacred person'.³⁶ Above all, Prynn

hath scandalised the Queenes Majesty, my loving Mistris, or faire Cynthia; one whose vertues noe Orator is able to display, noe Poet able to sett out. I will praise her for herselfe, one soe sweetly disposed, that the sunne setts not upon her anger. A woman made for the redemption of all imperfections which men unjustly cast upon that sexe. She is one that is constant in her devotion; as for confession, she troubleth her confessor with nothing more than that she hath nothing to trouble him withall.³⁷

Dorset regarded Prynn as 'a schisme-maker, an enemy to all mankind', and had 'noe more mercy [on him] than on a mad dog, who being at liberty will bite the next he meets, or cast his fome upon them'.³⁸ Prynn should be 'immured in perpetuall imprisonment, rather to live amongst beasts than men', and

35. Ibid.

36. Ibid.

37. Ibid., fols. 130v-131r.

38. Ibid., fol. 131r.

fined £10,000.³⁹ In addition, Dorset urged some sort of corporal punishment, but

cannott tell whether I should censure him to be branded like Cain with a visible marke, to have his nose slitt, or a brand on his forehead, or to have his eares cutt, but then it may be he may weare a perriwigg to hide his forehead, or a couple of lovelocks, which he hath soe much inveighed against, to hide his eares.⁴⁰

This time, the final sentence was marginally less severe than Dorset advocated: Prynne was fined £5,000, pilloried, and had his ears cropped.⁴¹

To summarise the argument so far. Although Dorset may have had 'godly' sympathies, his main concern at the trials of Sherfield and Prynne was to preserve order and hierarchy in Church and, especially, State. If a harsh sentence on Sherfield threatened order, then it should be moderated. Likewise, he regarded Prynne's attacks on the Queen as seditious, and therefore wanted him punished severely. Dorset

39. Ibid.

40. Ibid.

41. The Star Chamber's sentence on Prynne is detailed in Gardiner, History of England, VII, 333. A briefer account of Dorset's speech at Prynne's trial may be found in B.L., Add. MS 11764 (miscellaneous law papers), fols. 26v-27v. This is printed in Documents relating to the proceedings against William Prynne in 1634 and 1637, ed. S.R. Gardiner (Camden Society, Second Series, Vol. XVII, 1877), 25.

tolerated (and possibly even encouraged) the godliness of the 'conformable', but fiercely condemned any form of sedition.

Notwithstanding his praise for Henry Sherfield's 'conformity' to the canons and statutes of the Church of England, Dorset seems to have taken a much kindlier view of nonconformity than he did of sedition. This is clearly seen in his protection of two ministers accused of nonconformity in the early 1630's: John Brinsley of Great Yarmouth and John Cotton of Boston. The right to appoint a lecturer at Great Yarmouth was claimed by both the corporation and the Dean and Chapter of Norwich, who also nominated the incumbent of the parish church. Dorset had been appointed High Steward of Great Yarmouth in 1629, and on 27 April 1631, the bailiffs requested his help in 'the obtaining and injoying of Mr. Brinsleye to be our town preacher or lecturer'.⁴² Dorset vigorously took up the corporation's case, but the Dean and Chapter of Norwich stood their ground, as a letter to Dorset in December 1631 shows.

42. The main documents relating to this episode are usefully printed in H. Swinden, The History and Antiquities of Great Yarmouth (Norwich, 1772), pp. 826-56. The bailiffs' letter to Dorset is given in full on pp. 847-8. For the background to the dispute, see C.J. Palmer, The History of Great Yarmouth (2 vols., London, 1854-6), II, 158-64. The lecturer in question was John Brinsley the younger, a prolific writer whose works are listed in Wing, B 4705-4737.

They acknowledged 'your Honor's letters in favour of Mr. Brinsley', but defended their 'right for choosinge ministers for the Towne of Yermouth' as 'mor likly to setle peace and quench facon than for one to be chosen by us and another by' the townsmen.⁴³ At about the same time, they wrote to the Bishop of Norwich reminding him that Chancery had found Brinsley 'a man unfitt for that place', and urging him not to license 'a man so prejudiced': '... whatsoever is per him or his well willers pretended for his conformitye, yett are we vehemently suspicious that except they will sett their mynds uppon some other man they will have no peace amongst themselves'.⁴⁴ The case came before the King and Council on 24 March 1632. Charles declared himself 'sensible and careful ... of countenancing and maintaining, as well of ecclesiastical authority and discipline, as of civil order and government'.⁴⁵ Brinsley was forbidden to lecture in the town, and the chapel in which he had preached was returned to its former use as a warehouse. Although the bailiffs and aldermen were to nominate another lecturer, Dorset's influence had failed to protect

43. Bod. Lib., MS Tanner 134 (diocese of Norwich papers), fol. 189r.

44. Ibid., fol. 184r.

45. Palmer, Great Yarmouth, II, 162.

Brinsley.⁴⁶ It may, of course, be argued that Dorset was simply championing the corporation of Great Yarmouth's interests in his capacity as High Steward of the borough. Even so, he clearly defended a lecturer of doubtful conformity in direct opposition to the wishes of the Dean and Chapter of Norwich - and this only a few months before he praised Henry Sherfield for proving himself 'conformable'.

The Brinsley episode may also explain why Dorset turned against Dean Hassall of Norwich. It seems that in June 1631, Dorset was prepared to act with Viscount Dorchester as 'joint-mediators to his Majesty' in promoting Hassall for the newly vacated bishopric of Norwich.⁴⁷ But on 30 December, Hassall wrote bitterly to Dorchester, lamenting that Dorset

should from a servant of his owne raising and in his first sute think himself denied. But how ingenuously I have laboured the effecting of his Lordships desire, and to what forwardnesse I have brought the buisnesse, and how by a false dishonest carriage by Mr. Brinsley and his freinds of Yermouth have foiled it,⁴⁸ and (I feare) lost it, I leave to the messengers relation.

46. Ibid.

47. P.R.O., SP 16/194/29 (John Hassall to Viscount Dorchester, 18 June 1631).

48. P.R.O., SP 16/204/106 (John Hassall to Viscount Dorchester, 30 December 1631).

If 'the buisnesse' in question was Brinsley's lectureship, then it is hard to believe Hassall's claim that he was Dorset's loyal servant, and his attempt to blame Brinsley instead. Unfortunately, Hassall confided some of his information to a messenger, and it is now difficult to recover the precise meaning of his letter. At any rate, the bishopric of Norwich went to Richard Corbet.⁴⁹

Further evidence that Dorset could conflict with the established Church hierarchy in his defence of 'godly' ministers is afforded by his attempt to protect John Cotton of Boston from Laud's persecution. This story is told by Cotton's

49. P.R.O., SP 16/215/16 (Corbet's oath of homage on his election to the see of Norwich, 7 April 1632). It was by this time rare for deans to be promoted from the Close to the Palace. Laud regarded Hassall's bid for the bishopric as extremely presumptive: Victoria History of the County of Norfolk, Vol. II, ed. W. Page (London, 1906), 283. As a postscript to the above discussion, we may note that by 1651, Brinsley was again ministering to the 'parochial congregation' of Great Yarmouth, alongside another of Dorset's clients, John Tillinghast: Palmer, Great Yarmouth, II, 171. For Tillinghast, see below, p. 242, and Appendix 2. Dorset's activities as High Steward of Great Yarmouth are examined further in Chapter Five, below, pp. 310-14.

grandson, Cotton Mather, in his Magnalia Christi Americana.⁵⁰
 The Earls of Dorset and Lindsey apparently visited Lincolnshire concerning the drainage of some fenland, and went to hear Cotton preach at Boston. Cotton spoke on the duty of 'living by faith in prosperity'. Dorset was so impressed that he vowed to abandon 'certain pastimes on the Lord's day', and promised Cotton that if he ever needed a friend at Court, then he should look to him. When Laud received information that Cotton's congregation 'did not kneel at the sacrament, nor observe some other ceremonies which the law prescribed', he launched High

50. Cotton Mather, Magnalia Christi Americana (London, 1702), III, 18-19. Mather refers in the first part of his story to the 'Earl of Dorchester', and in the second part to the 'Earl of Dorset'. It is therefore just possible that this episode relates to Dorchester. But Dorset seems much more likely because:

1. Dudley Carleton was Viscount Dorchester, not an Earl.
2. Dorset was involved in fen drainage works, the reason given on p. 18 for his initial meeting with Cotton. See, for example, P.R.O., C 2 Chas. I, D 44/27 (Chancery procs., Series I).
3. 'Dorchester' is mentioned as travelling with the Earl of Lindsey, a lifelong friend and political associate of Dorset.
4. H. Hajzyk, 'The Church in Lincolnshire, c. 1595-c. 1640' (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Cambridge, 1980), p. 347, mentions that Cotton probably met Dorset through Viscount Saye and Sele, though I have been unable to trace her source. I owe this reference to John Adamson.

For John Cotton as Cotton Mather's maternal grandfather, see K. Silverman, The Life and Times of Cotton Mather (New York, 1984), pp. 3-4. For a positive assessment of the historical reliability of Magnalia Christi Americana, see D. Levin, Cotton Mather: The Young Life of the Lord's Remembrancer, 1663-1703 (Cambridge, Mass., 1978), pp. 255-6. I owe these last two references to Daniel Reagan.

Commission proceedings against Cotton.⁵¹ Dorset interceded, but to no avail. He therefore wrote to Cotton telling him that 'if he had been guilty of drunkenness, uncleanness, or any such lesser fault, he could have obtained his pardon; but as he was guilty of Puritanism and Nonconformity the crime was unpardonable; and he therefore advised him to flee for his safety'.⁵² This passage is difficult to interpret. It may mean that Dorset found 'puritanism and nonconformity' 'unpardonable'. Alternatively, Dorset may have instanced these as the reasons why Laud was implacable, without especially objecting to them himself. The second interpretation seems more persuasive, for two reasons. First, Dorset was quite prepared to champion Cotton even after he had been accused of 'puritanism and nonconformity'. Second, it is unlikely that Dorset could have attended one of Cotton's services and been deeply moved by one of his sermons, and then found his activities 'unpardonable'. Just as he championed John Brinsley against the claims of the Dean and Chapter of Norwich, so Dorset was prepared to protect John Cotton from the persecution of Archbishop Laud. How far Dorset kept his vow to abandon

51. P. Thompson, The History and Antiquities of Boston (London, 1856), p. 416.

52. Mather, Magnalia, II, 19. Cotton arrived in New England on 4 September 1633: J. Savage, A Genealogical Dictionary of the First Settlers of New England (4 vols., Boston, 1860-2), I, 462. See also P.R.O., SP 16/260/13 (Stephen Goffe to Gilbert Sheldon, 3 February 1633/4).

'certain pastimes on the Lord's day' remains obscure. But we can conclude that, unlike sedition, Dorset found nonconformity acceptable and possibly even attractive.

One possible solution to the apparent inconsistency of Dorset's praising Sherfield for his 'conformity' while also protecting 'nonconformist' ministers such as John Brinsley and John Cotton may lie in a commitment to the twin ideals of godly minister and godly magistrate. Certainly Dorset's speech at Sherfield's trial and his support for the two ministers can be seen as a coherent defence of magistracy and ministry. The disciplinary roles of both would also tie in with his concern for order. But at this point we enter the realm of speculation.

John Cotton was not the only enemy of Laud's who received help from Dorset. Rushworth tells how many 'people of better sort' blamed Laud for the dissolution of the Short Parliament.⁵³ A drawer overheard 'Mr. C., Mr. G., Mr. O., Mr. M. and Mr. T.', 'young gentlemen of Lincoln's Inn', drinking 'a

53. John Rushworth, Historical Collections of private passages of State (8 vols., London, 1680-1701), II, ii, 1180 (Wing, R 2318), from which the following quotations are taken.

health to the confusion of the Archbishop of Canterbury', and reported this to Laud. Faced with prosecution, the gentlemen asked Dorset to 'stand their friend':

The Earle askt them, who doth bear witness against you? They answered, one of the drawers; where did he stand, said the Earle, when he heard you drink the health? They replied, he was at the door going out of the room; Tush, said the Earle, the drawer was mistaken, you drank a health to the confusion of the Archbishop of Canterbury's foes, and he heard the first part of your words, and was gone before he heard the latter words.

The gentlemen took this hint, and also followed Dorset's advice that they 'carry themselves with all humility and respect to the Archbishop when they were called in before the King and his Council'. As a result, 'by the favour of the said Earle and others, they only received a reproof and admonition, and so were dismiss'. Rushworth does not give his source. A deposition by the drawer, Stephen Hosier, a 'retainer' to the Earl of Northumberland, does survive, together with an answer by a sixth gentleman of Lincoln's Inn, Robert Warcup. These present differing accounts of the incident, and disagree over whether a toast to Laud's confusion was drunk.⁵⁴ Neither Warcup, nor the three other gentlemen whose surnames are given,

54. Bod. Lib., MS Eng. Hist. B 204 (Warcup papers), fols. 1r-v, 3r-v. I owe this reference to John Adamson.

appear to have had previous links with Dorset.⁵⁵ Nor have I yet found evidence beyond Rushworth which proves that Dorset protected the gentlemen. His behaviour is once again difficult to assess. He may have thought the toast of confusion to Laud unimportant, and felt that it could be treated leniently. Alternatively, he may genuinely have disliked Laud and sympathised with his enemies, just as he had championed John Cotton. At any rate, this story hardly argues that Dorset was among Laud's most fervent admirers.

Dorset's relations with Laud appear even more ambivalent when we turn to the case of John Williams, Bishop of Lincoln.⁵⁶ Williams was a long-standing enemy of Laud's, and was prosecuted in Star Chamber as early as 1628. In November 1636, he wrote The Holy Table, Name and Thing, an implicit attack on the Laudian altar policy which argued that the communion table,

55. The gentlemen in question appear to have been:

1. Either John Glanville, admitted 29 June 1639 (Lincoln's Inn admissions, I, 239), or Francis Glanville, admitted 20 January 1638 (ibid., 233).
2. Either John Churchill, admitted 15 March 1639 (ibid., 238), or Winston Churchill, admitted 30 January 1636 (ibid., 229).
3. William Osborne, admitted 16 September 1639 (ibid., 240).
4. Robert Warcup (or 'Warcoppe'), admitted 23 January 1638 (ibid., 234).

56. For a general account of the Williams case, see Gardiner, History of England, VIII, 251-5, 390.

though usually standing at the east end of the church, should be brought down into the body of the church in time of communion. In June 1637, he was tried in Star Chamber on a string of charges including 'publishing false news and tales to the scandal of his Majesty's government', 'revealing counsels of State contrary to his oath as a Privy Councillor', and 'tampering with the King's witnesses'.⁵⁷ Dorset did not attend the sentence, apparently because of ill health. On 5 July 1637, Sir Henry Vane wrote to the Earl of Northumberland that 'Dorsett some say hath been sicke really, others doubt thereof, but certain itt is hee hath made himselfe by his absence incapable to harangue the day of sentence'.⁵⁸ I suspect that the illness was genuine: certainly Dorset did not attend any Privy Council meetings between 30 June and 23 July 1637.⁵⁹ Furthermore, in the seventeenth century, the verb 'harangue' had the neutral sense of 'to make an address or speech to an assembly', and need not necessarily imply that Dorset was hostile to Williams.⁶⁰ Dorset's position during Williams' first trial thus remains unclear.

57. W. Cobbett, A Complete Collection of State Trials (12 vols., London, 1809-26), III, 769-70.

58. B.L., Microfilm M 285 (Percy MS, Alnwick Castle), Vol. XIV, fol. 100r (Sir Henry Vane to the Earl of Northumberland, 5 July 1637). I owe this reference to Peter Salt.

59. P.R.O., PC 2/48 (Privy Council Register, 1637-8), pp. 72-149.

60. Oxford English Dictionary, sub 'harangue'.

Thereafter, there are clear signs that Dorset acted as intermediary between the King and Queen and Williams. Shortly after sentence was passed, the King offered to free Williams if he paid his £10,000 fine, surrendered his bishopric in return for one in Wales or Ireland, and recanted the views expressed in The Holy Table, Name and Thing.⁶¹ Williams at first indicated that he would accept these terms, and so, in the words of Laud's chaplain and biographer, Peter Heylyn:

the King, upon the Queen's desire, sent the Earl of Dorset ... to accept the Bishop's offer on the one side; and on the other side, to promise him in his Majesty's name, the next good bishoprick which should fall in Ireland. Which propositions being made, the Bishop absolutely refused to hearken to it, telling the Earl of Dorset, that he had made a shift, by the power and mediation of his friends, to hold out against his enemies here for seven years together ... Which double dealing did so cool the affections of his friends in Court, that for three years and more there were no further endeavours for his enlargement.⁶²

Heylyn may, however, have exaggerated the time lapse. The following year, Williams was again awaiting trial in Star Chamber, this time as the recipient of letters from Lambert Osbaldeston, the Headmaster of Westminster School, which

61. These terms are set down in Laud's handwriting in Lambeth Palace Library, MS 1030 (Papers of Archbishop Laud and Bishop Williams of Lincoln, 1631-40), fol. 68v. I am grateful to Peter Salt for drawing this volume to my attention.

62. Peter Heylyn, Cyprianus Anglicus (London, 1668), p. 344 (Wing, H 1699). I owe this reference to Anthony Milton.

referred to Laud as 'that little meddling hocus-pocus'.⁶³ In May and June 1638, Williams wrote two letters to Dorset, begging him to intercede with the Queen.⁶⁴ He refused to recant any of the views in The Holy Table, Name and Thing, and described his debts as 'rockes of impossibilitie', but protested his obedience to both King and Queen. Williams probably turned to Dorset because he knew that as Lord Chamberlain of the Queen's Household, Dorset had influence with Henrietta Maria, who in turn had the ear of the uxorious King. His requests to Dorset thus resemble Prynne's approach to Henry Sherfield, examined above.⁶⁵ In fact, Dorset's position in the Queen's Household may go a long way towards explaining his behaviour in the Williams case. In a letter to Wentworth of 14 May 1638, Laud included Henrietta Maria among the 'solicitors for' Williams, and named Dorset as the go-between between Queen and Bishop.⁶⁶ Malcolm Smuts has shown that many in the Queen's

63. Osbaldeston's letters are quoted in full in B.D. Roberts, Mitre and Musket: John Williams, 1582-1650 (Oxford, 1938), pp. 155-6.

64. Lambeth Palace Library, MS 1030, fols. 153r, 155r.

65. Like Prynne, Williams combined formal petitions to the King - for example, P.R.O., SP 16/437/23 - with private approaches via an influential courtier. See above, pp. 218-20.

66. The Works of William Laud, ed. W. Scott (7 vols., Oxford, 1847-60), VII, 424-5.

immediate circle were antagonistic towards Laud.⁶⁷ Dorset may have shared this antagonism, which had social and political as well as religious dimensions. Alternatively, as his words at Prynne's trial show, he was so loyal to the Queen that her dislike of Laud was almost bound to influence Dorset's behaviour.

Certainly Dorset actively tried to help Williams when he came before Star Chamber on 14 February 1639. He laid much the greatest blame on Osbaldeston, in whose letters he found 'scandalous and heinous crimes'.⁶⁸ It was Osbaldeston's 'folly which hath brought my Lord of Lincoln under the censure of this Court. It is he that hath been the Siren, that hath bewitched him, and ledd him out of his way'.⁶⁹ Williams had 'fallen into the limetwiggs of his adversaries'.⁷⁰ Dorset urged a fine of £3,000, but the final sentence was a £5,000 fine and continued

67. M. Smuts, 'The Puritan Followers of Henrietta Maria in the 1630's', English Historical Review, XCIII (1978), 26-45, esp. 31-2. For Laud's deteriorating relations with the Queen, see Hibbard, Popish Plot, pp. 45, 60-4.

68. Bod. Lib., MS Tanner 67, fol. 91r.

69. Ibid.

70. Ibid.

imprisonment.⁷¹ In his speech, Dorset had this to say about Laud: 'My lord of Canterbury is so faithful towards the King, and so upright in his place, that never any that sate in his place before him had cleaner hands than he: he carries himself to the glory of God, the good and welfare of the Church, and honour of the King'.⁷² This praise rings slightly hollow. It consists of stock phrases and is really the least that Dorset could say. Taken with his attempts to reduce the penalties for offences which Laud found 'abominably foul and clearly proved', it suggests little enthusiasm for Laud's cause. It therefore comes as no surprise that shortly after the trial, Dorset was again mediating between Williams and the King and Queen.⁷³ This time, Williams acknowledged the Star Chamber sentence to be 'iust and honourable',⁷⁴ and accepted the King's terms: he would recant the errors in his book, withdraw into Wales, and pay his whole fine.⁷⁵ On 5 March 1640, Dorset delivered to Laud all the evidence of his previous dealings with Williams; on 27 March he delivered a paper describing how 'the Bishop of

71. Cobbett, State Trials, III, 818-9.

72. Bod. Lib., MS Tanner 67, fol. 91r.

73. Lambeth Palace Library, MS 1030, fols. 166r, 168r-v, 169r, 178r.

74. Ibid., fol. 169r.

75. Ibid., fol. 178r.

Lincoln came to an agreement with him, etc.'⁷⁶ Dorset's motives are obscure, but he may have wished to demonstrate to Laud that Williams should now be released. Nevertheless, Williams was kept in prison, and only released on 16 November 1640 by order of the House of Lords.⁷⁷

It is very difficult to know how far Dorset was an independent agent in all these proceedings. His speech in Star Chamber in February 1639 may be seen less as a considered assessment of Williams than as part of a strategy, supported by the Queen and designed to help Williams, which combined private attempts to reach a compromise with public attempts to restrain Laud's persecution. Dorset's behaviour need not imply that he agreed with Williams' theology, or disagreed with Laud's. As Henrietta Maria's Lord Chamberlain, Dorset may simply have been

76. Ibid., fols. 153r, 155r, 166r, 168r-v, 169r, 178r.

77. L.J., IV, 92.

an obvious agent for 'the mediation of the Queen's most excellent Majesty'.⁷⁸

Dorset's influence within the Queen's household, to which both Prynne and Williams appealed, may also explain why he was sometimes rumoured to be a Catholic. It is interesting that these rumours became more widespread in 1640-1, at precisely the time when the Queen's Court was increasingly perceived as a centre of popish conspiracy.⁷⁹ It was then, for example, that

78. Lambeth Palace Library, MS 1030, fol. 178r. Two more mysterious aspects of Dorset's relations with Laud may be briefly mentioned as a postscript to the above discussion. First, Dorset was among the commissioners appointed on 10 April 1631 'for the repair of St. Paul's Cathedral': P.R.O., SP 16/188/37 (King's commission for the repair of St Paul's). The appointment may have been purely ex officio; the majority of Privy Councillors were appointed to this commission. Yet Dorset displayed some real enthusiasm for the scheme when he made two payments of £100 each on 17 April 1638 and 22 February 1638/9: Guildhall Library, MS 25475/1, fol. 102v; MS 25475/2, fol. 5r (Day Books recording money received for the repair of St Paul's Cathedral, 1631-91). I owe these references to Ian Atherton. This does argue some support for Laud's project, and some difference from the 'Puritan' critics who condemned St Paul's as 'a rotten relic': see Gardiner, History of England, VII, 245-6. It is, however, difficult to know how much to read into such payments. Even more mysterious are the four visits which Dorset was licensed to make to the imprisoned Laud on 8, 9 and 30 January and 20 February 1641: L.J., IV, 127, 128, 148, 168. The nature of this business remains very obscure: Laud's Works, ed. Scott, yields no clue. See also Chapter Six, below, p. 348.
79. Hibbard, Popish Plot, especially pp. 51-8 and 198-9.

Sir Walter Erle accused Dorset of popery.⁸⁰ But, as Malcolm Smuts has shown, loyalty to the Queen was perfectly compatible with 'godly' religious views, and need not denote Catholic sympathies.⁸¹ Similarly, Dorset's entertainment of Watt Montagu on the latter's return to England in 1637 may well have been in his capacity as Henrietta Maria's Lord Chamberlain. John Burghe described how Montagu 'presented himself to the Queene, where he was graciously received, and kissed the Queenes hand ... Many of the great Court lords as my lord of Holland, my lord of Dorset and sondry others, feast him, and afford him theire dayly company'.⁸² It is very unlikely that Dorset shared the Queen's Catholicism; equally, his Protestant views were never so emphatic as to prevent his serving her loyally and efficiently.

Perhaps conscientious service to the Crown is also the key to Dorset's treatment of the Clerkenwell Jesuits in 1628-9.⁸³

80. See above, p. 210.

81. Smuts, 'Puritan Followers', passim.

82. P.R.O., C 115/N4/8612 (John Burghe to Viscount Scudamore, 12 April 1637). I owe this reference to Ian Atherton.

83. The general outline of this paragraph is derived from 'The Discovery of the Jesuits' College at Clerkenwell', ed. J.G. Nichols, Camden Miscellany II (Camden Society, First Series, Vol. LV, 1853), item 4, passim. See also Reeve, Road to Personal Rule, p. 93.

Early in 1628, the Earl of Shrewsbury's mansion in Clerkenwell was found to be occupied by a small community of Jesuits. They were arrested by Privy Council order on 15 March 1628, but little solid evidence of treason was discovered. No legal proceedings were launched until December, when three Jesuits were tried, and one was convicted. When the Commons committee for religion met on 13 February 1629, Sir Walter Erle asked why the Jesuits, including this convict, had recently been released from Newgate. The next day, Sir Thomas Hoby reported that Dorset had 'sent the keeper word, that his Majesty's pleasure was that they should be delivered'.⁸⁴ Sir John Eliot bitterly condemned this action: all blame should be 'fixed on that great lord, the Earl of Dorset, who I fear hath too much soiled his fingers in this business'.⁸⁵ But any attack on Dorset was pre-empted by the adjournments of Parliament on 25 February and 2 March, and finally by its dissolution on 10 March. It may be that Dorset had acted without authority, but his intense loyalty to the King and Queen makes this improbable. Rather, this episode closely resembles the Commons' response to the King's handling of the Five Knights' Case, described by Dr Guy.⁸⁶ Faced with the possibility that Charles was behaving

84. C.D., 1629, p. 75.

85. Ibid., p. 77.

86. J. Guy, 'The Origins of the Petition of Right Reconsidered', Historical Journal, CCV (1982), 289-312, passim.

illegally, M.P.'s instinctively blamed 'evil counsellors' acting on their own initiative.⁸⁷ They blamed Dorset in 1629 just as they had blamed Buckingham the previous year. The abrupt end of the 1629 session may well have prevented the discovery of uncomfortable evidence that the King was prepared to act outside the law by releasing prisoners on his own authority, just as he had removed the five knights so as to circumvent Habeas Corpus. While Dorset's behaviour may have been the origin of Sir Walter Erle's belief that he was a 'papist',⁸⁸ it seems more likely that he really was acting on royal authority, and was made a scapegoat by M.P.'s convinced that their King could do no wrong. As with the Williams case, it may be that Dorset's behaviour was shaped less by his religious sympathies per se than by his official duties. We might also speculate that his status as Privy Councillor and Lord Chamberlain of the Queen's Household strengthened his commitment to order and detestation of sedition. If so, then 'godliness', official self-interest and general social conservatism may have fused, rendering it difficult to isolate the purely religious motive.

87. The same mentality may also be seen in 1629 in the Commons' criticism of the customs officers, following the imprisonment of an arch-critic of extra-parliamentary loans, Richard Chambers, despite the King's assertion that the officers had acted on his instructions. See R. Ashton, The City and the Court, 1603-1643 (Cambridge, 1979), pp. 131, 149-50.

88. See above, pp. 210, 238-9.

In the last part of this chapter, I want to explore Dorset's patronage activities in greater detail. What, first of all, can be learned of Dorset's religion from his presentation of ministers to livings? Among the Sackville Papers, there survives a list of thirty-nine livings in Dorset's control.⁸⁹ By means of the Bishops' certificates of presentations to benefices, it has been possible to trace some of the ministers whom Dorset presented. These records are incomplete; in particular, those for the counties of Essex and Middlesex, which both contained Dorset livings, do not survive. This gap can however be filled by an examination of the Register of the Bishops of London. I have so far uncovered nineteen presentations by Dorset, giving a total of seventeen different ministers. Twelve of these appear to have graduated from either Oxford or Cambridge, and something of their background can therefore be found in the Alumni Oxonienses and Alumni Cantabrigienses. In only two cases has it proved possible to reconstruct theological views explicitly: Brian Duppa and John Tillinghast. The Laudian attitudes of the former will be discussed below, while the latter is known to have been an Independent in the later 1640's, and possibly a Fifth Monarchist by 1651.⁹⁰ Further inferences may be drawn

89. K.A.O., Sackville MS, U 269/Q1. The other evidence on which this paragraph is based is presented in Appendix 2.

90. See below, pp. 244-5, and Appendix 2.

from the information that three of the ministers were sequestered during the 1640's, while at least four of them held Church office after the Restoration. It would be unwise to draw firm conclusions from such scanty evidence, but the religious positions of these ministers seem pretty diverse. Ten of these twelve graduates were presented to Sussex livings. In eight cases we know the county in which their father lived, and in seven cases that county was also Sussex. Of the remaining two presentations, the minister at Tooting in Surrey was from Kingston, Surrey, while the one at St Dunstan's-in-the-West, London, was the son of a City of London grocer. It thus appears that Dorset chose local men for his livings. This does not necessarily prove that religion was unimportant, but it does suggest an alternative, secular reason for his presentations.⁹¹

Next, let us consider four members of Dorset's immediate 'circle' whose religious views can to some extent be reconstructed: his chaplain, his steward, and two lay clients who wrote religious tracts. Once again, it seems that these men had very different religious attitudes, and that Dorset did

91. For a similar conclusion, see I. Green, 'Career Prospects and Clerical Conformity in the early Stuart Church', Past and Present, XC (1981), 71-115, esp. 89-92. I owe this reference to Ian Atherton.

not patronise all - or even most - of them because he shared their religion. Indeed, in practically every case, another, often more compelling reason can be adduced for Dorset's patronage.

First of all, Dorset's choice of chaplain, Brian Duppa, might seem a strong hint as to Dorset's own religion.⁹² The work of Anthony Fletcher and Nicholas Tyacke has shown that Duppa was in many ways a committed Laudian. As Bishop of Chichester, Duppa's visitation articles in 1638 urged the railing in of altars, the beautifying of chancels, and the repair of church fabric.⁹³ It was through Dorset that Duppa secured his first major appointment, as Dean of Christ Church, Oxford, in 1628.⁹⁴ But such patronage does not necessarily prove that Dorset shared Duppa's religious views. After all, the two men had almost certainly met at university, for they

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92. 'The Correspondence of Bishop Brian Duppa and Sir Justinian Isham, 1650-1660', ed. G. Isham, Publ. Northamptonshire Record Society, XVII (1955), xx.
93. Fletcher, Sussex, pp. 90-2. N. Tyacke, Anti-Calvinists: The Rise of English Arminianism, c. 1590-1640 (Oxford, 1987), pp. 206-7.
94. See, for example, J. Aubrey, Brief Lives, ed. O.L. Dick (London, 1950), p. 72. Also Isham, 'Correspondence of Duppa', xx. For Dorset's presentation of Duppa to the Sussex livings of Hailsham (2 December 1625) and Withyham (5 January 1626/7), see Appendix 2.

both entered Christ Church as undergraduates in July 1605. Furthermore, Duppa served as chaplain to the third Earl of Dorset from 1613 and was 'inherited' by the fourth Earl in 1624.⁹⁵ It may well have been this long acquaintanceship and record of family service which recommended Duppa to Dorset, rather than his religious attitudes.

Wilfrid Prest writes that Dorset's steward, Richard Amherst, may have had 'puritan leanings'.⁹⁶ Anthony Fletcher likewise finds Amherst's will 'distinctly puritan'.⁹⁷ But Amherst had been steward to four successive Earls of Dorset. His employment may indicate the religious views of Thomas Sackville, Lord Buckhurst, first Earl of Dorset, but not necessarily those of his grandson, the fourth Earl. It is unlikely that Dorset would have ousted a steward with so long a record of service even if he had disagreed with his religious

95. Duppa was admitted on 9 July 1605: Alumni Oxonienses, 1500-1714, ed. J. Foster (4 vols., Oxford, 1891-2), p. 434. Dorset was admitted on 26 July: ibid., p. 1298. For Duppa as chaplain to the third Earl of Dorset, see C.J. Phillips, History of the Sackville Family (2 vols., London, 1930), I, 274-5.

96. W. Prest, The Rise of the Barristers: A Social History of the English Bar, 1590-1640 (Oxford, 1986), p. 340.

97. Fletcher, Sussex, p. 63. Amherst's will, proved on 3 May 1632, may be found in P.R.O., PROB 10 (Prerogative Court of Canterbury, original wills), Box 504.

views. Furthermore, Amherst was an assiduous J.P., with considerable local influence centred on Lewes in East Sussex.⁹⁸ He was also executor to Dorset's elder brother, and acted with Dorset in the Chancery disputes over the third Earl's estates and debts.⁹⁹ In short, Dorset probably employed Amherst because he was a loyal steward, his elder brother's executor, and a man of local influence, rather than because of any 'puritan leanings'.

Similar points may be made about Sir John Suckling, whom Dorset promoted in the Short Parliament elections at Great Yarmouth (unsuccessfully) and Bramber (successfully).¹⁰⁰ Three years earlier, Suckling had dedicated 'an account of religion by reason' to Dorset.¹⁰¹ This was the discourse, Suckling wrote,

98. Fletcher, Sussex, p. 352.

99. For the third Earl of Dorset's will, see B.L., Add. MS 5701 (Miscellaneous Sussex Collections), fols. 54-121. For the main Chancery suits, see C 2 Jas. I, D 14/44 and C 2 Chas. I, M 22/41 (Chancery procs., Series I).

100. Palmer, Great Yarmouth, II, 206. Fletcher, Sussex, p. 244. See also Chapter Five, below, pp. 312-14.

101. The Works of Sir John Suckling, ed. A.H. Thompson (London, 1910), pp. 339-52.

which frightened the lady into a cold sweat, and which had like to have made me an atheist at Court, and your lordship no very good Christian. I am not ignorant that the fear of Socinianism at this time renders every man, that offers to give an account of religion by reason, suspected to have none at all; yet I have made no scruple to run that hazard, not knowing why a man should not use the best weapon his Creator hath given him for his defence.¹⁰²

Suckling's view of the Trinity in particular must have encouraged accusations of Socinianism: 'we then hold God to be one and but one, it being gross to imagine two omnipotents, for then neither would be so'.¹⁰³ Certainly the charge seems to have stuck. The tract was not printed until 1646,¹⁰⁴ but had probably been circulated privately before that: a copy of 'Sir John Suckling's book on Socinianism' was among 'Mr. Vassall's papers' seized on 27 September 1639.¹⁰⁵ But does this tract necessarily get us much further in analysing Dorset's religion? Suckling's father had been secretary to Dorset's grandfather, Lord Buckhurst.¹⁰⁶ Suckling was also a nephew of Dorset's

102. Ibid., p. 341.

103. Ibid., p. 351.

104. In the posthumous collection Fragmenta Aurea (London, 1646), Wing, S 6126.

105. P.R.O., SP 16/429/38 (Secretary Windebanke's notes, 27 September 1639).

106. H.M.C., Manuscripts in Various Collections, Vol. VII (London, 1914), 87. See also B.L., Microfilm M 485 (Cecil MS, Hatfield House), Vol. CXXV, fol. 107r (Earl of Salisbury to Sir John Suckling, 28 April 1608).

lifelong friend, the first Earl of Middlesex, and a cousin of Frances Cranfield, who married Dorset's eldest son in January 1641.¹⁰⁷ Another connection was through the Court: Suckling was sworn a Gentleman of the Privy Chamber Extraordinary in November 1638.¹⁰⁸ It seems at least as likely that Dorset's patronage of Sir John Suckling encouraged rumours that he shared Suckling's religious views, as that common religious views caused the patronage link.

Finally, let us turn to that polymath, latter-day knight-errant, and well-known Catholic, Sir Kenelm Digby.¹⁰⁹ After the battle of Turnham Green, Digby was imprisoned in Winchester

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107. M. Prestwich, Cranfield: Politics and Profits under the Early Stuarts (Oxford, 1966), especially pp. 561-3. T. Clayton, 'Sir John Suckling and the Cranfields', Times Literary Supplement, MMMXXII (29 January 1960), 68. There was even a rumour that the sixth Earl of Dorset was an illegitimate son of Sir John Suckling, following his affair with Frances Cranfield, the future Countess of Dorset: J. Spence, Observations, Anecdotes and Characters of Books and Men, ed. J.M. Osborn (Oxford, 1966), I, 200.
108. P.R.O., LC 5/134 (Lord Chamberlain's Warrant Book, 1634-41), p. 286.
109. For accounts of Digby's life, see D.N.B., XV, 60-6; R.T. Petersson, Sir Kenelm Digby: The Ornament of England, 1603-65 (London, 1956); M. Foster, 'Sir Kenelm Digby (1603-65) as Man of Religion and Thinker', Downside Review, CVI (1988), 35-58, 101-25.

House along with Dorset's son.¹¹⁰ Shortly afterwards, in December 1642, Dorset sent him a copy of Dr Thomas Browne's spiritual autobiography, the Religio Medici. Digby wrote in March 1643 that Dorset's covering letter (now apparently lost) 'occasioned' his critique of Browne, written in only twenty-four hours.¹¹¹ These 'observations' on Browne offended many with their Catholic attack on the doctrine of predestination: Henry Bates wished that Digby had gone 'to bed rather then to have sitt up soe late to soe little purpose, and lose his sleepe, unless hee intended to make an opiate for his readers'.¹¹² But it is far from clear that Dorset wanted Digby to criticise Browne. Digby mentions that he had immediately bought the Religio Medici because Dorset 'gave so advantageous a character of it', and describes it as 'a favourite' of Dorset's.¹¹³ If so, then shared Catholic sympathies can hardly

110. An Exact and True Relation of the Battell fought on Saturday last at Acton (London, 1642), pp. 6-7 (Wing, E 3614; B.L., T.T., E 127/8). A continuation of certaine speciall and remarkable passages (12-18 November 1642), sig. B 2 (S.T.C. (Newspapers), 57.2; B.L., T.T., E 127/21).

111. The Works of Sir Thomas Browne, ed. G. Keynes (London, 1964), pp. 236-7.

112. Quoted in F.L. Huntly, Sir Thomas Browne (Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1962), p. 145.

113. Observations upon Religio Medici, occasionally written by Sir Kenelm Digby (London, 1643), p. 3 (Wing, D 1441; B.L., T.T., E 1113/4). See also Foster, 'Sir Kenelm Digby', 101.

have been at the root of Dorset's friendship with Digby. Indeed, Dorset had acted as Digby's sponsor as early as August 1629, before the latter's conversion to Catholicism.¹¹⁴ There was also a link through the Queen's Court: Digby was among Henrietta Maria's circle of friends in the 1630's,¹¹⁵ while it was through her mother's intercession that Digby was given leave to go to France 'about some earnest business' in the summer of 1643.¹¹⁶ It therefore seems that Dorset's friendship with Digby was unrelated to the latter's Catholicism: religion neither made nor broke the friendship. If anything, Dorset may have sympathised with the more 'godly' views of Dr Thomas Browne.

An examination of Dorset's presentations to livings and of his immediate 'circle' thus suggests that he patronised men of diverse religious views. He cannot have shared the religion of everyone to whom he gave help, and in most cases there were

114. P.R.O., SP 16/148/99 (Dorset to Viscount Dorchester, 30 August 1629). For the story that Dorset may have had an affair with Lady Venetia Stanley before her marriage to Digby, see E.W. Bligh, Sir Kenelm Digby and his Venetia (London, 1932), pp. 88-105. See also Chapter One, above, p. 23.

115. D.N.B., XV, 62. See also Hibbard, Popish Plot, p. 40.

116. L.J., VI, 150, 152, 163, 206. C.J., III, 187. See also D.N.B., XV, 63.

other, secular reasons for the patronage link. A long record of family service, membership of the same Oxford college, contact through the Queen's Court, especially, perhaps, local origins or influence - these were the credentials which Dorset rewarded, rather than a particular set of religious attitudes.

So far, we have been looking at successful clients, those to whom Dorset gave actual help. But what of the 'hopefuls'? Are there any signs in the tracts dedicated to Dorset that he was perceived as sympathetic to certain religious beliefs? John Bastwick's 'apology' dedicated to Dorset in 1636 might suggest the 'godly' leanings which have emerged elsewhere in this chapter.¹¹⁷ Equally, Dorset's crisp cross-questioning of Bastwick in Star Chamber on 14 June 1637 suggests that his commitment to order and hatred of libellers overcame any such sympathies.¹¹⁸ Dorset's position as Henrietta Maria's Lord Chamberlain may explain why several of the works dedicated to him or his wife were translations of French tracts - for

117. J. Bastwick, ΠΡΑΞΕΙΣ ΤΩΝ 'ΕΠΙΣΚΟ' ΠΩΝ, Sive Apologeticus ad Praesules Anglicanos (London, 1636), S.T.C., 1576. The manuscript of this may be found in B.L., Sloane MS 2131 (Johannis Bastwickij Apologia Edwardo Comiti Dorset D[ed]icata), fols. 1-12.

118. Cobbett, State Trials, III, 722. For Dorset's hatred of libellers, compare his attack on John Lilburne: ibid., 1322.

example, Thomas Hawkins' translation of Nicholas Caussin's The Holy Court in Five Tomes, or John Reynolds' translations of Eustache du Refuge's Treatise of the Court, and Jacques du Bosc's The Secretary of Ladies.¹¹⁹ Reynolds' dedications were probably inspired by a French connection rather than a religious one. In addition to Dorset's status at the Queen's Court, Reynolds had probably travelled in France with him in 1619-22.¹²⁰ The epistles dedicatory to these various tracts all praised Dorset's conduct as the Queen's Lord Chamberlain and entirely ignored his religious attitudes. Dorset's official position also explains why the works dedicated to him included Dr Edward May's graphically illustrated tract of 1639: A most certaine and true Relation of a strange monster or serpent found in the left ventricle of the heart of John Pennant, gentleman, of the age of twenty-one yeares.¹²¹ May

119. N. Caussin, The Holy Court in Five Tomes, translated by T[homas] H[awkins] and others (London, 1650), Wing, C 1547. Tome Two was dedicated to Dorset. Eustache du Refuge, A Treatise of the Court ... done into English by Iohn Reynolds (London, 1622), S.T.C., 7367, was dedicated to Dorset, while Jacques du Bosc, The Secretary of Ladies, translated by I[ohn] R[eynolds] (London, 1638), S.T.C., 7276, was dedicated to the Countess of Dorset.

120. For the importance of this French connection, see J.H. Bryant, 'John Reynolds of Exeter and his canon', The Library, Fifth Series, XV (1960), 105-17, esp. 110.

121. Edward May, A most certaine and true Relation of a strange monster or serpent found in the left ventricle of the heart of John Pennant, gentleman, of the age of twenty-one yeares (London, 1639), S.T.C., 17709.

served as 'physitian ... extraordinary unto her most Sacred Majesty, Queene of Great Brittany, etc.', and it was therefore natural to dedicate the pamphlet to her Lord Chamberlain.¹²² In short, the further we explore the area of patronage, the weaker the religious 'signals' become. This may mean that Dorset's own religious views were not doctrinaire; or it may mean that patronage was a mainly secular activity. Or perhaps Dorset's patronage was often secular precisely because his religious views were not doctrinaire.

122. Ibid., title page. Such dedications to Dorset or his wife could sometimes result in actual patronage. The most striking example of this that I have so far found is Francis Quarles. He dedicated two tracts to the Countess of Dorset: Divine Fancies: Digested into Epigrammes, Meditations and Observations (London, 1632), S.T.C., 20529; and Hieroglyphikes of the Life of Man (London, 1638), S.T.C., 20548. The way to Dorset's heart may well have lain through his Countess, for on 1 February 1640 Dorset successfully recommended Quarles to the Lord Mayor and Aldermen of London for the post of City Chronologer: C.L.R.O., Repertory of the Court of Aldermen of the City of London, LIV (1639-40), fol. 86v. It may also be significant that in Francis Wortley, Characters and Elegies (London, 1646), pp. 52-4 (Wing, W 3634; B.L., T.T., E 344/21), the elegy to Quarles directly follows that to the Countess of Dorset. Further information about Quarles may be found in D.N.B., XLVII, 92-6, and especially in C. Hill, Collected Essays, Vol. I: Society and Literature in Seventeenth Century England (Brighton, 1985), 188-97. For a parallel discussion of the plays dedicated to Dorset in his capacity as Henrietta Maria's Lord Chamberlain, see Chapter Three, above, pp. 150-2.

What general conclusions are we to draw from this case study of Dorset's religion? Any attempt to reconstruct his religious attitudes must first of all address the problem of ambiguous and incomplete evidence. Dorset seldom referred to religious questions in his correspondence, while the preamble to his will gives very little away. He kept no diary. This may well be an obstacle to the study of Royalists in general: Gerald Aylmer has recently noted 'their relative lack of articulacy compared to their Puritan-parliamentarian counterparts'.¹²³ Religious beliefs which were Anglican or undogmatic did not stimulate the relentless self-examination which lay behind many 'godly' diaries. Furthermore, those moderates who were not primarily motivated by religious convictions commonly left less coherent evidence of their beliefs. If it is relatively easy to reconstruct the religious imperatives of many militant Parliamentarians, it is incomparably more difficult when we turn to Royalists or to moderates. On this basis, moderate Royalists must pose especially severe problems when we try to assess the relationship between politics and religion.

123. G.E. Aylmer, 'Collective Mentalities in Mid-Seventeenth Century England: II. Royalist Attitudes', Transactions of the Royal Historical Society, Fifth Series, XXXVII (1987), 1-30, at 2.

Where religion was not the prime motivation, it is often difficult to know how much importance to attribute to it. Thus, when Edmund Waller defended episcopacy as 'the counterscarp and outwork' of the whole social and political order, can the religious considerations be isolated from the secular?¹²⁴ A fear of anarchy may likewise have inclined Denzil Holles towards 'primitive' episcopacy, while a horror of disorder was a crucial reason for the 'defection' of Sir Edward Dering from the 'root-and-branch' movement.¹²⁵ Dorset's concern for order throughout his career probably owed as much to social conservatism and loyalty to the Crown as to his religious beliefs. His commitment to obedience and hatred of sedition certainly had a religious component, as his speech at Prynne's trial shows.¹²⁶ But the institutional implications of this were far from clear. Was social order to be secured by 'godly magistrates' or by the hierarchy of the Church of England? At Sherfield's trial, Dorset stressed the need to obey both, and in 1633 this was still possible.¹²⁷ But by 1642 the ideals of 'godly magistracy' and episcopacy had in practice

124. Quoted in Fletcher, Outbreak, p. 124.

125. P. Crawford, Denzil Holles, 1598-1680 (London, 1979), pp. 51-2. D. Hirst, 'The Defection of Sir Edward Dering, 1640-1', Historical Journal, XV (1972), 193-208, passim.

126. See above, pp. 220-2.

127. See above, pp. 214-18.

become incompatible. In general, the strongest exponents of the former joined Parliament, while the champions of the latter sided with the King. Dorset saw episcopacy and monarchy as mutually supportive, but it is impossible to isolate a purely religious motivation for his Royalist allegiance. His regard for bishops was inseparable from his political loyalty to the Crown and his social conservatism. In his recent attempt to analyse the 'Royalist mentality', Gerald Aylmer is 'forced back onto temperamental differences', and stresses 'concepts of honour and loyalty'.¹²⁸ The second point is much stronger than the first, and Sir Edmund Verney and the Earl of Worcester remain classic illustrations of it. Dorset was undoubtedly very loyal, especially to the Queen; it is likely that his ambivalent attitude towards Laud was shaped as much by his loyalty to her as by his private religion. Possibly Dorset was one of the less doctrinaire of her 'puritan followers'. But again we confront the impossibility of segregating religious and secular motives. Were men like Holland and Northumberland in the Queen's circle primarily because they were 'Puritan', or because they were loyal to Henrietta Maria personally, or because they hated the policies of 'Thorough', or because they desired a rapprochement with France?¹²⁹ We cannot know for

128. Aylmer, 'Royalist Attitudes', 29-30.

129. For this, see Smuts, 'Puritan Followers', passim.

certain because Henrietta Maria's 'puritan followers' were not put in a position where they had to choose between these objectives until after 1640. The importance of religious motives can only be assessed confidently where they became incompatible with other considerations, and then either overrode these or were overridden by them. The contrasted Cheshire leaders Sir Thomas Aston and Sir William Brereton dramatically illustrate how religious imperatives could overcome constitutional preferences.¹³⁰ But for Dorset, as for so many other moderates on both sides, no such evidence can be adduced.

It seems very unlikely that Dorset's religious views were doctrinaire. He was probably sympathetic to 'godly' magistrates and 'godly' ministers, yet also patronised Laudians and befriended Catholics. Was this lack of religious dogmatism something which Dorset shared with other Royalists or with other moderates? First, it needs stressing that while virtually all militant Royalists were committed Anglicans, by no means all committed Anglicans were militant Royalists. Gerald Aylmer is struck by 'how many ... cases we find of obviously committed Anglican royalists who did not fight for

130. See Morrill, 'Religious Context', 177.

the King or in some way opted out'.¹³¹ It is impossible to explain this distinction in religious terms: passive and militant Royalists seem to have been equally concerned to defend episcopacy and the Prayer Book. Sir Edward Hyde was a committed Anglican, but remained a moderate Royalist. The crucial reason for Hyde's moderation was probably not his religion, but his overriding concern with constitutional reconciliation.¹³² This was characteristic of moderates on both sides. Dr Morrill has argued that many moderate Parliamentarians were 'primarily concerned with secular misgovernment, with legal and constitutional issues', while many moderate Royalists were 'dominated by a constitutional propriety and constructionism that forbade innovation in accidentals in order to preserve the essence of the constitution'.¹³³ Dorset exactly fits this argument. His letters and speeches in 1640-3 dwelt obsessively on the need for an accommodation between King and Parliament, but hardly ever referred to religious issues. His patronage was likewise shaped by secular motives. Those driven primarily by religious convictions gravitated to the political extremes, while the

131. Aylmer, 'Royalist Attitudes', 4.

132. See B.H.G. Wormald, Clarendon: Politics, History and Religion, 1640-60 (Cambridge, 1951), especially pp. 302-8. For another parallel between Dorset and Hyde, see Chapter Six, below, pp. 14, 49-50.

133. Morrill, 'Sir William Brereton', 324-5.

moderates, like Dorset, were those who either lacked dogmatic religious views, or for whom religion was not the most important consideration. This is what makes the religion of moderates so difficult to reconstruct. Propelled mainly by secular forces, they have generally left much less coherent and unambiguous evidence of their religious beliefs than the zealots who started the war. Nevertheless, the problems must be confronted, for it is only by understanding those who tried to prevent the English Civil War, as well as those who resorted to arms, that the true nature of the conflict can be established.