INTRODUCTION

Background and context

The following edited texts form part of the intelligence-gathering function of English diplomacy in France during the early 1580s. They were put together, in the milieu of the English embassy, between 1579 and 1584, in a series of interrelated versions that indicate a collaborative project, as was not unusual for the period. The authorship of the core survey is still in doubt, but an important contribution to it was made to it by Robert Cecil, son of Elizabeth I's Lord Treasurer, who was in Paris during 1584. The texts amount in sum to a substantial attempt, on a par with those of the contemporary Venetian ambassadors' *Relazioni* or the writings of the Savoyard ambassador Lucinge,[1] but in some ways surpassing them, to survey the entire French political class as well as the structure of power in the provinces of France. They take the form, however, of compilations rather than polished literary works and have some of the advantages of presenting their material in quasi-statistical form.

English interest in the affairs of France was lively and often engaged during this period. A few years later the translator, John Eliot, published his topographical *Survay*,[2] while the most polished general account, by Robert Dallington, appeared in 1604.[3] In the 1590s, Edmond Tyllney completed his vast unpublished *Topographical Descriptions*, Book II of which covered France.[4] Edward

[1] For the *relazioni* of the Venetian ambassadors, see L. Firpo, *Relazioni di ambasciatori veneti al senato*, V (Francia, 1492–1610, Turin, 1978), pp. 745–892: Giovanni Michiel, 1578; Girolamo Lippomano, 1579; Lorenzo Priuli, 1582. On René de Lucinge, see A. Dufour (ed.), *Le miroir des princes ou grands de France*, in *Annuaire-bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire de France*, 1954–1955, pp. 95–186, and *idem* (ed.), *Lettres sur les débuts de la Ligue (1585)* (Geneva, 1966).

[2] *The Survay or Topographical Description of France* (London, 1592), which begins with a list of *Parlements* and *bailliages*, and then covers the country by *pays* rather than military governments. In the later sections of the work, remarks on the stereotypical characteristics of the inhabitants of the *pays* are added.

[3] W.P. Barrett (ed.), *The View of Fraunce (1604)* (Oxford, 1936).

[4] See W.R. Streitberger, *Edmond Tyllney, Master of the Revels and Censor of Plays: A Descriptive Index to his Diplomatic Manuel on Europe* (New York, 1986); *idem* (ed.), *Edmond Tyllney's Topographical Descriptions, Regimens, and Policies* (New York, 1991), which publishes the books on the British Isles only. The nearest to a MS draft is in Folger Shakespeare Library, Vb.182.

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Hoby's translations of La Popelinière and Edward Grimestone's of Jean de Serres[5] made the standard Protestant contemporary historians available in English at the end of the century.

The influence of French writings on English culture in the sixteenth century is vast and complex subject: there was clearly a great appetite for translations from French from the early sixteenth century,[6] but the 1580s saw a sharp rise in English interest in French affairs, and not only news reports but substantial translations of contemporary French polemical works appeared in profusion, when found to be in tune with government policy.[7] Translations of works as diverse as Bodin, Montaigne, and du Bartas were widely available and read, while from the death of Anjou in 1584 there was plainly a rising appetite for translations of texts concerning the civil wars in France.[8]

English envoys to France needed a degree of fluency in the language throughout the sixteenth century (since knowledge of English in France was virtually nonexistent).[9] The French language was studied with a high degree of technical expertise, as the work of Palsgrave (1530) shows,[10] and was being taught from Claude de Sainliens's *French Littleton* (1576) and the works of Eliot, while Randall Cotgrave's *Dictionarie* was to appear in 1611.[11] What is perhaps more unusual in the texts under discussion is the phenomenon of the English writing on France in

It was compiled from the 1560s onwards but only put together in the 1590s. The University of Illinois, Urbana, MS has a fair copy with authorial corrections.

[5] *The Historie of France: The Foure First Books*, E. Hoby (tr.) (London, 1595); *A General Inventorie of the History of France [. . .] to the Treatie of Vervins in 1598 [. . .] Written by J. de Serres*, E. Grimestone (tr.), second edn (London, 1607).

[6] For the general background to all this see S. Lee, *The French Renaissance in England: An Account of the Literary Relations of England and France in the Sixteenth Century* (Oxford, 1910), esp. pp. 42–61, 80–96. J.H. Salmon, in *The French Wars of Religion in English Political Thought* (Oxford, 1959), pp. 15–20, pointed out that, though reports on French politics were extensively translated, the more speculative and theoretical treatises were usually selected or just available in French. L.F. Parmelee, *Good Newes from Fraunce: French Anti-League Propaganda in Late Elizabethan England* (Rochester, 1996) largely confirms this in discussing 130 translations of French pamphlets in the period 1584–1603.

[7] See in particular Parmelee, *Good Newes*, ch. 2.

[8] Lee, *The French Renaissance in England*, pp. 285–358; Parmelee, *Good Newes*, p. 31, and appendix. For example, A.W. Pollard and G.R. Redgrave, *Short Title Catalogue of Books Printed in England [. . .] 1475–1640*, 2nd edn, 3 vols (London, 1976–1991), nos 5034–5042, 11256–11307, 11309–11312, 13091–13147, 13843–13847, 15207–15216 (15215, La Noue, 1587), 14003 (Michel Hurault's *Discours*, 1588), 15230–15241, 18134–18164, 22241–22248. Among the most important French refugee printers at work in London was Thomas Vautrollier.

[9] G. Ascoli, *La Grande-Bretagne devant l'opinion française depuis la guerre de Cent Ans jusqu'à la fin du XVIe siècle* (Paris, 1927), pp. 176–205.

[10] John Palsgrave's *L'éclaircissement de la langue françoyse* (1530) was the first printed systematic French grammar in any country; K. Lambley, *The Teaching and Cultivation of the French Language in England during Tudor and Stuart Times* (Manchester, 1920).

[11] Claudius Holyband, *The French Littleton*, M. St Clare Byrne (ed.) (Cambridge, 1953).

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French, parallel perhaps to the extensive work in Spanish compiled by Sir John Smith in the 1570s.[12]

The texts

These can be listed as follows:

(A) British Library, Cotton MSS, Vespasian FV, fos 1–47 (foliation jumbled);
(B) Public Record Office, SP 78/12 no. 82, fos 222–237 (ment., *Calendar of State Papers, Foreign Series, of the Reign of Elizabeth*, 23 vols (London, 1863–1950) [hereafter *CSPF, Elizabeth*], XIX, p. 83);
(C) Folger Shakespeare Library, MS V.a.146, fos 86–127.

Text (A)

This is the first text in a volume of the Cotton Library which is labelled on its first page 'Thes things of France I had of Mr Harrison of Pouls 1594'.[13] The volume also contains a number of lists of French officials and copies of French official texts on the court and administration, as well as public letters on French political affairs between the 1560s and 1590s. How this volume came to be in a bookseller's hands in 1594 is impossible to say, but it may be conjectured to have previously been linked in some way to the author of (C). It also contains, at fos. 304–305, a document headed: 'The names of those counsailours which have the mannaging of the Kinges chief affaires and their dispositions as it is conceaved', endorsed April 1580. The notes on the individuals concerned correspond very closely in judgment to Part 1 of the main document, *Traité des princes*, etc.

(A) is given as the primary text here; it is written in French in an anonymous English secretary hand, but with corrections in a different hand. It bears the signs of being a copy of another recension, since there are passages in which words have been corrupted and sometimes omitted, and the copyist has interlineated words initially omitted.[14]

[12] BL Add. 48026, fos 65–231.

[13] It may be surmised that Cotton had acquired the MS from the antiquarian William Harrison, author of the 'Description of England' published in Raphael Holinshed, *The Third Volume of the Chronicles Continued to the Yeare 1586* (London, 1587).

[14] For example fo. 25v, 'Rossy autrement Nefue', where 'Nefue' is a corruption of 'Mesme', for Henri de Mesme, sr de Malassise. This list of govs in Picardy is seriously

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The contemporary corrections have dealt with some, but not all, of these. The French is fairly accurate, but betrays many idiomatic signs that the copyist, at least, was English rather than French. The text contains: Part 1 (i) a survey of the leading ministers in France, in the form of brief thumb-nail sketches, followed by (ii) a summary of the causes of factional conflict and then finally Part 2, the survey of France province by province. Internal evidence indicates that the basis of this text was drawn up early in 1580, but the text as it stands was copied in 1583 and emended towards the end of the year.[15] The text has been bound up so that the foliation is hopelessly confused and needs to be rearranged in the correct order.

Text (B)

This is written in an Italic hand that is almost certainly the autograph of the twenty-one-year-old Robert Cecil, and was signed by him at Paris on 30 September 1584. The text is simply that of the survey of French provinces, i.e. the (A) text, Part 2. The French is sometimes more inaccurate than (A), with mistakes in gender and agreement, though sometimes clearer in meaning. Cecil seems to have made the usual copyist's mistake of omitting passages by error where similar words occur in proximity, but he also attempted to tidy up some of his original's mistakes, and added passages which brought the survey up to date for late 1584.

In addition to this text, we have in the same hand, and dated Paris, 3 October, a number of supplementary documents as follows: (i) no. 84, fos 240–245v, a list of the titled nobility, officers of the crown, governors, distribution of titled nobles by province, and important nobles of neighbouring territories. This gives every impression of

corrupted and partly corrected in (C), though both spell the gov. of Corbie as 'Queilly' instead of 'Heilly'.

[15] A number of individuals who d. in 1579 are listed and then noted as recently deceased. Secretary Fizes is noted as 'mort', having d. in 1579 (Part 1, n. 28). The entry on Bellegarde (Part 1, n. 21) suggests that the first draft was made early in 1580, since he had d. in the previous December yet his d. is not noted. The entry on Roissy (Part 1, n. 61) does not note his dismissal in January 1582. The date of composition can be narrowed to between June 1579 (when Chateauvieulx became capt. of the Scots guard) and March 1580 (when Jean d'O succ. Rambouillet as capt. of the guard). The entry on Cossé (n. 15) suggests that the revision was done between his d. in January 1582 and the end of 1583. Further additional notes are made up to 1583 (e.g. including the elevation of Guillaume de Joyeuse to the marshalship in 1583, and of his s., the royal favourite, as gov. of Normandy in the same year; Cheverny's appt as chancellor in November 1583).

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being an official and widely-known list;[16] (ii) no. 85, fos 247–252, a text much more closely allied to the rest of the compilation, consisting of paragraphs on a large number of families, restricted to their main members, with marriage alliances, but occasionally noting income. The approach differs from the rest of the texts by not dividing its families by province but rather by family connection. The practical value of these compilations to the English government is obvious and continued to be pursued, as we can see a brief survey of the Breton nobility made in 1593.[17] Additional information contained in these documents which throws light on texts (A)–(B) will be referred to in the notes as (B)(i) and (B)(ii) fos [. . .], and the full texts given in Appendix 2.

The fact that Robert Cecil was in France during this period should occasion no surprise since intelligence was often based on travellers' reports. William Cecil had sent his elder son Thomas there in 1561 to stay with Nicholas Throckmorton and learn civil law as well as French and Italian; he could also observe the political and religious situation on his father's behalf.[18] William Cecil indeed took a close interest in young English noblemen and their activities while on tour, encouraging the Earl of Rutland, who was to travel to France in 1571, to inspect:

> [. . .] the countries as you pass [. . .] by whom they ar governed as well by superior officers as by subalternall, what noble men have ther habitation in the same countrys, whyther ther be any superior place of Parlement for justice in the country [. . .] what ar the principal commodities [. . .] as well of nature as the soyles or [. . .] by industry.

He was to pay special attention to the court, the royal family, officers of state and 'the principalls of the noble men and gentlemen that profess the religion reformed and that do challendg the benefit of the Edict, ther allyances and confederacions, ther habitacions'.[19] It was indeed generally assumed that part of the purpose of travel was to gather intelligence, as the vogue for instruction manuals to travellers

[16] There are numerous lists of peers and titled nobility, province by province, in French archives and libraries, and this seems to be the material drawn on by Tyllney (see below, n. 42).

[17] 'The seynoryes in Brittany', PRO SP78/31, fo. 240 (I owe this reference to Malcolm Walsby).

[18] Conyers Read, *Mr Secretary Cecil and Queen Elizabeth* (London, 1955), p. 212.

[19] PRO SP12/77 no. 6, fo. 10: this long instruction in Cecil's hand (there is also a copy in SP Domestic) contains detailed suggestions for observations in France and other countries. See also S.H. Bleiweiss, 'The Elizabethan intelligence service 1572–1585' (Rutgers University, NJ, unpublished Ph.D., 1976), pp. 49, 169, 178.

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at the start of the age of the Grand Tour testifies. Travelling without detailed preparatory instruction was regarded as fruitless.[20]

There were many advantages in terms of cost in placing a son with the English envoy in the country of destination; Sir Philip Sydney was prepared for public service by a tour of France, Germany, Italy, and the Low Countries in the years 1572–1575, partly subsidized by the Queen. Francis Bacon was attached to the staff of Amyas Paulet's embassy to France from 1576–1579, and became an information gatherer for the 'intelligencer' Thomas Bodley. Indeed, the latter instructed his employee to note the state of religious parties, how they concerned England, the history of the country:

> [. . .] the consanguinities, alliances, and estates of their princes, proportion between the nobility and magistracy; the constitutions of their courts of justice; the state of laws, as well for the making, as the execution thereof; how the sovereignty of the king infuseth itself into all acts and ordinances; how many ways they lay impositions and taxation, and gather revenues to the crown. What be the liberties and servitudes of all degrees; what disciplines and preparations for wars; what invention for increase of traffic at home, for multiplying their commodities [. . .].

A clearer blueprint for broad intelligence gathering in the context of the time could not be found.[21] Such 'intelligence' was not so much spying as information gathering and analysis. Diplomatic agents were naturally best placed to collect and analyse such information in detail, and this was probably the routine nature of their work rather than cloak-and-dagger operations. While attached to the embassy in France from 1564 onwards, Robert Beale, later an adjutant of Walsingham as well as his brother-in-law, had taken care to assemble copies of documents concerning the finances of France and its court.[22] When back in England in the 1570s, he preserved the extensive writings of

[20] See, for instance, the translation of Jerome Thurler, *The Traveller* (London, 1575). Robert Dallington took care, in the edition he published himself in 1604 after the pirated edition, to provide a preface on the art of travel: *A Method for Travel. Shewed by Taking the View of France. As it Stoode in the Yeare of out Lord 1598* (London, 1604); see also Edward Chaney, *The Evolution of the Grand Tour* (London, 1998).

[21] For a consideration of this controversial document, see L. Jardine and A. Stewart, *Hostage to Fortune: The Troubled Life of Francis Bacon, 1561–1626* (London, 1998), pp. 48–50. See also D.J.B. Trim, 'Sir Thomas Bodley and the international Protestant cause', *Bodleian Library Record*, 16 (1998), pp. 314–340. For a more detailed travel instruction, c.1595, probably drawn up by the former Secretary of State, William Davison, see Streitberger, *Edmond Tyllney, Master of the Revels*, pp. 29–32, first published in *Profitable Instructions: Decribing what Speciall Obseruations are to Be Taken by Travellers in all Nations, States and Countries*, ed. by Benjamin Fisher (London, 1633).

[22] BL Yelverton MSS, Add. MS 48026, fos 10–31.

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Sir John Smith on the Spanish monarchy, assembled during his mission to that country in 1577.[23]

The household of the English ambassador to France – under Paulet, Cobham, and Stafford the only permanent English embassy – was bound to be an information factory; indeed one recent study has called it 'the crossroads of the diplomatic world'.[24] In 1580, Bacon's brother Anthony went to Paris and, though not attached to the embassy, began work as an 'intelligencer', travelling around France and staying in Geneva over the next few years (he spent much of 1584 and early 1584 in Bordeaux, for instance). In this role he is thought to have drawn up in 1582 'Notes on the present state of Christendom', once attributed to Francis Bacon, as well as memoranda on the politics of most European countries, which he forwarded to Burghley via Nicholas Faunt, Walsingham's secretary. Then, having steered rather close to the wind, he was in May 1584 taken directly into ambassador Stafford's service in clandestine liaison work with the Navarrist camp, a course that was to lead to his famous legal troubles over accusations of sodomy at Montauban in 1586.[25] Stafford's role remains an ambiguous one, especially in his relations with Walsingham at a time when there was a degree of tension between the latter and Burghley over the control of secret information from abroad. Recent work has shown how determined he was as a seeker of intelligence,[26] and since John Bossy's work on Bruno and the French embassy in London, of course, we know much more about the importance of embassies in the collation of a wide range of intelligence and promotion of secret

[23] *Ibid.*, fos 65–231.

[24] M. Leimon and G. Parker, 'Treason and plot in Elizabethan diplomacy: the "fame of Sir Edward Stafford" reconsidered', *English Historical Review*, 111 (1996), pp. 1134–1158, 1139. See also Jardine and Stewart, *Hostage to Fortune*, pp. 55–59, especially in view of the presence of Thomas Phelippes, the cryptanalyst. See also Bleiweiss, 'The Elizabethan intelligence service', pp. 26–55. For the early newsletters from France in this period (25 for the period 1579–1585), see PRO SP101/9.

[25] Jardine and Stewart, *Hostage to Fortune*, pp. 73–76, 87–88, who suggest that, as with many such writings, the work was collaborative, the outline by Francis and the details by Anthony. For the text, see J. Spedding, *Letters and Life of Francis Bacon*, 7 vols (London, 1861–1872), I, pp. 18–30; BL Harl. 7021, fos 1–11; D. Du Maurier, *Golden Lads: Anthony Bacon, Francis and Their Friends* (London, 1975), pp. 66–67; J. Freedman, 'Anthony Bacon and his world, 1558–1601' (Ph.D. thesis, Temple University, Philadelphia, PA, 1979), pp. 104–107; Alan Haynes, *Invisible Power: The Elizabethan Secret Service, 1570–1603* (Stroud, 1992), pp. 104–105.

[26] For the debate on Walsingham's suspicions of Stafford, see Conyers Read, 'The fame of Sir Edward Stafford', *American Historical Review*, 20 (1915), pp. 292–314, arguing that he was supplying Mendoza with information, refuted by J.E. Neale in 'The fame of Sir Edward Stafford', in *idem*, *Essays in Elizabethan History* (London, 1958), pp. 146–169, with a return to the view that he was actually spying in Leimon and Parker, 'The "fame of Sir Edward Stafford" reconsidered'.

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schemes, as well as, for Stafford, the observation of English exiles in France.[27]

Robert Cecil therefore had plenty of examples to draw on for his travels abroad on behalf of his father. He was in France for some period during 1583, staying with the newly appointed ambassador Stafford, and seems to have returned in August 1584, staying this time with one of Stafford's gaming partners, the sieur de Marchaumont, a member of the late duc d'Anjou's household, who had himself been in England the previous year. The effects of the death of Anjou in June 1584 were an obvious reason for Burghley to send over his son to observe affairs in France. It has been suggested that Marchaumont was the source of much of his information[28] but, as we have seen, Cecil confined himself to editing an already existing work. Cecil was also in touch with his friend, the 'plausible scoundrel' William Parry, who had been in Paris as and agent for Lord Burghley in 1580 and 1583, supplying information on English Catholic exiles, but was arrested dramatically for treason early in 1585.[29]

Text (C)

The authorship of this document is not in doubt, as it is claimed by the shadowy figure of Richard Cook of Kent. The text on the provinces of France is simply headed 'France' at the head of the first folio, though it is described as 'Discription de tous les provinces [. . .]' in the index and this title had been retained here. It forms part of

[27] J. Bossy, *Giordano Bruno and the Embassy Affair* (Yale, CT, 1991), pp. 54–56, 64–71; complemented by *idem*, *Under the Molehill: An Elizabethan Spy Story* (Yale, CT, 2001). See Stafford to Walsingham 8 December 1584, Hatfield House MSS, 163, fo. 62, *Calendar of Manuscripts of [. . .] the Marquis of Salisbury Preserved at Hatfield House*, HMC, 22 vols (London, 1883–1971) [hereafter *HMC Hatfield MSS*], III, p. 75, transmitting an answer to a 'secret book of the faction of the Guise against the King of Navarre', and same to same, 29 December 1584, III, p. 77, transmitting 'the French book of the new Order of the King's House'.

[28] P.M. Handover, *The Second Cecil: The Rise to Power 1563–1604 of Sir Robert Cecil Later First Earl of Salisbury* (London, 1959), pp. 38–45. Handover suggests that Cecil was at Orléans in September on a journey with Stafford, though he was plainly back at Paris by then. Burghley was certainly warning Stafford in 1586 of rumours in England (implicitly purveyed by Walsingham) that 'you are in dett by unmeasurable playing; that Marchaumont and Simier do wholly rule you'; W. Murdin, *Collection of State Papers Relating to Affairs in the Reign of Queen Elizabeth from the Year 1571 to 1596* (London, 1759), p. 569. Marchaumont gravitated to the Cath. League after 1584, and the tone of the first part of the Treatise is highly unlikely to stem from him.

[29] Conyers Read, *Lord Burghley and Queen Elizabeth* (London, 1960), pp. 300–301; L. Hicks, 'The strange case of Dr William Parry: the career of an agent provocateur', *Studies* (Dublin), 37 (1948), pp. 343–363.

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a larger collection of extracts and studies, including one of the court of France, the English version of which has already been published.[30] The volume from which this document comes is entirely in French and was dedicated to Henry, fourth Earl of Derby, from the Middle Temple on 28 October 1584 (Derby was to leave on a ceremonial embassy to France in February 1585). Cook then went on to dedicate his English translation of the section on the court on 4 February 1585 to Lord Cobham, father of Sir Henry Cobham, who had been replaced as ambassador in France in September 1583 by Sir Edward Stafford.[31]

Most of what we know about Cook in this period stems from his dedicatory letters, and one problem with the records is that his is a fairly common name.[32] It seems that he had been in France with Paulet's successor as English ambassador, Sir Henry Cobham, in the early 1580s. What complications might have ensued from Cobham's hostility to Walsingham are unknown, but they would not have damaged his relations with Cecil. He may have stayed on with Sir Edward Stafford and must have known Cecil well at this time. As he put it himself in his dedicatory letter to Cobham in February 1585:

> After I had spente some yeres in Fraunce under Sir Henry Cobham beinge then Her Majesties embassadoure in those partes and had gotten happilie (by that meanes) some good occasion to be daylie conversaunte in the Frenche Courte, retornynge at the lenthe into Englande, I coulde not chose but thinke upon the orders and fashions of that place where I had bene soe longe and soe manie tymes employed, havinge therefore gathered together a fewe notes onlie for my owne remembrance, I was by some of my friendes so earnestlie importuned to presente then (even such as they were) to me L of Darbie.

This was the volume from which text (C) is drawn. The letter of dedication to Derby in October 1584 survives and tells us something about Cook's literary pretensions: 'On me peut estymer du tout sans jugement ou pour le moins comme un pauvre Phocion traictant de l'art militaire devant le grand et expert Hannibal. Car c'est vous Monseigneur qui en nostre aage est rendu admirable entre les plus grands en matiere des affaires d'estat.' He could, he said, have

[30] D. Potter and P. Roberts, 'An Englishman's view of the court of Henri III, 1584–5: Richard Cook's "Description of the Court of France"', *French History*, 2 (1988) pp. 312–344.

[31] *CSPF Eliz.*, 1583–1584, nos 157, 159.

[32] He seems to have spelled his name either 'Cook' or 'Cooke'; neither of the manuscripts seems to be an autograph.

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dedicated his work to the Queen, 'mais pour ce que vous delectez en telz et semblables discours, j'ay prins hardiesse de vous presenter ce premier bougeron de mon creu'. The letter to Cobham of 1585 tells us something of the result:

> Althoughe at the firste I was almoste uttelie discouraged, because fruites gathered at this tyme of the yere be not wonte to be welcome to anye; and allsoe I feared that Salamon's bees woulde easilie discover my counterfayte gilleiflower: yet his Lordship's most fawurable likinge of soe smale paynes hath imboldened me to goe forewarde and to make a seconde presente thereof unto your honor [. . .] which hereafter in some fitter season shall I hope yelde riper and better fruites to your agreament.[33]

Everything, then, points to a man in search of patrons eager to attract attention.

Who, then, was Richard Cook? There are many men of such name in records connected with Kent during the period, all of them unlikely to be this man.[34] A Richard Cooke matriculated at Trinity College Cambridge in 1556, was a scholar in 1560, and admitted to the Inner Temple in 1561.[35] He would surely have been of an earlier generation, since the author of the text is clearly a man setting out on his career. The records of all the Inns of Court are silent.[36] A likelier connection is provided by a family of Kentish landowners at North Cray and Erith, who seem to have emerged from Sussex and the world of London trade in the middle of the sixteenth century and to have retained connections in the city. So, a Richard Cooke was the younger brother of the head of the family, Edmund Cooke, who as JP sat on the bench

[33] For the text of these two letters: Folger, V b.41, fo. 117; V a.146, fo. 86.

[34] For example Centre for Kentish Studies, Maidstone [CKS], QM/RLv/53 (26 December 1598); *ibid.* 12 (7 May 1595) victualler's recognizances by a yeoman of Gravesend and a painter of Maidstone. Earlier in the 16th century, there had been a suit in Chancery involving Edward Bolney, alderman of Canterbury, over the administration of the goods of Richard Cooke (PRO C1/193/20). There is no will in the probate records of the PRO which seems appropriate.

[35] This Cooke is also clearly listed as 'of Essex'. See J. Venn, *Alumni Cantabrigienses, Part 1, Earliest Times to 1751,* 4 vols (Cambridge, 1922–1926), I, p. 386; *idem*, *The Book of Matriculations and Degrees: A Catalogue of Those Who Have Been Matriculated or Been Admitted to Any Degree in the University of Cambridge from 1544 to 1659* (Cambridge, 1913), p. 171. The Richard Cooke who matriculated at Caius in 1577–1578 is also from another county (*ibid.*). Three Richard Cookes matriculated at Oxford in 1566 and 1571 (A. Clarke, *Register of the University of Oxford*, 4 vols (Oxford, 1887), II, ii, pp. 28, 50, 82); none of them seem likely.

[36] For example, H.A.C. Sturgess, *Register of Admissions to the Honourable Society of the Middle Temple* (London, 1949), I. The same goes for the equivalent publications for the Inner Temple and Lincoln's Inn.

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with Sir Henry Cobham in this period and died in 1619.[37] This provides a convincing link with Cobham as Richard Cook's patron.

The records of Derby's garter embassy of 1585 are, to say the least, confused. Derby's household suite includes a 'D. Cooke', Clarenceux herald, whereas it is evidently the case that the person meant is the well-known Robert Cooke appointed, as Clarenceux herald, to attend the embassy.[38] There is also a 'Master Anthony Cooke' of Essex listed in the printed report of the embassy.[39] However, all this does not exclude the possibility that Richard Cook was the 'Mr Cooke' despatched by Walsingham to Stafford in March 1585, and who was accused by the latter of misdemeanours in putting it about that Parry had taken back his confession before his execution.[40]

After 1585, traces of Richard Cook become scarce and there is no certainty that he lived much longer. A 'Mr Cooke' accompanied Cecil on a major embassy to France in February 1598, though there is no way of knowing if he is the same man.[41] There is, though, at least a possibility that our Richard Cook went on to become an 'intelligencer' abroad and was the Richard 'Cooke' who had been in Spain and

[37] *Visitation of Kent, 1619*, *Publications of the Harleian Society*, 42 (1898), pp. 117–118: Richard and Edmund's father, Henry Cooke, had married the dau. of a London alderman, Henry Goodere, and Edmund was m. to the daughter of a controller of London Bridge. Henry was consistently entitled 'gentleman' (see *Calendar of Patent Rolls, Edward VI*, 7 vols (London, 1924–1929), III, p. 234. On Edmund's role as JP, see *Kent Assizes* and recognizances taken before Cobham, Justinian Champneis, and Edmund Cooke, CKS, QM/RLv/6, 14 March 1589. Edmund had been commissioner of sewers since 1569 (*Calendar of Patent Rolls Elizabeth*, 1569–1572, no. 1865). Henry Cooke had acquired Lesnes Abbey (Erith) via Sir Ralph Sadler in 1541, and Mount Mascall in North Cray (Bexley) under Elizabeth. (See E. Hasted, *A History and Topographical Survey of the County of Kent*, 12 vols, 2nd edn (Canterbury, 1797) II, pp. 154, 254). Henry d. in the reign of Edward VI, leaving his s. as minors (licence to Edmund Cooke for assuming his lands from the age of 21, March 1563, *Calendar of Patent Rolls, Elizabeth I*, 1560–1563, p. 598).

[38] *Derby Household Books*, *Chetham Society*, old series, 31; E.B. Goodacre, 'Henry Earl of Derby's suite on his embassy to Paris in 1584–5', *Transactions of the Historical Society of Lancashire and Cheshire*, 92 (1941), pp. 51–56. See also R. Strong, 'Festivals for the Garter embassy at the court of Henri III', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 22 (1959), pp. 60–70. Robert Cooke, Clarenceux from 1567 (d. 1592), was also much older, having matriculated in the early 1550s (see C.H. and T. Cooper, *Athenae Cantabrigienses*, 3 vols (London/Cambridge, 1858–1911), I, p. 145), but he may have been connected with the Richard Cooke who matriculated at Trinity College in 1556. Robert Cooke was also a major antiquary who produced a vast corpus of genealogical writings on the English nobility and gentry; see e.g. BL Harleian 214, 1041, 1009, 1183.

[39] J. Nichols, *The Progresses and Public Processions of Queen Elizabeth*, 4 vols (London, 1788–1821), II, p. 209; 1823 edn, II, pp. 428–431. 'Mr. Cooke of Essex' is mentioned as 'one of the gentlemen ushers of her Majesty' who also attended this embassy (see *Derby Household Books*, introduction, letter of Kellet to Farrington).

[40] Walsingham to Stafford, 7 March 1585, Stafford to Walsingham, 12 March 1585; *CSPF Eliz.* 1584–1585, pp. 332, 349.

[41] *HMC Hatfield MSS*, XXIII, p. 22.

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returned to England in 1600 to 'discover' the plots of English exiles in Madrid. He returned to Spain and received £66 in 1601. However, this Richard Cooke was decidedly shady, strange, and dishonest. He claimed to have opted to turn Queen's evidence on the plotters in Madrid, Wiseman and Hare, while stopping at Vitoria on his journey from Madrid:

> The nighte I beinge in my bede I dremed I was in Inglande aprehended and exsecuted for this offence and that my soule departinge this life was receved bye evell spyrytes which broughte me into suche amaze and teror that I began to see my error and so fully [. . .] mendede to revelle the same.

The problem is that the general tone of this letter and the spelling do not reveal a very educated man, while he goes on to say in a naïve tone that 'I take God to witnes above all thinges I desier to lyve in my cuntry and have hade departed the same hade I knowen the wolde so well as I do nowe'.[42] This seems to have been the same man who was reported on from Bayonne early in 1600 as a messenger from Richard Hawkins for the 'relief' of the English there, but who was afraid to return to England because of outstanding charges of counterfeiting against him, and had evidently been imprisoned by Idiaquez in Spain for refusing to act as a double agent.[43] Whether he should be connected with the 'R. Cooke' who wrote to his sister in 1600 'being myself religious' about the conversion of their mother to the Catholic faith is again uncertain.[44]

There are a number of difficulties of textual interpretation in the text written by Richard Cooke of Kent. The text of the court survey certainly seems to have been drawn up in 1583–1584 and there is no reason to doubt that the survey of provinces took shape at the same time. The writing is that of a copyist and betrays a certain idiosyncrasy in the spelling of proper names. Cook's work certainly draws on (A) and (B); he sometimes quotes that text verbatim (such passages are italicized in this edition of Cook), and more often seems to paraphrase it (a convenient check for this is in the entries on Montmorency

[42] Richard Cooke to Cecil, 14 January 1600, PRO SP78/44, fo. 27; same to same, London, 28 July 1600, Hatfield House MSS, vol. 251, no. 15 (*HMC Hatfield MSS*, X, pp. 249–250); source of quotation – same to same, London, 2 August 1600, Hatfield MSS, vol. 81, no. 7 (*HMC Hatfield MSS*, X, p. 261), reiterating his request for financial aid and asking for 'derectyon' to be given to a Mr Honyman in the matter. For a summary of all this, see Handover, *The Second Cecil*, p. 267.

[43] M.A.E. Green (ed.), *Calendar of State Papers Domestic, 1598–1601* (London, 1869), pp. 378, 427, 470. There is a possibility that this Richard Cook was the same as the one arrested in Cornwall in March 1603; see *Calendar [. . .] Hatfield*, XII, p. 183.

[44] *Calendar [. . .] Domestic, 1598–1601*, p. 410, 'R. Cooke' to Mrs Mary Goche, 9 March 1600.

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under Ile-de-France in each document). His arrangement of material, though, is rather different. It is virtually certain that the version used by Cook was Cecil's, since he repeats Cecil's misunderstandings of (A) (for example, Cecil's misreading of 'princes' for 'provinces' in the introduction to the provincial survey). He draws on the material in (A) and (B) for the 'alliances' of his noble houses but goes beyond them. His survey of the provincial jurisdictions is more accurate than (A) and (B) and, while (A) and (B) pass over the state of Paris as needing no further comment, (C) indulges in a flowery and not entirely accurate account of its government. The matter concerning 'alliances' is more perfunctory than in (A) and (B) and sometimes more confused. Where judgements of individuals are concerned, for instance of the secretaries of state such as Pinart, Cook's opinions are rather different, certainly less acerbic. It is unlikely, therefore, that Cook drew on (A) for them.

While we know that the Cook volume was the first part of his work, the second has not survived, and so what we have covers only the four northern provinces of Ile-de-France, Normandy, Picardy, and Brittany. What he has to say is very much more detailed than (A) and (B), and more concerned with the income of the nobility and their religious affiliations. Most individuals are classified by age (often only approximate when these can be checked, and usually slightly lower than the ascertainable age for 1584), yearly income, and religion. The marginal notes for the latter are: 'Pro' (Protestant), 'Pa' (Papist), or 'U' (possibly neutral or royalist). It is also immediately obvious that the coverage of Normandy is much the most detailed in any part of these texts, extending beyond the important members of the 'second nobility', those prominent in both local and national affairs, to gentlemen of purely local importance. This is its main claim to originality, since there is nothing contemporary which is like it in terms of breadth of survey on these matters.

It is clear that the Protestant bias of the writer leads him seriously to overestimate Protestant strength in Normandy by the attention paid to relatively obscure members of the Lower Norman gentry, or by bringing in families such as the ducs de Bouillon and comtes de Montgommery whose credit in the province was much reduced by the 1580s. While some Rouennais families are included, important ones such as the Bauquemare are ignored, as are powerful Catholic sword familes such as Tiercelin, Pellevé, Harcourt, and Clères. Similarly, in the coverage of Picardy, the key Catholic family and affinity of the Humières (so central to the formation of the 1576 League) is ignored.

Cook's survey is far more systematic than (A) and, where it is possible to check, seems surprisingly accurate. To make sense of his figures, it should be noted that, though Cook expressed his values in livres tournois, the latter had been suppressed as money of account in 1578

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in favour of the écu, worth 3 livres, and the livre was to be a silver coin, the franc. The value of landed property in this period was usually assessed at thirty times annual revenue, though the latter fluctuated as thus did the return on capital investment. An ordonnance of 1582 stipulated an annual revenue of 8000 écus as the minimum for a duchy.[45]

Cook's work therefore needs to be viewed as a text related to but very different from (A) and (B). Both of them constitute one of the earliest attempts to provide an overall conspectus of the French nobility in these terms. The supplementary documents compiled in the Folger volume are printed here in Appendix 3. They concern matters of precedence and the procedures of the French royal chancellery, but also include a remarkably detailed tax list for the '*bonnes villes*' of France, stemming from the levy made by the consent of the Estates General in 1577 but which failed to raise the sums necessary for waging war. The most likely source here is a chancellery *formulaire* of the kind which often included lists of local circumscriptions and modes of address as well as exempla of royal letters.[46]

The sources

The question of the sources drawn on is inevitably highly complex and obscure. It seems clear that the French crown may have had at its disposal surveys of reliable provincial nobles. In 1572, the duc de Nevers had advised Henri III when he was still duc d'Anjou that:

> [. . .] pource que la France est si grande et peuplée d'une infinité de noblesse qu'il est bien malesé s'en pouvoir souvenir à toutes heures, il soulageroit fort vostre memoire aux occasions soudaines, avoir ung roolle des principaulx gentilshommes de chacune provynce indiferamment de toute calité, qui vous sont recongneuz dignes de avoir charges et estatz [. . .].[47]

[45] Jacqueline Boucher, *Société et mentalités autour de Henri III* (thèse de l'Université de Lyon III, 1977) 4 vols (Lille, 1981), I, pp. 407–408.

[46] H. Michaud, *Les formulaires de la grande chancellerie 1500–1580* (Paris, 1972).

[47] N. Le Roux, *La Faveur du roi: mignons et courtisans au temps des derniers Valois (vers 1547–vers 1589)* (Seyssel, 2000), pp. 120–121, n. 3. For examples from one province: 'Noms et surnoms des gentilshommes d'Auvergne' (BN fr. 3383, fos 71); 'Role des nobles du duché d'Auvergne qui font le serment de fidelité au Roy' (AD Loire, MS); 'Rolle et estat des noms, surnoms, qualités et demeurances des gentilshommes et aultres qui ont porté les armes contre le Roy notre sire [. . .] estant du ressort de la jurisdiction et gouvernance de Roye', 27 March 1569, BN fr. 4717, fos 81–82.

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Such lists were an essential resource in the planning of patronage, though they may not have paid much attention to family and lineage, nor would they have been generally accessible. J.M. Constant, in calling for a more quantitive approach to the question of the political objectives of noble clans, pointed out that every province had such lists and that they needed to be co-ordinated.[48] The documents printed here to some extent supply that gap, and may reflect a degree of access to such semi-public information. That there was also a passion for panegyric genealogies sponsored by distinguished families from the late Middle Ages is beyond doubt, though they cannot have circulated very widely.[49] There were a few genealogical compilations in print during the period from 1560–1580,[50] though it seems unlikely that they were drawn on for this work; the great age of aristocratic genealogy in print did not begin until the work of André du Chesne and Guy Allard after c.1620. Studies of great officers of state in the works of Jean Le Feron, published in the 1550s, were available. Indeed, Le Feron's work was already known to English diplomats in the time of Nicolas Wotton, an earlier English envoy who, while in Paris in 1549, collected materials of an analogous kind concerning the genealogies and connections of the French nobility.[51]

By the 1580s, there was ample printed material on contemporary France. Edmond Tyllney's sources on France are known to have included Belleforest's *Histoire Universelle* (1570) and the *Cosmographie* (1575), as well as the English translation of La Noue's *Politike and Militarie Discourses* (1587), and he may have had a government financial document at his disposal.[52] Dallington made use extensively, among historians, of Commynes, and among contemporary writers, of

[48] J.-M. Constant, 'Clans, partis nobiliaires et politiques au temps des guerres de religion', in J.-P. Genet and M. Le Mené (eds), *Genèse de l'état moderne. Prélèvement et redistribution. Actes du Colloque de Fontevraud, 1984* (Paris, 1987), p. 225.

[49] For example, C. d'Hozier (ed.), *Histoire de Bretagne avec les chroniques des maisons de Vitré et de Laval*, (Paris, 1638), written c.1500; J. Legeay, *Abregé des alliances, antiquitez [. . .] de l'illustre maison d'Espinay*, H. Busson (ed.), in *Charles d'Espinay [. . .] 1531–91* (Paris, 1923).

[50] For example, F. de L'Alouette, *Traité des nobles [. . .] avec une histoire de la maison de Couci* (Paris, 1577).

[51] The three volumes of notes by Wotton are to be found in British Library, Add. MS 38692 and Harley MS 902, headed 'Lutetia', and PRO SP Foreign Mary, no. 171. It would seem that these papers passed to Burghley on Wotton's death (BL Add. 20770, fo. 20). Wotton traced the genealogies of the families of Chabot, Luxembourg-Ligny, Dreux, and Boulogne from the writings of and conversation with Jean Le Feron. In Add. 38692, fos 72v–73r we find notes on the Rouault de Gamaches family 'ex relatu domini de Perrey anno 1549 mense Augusto'; fo. 218r, notes 'ex chartis M. Feronii'; Harley 902, fo. 172r–81r, 'ex chartis Feronii', notes on the Mailly and Offémont families. For a further discussion of this work, see B. Ficaro, 'Nicholas Wotton: dean and diplomat' (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Kent, Canterbury, 1981).

[52] Streitberger, *Edmond Tyllney, Master of the Revels*, p. 49.

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Bodin's *Six Livres de la Republique* (published in 1576 but still not, of course, available in English in the 1580s); La Noue's *Discours*, *Le Guide des chemins de France* of Charles Estienne, published in 1555; *Le Cabinet du Roy de France* (1581),[53] which provided highly tendentious detailed statistical information; du Haillan (1571);[54] P. Mathieu's *Histoire des derniers troubles* (1597);[55] Pierre de La Place (1565);[56] du Tillet's *Recueil des Roys de France* (finished in 1558 but not printed until 1580); and the *Dialogue entre le Maheustre et le Manant*, a highly polemical work of the later stages of the League. Robert Cecil's only direct reference to a printed work is du Tillet (see Appendix 2) from whom he gleaned some information on the house of Courtenay. The book concerned is likely to have been *Recueil des Roys de France*.[57]

In any case, however, printed and semi-official sources would not have been adequate to keep a compilation such as Cook's up to date for 1584, and just as Wotton had relied on verbal communications from antiquaries, so Cook and his associates are likely to have relied on a variety of verbal sources, especially for recent developments; we know that there were a number of Huguenot nobles in exile in England during this period and, as far as Normandy is concerned, there is a comprehensive list of them.[58] The Rouennais agent, François de Civille, seems as likely a source as any for the details about the many minor Norman Huguenot gentlemen included.[59] As for knowledge of the income of the nobility, this can only derive ultimately from privileged information, common rumour, or declarations of wealth for the *ban et arrière-ban*. Foreign envoys were usually interested in such matters; indeed the Venetian ambassadors and the Papal nuncios in the same period took care to report what they thought was the income

[53] Nicolas Barnaud (?), *Le Cabinet du Roy de France* (n.p., 1581).

[54] B., sr. du Haillan, *De l'estat et succez des affaires de France jusques au Roy Loys onziesme* (Paris, 1571, repr. 1572), p. 1609 etc.

[55] P. Mathieu, *Histoire des derniers troubles de France sous les regnes des Roys Tres-Chrestiens Henry III [. . .] et Henry IIII* (Lyon, 1597).

[56] Pierre de La Place, *Commentaires de l'estat de la religion er republique sous les Rois Henry et François seconds, et Charles neufiesme* (Paris, 1565).

[57] *Recueil des Roys de France, leurs couronne et maison* (Paris, 1580), and his brother Jean du Tillet, Bishop of Meaux's *Chronicon de regibus Francorum a Faramundo* had been in print since 1548. However, Greffier Du Tillet's s., Hélie, later published *Discours dur la généalogie et maison de Courtenay issue de Louis le Gros [. . .]* (Paris, 1603), and it is possible that Cecil had seen a MS copy of this. See also D. Kelley, *Foundations of Modern Historical Scholarship: Language, Law and History in the French Renaissance* (New York, 1970), pp. 215–238.

[58] Dated 13 January 1586, *CSPF, Elizabeth*, XX, p. 293; those listed are from Rouen, pays de Caux, Picardy, and Vexin.

[59] On François de Civille, see the note below on Cook, Normandy. Civille, who had a colourful life, especially in the siege of Rouen of 1562, had been reporting to Walsingham from Rouen at least as early as 1582, travelled to England on a mission for his master, the duc de Bouillon, in 1584, and was resident at Rye with his wife the following year.

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of some leading figures in France.[60] As for religious allegiance, this, of course, was of prime concern but never easy for contemporaries to estimate. Cardinal d'Ossat thought that no more than 10 per cent of the nobility had been attracted by Catholic enthusiasm to the League, and an Italian report of 1589 tried to estimate the loyalties of just over a hundred of the leading nobles of France, including fifty-nine followers of Henri III as against fifty-four for Mayenne.[61]

The assumptions of the authors

Analysis of the political, social and religious climate in France that emerges from these documents requires some attention. The layout of the document anticipates in some ways the approach of Edmond Tyllney's *Topographical Descriptions*, which were to combine the historical with surveys of the commodities of regions and their chief families. Tyllney, though, was much more antiquarian in approach. His book on France, for instance, was much concerned with the Salic Law, and he divided his survey of provinces into histories of the peerages within them. The emphasis is on history and topography.[62] The documents under discussion here emerge very much from the specific political circumstances of the late 1570s and early 1580s, particularly in their survey of the most active royal councillors. The authorship of all the documents is either English or Protestant in outlook. The survey of ministers, (A) Part 1, includes essentially all those with entry into the royal councils as listed in the household *ordonnance* at 11 August 1578: those with entry into the *conseil des affaires* (most included here except the queen and the queen mother), the twenty-five *conseillers de robe longue* or *de robe courte* (all but one of whom are included here), and various judicial and military officials, provincial governors, and the captains of the guards (many of whom are included here).[63]

In its general comments, (A) deploys the conventional nostrum of the time that the 'troubles' of France were caused by the factional

[60] Boucher, *Société et mentalités autour de Henri III*, I, pp. 405–406 lists some figures drawn from such sources in the period 1566–1587 and gives some credence to them. They are, though, fragmentary in comparison with the figures given by Cook.

[61] 'Discours sur les effets de la ligue en France', in Thiroux d'Arconville, *Vie du Cardinal d'Ossat* (Paris, 1771), p. 17; BN fr. 5045, fos 183–186.

[62] See Streitberger, *Edmond Tyllney's Topographical Descriptions*, p. xxxviii; *idem*, *Edmond Tyllney, Master of the Revels*, pp. 18–21, 37–38, 102–105.

[63] For a list of these, see BL Cotton, Vespasian FV, fos 50–51 and Appendix 2 below. Of the 25 *conseillers*, only Bailly, Président de la Chambre des Comptes, is left out.

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hatreds of the great nobility and places considerable emphasis on the loyalties of individuals to 'ceulx de Guise' and 'ceulx de Montmorency'. While religion is not portrayed as a 'cloak' for political ambition, as was so often the case in the sixteenth century, the fact that an individual was 'Papiste' and 'Bartholomiste' is often linked to his being a 'Guisard'. The most salient other feature is the emphasis on the familial 'alliances' of the nobility as a whole.[64] Except for the preliminary treatise on the leading personalities of France, which can now be viewed in the light of the important modern prosopographical works of Jacqueline Boucher and Nicolas Le Roux,[65] all three texts stick to the approach, in their surveys of the provinces, of outlining their jurisdictions, listing the main noble families, their connections with each other and then the holders of both provincial and town governorships. In many provinces, the councillors described in Part 1 are taken up again in their local context. (A) and (B) also supply a summary of the '*comodités*' and '*incomodités*' of each province, relatively brief (especially in comparison with Eliot's *Survay* of 1592 and Tyllney's *Topographical Descriptions*), and concentrating on the rivers and main produce in food and wine.[66] The emphasis is therefore upon the nobility, and in this vast and complicated world of noble relationships it is essentially this form of '*alliance*' which is, with a few exceptions, seen as the basic determining feature in all the documents.

This is a view re-emphasized by some important modern studies. Laurent Bourquin and Michel Nassiet, in analyses of the early modern nobilities of Champagne and Brittany, have both pointed out that family relations provided the backbone of the all-important links of clientage and patronage by which the French nobility was articulated, Jean-Marie Constant has noted the networks of '*alliance*' and '*réseaux de parenté*' in the implantation of Protestantism in the Beauceron nobility, and Nicolas Le Roux the importance of the calculated

[64] On the French nobility of this period in general, its numbers, military activity, and assumptions, see A. Jouanna, *Le devoir de révolte: la noblesse française et la gestation de l'Etat moderne, 1559–1661* (Paris, 1989); J.-M. Constant, 'Les barons français pendant les guerres de religion', in *Quatrième centenaire de la bataille de Coutras* (Pau, 1989); M. Orléa, *La noblesse aux Etats généraux de 1576 et de 1588* (Paris, 1980).

[65] See above nn. 44 and 46.

[66] Dallington also emphasized the 'singular commodities' of each province as an object of attention, see *View*, sig. B2. A closely related prospectus for the analysis of French society and politics drawn up in 1599 listed 10 matters of internal and 10 of external interest to investigate (see 'The collections of the state of Fraunce att my being there in 1599', BL Cotton, Titus B VIII, fo. 380) including (1) 'the qualitye therof viz: the situacion, fertilitye & commodityes, confininge neybors, number of cittyes, townes, villages, castells & defences with the qulaityes and manners of the people', and (2) 'the state, number of nobilitye & subiects, their division, authoritye & abilitye both ecclesiastick and lawick'.

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marriage alliances arranged by Henri III for his *mignons*.[67] Others have stressed the centrality of marriage alliance to the prospects of any family anxious to maximize its wealth, security, and influence.[68] The obsession of these texts with marriage alliances is therefore no whim or preoccupation with the anecdotal; it is the expression of an awareness of the location of social, and hence political, power. Combined with the notes on degrees of royal favour and holding of provincial or local governorships, this information could therefore aim to give a full overview of power networks in France at the time.

This would be the aim, though the work inevitably falls short. The religious bias has already been discussed. A certain bias of information is also apparent on other grounds. (A) Part 1 is particularly concerned with the participation of an individual in the Massacre of Saint Bartholomew, and is rather revealing on contemporary perceptions of this. The circumstances of the duc d'Uzès's conversion, or Pibrac's supposed advice to the Guise family not to take on responsibility for the Massacre are cases in point. The attitude to the Guises is hostile but their power is rather understated in comparison with that of the King. Above all, any understanding of the configurations of power was bound to be clouded by lack of inside information even for the generally well-informed. The English ambassador, Amyas Paulet, contemplating the crisis of 'factions' within the court in 1578 (with its duels and violent confrontations between the supporters of the King and Monsieur) could only surmise that the quarrels of the royal brothers were only a 'sleight counterfeited to blear the eyes of those of the religion', but took the view that their followers were generating conflict and had 'gone so far that they must go further, unless they will go no more'. When trying to explain the bewildering twists and turns

[67] L. Bourquin, *Noblesse seconde et pouvoir en Champagne aux XVIe et XVIIe siècles* (Paris, 1994), pp. 24–26; M. Nassiet, 'Signes de parenté, signes de seigneurie: un système idéologique (XVe–XVI siècles)', *Mémoires de la Société d'histoire et d'archéologie de Bretagne*, 68 (1971), pp. 175–232; *idem*, 'Réseaux de parenté et types d'alliance dans la noblesse (XVe–XVIIe siècles)', *Annales de démographie historique*, (1995), pp. 105–123; *idem*, *Noblesse et pauvreté. La petite noblesse en Bretagne, XVe–XVIIIe siècle* (Rennes, 1993); J.-M. Constant, 'La pénétration de la réforme protestante dans la noblesse provinciale: quelques exemples du Bassin parisien et de l'Ouest', in B. Chevalier and R. Sauzet (eds), *Les Réformes. Enracinement socio-culturel* (Paris, 1985), pp. 321–326; Le Roux, *La faveur du roi*, pp. 238–241.

[68] For overviews, see R. Harding, *Anatomy of a Power Elite: The Provincial Governors of Early Modern France* (Yale, CT, 1978), pp. 111–117, 160–164; J.-M. Constant, *La vie quotidienne de la noblesse française aux XVIe–XVIIe siècles* (Paris, 1972), pp. 132–139. Detailed studies include R.J. Kalas, 'Marriage, clientage, office-holding and the advancement of the early modern French nobility: the Noailles family of Limousin', *Sixteenth-Century Journal*, 27 (1996), pp. 365–383; D. Bohanan, 'Matrimonial strategies among nobles of seventeenth-century Aix-en-Provence', *Journal of Social History*, 19 (1986), pp. 503–510; J. Davies, 'The politics of the marriage bed: matrimony and the Montmorency family, 1527–1612', *French History*, 6 (1992), pp. 63–95.

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of fortunes at court, he could only offer the view that the French, as was their nature, were a prey to inconstancy and never kept their word: 'we like and mislike all in an hour, and therefore our first meaning may not be judged by the effects ensuing'.[69]

It is interesting, though, that the author of (A) in some ways understood that the circle of the king's minions, so wasted by death and disgrace,[70] had come to concentrate a small remaining group in the king's favour, the other survivors noted only for the role as military commanders or provincial governors. In terms of party alignment, (A) and (B) have a great deal to say about the links between figures such as Biron, Saint Sulpice, and La Mothe Fénelon, or between Charny and his allies, while much attention is devoted as well to the hostilities between court officials such as Cheverny and Gondi and a group of lawyer-bureacrats linked to Foix and Pibrac, themselves portrayed as allies of Biron and his circle. On the other hand, simply to take the case of Limousin and Guyenne, while full attention is given to figures such as Turenne and Châteauneuf, the rising family of Noailles, so important politically in the generation of the ambassadors Antoine, François, and Gilles (roughly the 1550s–1570s), is ignored. Some figures are therefore plainly emphasized at the expense of others.

Presentation of the text

The principle has been to present the (A) text as the basic one, with full apparatus for viewing the variants in (B), and the Cook text as a related but separate work. Original spelling is retained, except that *u* and *v* are distinguished in modern form. Punctuation and capitalization are modernized (the latter in French convention), and accentuation added according to the requirements of French textual presentation (in other words a light accentuation following the norms of sixteenth-century grammar in order to distinguish vowels).

In Part 1, marginal annotations in the original are placed after each entry with an asterisk. In the central body of the text, passages omitted by (B) in Cecil's transcript are shown thus: <···> while substantial passages added by Cecil are shown thus: {···}. Small variations in (B) are shown in textual footnotes, while where the corrections of (B) are accurate in terms of names and grammar the version of (A)

[69] Paulet to the secretaries of state, 11 March 1578, *CSPF Elizabeth*, XII, p. 534.

[70] Le Roux, *La faveur du roi*, p. 417 argues that 1579–1580 was the period of the definitive transformation of the royal entourage in this way.

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is given in the textual footnote. Passages copied from (B) in (C) are italicized, as are the interlineations in (A). In Cook's text, the marginal indications of religion are incorporated in the text at the appropriate point between square brackets as [*Pro*], [*Pa*] or [*O*] for U, the latter standing for the uncertain category. For the appendices, slightly different conventions are adopted.

For the two main texts, lettered footnotes clarify confusions or omissions in the text. The numbered footnotes, inevitably very numerous in view of the complexity of the information deployed, concern mainly explanatory matter to elucidate the text. In Part 2 of (A), the numbered footnotes frequently refer to references to the notes to Part 1 to save repetition. The numbered footnotes to Cook are confined to explaining matter which is not clarified in the edition of (A) and (B). Footnotes to the appendices are kept to the minimum and explain misunderstandings. Most of the names are covered in the two main texts.

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