

# **The Life and Career of William Paulet (c.1475–1572)**

**Lord Treasurer and First Marquis of Winchester**

**David Loades**

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DAVID LOADES

*University of Sheffield, UK*

ASHGATE

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In a sense, a whole working life lies behind this essay. William Paulet has been ever present in the margins of nearly all of the research which I have undertaken over many years. I consequently feel that I have a longstanding obligation to try and put this pervasive and enigmatic figure into the foreground. He would probably have hated the idea, but a man whose public career began when he was nearly 50, and lasted for almost another half century, must have had more than longevity to commend him. Whether I have succeeded the reader will judge. William Paulet is certainly the subject of this book, but whether I have succeeded in explaining him is perhaps another matter.

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# Abbreviations

|                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| APC                                | <i>Acts of the Privy Council</i> , ed. J.R. Dasent (32 vols), London 1890–1907.                                                                                                                |
| Bindoff, <i>House of Commons</i>   | S.T. Bindoff, ed., <i>The History of Parliament: the House of Commons, 1509–1558</i> (3 vols.), London, Secker and Warburg, 1982.                                                              |
| Bod.                               | Bodleian Library.                                                                                                                                                                              |
| BL                                 | British Library.                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Cal. Fine                          | <i>Calendar of the Fine Rolls XXI</i> , Edward IV – Richard III, London HMSO, 1963                                                                                                             |
| Cal. For.                          | <i>Calendar of State Papers, Foreign, 1547–1589</i> , ed., W.B. Turnbull et al. (23 vols.), London HMSO, 1863–1950.                                                                            |
| Cal. Pat., 1485–1494,<br>1494–1509 | <i>Calendar of the Patent Rolls, Henry VII</i> (2 vols.) London, HMSO 1914–1916.                                                                                                               |
| Cal. Pat., Edward VI               | Ditto, ed. R.H. Brodie (5 vols.), London, HMSO, 1924–1929.                                                                                                                                     |
| Cal. Pat. Elizabeth                | Ditto, London HMSO (1939 – ongoing).                                                                                                                                                           |
| Cal. Pat., Philip and Mary         | Ditto (4 vols.), London, HMSO, 1936–1939.                                                                                                                                                      |
| Cal. Span.                         | <i>Calendar of State Papers, Spanish, 1485–1558</i> , ed. G.A. Bergenroth et al. (13 vols.), London, HMSO, 1862–1954.<br>Ditto, Elizabeth, ed. M.A.S. Hume (4 vols.), London, HMSO, 1892–1899. |
| Cal. Ven.                          | <i>Calendar of State Papers, Venetian, 1202–1603</i> , ed. Rawdon Brown et al. (9 vols.), London, HMSO, 1864–1898.                                                                             |
| CSPD, 1547–1581                    | <i>Calendar of State Papers, Domestic</i> , ed. R. Lemon, London, HMSO, 1856.                                                                                                                  |
| CSPD, Edward VI                    | Ditto, ed. C.S. Knighton, London, HMSO, 1992.                                                                                                                                                  |

|                           |                                                                                                                                                        |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| CSPD, Mary                | Ditto, ed. C.S. Knighton, London, HMSO, 1998.                                                                                                          |
| Grafton, <i>Chronicle</i> | Richard Grafton, <i>A Chronicle at large and mere history of the Affayres of England</i> (1568), ed. H. Ellis, London, Johnson, 1809.                  |
| HMC                       | Historical Manuscripts Commission, reports, various.                                                                                                   |
| IPM                       | <i>Index of Inquisitions Post Mortem 1509–1660</i> (4 vols.) London, HMSO, 1907–1909.                                                                  |
| JL                        | <i>Journals of the House of Lords, 1509 ff.</i> (9 vols.), London Records Commission 1846.                                                             |
| L&P                       | <i>Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the reign of Henry VIII</i> , ed. J.S. Brewer, J. Gairdner et al. (21 vols.), London, HMSO, 1862–1910. |
| Machyn, <i>Diary</i>      | <i>The Diary of Henry Machyn, citizen and merchant taylor of London, 1550–1563</i> , ed. J.G. Nichols (Camden Society, 42, 1848).                      |
| NA                        | The National Archive.                                                                                                                                  |
| ODNB                      | Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, Oxford, 2005.                                                                                                 |
| SR                        | <i>Statutes of the Realm</i> , ed. A Luders et al, London Records Commission 1810–1828.                                                                |
| VCH Hants.                | <i>The Victoria County History of Hampshire</i> (5 vols.), London, Athlone Press, 1900–1914.                                                           |

# Introduction

There is no historiography of William Paulet. As becomes his status, he has a suitable entry in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, as he did in its predecessor, but apart from one North American thesis written nearly 40 years ago and a handful of articles, no work has been specifically devoted to him.<sup>1</sup> This is partly because there is no family archive and the numerous letters which he wrote in the course of his working life are largely impersonal. Even his own family seem to have known remarkably little about him. His grandson, George put together a commonplace book in 1581, which contains an extraordinary miscellany of information, notes, extracts from books and anything which has caught his imagination. It also includes, within ten years of the marquis's death, some notes on his grandfather's life which are both incomplete and inaccurate.<sup>2</sup> There are some estate papers and the steady build up of his fortune can be charted. There are descriptions of Basing House, his Hampshire seat, and his tomb survives, but none of this brings us any closer to the man himself. Yet he was one of the Great Men of Tudor politics and administration, who held a succession of major offices, both at court and in the state, who served, in one capacity or another, all the Tudors and who was Lord Treasurer for more than 20 years.

It is also partly because he was a survivor and a man who did not wear his religious convictions on his sleeve. Anyone who could be promoted by the Duke of Northumberland, retained in office by Mary and *still* survive to serve Elizabeth, must have been, one might think, either uniquely secretive about his beliefs, or to have had no convictions worth speaking about. However, he seems in fact to have been a man of conventional piety, who could see little point in the controversies which racked his contemporaries. He was neither a martyr nor villain at the time and has never been anyone's hero since. His very durability has, in a sense, made him uninteresting, because he has never been associated with any of the dramatic twists and turns, religious or political, which have captured the imaginations of historians of the period. Nowadays he is best remembered for having lived to a very great age and for being accorded the respect that extreme longevity then attracted. For his contemporaries, to die in peace, both old and rich, was a sure sign of God's especial favour and no one was impertinent enough to ask how he had achieved that. Even his famous self description, as being made of the willow rather than the oak, is not as straightforward as it looks. Before we jump to the conclusion that it refers

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<sup>1</sup> J.P. Henderson, 'Sir William Paulet' (Northwestern University PhD, 1969).

<sup>2</sup> Northallerton Record Office, MS MIC 2063/64.

to his religious flexibility, we should remember that Sir Robert Naughton, who recorded it, glossed it to mean ‘I chide, but never hurt with stroke’.<sup>3</sup> In other words it is a reference to his gentle disposition rather than to his adaptability.

This is an important clue, because nearly all those famous men, and women, who ended on the block in Tudor England did so only partly because they had offended their sovereigns. Their fates were mostly determined by the fact that they had enemies who were both able and willing to turn the monarch’s mind against them. The Duke of Northumberland was probably his own nemesis, but Edmund Dudley, the Duke of Buckingham, Thomas Wolsey, Thomas Cromwell, Anne Boleyn, the Duke of Somerset and the fourth Duke of Norfolk (to name but the most obvious) were all undone by personal enemies. Paulet had no enemies in that sense. He had rivals and opponents from time to time and not everyone thought well of him, but no one ever sought his destruction in the way which Cromwell sought that of Anne Boleyn, or the Duke of Norfolk that of Cromwell. Although George Paulet is not the most reliable of witnesses, he may well have been right when he wrote of his grandfather:

he sought still by friendship his foes his friends to make ... true to (the) Crown, just in every office, upright in his dealing, bore no revenging mind ...<sup>4</sup>

Not everyone agreed, and in any case that could be said of other men who were far less successful in avoiding the whirlpools of faction and feud. So what was his secret? It is one of the purposes of this study to find out. Perhaps he had no mind of his own, but simply did as he was bidden. That, combined with a talent for administration, might explain how he stayed in office for so long, but it cannot explain how he got there in the first place, or why he rose so high. His was no precocious talent. He was already a man of about 50 when his father died and his career at court began. Nor did he ever make any secret of his natural conservatism. From the time when he entered the House of Lords in 1539 he consistently voted against every measure of religious change and yet John Dudley, Earl of Warwick, the head of the minority council, who staked his life on furthering the Reformation, promoted him to the Lord Treasurership in 1550 and made him a marquiss in 1551. The obvious comparison here is with that other elder statesman of the period, Cuthbert Tunstall, Bishop of Durham. When the Pilgrimage of Grace struck the north in 1536, Tunstall, who was President of the Council in the North, simply ran away and hid – yet the King continued to trust him. Like Paulet, Tunstall voted against every measure of reformation in the House of Lords, but enforced each measure

<sup>3</sup> Quoted by Edmund Lodge in his *Life of Sir Julius Caesar* (London, J. Hatchard, 1827), p. 37.

<sup>4</sup> NRO MIC 2063/64, f. 130.

in turn as it became law.<sup>5</sup> Tunstall was so deeply distrusted by Dudley that he was charged with a largely spurious misprision of treason and deprived of his see. This was a misfortune which never befell Paulet, although he must have come close on more than one occasion. Both Paulet and Tunstall supported Henry against the papacy in the 1530s and both repented of that stand during Edward's reign. When Mary came to the throne, Tunstall was in prison and Paulet was in office, but she treated them both in the same way, recognising an affinity between them which was not reflected in their fortunes. When Elizabeth succeeded, she expected them both to conform again. This time Tunstall, who was the elder by about five years eventually refused and was deprived with regret – but the Lord Treasurer carried on as before. On a specifically religious issue the conscience of the layman was slightly more flexible than that of the priest, although in truth there was little difference between their positions.

Paulet was not an intellectual. As far as we know he never had any constitutional or theological ideas which were thought worth recording and that may have made survival easier. But he was not a nonentity and as Treasurer had policies which he applied and which brought him into conflict with various other interests. There are good reasons for attributing to him the reorganisation of the financial structure which was proposed under Edward and carried out under Mary. He may also have helped to frustrate Mary's declared intention of returning to the church ecclesiastical property still in the hands of the Crown. In the 1560s he worked closely with Sir William Cecil, particularly on the recoinage, although they were never friends. He had worked similarly with Cecil's former patron John Dudley in the early 1550s, without ever being identified as a political ally. Throughout his career he avoided commitment to any party or group and reserved his loyalty entirely for the Crown. However, perhaps that is another way of saying that he served no interest but his own. Without Paulet and the other lesser mortals like him, Tudor England would have been quite different. He was the symbol and essence of continuity, changing slowly and conforming his conscience as best he could. He was also a quintessentially English statesman; a great nobleman without *manred* and without any pretensions to autonomous power; a service nobleman, who came not of an ancient noble family like the Talbots or the Staffords but of solid Hampshire gentry. He did not rise through family connections at court, but through hard work and the networks of London law and trade. The Tudors made him, used him and rewarded him well. There were many like him in that respect, but few with his sense of balance. He never overreached himself, or presumed upon the royal favour. As a Councillor for over 30 years he must have been party to endless memoranda of advice on sensitive issues, but his individual hand is seldom discernable.

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<sup>5</sup> Charles Sturge, *Cuthbert Tunstall* (1938), various.

Sixteenth-century England suffered many revolts, innumerable riots and notoriously several reversals of religious policy within a few years. But it never had a civil war and it did not change its ruler by force. It is now recognised, far better than it was a generation ago, that this was largely because the high profile changes seriously affected only a few. Beneath the pyrotechnic canopy of public events, the daily lives of Englishmen changed far less than used to be supposed and much of the slow change which did occur was for the better. William Paulet, because of his personality, long life and relationship with four successive Tudors, was one of the most important – perhaps the most important – of the ties which held this potentially volatile structure together. He was solid, and rather unexciting, but for that very reason represented an essential element in the political structure of Tudor England. For anyone wishing to understand the unique evolution of this country in the sixteenth century, William Paulet is an essential study.

## The Early Years

When William Paulet, first Marquis of Winchester and Lord Treasurer of England, died in March 1572 there was an entrenched belief among those who knew him that he was over 106 years old. Within a few months of his death, Rowland Broughton, a one time gentleman servant and distant relation by marriage, published a verse panygeric entitled: *A briefe discourse of the lyfe and death of the late right high and honourable Sir William Paulet, knight ... Marquess of Winchester...* which contained the lines:

About the time, from Christes birth  
One thousand iiii hundred sixtie & five;  
The fift of EDWARD eke the fourth,  
That tyme in England kyng alive.

At fisherton, hight DELAMER,  
This Subject true was borne,  
Of worthy Parentes, as the stocke,  
Had long tyme ben beforne.

.....

AN. A thousande iiii hundereth, sixtie five,  
He was borne on Whitson night,  
And lyved a C sixe, three quarter and od,  
By Computacion right.<sup>1</sup>

This was an opinion repeated by George Paulet, who may well have taken it from Broughton, that being his way. However, he clearly had no reason to doubt it and it may well reflect the belief of the old man himself. However, he had a mythological reputation for longevity by then and even contemporary calculations varied by as much as 18 years.<sup>2</sup>

In the days before either birth certificates or parish registers, it is not surprising that there should have been doubt. The only time when a gentleman's precise age was important was at the attaining of his majority and since William's father, Sir John Paulet, did not die until 1525, that milestone was long since past when he succeeded to the estate. The Paulets were a long established gentry family, and one of the most substantial in Hampshire by the middle of the fifteenth century, but dates of birth and

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<sup>1</sup> This poem consists of 129 doggerel stanzas of no poetic merit. These are stanzas 18, 19 and 95. On Broughton, see J.D. Alsop and D.M. Loades, 'William Paulet, First Marquis of Winchester, a Question of Age', *Sixteenth Century Journal*, 18, 1987, p. 335.

<sup>2</sup> From 1465 to 1483. 'A Question of Age'.

death are alike hard to recover. William's grandfather, John, was certainly married by 1st December 1458, when a property transaction records his age as 'triginta & duorum annorum et amplius'.<sup>3</sup> His wife's age is recorded in the same document as 26. There is no suggestion that they were newly weds and, indeed, those would have been mature ages for such a state, as neither of them is known to have had a previous partner. Their son, also John and later knighted, is known to have married before 1468. So either he was married as a child, or he was born in or before 1450 – either of which is possible. When the elder John died in 1492, his son was described in the IPM as '32 years of age and upwards', which would normally mean more than 32 and less than 33 and would put his birth date in 1460.<sup>4</sup> However, IPMs were based on oral tradition and were themselves notoriously imprecise, especially if the date of the heir's majority was long since past. A birth date much before 1450 is ruled out by his mother's known age, but even if he was born in 1448 and married as a child, he would have been most unlikely to have begotten a child of his own in 1464. It therefore seems certain that the family tradition was inaccurate and that William was not born at Whitsun 1465, at Fisherton Delamere or anywhere else.

Sir John's IPM of 1525 describes his son as '40 years of age and upwards' and it is upon that evidence that a conjectural birth date in 1485 has been suggested. However, William was the eldest son, if not the eldest child, and if his father was married by 1468, even if he had been no more than a child at that time, this seems an impossibly long delay. Even if John was born as late at 1460, he would still have been cohabiting with his wife by 1478. So it is probably wisest to treat Sir John's IPM as being even more imprecise than usual. There is also the additional factor that birth in 1485 would have made William 86 when he died – an advanced age, but one matched by several other public figures, such as Cuthbert Tunstall and the third Duke of Norfolk. The impression given by contemporaries on the other hand, is that Winchester was regarded as uniquely aged. When Thomas Newton translated Cicero's *The Worthye Booke of Old Age* in 1570, he dedicated it to the Lord Treasurer with the words:

Amonge all others I could find none, unto whom the whole process of the matter, and the excellency of the Argument seemed better to agree, than to your Lordshippe ... in whom old age most triumphantly flourishes ...<sup>5</sup>

Newton, however, did not subscribe to the view that his subject was 105 at that point. In fact he says elsewhere that Paulet was 96 at the

<sup>3</sup> C.A.H. Franklyn, *A Genealogical History of the Families of Paulet (or Pawlett), Berewe (or Barrow), Laurence and Parker* (1963), pp. 66, 68.

<sup>4</sup> NA C142/8/70.

<sup>5</sup> Thomas Newton, *The Worthye Booke of Old Age; Otherwise Entitled the Elder Cato* (London, T. Marshe 1569 [STC 5294]), 'Epistle Dedicatorie'.

time of writing, that is to say that he was born between March 1473 and March 1474. John Stow in 1592 said much the same; '... this worthy man was born in the year of our Lord 1474, in the 14th year of King Edward the fourth ...'.<sup>6</sup> The source of this information is not known, but in the absence of conclusive evidence, it seems the most plausible. Consequently, we can reasonably conclude that the younger John Paulet was born about 1450, when his parents would have been aged 24 and 18, that he married at about 17 and that his own eldest son was born when he was about 24. These dates would have made him 75 at the time of his own death, which is consistent with a codicil to his will, which pays tribute to William for having cared for his aged parent over many years. It means that William would have been 50 rather than 40 when his father's will was proved, but as we have seen, that is well within the bounds of possibility.

There were two branches of the Paulet family, springing from an original root in Devon and traceable back to Sir William Paulet of High Paulet, who was alive in 1242.<sup>7</sup> About the beginning of the fifteenth century the family moved its principal seat to Hinton St George in Somerset, which had been acquired by marriage. The elder branch remained at Hinton into the sixteenth century, but soon after 1400 a younger branch established itself, first at Melcombe in Dorset and then at Nunney. Early in the fifteenth century Sir John Paulet of Nunney married Constance, daughter and heir of Hugh Poynings, Lord St John of Basing in Hampshire.<sup>8</sup> The title became dormant on Hugh's death, but Basing passed to John in right of his wife and he moved his principal seat there. His son was that John Paulet of Basing who became William's grandfather and his wife was Elizabeth, daughter and co-heir of Robert Rose of Lincolnshire, whose age in 1458 we have already noticed. John's son married Elizabeth, daughter of William Paulet of Hinton St George, and thus a remote cousin, by 1468, as we have seen, and their son was William. Apart from the fact that the Somerset branch of the family used the name Amyas from time to time, it seems to have been the custom in both branches to call their eldest sons either William or John. The fact that there were three successive Johns in the Basing family during the fifteenth century makes identification difficult, but it appears that each in turn served as sheriff of Hampshire and that sometimes Somerset was added to it. Equally confusing is the fact that two successive Sir Williams of Devon appear to have died in 1488 and 1496.<sup>9</sup> Both branches held lands in Somerset, but whereas the Hinton St George

<sup>6</sup> John Stow, *The Annales or Generall Chronicle of England* (London, T. Dawson/T. Adams, 1615 [STC 22338]), p. 671.

<sup>7</sup> Henderson, 'Sir William Paulet', pp. 1–3. J.B. Whitmore (ed.) *A Genealogical Guide* (Harleian Society, 1950), Part III, p. 391.

<sup>8</sup> Henderson, p. 6. BL Add. MS 38133, f. 137.

<sup>9</sup> Cal. Fine, 1485–1509, nos. 188, 577.

branch also held in Dorset and Devon the Basing branch had, by that time, spread into Sussex and Wiltshire as well as Hampshire.

We know nothing about William's early life. There is no hint that he was brought up in any house other than his father's, so he was probably educated at home by a tutor. In later life he never pretended to be a scholar, but was sufficiently literate in English, French and Latin to study law and to undertake diplomatic missions. George Paulet's notes say '... from school to Thavies Inn he came', but school does not necessarily mean an institution of that kind. There is no indication as to who his tutor might have been, and he never expressed any gratitude for his education when he was a grown man, so it may well be that one of Sir John's domestic chaplains doubled this role. Sir John himself had no reputation for learning, but he did at least make sure that his son and heir spent some time on his books, instead of concentrating exclusively upon the social graces and field sports which formed the traditional culture of his class. If William ever showed any aptitude for either hunting or fighting, we never hear of it. Thavies Inn was an Inn of Chancery, and that was an unusual choice for a man who was heir to an estate, nor are any dates known for his alleged attendance there, but if he followed the usual custom he would have been about 18 or 20 when he enrolled, so he may well have come to London about the time of his grandfather's death in 1492.<sup>10</sup>

What he may have been doing for the next ten years or so is entirely a matter of conjecture. His father served on every commission of the peace in Hampshire from 1498 to 1504, but of the son, who was a grown man and fully capable of taking his place, there is no sign. He was presumably living in London, studying and practicing law. Whatever the truth of the Thavies Inn tradition, by 1500 at the latest he seem to have established himself at the Inner Temple. The admissions register does not survive for those years, but a Paulet who was probably William was Marshal there from 1505 to 1507 and the Marshals were not students but lawyers of some standing.<sup>11</sup> His younger brother George was admitted as a student in the latter year. At about this time also, William married, his bride being Elizabeth, the daughter of Sir William Capell. There is no trace of any connection between John Paulet and Sir William, so this seems to have been a relationship which William established for himself on the basis of his prospects and ability in the law. In 1506 he became a member of the Drapers, which was Capell's own company, and this move must surely have been linked to his marriage into the family.<sup>12</sup> It was also a connection of the utmost importance, because Sir William Capell was a powerful man.

<sup>10</sup> Paulet Commonplace Book. NRO MIC 2063/4.

<sup>11</sup> F.A. Inderwick, *A Calendar of the Inner Temple; its Early History as Illustrated by its Records*, Vol. 1, 'The early history' (1896).

<sup>12</sup> Drapers Company Wardens' Accounts 1475–1509 (WA 2), f. 82.

His career went back to the 1460s, when he had arrived in London as a virtually penniless younger son, to be apprenticed to a Draper – it is not known who. He was the second son of John Capell of Stoke by Nayland, Suffolk, and thus by birth a gentleman, although of very modest status.<sup>13</sup> He was a tough and enterprising man of business, who prospered, becoming a Merchant of the Staple and dealing in Spanish iron and Derbyshire lead as well as cloth. In 1475 he became fourth Warden of the Company, first Warden in 1484 and Master in 1487. By the time that he achieved the Mastership for the first time he was also Alderman for Wallbrook Ward and had been knighted in 1486.<sup>14</sup>

At some point before 1485 he had married, his bride being Margaret, the daughter of Sir John Arundell of Lanherne, Cornwall. Margaret's sister was married to Giles, Lord Daubeney, who was later to be a useful support to his brother-in-law. Sir John was not the first, nor the last, major country gentleman to marry a daughter in the City, but it is a testimony to William's status (and wealth) that he was considered to be a suitable prospect for such a marriage. His eldest son, Giles, who seems to have named for his kinsman, must have been born soon after and Elizabeth certainly not later than 1490. Sir William was sheriff of London in 1489/1490, and Lord Mayor in 1503/1504 and again in 1510/1511.<sup>15</sup> In spite of this exalted progress, however, his career was punctuated by quarrels and disputes, mainly of a financial nature. In 1494 he was convicted in the Exchequer for selling cloth and other goods on credit to strangers, which was a statutory offence and fined the enormous sum of £2743. This was reduced later on the intercession of Lord Daubeney, but still must have been a severe drain on his fortune.<sup>16</sup> Thereafter he took the precaution of suing out pardons at regular intervals, in 1495, 1500 and 1505, sometimes paying as much as £1000 – which was presumably cheaper than the likely fines. His wealth seems to have made him a target for Henry VII's notorious enforcers, Empson and Dudley, and in 1508 he was convicted on dubious evidence of having failed to punish a coiner who had been arrested during his mayoralty and fined £2000. This time he refused to pay and was lodged in the Tower, where he remained until Henry VII's death in April 1509. Like other of Empson and Dudley's victims, he was released and rehabilitated within weeks and resumed his functions as Alderman for Wallbrook on 8th June.<sup>17</sup> Perhaps it is not hard to see why he married his eldest daughter to a lawyer, but it does not seem to have done him much good. However, his

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<sup>13</sup> Bindoff, *House of Commons*, sub Capell.

<sup>14</sup> Drapers Company; Percival Boyd's Register of Apprentices and Freemen of the Drapers Company, sub William Capell.

<sup>15</sup> Bindoff, *House of Commons*.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> L&P, I, 309.

incarceration had made him something of a hero in London and, in spite of a row between the Drapers and the Merchant Taylors which threatened to block his election, he became Lord Mayor for a second time in 1510.

By this time Capell was a seriously rich man. In 1510 he set up a use or trust in favour of himself, his wife and his son, Giles, which embraced his London home, two manors in Middlesex, five in Essex, six in Norfolk and one each in Cambridge, Hertford and Suffolk.<sup>18</sup> Not only was this a considerable estate, but his feoffees were headed by the Archbishop of Canterbury, William Warham, and included seven peers and a substantial group of lawyers, one of whom was his son-in-law, William Paulet. By 1512 William Capell was free of the Merchant Adventurers as well as the Staplers and got stranded uncomfortably in one of the numerous disputes between them. He died towards the end of August 1515 and his will was proved on the 1st September.<sup>19</sup> The bulk of his estate was already settled by the use and his bequests are notable mainly for their lavish traditional piety and for the names of the relatives which appear. The Mayor, Aldermen and Common Council, together with the 'fellowship of the Drapers' and the Wardens of the Grocers, Mercers, Goldsmiths, Fishmongers and Skinners were all admonished to be at his month's mind, 20s was left to the Prior and Convent of 'St Augustine of London' for a trental and 6s 8d to every hermit and anchoress for prayers. There was much more in a similar vein, including relief to the prisoners of Newgate. Both his widow Margaret and his son Giles received various specific bequests in addition to their shares of the estate. One thousand marks was left to Giles's son, Henry, who was aged about ten at that point, the administration of the legacy being given to Margaret to hand over 'at such time as she shall think most expedient'. His 'daughter Elizabeth Pawlett' received a ewer and basin gilt weighing 71oz. William Paulet was one of the executors, receiving £40 for his trouble, while William's own children John, Alice, Margaret and Margery received 40s each. Considering the complexity of the will, and the amount of work which being an executor would involve, this was not particularly generous, especially as it was accompanied by a warning to take '... that and no more save his reasonable costs in riding ...'.<sup>20</sup> William Capell may not have been particularly fond of his son-in-law, but he recognised a good lawyer when he saw one.

Giles had become a freeman of the Drapers Company by patrimony in 1510, but he does not seem to have pursued a career in the City. He was already an Esquire of the Body at Henry VII's funeral, served with his own band in the French campaign of 1512 and was knighted at the siege

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<sup>18</sup> Bindoff, *House of Commons*.

<sup>19</sup> NA NAB11/18 (PCC Holderness 13), ff. 96–97.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid, f. 96.

of Tournai.<sup>21</sup> His first wife Isabelle, the mother of his son Henry had died several years before, perhaps soon after Henry's birth in 1505. The name of his second wife we do not know, but she had also died by 1512 when he married for a third time, his bride on this occasion being Mary Denis, described as 'one of the Queen's servants'. He seems to have been in regular attendance at court for a number of years thereafter. He had become a Knight of the Body by 1516 and in the same year joined with Sir George Carew as the defenders in a great tournament at which the King and the Duke of Suffolk were the challengers.<sup>22</sup> His skill was well thought of, so he had obviously been given a gentlemanly education by his citizen father. He is listed as a Knight of Middlesex at the Field of the Cloth of Gold and was one of the 15 champions who jousting on Henry's behalf at that meeting. He seems to have been hurt in that encounter, but was nevertheless in attendance when the King met the Holy Roman Emperor a few days later. In 1522 he was in command of a royal warship. Although described as 'of London' in 1522, he was a regular commissioner of the peace in Essex by 1525 and served as sheriff there in 1528. In 1527 he was forgiven a debt of £240 to the Crown and two years later owed an unspecified sum to Thomas Cromwell.<sup>23</sup> He may have been in some financial difficulties, because he seems to have retired from the court by about 1530. As he would have been by then a little over 40, his jousting days were presumably over. He continued to serve the Crown in Essex and died there in 1556. He seems not to have sat in parliament, although his son Henry, who lived until 1588, represented Somerset in 1547.<sup>24</sup> Giles was clearly well established at court when his brother-in-law William Paulet arrived, although Paulet was many years older. They must have known each other well, but there is no evidence of any direct contact between them, and whether he was any help to William, we simply do not know.

It is possible that they may even have served together at Tournai, although the 'Mr. Pawlett' who was rewarded as a servant of Sir Edward Poyning, and listed among the captains in September 1512, is more likely to have been his brother George, or Thomas, one of his Hinton St George cousins. William was a muster commissioner for Hampshire in both 1512 and 1514 and appears to have led a contingent in person to serve under the Earl of Surrey, but there is no suggestion that he fought himself and everything which we know about him suggests that he was a complete civilian.<sup>25</sup> In November 1514 he appeared on the sheriff roll for Somerset

<sup>21</sup> L&P, II, 2301. 25th September 1513.

<sup>22</sup> 'The Capels at Rayne, 1486-1622', *Essex Archaeological Society Transactions*, ns 9, p. 243. L&P, II, 1935, 2735.

<sup>23</sup> L&P, IV, 3008 (March 1527) and 5330 (February 1529).

<sup>24</sup> Bindoff, *House of Commons*.

<sup>25</sup> Both George and Thomas served as captains at Tournai. L&P, II, pp. 1513-14.

and Dorset, but was not selected. There seems to have been no other William of suitable age at this time, so this must be the same person, but as his main estate was in Hampshire, and his father was still alive, the extent of his involvement is surprising. He featured on the commission of the peace for Hampshire on each reissue between 1515 and 1518, but in a relatively humble position, and on the sheriff roll between 1516 and 1518, being picked for the second time in the latter year. At the same time, however, as William Pawlett of London he was becoming a creditor of the Duke of Buckingham, in association with Richard Smith, Draper, for an undisclosed sum – a situation which became clear when the duke's accounts were taken after his attainder in 1521.<sup>26</sup> The nature of his service to the duke is undisclosed, but is unlikely to have been the sale of cloth – he was probably one of Buckingham's numerous legal advisers. In 1521 he served on the commission for concealed lands in Hampshire and Wiltshire, in 1522 he was once again pricked as sheriff and in 1523 was named second among the subsidy commissioners for the county.<sup>27</sup> Before the end of that year he had been knighted and in 1525 he succeeded to his father's estates. Sir John had not been active for a number of years, but the formal change in William's status was significant. He was no honorary commissioner. Throughout the years from 1521 to 1525, the Estreat Roll shows him to have been a working justice, who attended just about every session.<sup>28</sup> It is not known exactly when in 1523 he was knighted and there may have been some confusion, because both William Paulet and Sir William Paulet are named among the collectors of the subsidy, the one for Hampshire and Winchester, the other for Southampton. Also as late as November 1524 he still appears among the esquires on the Hampshire Commission of the Peace. However there was no William (let alone a Sir William) in the Somerset branch of the family at that time, so the references must all be to the London lawyer.

These numerous local concerns, however, seem not to have distracted him from affairs in the capital, which suggests great deal of coming and going. In 1519, as William Pawlet Esquire, he had sued the livery of the Draper's Company and, in 1521, had been listed among those contributing to the expense of Sebastian Cabot's voyage, although the size of his contribution is not mentioned.<sup>29</sup> Where he and his family usually lived at this time is not clear. He probably rented a house in London, but he must also have had the use of one of the family's manor houses in Hampshire, because as sheriff he could not have failed to be resident at least part of each year. In

<sup>26</sup> Accounts of the Duke of Buckingham, 1521. L&P, III, 1285.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid, 3282.

<sup>28</sup> NA E137/14/2, ff. 3–6.

<sup>29</sup> Drapers Company, Notes on the Drapers Company compiled by Kenneth Mason and Percival Boyd, 1947–1953, under 'William Pawlett'.

1525 of course, he became the master of Basing, and Elizabeth probably lived there with her expanding family, but William must have spent much of his time in London, where a career in the royal service was already beckoning. These various glimpses are tantalising, but inconclusive. We do not know whether he ever traded as a draper. Many years later, when his son, described as Lord Giles Paulet, took the Company livery in 1559 he is known to have had at least one apprentice, but there is no similar record for William.<sup>30</sup> What is clear is that his connection with the company was not ended by his father-in-law's death. Nor do we know just how he functioned as a lawyer, although he certainly administered Sir William Capell's will and was probably a member of the Duke of Buckingham's council. However it happened, his ability had been noticed, probably by Wolsey, and in February 1526 his name features among those of the King's Council to be consulted on matters of law.<sup>31</sup> Too much should not be made of this. Altogether 26 such lawyers were listed and there is no suggestion that he had taken any councillors' oath. The royal council at that stage was a large and amorphous body, ranging in importance from major officers of state, such as Wolsey and Tunstall, to occasional advisers. However, it does indicate that he was by this time 'the king's servant' in more than a notional sense. By this time his name was also appearing regularly on commissions of investigation, for instance a perambulation of the manor of Grafton in Essex, which had nothing to do with Hampshire; and this also suggests regular service. In November 1526 he obtained his first office, when he was joined with Thomas Englefield, sergeant at law, to be a Master of the King's Wards, at the substantial fee of £100 a year.<sup>32</sup>

As his pairing with Englefield makes clear, this was essentially a law office. It was not attached to the Household, carried no bouge of court and was answerable to the Lord Chancellor. It was, however, a key office for anyone wishing to develop a network of contacts among the nobility and gentry and Paulet seems to have played a significant part in constructing that administrative system which the Court of Wards was later to inherit. Wardship was a fiscal prerogative of the Crown, to which anyone holding land in chief of the King by military tenure was subject. If any such tenant died leaving his heir underage, then the estate passed into the custody of the Crown until he (or she) attained his majority. Sometimes such estates remained in the hands of the Crown, which also assumed responsibility for the heir's education and marriage; but more often these rights were sold or granted away. The marriages of heiresses were considered to be particularly valuable and, although the ultimate responsibility for such sales or grants rested with the monarch, the Master of the Wards was always the middle

<sup>30</sup> Ibid, under 'Giles Pawlett'. Minute Book 7, pp. 156, 171.

<sup>31</sup> L&P, IV, Appendix 67.

<sup>32</sup> NA E36/246. L&P, IV, 2673.

man or broker. A similar prerogative applied if the heir was of full age, but deemed to be deficient in his wits.<sup>33</sup> Whether he (or she) was capable of managing his own affairs was adjudicated by a royal commission upon which the Master always sat and his was the determining voice. Thomas Englefield seems to have been an elderly and respected lawyer of no particular ambition and the man who seized the political opportunities presented by this position was Sir William Paulet. Paulet was by this time a man of over 50, with a solid but not particularly spectacular record of achievement. It may well have been thought by those responsible for his promotion that he was approaching the end of his career. Instead, this proved to be no more than a small beginning.

The office of the Wards had been created in 1513 out of the older Surveyorship of the King's Prerogative, partly to replace the much reviled but necessary functions of Sir Richard Empson and Edmund Dudley. It was part of an unheralded operation to increase the Crown's ordinary revenue under the smokescreen of extraordinary demands called into existence by the war. It consisted of far more than the Mastership,<sup>34</sup> because not only did he have a team of clerks, he also had a network of feodaries spread over the entire country whose task it was to ensure that no tenant who was liable to wardship escaped the King's notice. This particular system had been put in place by a statute of 1512. Originally, in the twelfth century, it had been a reasonable military provision, based upon the fact that it was a tenant-in-chief's duty to serve his Lord in arms. If his heir was for any reason unable to serve, either through gender, or minority or incapacity, then the profits of the estate would be sequestered until the situation was corrected either by time or marriage. Normally, if the heir was a woman of full age, or a churchman, he or she would be permitted to take possession and pay someone else to perform the service for them, but in the case of minority the estate passed to the Crown for the duration. Long before 1512 feudal military service had become obsolete and the administrative weakness of the crown in the middle of the fifteenth century had caused the whole system to decay. Henry VII had revived it for the sole purpose of providing revenue and the statute of 1512 ignored the anachronistic background, concentrating upon the king's undoubted and ancient, fiscal rights. Mesne lords, who in theory exercised similar rights over their subtenants, had in practice long ceased to exercise them and were ignored in the act. There was only one partial exception to a liability of this kind and that was in favour of the heirs of those who died in the king's wars – a concession which perhaps reconciled a military aristocracy which was keen

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<sup>33</sup> H.E. Bell, *An Introduction to the History and Records of the Court of Wards and Liveries* (1953).

<sup>34</sup> Joel Hurstfield, *The Queen's Wards* (1958), pp. 3–18. J.D. Alsop, 'The Theory and Practice of Tudor Taxation', *English Historical Review*, 97, 1982, pp. 1–30.

to appear on the battlefield to what was otherwise an oppressive exaction. When Elizabeth Bashforth lost her husband in the Flodden campaign, she was able to buy the wardship of her own son for a notional £48 6s 3d, which was then cancelled by royal warrant.<sup>35</sup> The King could well afford such gestures and they were well received. Paulet appears to have made a success and a profit of his office and Englefield featured very little in their theoretical condominium.

Not only was he soon in regular correspondence with such noblemen as the Duke of Suffolk and the Earl of Northumberland, but he was also in an excellent position to pick up some useful prizes for himself. The first of these was the wardship of Richard Waller, the son of a certain John Waller deceased, which he received in September 1527. The value of Richard's estate is not known, and was probably not great, but Paulet was not in a hurry and had no desire to acquire a reputation for covetousness. Very often the family of a deceased tenant would attempt to keep the wardship of an heir within the family and would offer significant inducements to the Master to bring this about. Such sums, of course, were never declared either by the donor or the recipient, provided that the bargain was honoured, and Paulet seems to have been scrupulous in that respect. Towards the end of 1526 he arranged the grant of the young Edward Underhill – the future 'hot gospeller' – to William Underhill, who was probably his uncle.<sup>36</sup> Meanwhile, he continued to climb the pecking order of the Hampshire commission, being named 13 (out of 33) in 1529 and being listed, but not picked, for the shrievalty in 1527. The stewardship of Winchester diocese, which he had received originally from Bishop Fox, he continued to exercise under Wolsey. In fact one of Fox's last actions before his death was to commend Paulet to the man whom he probably knew would be his successor.<sup>37</sup> When the Cardinal fell from power and was deprived of the Great Seal in 1529, he continued to be Bishop of Winchester and Paulet continued to serve him in that capacity. As late as June 1530 he was still reporting routine business from Hampshire, where he had just completed a tour of the episcopal manors.

He seems also to have been fairly close to Wolsey. Close enough, at any rate for the Cardinal to request a loan of £100 at a time when all his resources were under threat.<sup>38</sup>

On the 1st August, in the course of yet another letter of routine business, he professed his willingness to comply, but could send only £40

<sup>35</sup> Hurstfield, *The Queen's Wards*, p. 9.

<sup>36</sup> L&P, IV, 3087. Edward Underhill became a gentleman at Arms in 1539 and early in Elizabeth's reign wrote an account of his sufferings under Mary. This is now BL Harley MS 425 and was printed by A.F. Pollard in *Tudor Tracts* (1903), pp. 170–198.

<sup>37</sup> L&P, IV, 3815.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid, 6544. 1st August 1530.

at that juncture. Money was scarce, he lamented, but he was doing his best. The reader would never gather it from this letter, but a fortnight earlier a commission had been issued to take an inventory of the Cardinal's possessions – and Paulet, in his capacity as a royal servant was one of the commissioners. He never sent the balance of the £100, because when Wolsey's affairs were wound up after his death in November, Sir William features as a creditor for £40.<sup>39</sup> Having been placed in the classic position of the servant of two masters who found themselves at odds, he seems to have trodden a very delicate line of duty. Whether he ever allowed the right hand to know what the left hand was doing is another matter.

A year earlier, in November 1529, he had been returned to the House of Commons as Knight of the Shire for Hampshire – the only occasion upon which he was to sit in the Lower House.<sup>40</sup> He was probably the leading gentleman in the county by that time, so there is nothing surprising about his nomination. However his friend Thomas Cromwell also decided at the last minute that he should seek election. He was by that time sufficiently the King's servant to need permission for such a move and, Henry told him, via the Duke of Norfolk, '... that his highnes was veray well contented [h]e should be a burgess, so that [h]e wolde order [him]self to the saide rowme according to such instructions as the said Duke of Norfolk shall gyve [him] from the king'.<sup>41</sup> Henry already knew that the agenda for the forthcoming session was likely to be controversial and the more members he could control the better. He did not, however, find Cromwell a seat and neither did the Duke of Norfolk. Thomas appears at first to have attempted to displace one of the elected burgesses for Orford in Suffolk with the aid of his friend Thomas Rush. Rush, however, was unable to oblige. The town would probably have been under Norfolk's influence, if not control, and it may be deduced that the duke was not enthusiastic to assist him. Orford had already named Erasmus Paston and Richard Hunt and no one was

<sup>39</sup> Ibid, 6748.

<sup>40</sup> Bindoff, *House of Commons*.

<sup>41</sup> BL Cotton MS Cleopatra E. iv, f. 178. (L&P, IV, App. 238). G.R. Elton, *The Tudor Revolution in Government* (1953), p. 77 and n. At this stage of his career, Cromwell was still a somewhat shadowy character. He was the son of Walter Cromwell of Putney, variously described as blacksmith and cloth merchant. Little is known about his youth, except that he later described himself as a 'ruffian'. He travelled extensively in Italy and the Low Countries, partly as a soldier and partly as a merchant, learning languages and the ways of the world. By 1520 he had settled in London as a general agent or 'man of business', and enrolled as a member of Gray's Inn in 1524. Through his skill in conveyancing he established a contact with Thomas Heneage, and through him entered Wolsey's service in 1525. He may have sat in the parliament of 1523, but the evidence is unclear. He established his reputation with Wolsey by his skill in dissolving the monasteries whose resources were diverted to Cardinal College. And became a member of Wolsey's council in 1526. He held no senior office, but was recognised as a specialist in real estate matters. It was through this service that he became acquainted with Paulet.

willing to disturb that arrangement. Ralph Sadler, Cromwell's secretary, was however ready with an alternative suggestion:

If you are not elected there [Orford], he wrote on 1st November, 'I will desire Mr. Paulet to name you as burgess for one of my Lord's [Wolsey] towns of his bishopric of Winchester ...'<sup>42</sup>

They must have moved fast, and Paulet probably had advance warning that such a request might come, because even at that 11th hour, Taunton had named only one burgess, another lawyer friend of Paulet's named William Portman, later a chief justice. Portman was a local man, but his real qualification was that he was known to the Steward. So Cromwell duly got his seat and Paulet earned his gratitude. On the 4th November they both took their places in what was to be a momentous assembly.

Unlike Cromwell, Paulet made no particular mark on this parliament. His surviving letters do not refer to Commons business and it is not known which way he voted on any of the issues over which there was a division. As a royal officer and a minor councillor, it may be presumed that he voted as required. At the same time, he was making a great success of his office at the Wards and the records are littered with evidence of his diligence. Individually these letters and certificates are no more than the tracks of a diligent official doing his job, but it is immediately clear that he was effectively discharging his duties alone. It is Paulet who is constantly referred to and in January 1531 he received a new grant of the Mastership without reference to any associate. In that document he is described as 'surveyor in England, Wales and Calais of all possessions in the King's hands by the minority of heirs [and] surveyor of all the King's widows, and governor of all idiots and naturals in the King's hands ...'.<sup>43</sup> This probably represents a step in the formalisation of an office which had now become the main enforcement agency of the Crown's fiscal prerogative. The whole operation was upon a grand scale and was by far the largest of the remaining feudal revenues. So when William Paulet became sole Master of the Wards, he received exclusive control of a well established empire, which gave him authorised access to every corner of the land and to the economic circumstances of virtually every gentleman and nobleman. It is not surprising that his goodwill was so much solicited.

William's siblings appear infrequently and their careers cannot be traced with any accuracy. His brother George followed him to the Inner Temple, enrolling there in 1507, and 'stood in' for his brother while the latter was on a diplomatic mission in France in 1533. William may well have employed him in other ways of which he did not feel it necessary to leave any record, but he seems to have lived obscurely as a country

<sup>42</sup> Ralph Sadler's letter. L&P, IV, App. 238.

<sup>43</sup> L&P, V, 80 (11).

gentleman. Richard is slightly more visible. He became a member of the Draper's company in 1520, but does not seem to have pursued a career in London. Several of his accounts survive, but they do not present a coherent picture. In November 1525 he and a number of others were in receipt of 'crane coloured cloth' from the Marquis of Exeter, which suggests some kind of livery, and indicates that he was one of the marquis's gentlemen.<sup>44</sup> However, two years later he was recording the expenses of Lord Abergavenny's stables in a manner which could only have been done by one of Abergavenny's servants, probably his steward. In the following year another account is headed 'Herein showeth all such money as hath been received by me, Richard Paulet, of my Lord my master, and my brother Sir William Paulet, knight ...'. The master referred to could have been Abergavenny, but in this context is much more likely to have been Cardinal Wolsey, because he is known to have acted on William's behalf in some of the duties of the Winchester stewardship and that would explain why he was receiving money from him in 1528.<sup>45</sup> In another place he also recorded payments made on his behalf by one Dawbeney 'by command of Sir William Paulet'. Like George, Richard seems to have made himself useful to his brother, but to have had no public career which was remotely comparable. Both would have been gentlemen of some substance by this time, and in their 40s, but neither of seems to have aspired, even to the commission of the peace. Thomas, the fourth brother, is not visible at this time, although he must have been of full age.

It has always been a matter of some speculation, just how Thomas Cromwell made the transition from Wolsey's service to the King's. Even among his contemporaries a story circulated that he had obtained a crucial interview, in the course of which he had convinced Henry that he could provide a solution to the crisis over his marriage, which was then consuming his energy and everyone's ingenuity. According to Eustace Chapuys this interview had occurred shortly after Wolsey's death and occurred because Cromwell was seeking the King's protection in a quarrel with Sir John Wallop.<sup>46</sup>

He asked and obtained an audience from King Henry whom he addressed in such flattering terms, and eloquent language – promising to make him the richest king in the world – that the king at once took him into his service and made him a counsellor, although the appointment was kept secret for four months.

The ambassador did not disclose his source, but it was inaccurate in several respects. Cromwell had been in the King's service for more than 12 months when Wolsey died and there was no attempt to keep his membership

<sup>44</sup> Ibid, IV, 1792.

<sup>45</sup> Richard Paulet's accounts, 1527, 1528. L&P, IV, 3734, 5108.

<sup>46</sup> Cal. Span, 1534–5, 568 ff. Elton, *Tudor Revolution*, p. 72.

of the council secret. Cromwell had probably had several interviews with the King by November 1530 and membership of the Council – although undoubtedly a token of favour – did not imply any special intimacy, or influence. Chapuys was, of course, concerned to demonstrate what a plausible rogue Cromwell was and the image of a silver tongued deceiver suited his purpose. It was probably from the same source that similar stories of a crucial interview circulated in England after the minister had fallen. There is also another tradition, which is more plausible and less dramatic; that the King had been impressed by Cromwell's skill in handling Wolsey's affairs and by his loyalty to his master when the latter was in serious trouble and difficulty. Unlike the first, this tradition is traceable, and the source is George Cavendish, at the time Wolsey's Gentleman Usher. Although writing many years later, Cavendish recalled that it had been the 'ordering and disposition' of the Cardinal's lands which had so impressed Henry. 'The conference that he had therein with the king, caused the king to repute him a very wise man, and a mete instrument to serve his grace ...'. In other words, it was a gradual process and Cavendish does not precisely date it.<sup>47</sup> However, what has not been recognised is that there was already a model for Cromwell's actions in the person of Sir William Paulet. Paulet was Wolsey's steward in respect of Winchester and, as we have seen, continued to serve him until the very end. He was also the King's Master of the Wards and a low level councillor. Cromwell and Paulet were certainly acquainted before 1529. Both were lawyers with strong London connections, both were practiced in land transactions and must often have done business together. They were probably not intimate and may not have liked each other very much, but each knew the other's strengths; and when Cromwell's bid to enter parliament looked like failing, it was Paulet who baled him out. That seat in the Commons was very important to Cromwell and created an obligation which he was later quite willing to discharge. In 1529 Paulet's favour was the higher of the two. He was an experienced and trusted servant, while Cromwell was a relative novice. He was also a gentleman of substantial and recognised family. Friendship, or at least co-operation, between them was a matter of mutual advantage. It is entirely likely that it was Paulet who first introduced Thomas Cromwell to the royal service and created the opportunities which he was then able to exploit so effectively. The best evidence for this lies in the friendship which both later acknowledged and in the steep rise in Paulet's fortunes during those years in which Cromwell held the King's ear.<sup>48</sup>

<sup>47</sup> George Cavendish, *Life and Death of Cardinal Wolsey*, ed. S.W. Singer (London, Harding and Lepard, 1827), I, 199.

<sup>48</sup> Elton, *Tudor Revolution*, *passim*.

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# An Officer of the King's Household

In May 1532 Sir Henry Guildford, the Comptroller of the Household, died and Sir William Paulet was appointed in his place. Every royal office was theoretically in the king's gift, but senior household appointments were really chosen by the monarch personally and were significant marks of favour. The Comptroller was also a 'core' councillor – what would later be known as a member of the Privy Council – and took the councillor's oath. The Comptroller's main responsibility was to preside over the Board of Greencloth, the accounting office which controlled the expenditure of the various household departments.<sup>1</sup> In theory the Lord Steward presided, but the Lord Steward was a grandee and did not usually trouble with such routine matters. In 1532 he was George Talbot, 4th Earl of Shrewbury, who was 64 years old and who was to die in 1538. He appeared at court only occasionally and it is unlikely that he played any significant part in administration, or was even consulted over Paulet's appointment. It is possible that this was a promotion which had been anticipated for some time, because in a letter which appears to have been written as early as July 1531 Dr. Richard Layton had addressed a query about a licence of Mortmain to 'Mr. Pawlett, controller of household to the king's grace'.<sup>2</sup> Whose error this was is not immediately clear.

By this time, Paulet was becoming a ubiquitous presence in the royal administration. In January 1531 he had been joined with Arthur, Viscount Lisle, in a commission to investigate piracy. Lisle was the Vice-Admiral, so such an inquisition would have been part of his normal duties, but the presence of Paulet is unexplained, unless it was for his legal expertise.<sup>3</sup> In June, and presumably for the same reason, he was appointed to head a group of agents appointed to receive lands to the King's use from the Prior of St John's Hospital in London. His close association with Thomas Cromwell is unmistakable. When the latter was appointed Master of the Jewel House in April 1532, Paulet was joined with Sir Thomas Audley and others to inventory the contents, 'lately in the custody of Robert Amadas, Master, deceased'.<sup>4</sup> A month later Audley was appointed Lord Keeper of the Great Seal on More's resignation as Chancellor. At the same time

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<sup>1</sup> D. Loades, *The Tudor Court* (1986) pp. 42–3.

<sup>2</sup> L&P, V, 321. It is possible that the editor may have misdated this letter, as he did with several.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, 35. He was one of a number of individuals named to this commission.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid, 939. 14th April 1532.

Paulet, Cromwell and Audley acted on behalf of the King in an indenture with Sir Thomas Seymour for the payment by the latter of 2,500 marks to the King's use. At about that time also Cromwell and Paulet were jointly granted the office of Master of the King's Woods.<sup>5</sup> The impression is very much that of a team or group working together. At a time when Henry was still seeking vainly for a diplomatic solution to his 'Great Matter', and was applying pressure to his clergy through praemunire indictments and the threatened withholding of annates, it seems that Cromwell and his allies were also applying pressure of a slightly different kind. In September 1532 the Knights of St John conveyed further lands to Paulet and others, acting on the King's behalf, these being London properties described as 'late of the monastery of Stanesgate'. Two months later, further ecclesiastical property, this time in Calais, was transferred in the same fashion.<sup>6</sup> However, not all this property passed into the Crown estate. Some was swiftly transferred to John Stokesley, Bishop of London to the use of the dean and Canons of Windsor. Again Paulet was joined with Stokesley for that purpose. In the same month of September he was also a feoffee to use in a grant to the new foundation in Oxford which Henry had taken over from Wolsey and which was later to be known as Christ Church.

In October 1532, accompanied by the newly created Marquis of Pembroke, Henry crossed to Calais, hoping to co-ordinate with Francis I a strategy to facilitate the second marriage which was now plainly intended. The King spent five days lodged at the abbey and provided lavish hospitality for Francis and his train. He is alleged to have lost £157 in a single day gambling on tennis matches. Paulet was responsible for all this expenditure and, when he presented his account on the 1st December, he disclosed the spending of £969 6s 3½ d.<sup>7</sup> Significantly, Thomas Cromwell also signed his account. Henry in addition spent five days in France as the guest of the French King, but in spite of the ostentatious conviviality, nothing more was achieved than at the Field of Cloth of Gold 12 years before. French support was never something which Cromwell was anxious to count on and the King's expensive hopes were again disappointed. However, William Warham, the aged Archbishop of Canterbury, had died on 22nd August and a fresh way was now open for Cromwell to steer the King in the direction of a domestic solution to his problems. The King's nominee for this crucial position was the diplomat and former Cambridge don, Thomas Cranmer. Cranmer had drawn attention to himself a little earlier by suggesting that the way out of the King's matrimonial morass lay through theology rather

<sup>5</sup> L&P, V, 260, May 1532. *Tudor Revolution in Government*, p. 168 n.

<sup>6</sup> L&P, V, 1360.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid, 1600. 1st December 1532. 'Payment for the charges of the French King's train lodged and victualled at Calais, as appears by a book signed by Sir William Paulet and Mr. Cromwell.'

than Canon Law.<sup>8</sup> This had given Cromwell, and no doubt the King, the critical element which had been missing from the strategy which the former had been developing in parliament – a sound ideological reason to bypass the obstructiveness of the pope. No ecclesiastical authority could stand in the way of the Law of God. At the time of Warham's death Cranmer was Archdeacon of Taunton and nowhere in the frame as far as most of the council were concerned. Whether Cromwell had any direct influence over the nomination we do not know, but Henry made up his mind quickly – certainly before he set off for Calais. Cranmer was recalled from his mission in Germany and his appointment became public knowledge shortly after his return, in January 1533. At about the same time, on 26th January, in the presence of a dozen councillors – including Paulet – the King committed the Great Seal to Audley as Lord Chancellor.<sup>9</sup> By this time Anne Boleyn was known to be pregnant and Henry secretly married her. Cranmer did not perform the ceremony, and who was in on the secret we do not know, but the triumvirate of Audley, Cromwell and Paulet spring immediately to mind. At about this time, Paulet wrote a routine business letter to Cromwell, which was something which he did not often do as they were both normally about the court, and addressed it to his 'fellow and friend'. A small gesture, but it says a lot in terms of their relationship.

As far as we know, Paulet was not making his fortune at this point, although the number of suits which were addressed to him, both as Master of the Wards and as Master of the Woods, suggests a substantial income in fees and 'inducements'. In June 1531 he was one of a number of purchasers of lands from the Marquis of Exeter, who must have had something of a cash flow crisis at that point. Other purchasers included his son John and Sir William Fitzwilliam, but whether this was an investment or a speculation we do not know.<sup>10</sup> When not at court he seems to have spent most of his time at Basing, an estate which he was at some pains to develop. In January 1531 he had licence not only to crenellate the house, but also to fortify it, building 'walls and towers within and around' and to empark 300 acres, including 20 acres of wood.<sup>11</sup> This does not mean that Sir William was expecting his seat to come under attack, but it was a very significant indication of his favour with the King. There is no reason to suppose that anything more purposeful than ornamental fortifications were ever built, but no one of whom the slightest suspicion was entertained would ever have been given such a chance. Moreover emparking, particularly on this scale, was contrary to declared royal policy. Little now survives of Basing, which was demolished after the siege during the civil war, so it is almost

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<sup>8</sup> Diarmaid MacCulloch, *Thomas Cranmer* (1996), pp. 41–5.

<sup>9</sup> L&P, VI, 73.

<sup>10</sup> L&P, V, 318.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 80 (36).

impossible to identify the work which Paulet carried out at this time. He was to go on building there throughout his life, but this apparently innocuous gesture in 1531 made a powerful and, at the time readily understood, political statement.<sup>12</sup> Paulet's local status was also maintained by constant nominations to the Commission of the Peace, not only for Hampshire but also for Wiltshire and Somerset. How often he actually appeared at sessions may be doubted, but he now belonged to that class of royal servant who would automatically be named to any commission where they had influence, out of regard for their 'worship'. On 1st January 1533 'Master Controller' was naturally among those who exchanged New Year gifts with the King. He received a gilt cup of modest dimensions, these gifts being determined by a rigid protocol of office rather than being any particular measure of favour. More significantly, when Sir Edward Croft wrote from Ludlow in March 1533 complaining that Wales was far out of order, and that murders were going unpunished because 'the chief of the Council is a spiritual man' (Bishop Veysey of Exeter), he addressed his letter to both Cromwell and Paulet, as though uncertain which of them was at that point closer to the King.<sup>13</sup> Robert Acton, reporting on the state of the King's woods on 12th March addressed his letter to 'the right worshipful Sir William Paulet, knight, controller of the King's House, and unto Mr Cromwell of the King's Council'. In the careful terminology of the time, this indicates that he, at least, perceived Paulet as the senior partner.

Henry had now cast his dice in his dispute with the Pope, although that was not yet public knowledge. He had not, however, decided how to play the hand which he now held and was still hoping for the support of Francis. The French King, he knew, was intending to meet Pope Clement VII during the summer and Henry hoped to be represented at that meeting, to secure the maximum benefit from French mediation. About the middle of April he therefore decided to send a high powered embassy led by the Duke of Norfolk. Chapuys reported this decision to Charles V on 27th April, listing among those due to accompany the duke the Bishop of London and the Controller of the Household.<sup>14</sup> Paulet was present at the Council meeting on 10th May which announced to Chapuys the state of the King's affairs and the Archbishop's court, which had opened that day, at Dunstable to give a verdict on his marriage without reference to the Pope. By the time that Cranmer delivered his verdict on 23rd May, the embassy had probably set off, because Norfolk was certainly in France by the time that Anne was crowned on 1st June. Paulet's role in this mission was not conspicuous and it is not certain that he took part in any of the

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<sup>12</sup> VCH Hants., Vol. V.

<sup>13</sup> L&P, VI, 210.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid, 391.

negotiations. There was, in any case, little to negotiate. It was reported on 17th June that they had 'gone to the King' who was then at Lyons and that they would go from thence to the Pope. A month later Paulet wrote to Cromwell from Auvergne, describing their reception by Francis.<sup>15</sup> The King was due to meet Clement at Nice, but in Sir William's view was unlikely to keep his appointment. Meanwhile, and unknown to the ambassadors, their whole mission had been torpedoed, because on 11th July the Pope in Consistory had solemnly condemned Henry's action and ordered him to take Catherine back upon pain of excommunication. When Norfolk heard these dread tidings, he immediately sent another of his colleagues, Lord Rochford, post haste to England for instructions.

How Henry reacted to the news, we do not know. It was not unexpected, because he had already taken the precaution of drawing up an appeal to a General Council, but it must have been extremely disappointing. Rochford was told that Norfolk should terminate his mission at once and return home.<sup>16</sup> By the end of August Paulet was back in England, and neither he nor anyone else seems to have alluded to his experience, either at the time or later. It was probably something which he wished to forget. The King was quite unreasonably furious with Francis, who was actually doing his best to mitigate the sentence and successfully got it postponed for two months. Hearing that Clement and Francis were due to meet eventually at Marseilles on 13th October, Henry quite irrationally sent another mission consisting of Stephen Gardiner and Edmund Bonner, who blustered – presumably on the King's orders – and succeeded not only in offending the Pope (which may have been intended) but also the King of France, who dismissed Gardiner's conduct as beneath contempt.<sup>17</sup> All that we really know about Paulet's share in the aborted mission is that he was paid £66 13s 4d for his expenses. The duke received £333 6s 8d, Lord Rochford £100 and Sir Anthony Browne £40. Like everything else at court, these expenses were finely graduated by status, but they were paid with unwonted promptness, perhaps because Paulet was paying himself out of the Household account. While he was away, and indeed for some weeks afterwards, his brother George, stood in for him as Master of the Wards, but it is not known that he transacted much business. The question remains as to why Sir William was sent to France at all. He had no diplomatic experience and no specific skill which Norfolk could have called upon. The probable answer is that he was sent because he was known to be high in the King's confidence. When the Duke of Norfolk had been sent to relieve Wolsey of

<sup>15</sup> Ibid, 661. Cranmer's account of the King's divorce and the coronation of Anne. Ibid, 830, 15th July 1533.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid, 1038. J. Scarisbrick, *Henry VIII* (1968), p. 318 and n.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid, 1427. Glyn Redworth, *In Defence of the Church Catholic: The Life of Stephen Gardiner* (1990), p. 56.

the Great Seal in 1529, the Cardinal had refused to surrender it to him, but had given it instead to a gentleman of the Privy Chamber who was in the duke's entourage, commenting that he recognised by that gentleman's position that the command was truly the King's will.<sup>18</sup> The presence of the Controller of his Household on a diplomatic mission similarly reinforced the credentials of the embassy.

On 10th September Paulet was one of those who signed the notarial attestation of Elizabeth's baptism. He did this as a Privy Councillor, not because he had played any prominent part in the ceremonial, although he was clearly present. We have no knowledge of his relations with Anne, or with any of her family. He missed her coronation, but that was because he was in France, and the same could be said of her brother Lord Rochford. We must assume that, because of his close relations with Cromwell and the fact that he remained high in Henry's confidence, he supported the second marriage, but neither he nor anyone else made any specific statement to that effect. Even the inquisitive and garrulous Chapuys did not comment upon the Controller's views. At the same time he was closely involved in the problems which were being caused by the Lady Mary (as she was officially known) – Henry and Catherine's only child. Mary was 17 at this time and full of adolescent intransigence.<sup>19</sup> As a result of the decision made by Cranmer's court at Dunstable, Henry's first marriage had been declared void and Mary illegitimate. The legal standing of this verdict was highly questionable, because although the doctrine of the Royal Supremacy was clearly implied, it had not yet been formally stated. Henry had simply acted in defiance of the Pope, relying upon his own interpretation of his 'ancient prerogative'. Appeals to the court of Rome had recently been prohibited by statute, but Catherine's appeal had been lodged before the statute had been passed and it was not at all clear that it could act retrospectively. In any case Catherine had no intention of accepting the decision of the Dunstable court and absolutely refused to be styled 'Princess Dowager of Wales'. By the same token, Mary refused to accept any form of address other than Princess, or to acknowledge Anne Boleyn as Queen. Instead she looked to Eustace Chapuys for guidance and support and he insisted in all his despatches in describing Anne as 'the concubine' and Elizabeth as 'the little bastard'.<sup>20</sup>

Paulet was soon in the thick of the resulting controversy. Lord Hussey, Mary's Chamberlain, and he were sent to Beaulieu at some time during September with strict orders, which were probably conveyed verbally, that

<sup>18</sup> L&P, IV, 6025. According to another version of the story, he insisted on sending for a written order.

<sup>19</sup> D. Loades, *Mary Tudor: A Life* (1989) pp. 77–91.

<sup>20</sup> See, for example, Chapuys to the Emperor, 21st February 1534. Cal. Span., V, p. 57.

the Lady Mary was to cease calling herself Princess forthwith. Paulet's use in this connection was undoubtedly intended to indicate that this order came from the King personally, but Mary absolutely refused to accept it. As a result, on 30th September articles were drawn up to be delivered to her by the Earls of Oxford, Essex and Sussex, condemning her usurpation of the title and threatening the King's displeasure. Paulet's message had been an informal warning – this was a formal one. It was equally ineffective. The King was clearly in two minds. On the one hand he authorised a new establishment for his daughter on 1st October, somewhat diminished but still large and self contained and, on the other hand, he instructed Paulet to write to Mary ordering her to remove from Beaulieu to Hertford. This letter was carefully addressed to 'The Lady Mary, the King's daughter' and was refused.<sup>21</sup> The following day Mary scribbled an indignant note to her father declaring that she had ignored such a deliberate insult and would continue to do so in future. This defiance put Henry in a difficult situation and Cromwell debated it painfully with himself. They could hardly ignore it without encouraging many others to follow her lead. On the other hand relations with the Emperor were already strained to breaking point and further severity towards either Catherine or her daughter might well result in war. The two women were being carefully kept apart at this stage, but we know that messages passed between them, borne by trusted servants, and that Catherine was taking a kind of gloomy satisfaction in Mary's forthcoming martyrdom.

The King hesitated until the end of November, and then decided that the domestic risk outweighed the foreign one. On 2nd December the Council issued an order 'for the diminishing of the house and order of the Princess Dowager', entrusting the work to the Duke of Suffolk, the Earl of Sussex and 'Mr. Controller'.<sup>22</sup> The Duke of Norfolk and others were deputed to do the same for Mary. The commissioners arrived at Buckden just before Christmas and Catherine deliberately made their task as difficult and uncomfortable as possible. This was actually the second reduction to which her household had been subjected, and how many servants were removed we do not know, but enough remained to cost the King nearly £3000 over the ensuing year, so the pruning can hardly have been drastic. Mary was much more severely handled. On 16th December the infant Princess Elizabeth was sent, with a suitable establishment, to the Old Palace at Hatfield and Mary was peremptorily ordered to join her, accompanied by only two female servants. The remainder of her establishment was dismissed by Norfolk.<sup>23</sup> The screams of protest, uttered by the young lady herself and by her 'Lady Governess' the Countess of Salisbury, echo shrilly

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<sup>21</sup> L&P, VI, 1207. Mary's letter to the King, dated 2nd October.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid, 1486.

<sup>23</sup> Loades, *Mary Tudor*, p. 78.

in the despatches of Chapuys, who was beside himself with indignation at such treatment. However, the ambassador had his own agenda and was doing his best to persuade the Emperor that all ‘good’ Englishmen were longing for him to come and ‘set matters right’ by overthrowing Henry’s schismatic government. At the same time Charles had many other calls on his time and resources and was beginning to find his aunt tedious. He had just received a letter from her, complaining bitterly about the tardiness of the papal *curia* in giving a definitive sentence in her favour and implying that he was not supporting her fully. The Emperor was therefore disinclined to act on his agent’s urgent representations. In any case, Catherine’s alleged afflictions, and the real penalties imposed on Mary, gave him a useful point of moral pressure against Henry. A threatening posture was thus likely to be more effective, and much cheaper, than action which might actually strengthen the King’s hand. Chapuys mentions Paulet frequently in his despatches, but always represents him as a mere functionary, an officer doing the King’s bidding.<sup>24</sup> It is never suggested that he had any opinion of his own in respect of the tasks which he was called upon to perform. Mary clearly regarded him as hostile, but he never led any of the missions which she confronted and there were no overt clashes between them. On the other hand the Controller was used far more frequently in these affairs than other comparable officers, such as the Treasurer of the Household (Sir William Fitzwilliam) or the Vice-Chamberlain (Sir William Kingston). This may not mean that he was especially favoured by Henry, but it does again reflect his closeness to Cromwell.

At some uncertain date during 1533 this was further expressed in another joint appointment – this time to be Surveyors of Woods for the Duchy of Lancaster and on 28th December two warrants were directed to them jointly in that capacity. The fortunes of the whole family seem to have benefited from this relationship. In April Paulet, his son John and several others purchased lands from William Blount, Lord Mountjoy in what seems to have been a speculative venture. George, as we have seen, was allowed to stand in as Master of the Wards, which usefully kept hold of the considerable profits and in March was acting in some undefined capacity as the Earl of Rutland’s ‘man of business’.<sup>25</sup> At the same time John and his uncle Richard were serving on a commission in Hampshire to investigate wastes and destruction on the royal lands there, appointments in which William was almost certainly instrumental. In November, after appearing on the list for a few years, John was finally pricked as sheriff of Hampshire.

<sup>24</sup> For example in his reporting of the reduction of Catherine’s and Mary’s households. Chapuys to the Emperor, 9th December 1533. L&P, VI, 1510.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid, 1623 (1533 but undated); 1575–1576 (28th December 1533); 1048 (30th August 1533); 300 (March 1533) – relating to an advowson in Lincolnshire.

Early in the following year Sir William was involved, again with Cromwell, in what appear to have been some preliminary skirmishes over minor religious houses. In April, at about the time that Cromwell was appointed King's Secretary, he was engaged with Thomas Legh in attempting to persuade the Abbess of Wherwell to resign on a pension. The reason for this is not known, but it was clearly a function of the newly established and as yet undefined Royal Supremacy. Perhaps someone in office was coveting the appointment for a female relative. There is no suggestion that the house was to be dissolved, and in any case its revenues would have been small, but Paulet's involvement was more than casual. He wrote to Cromwell that the lady was refusing to resign without speaking to the King, and added in a postscript:

My lady says that I am the occasion hereof, which troubles her the more, thinking that she would rather have done it in my absence ...<sup>26</sup>

Whether this was because she was personally known to the Controller, or suspected him of some improper interest in her departure is not clear. A few days later he wrote again with further particulars, but the reason for his special concern was not elucidated. Cromwell was by this time edging ahead in the royal favour. Since 1532 he had been Master of the Jewel House and Keeper of the Hanaper of Chancery, so that Paulet as Master of the Wards and Controller of the Household was notionally the senior partner. However, Cromwell had also become Chancellor of the Exchequer in April 1533 and now Principal Secretary. A few months later he was to become Master of the Rolls, while Sir William's only further success was finally to secure a patent for the sole office of Master of the Wards, a position which he had held in practice for the last two years.<sup>27</sup> Cromwell's key role in devising the Acts of Succession and Supremacy, which passed parliament in the two sessions of 1534 was probably the crucial factor in his advance at this stage. Having made up his mind how to respond to the Papal threat, Henry was particularly appreciative of the man who could turn ideas into effective action. Useful as he was, Paulet was now the junior partner.

Meanwhile, Mary was being troublesome again. At the end of March, in the course of a routine move from one residence to another, she refused to budge unless addressed by her 'proper title'. As it would have been treason to oblige no one volunteered and the exasperated Lady Mistress, Anne Shelton, had her manhandled into a litter and carried off amid shrill cries of protest.<sup>28</sup> Even Chapuys was alarmed by this unnecessary display of intransigence and it was almost certainly in connection with this incident

<sup>26</sup> L&P, VII, 527. Paulet and Thomas Legh to Cromwell, 21st April 1534.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid, 1601 (December 1534). This grant was in fuller terms, including fees, and was made on the termination of his joint grant with Englefield.

<sup>28</sup> Loades, *Mary Tudor*, p. 82.

that Paulet and the Earl of Wiltshire paid her a visit in early May, ‘... and thence to court to make report’. As the earl was Thomas Boleyn, Anne’s father, his attitude to Mary needs no emphasis and his pairing with Paulet was not intended to lessen the threat. The outcome of this interview is not known. It can hardly have satisfied anybody, and was repeated in July, when Chapuys reported on the 15th:

Two days ago the Earl of Wiltshire and the Controllor went again to summon the Princess to renounce her title ... she replied so wisely that they returned quite confounded ...<sup>29</sup>

This was, of course, because the ambassador had told her what to say! Chapuys’s role in the ongoing guerrilla warfare between Mary and the Privy Council needs to be emphasised because he was deliberately using her as a stalking horse to attack Henry and to encourage opposition to his rule. In June the Kildare revolt broke out in Ireland and Chapuys could hardly contain his glee, taking this to be the first step in that universal wave of protest which would sweep Henry from the throne and remove people like Cromwell and Paulet from power. In the same despatch, on 29th August, he also reported a further stage in the saga of the Princess. This time Paulet had been sent to supervise another move of ‘the little bastards’ household, presumably in the hope of stopping a repeat of the antics of March. If so, he did not succeed. ‘She played her part so well’ Chapuys reported, ‘that the Controllor promised her that she should not go after the other (Elizabeth) ...’. She then marched out, apparently shoving Paulet aside when he attempted to restrain her – to the great chagrin of all the heretics and other undesirables present.<sup>30</sup> A little earlier Mary had drawn up a formal objection to the withdrawal of her title and added that she would neither marry nor enter religion without the full consent of her mother. This instrument she sent, not to the Council but to the ambassador, who had presumably requested it. Henry’s reaction to this blatant interference was restrained, but pointed. In September 1534 he instructed his own ambassador at the Imperial Court to say in respect of Mary:

We do order and entertain [her] as we think most expedient, and also as to us seemeth pertinent, for we think it not meet that any person should prescribe unto us how we should order our own daughter, we being her natural father ...<sup>31</sup>

Charles, being no more anxious than Henry for a complete breach, swallowed the rebuke, but there is no sign of his trying to restrain either the zeal of his envoy or the recalcitrance of his *protégé*. Paulet, meanwhile,

<sup>29</sup> L&P, VII, 980. Chapuys to the Emperor, 15th July 1534.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid, 1095, 29th August 1534. Again Chapuys represents himself as the adviser behind this behaviour.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid, 1209. *Mary Tudor*, p. 83.

seems to have been stuck with the job of seeking to chastise her without fatal consequences.

One of the reasons why he was used on these delicate missions seems to have been that he was regularly available. Every time Chapuys reports on another trying interview with the council, he notes the Controller among those present. He signed council letters which had nothing to do with his offices, because he was there. In October he was one of three councillors (the others were Cromwell and Brian Tuke) assigned to settle with William Lord Dacre for the payment of the enormous fine of £10,000 which had recently been imposed upon him for treasonable correspondence with the Scots. Dacre had already paid 7000 marks and this bond was for another 10,000. In December of 1534 when Sir William Fitzwilliam was sent in his capacity as Lord Admiral to survey the defences of Calais, Paulet was one of the household officers designated to accompany him.<sup>32</sup> How much time he may have spent at Basing is problematic. At one point, in May, he says in a letter about something else that he is about to go there for 12 days and, on another occasion, there is a reference to his overseeing the building work which had been going on for a couple of years, but it must surely have been a question of occasional weeks. For the most part he was busy about the King's affairs and his son John was increasingly maintaining the family position in Hampshire. Like William, John was acquiring lands from time to time and was occasionally careless in the process. In December 1534 he needed a pardon for having acquired property illegally – in what manner is not known – from his cousin Sir Giles Capell.<sup>33</sup> He was also active now in the way which his father had been a decade earlier, on various administrative commissions in the county.

Early in 1535 another member of the Paulet clan surfaces. This was Thomas, whom Sir William identified as his brother in a business letter of 28th February. Thomas appears to have been a military man, and must have been about 50 at this point, but very little is known about him and the fact that he was sent on an important mission to Ireland must have been due to William's influence in the Council. The Kildare rebellion was still rumbling on and Paulet was sent with reinforcements about the middle of February. On 13th March William Skeffington reported that his coming had 'reformed' the army and a fortnight later the Council of Ireland wrote formally to the King, commending his conduct at the siege of Maynooth, which had just been taken.<sup>34</sup> His mission did not last long and he seems to have been what would now be called a 'trouble shooter' rather than a regular officer. In April, when Henry sent Skeffington fresh instructions, he sent them via Thomas Paulet, but the following month he was replaced

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<sup>32</sup> L&P, VII, 1270 (17th October 1534), 1522 (9th December).

<sup>33</sup> Ibid, 922 (27).

<sup>34</sup> L&P, VIII, 193 (10th February 1535), 382 (13th March), 448 (26th March).

by Sir John St Lowe and was back in England by the end of May. When his expenses were paid in October, his 'diets' came to £50 for about four months service, which is a fair indication of the level of his mission.

At about the same time there were rumours that the Duke of Norfolk would undertake another mission to France 'about Whitsunside' and that Rochford and Paulet would again accompany him. If Henry was ever contemplating such a move, he changed his mind, because no such mission was sent. Instead the Controller was occupied with grimmer business nearer to home. The Act of Supremacy of 1534 had made it High Treason to deny the King's right to the title of Supreme Head of the Church and both Sir Thomas More, the former Lord Chancellor, and John Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, had refused the proffered oath. Both were very high profile dissidents, not only in national but also in international terms and the decision to put them on trial may well have been the reason why the suggested mission to France was aborted. On 17th June and 1st July special commissions of oyer and terminer were issued to the Chancellor, Sir Thomas Audley and others for the trial under the common law of Fisher, More and the dissident Carthusian friars who had also refused the oath. Sir William Paulet was named to both commissions and sat at both trials.<sup>35</sup> The conviction and subsequent execution of the defendants sent shockwaves through Europe and earned Henry a second excommunication. The death of Clement VII in 1534 had given the King a chance to renegotiate his relations with the Papacy, but any settlement would inevitably have involved surrendering the Royal Supremacy and that Henry was totally unwilling to do. He may have been a prisoner of his own rhetoric, but the consistency with which he adhered to this position for the rest of his life suggests that he was genuinely convinced that such a regime represented the Will of God. The executions of Fisher and More defined not only his position, but that of all those who had been involved in them. Fisher had been named as a cardinal shortly before his death, 'and yet the head was off before the hat was on, and so the twain met not' as one contemporary put it. Paulet, no less than Audley, or Cromwell, or Anne Boleyn, was clearly identified as an enemy of the church.

In other respects the summer of 1535 appears to have been quiet. In May the dowager Lady Berkeley complained to Cromwell of Paulet's slowness in sending the writs which should have followed her husband's death, presumably in his capacity as Master of the Wards. In July it was again rumoured that he would go to Calais to inspect the fortifications 'for fear of the French'. However, the source of this rumour was Chapuys and he was looking eagerly for any signs of breakdown in Anglo-French relations. There was a mission to Calais, but it was a routine one and the Paulet

<sup>35</sup> Ibid, 886 (17th June 1535), 974 (1st July).

who served on it was his brother George.<sup>36</sup> In early August William was planning to take advantage of the King's progress to Winchester to take a fortnight at home with his building work, as he had done in the previous year. At the same time as Controller he was in the midst of negotiating a 'composition' with the City of London for the provisioning of the household, something for which his strong City ties gave him a uniquely favourable position. In September the Abbess of Wherwell surfaced again. By this time she had apparently agreed to accept a pension of £20 a year and Thomas Legh wrote to Paulet to make the payment 'that she may be honestly rid from thence' which suggests a disciplinary procedure rather than the dissolution of the house.<sup>37</sup> Why Paulet should have been called upon for this payment is not clear. He was not a treasurer and the Wards would have been an eccentric office to have paid a religious pension. Perhaps it was his good offices which were being called upon. Early in October he was corresponding cosily with Lady Bryan about the weaning of Princess Elizabeth, a matter which seems to have been decided entirely by the King (for whom Paulet was acting), without reference to the child's mother. As this would have involved the employment of a wet nurse, and her continued 'entertainment', perhaps that was not as unreasonable as it sounds.<sup>38</sup> As Sir William was a grandfather several times over by this time, he presumably had some experience in managing such matters.

In October came another mark of the royal favour, when the King and Queen ended their summer progress with a visit to Basing. This would have been an expensive honour, but the references to it in the surviving correspondence are casual and matter-of-fact. Paulet was travelling with the royal party in any case and on 16th October he informed Cromwell, who had remained in London, that the 'gestes' had been changed at the last minute. The King spent two days with Sir William, before proceeding to 'Mr. Seymour's place at Elvetham'. At least, that was the intention, but a note from Sir Francis Bryan on the 19th suggests that that may also have been changed. The itineraries for these moves were obviously fairly flexible. What Henry may have thought of the improvements at Basing we do not know, but at least he had plenty of chance to look at them. In spite of his prolonged absences, Sir William had no intention of lowering his profile in the county. In addition to the commission of the peace, he was also named on the commission of sewers for Hampshire and on that for the collection of tenths and fifteenths. On the latter he was supported by his brother George and son John and on the former by his brother Richard.<sup>39</sup> His kinsman Hugh Paulet also served for Somerset. There was

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<sup>36</sup> Ibid, 1018 (11th July).

<sup>37</sup> L&P, IX, 439 (25th September 1535).

<sup>38</sup> Ibid, 568 (9th October). D. Loades, *Elizabeth I* (2003), p. 31.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid, 620 (16th October); 149 (commissions).

no chance of the family allowing its local position to go by default. The same was probably true of his London network through the Capells, but his brother-in-law Giles had long since moved out of the City and for these years there is practically no evidence.

In January 1536, the Princess Dowager, or Queen as she insisted on being called, Catherine of Aragon, died at Kimbolton. There were inevitably rumours of poison, but even Chapuys did not give them much credit. Catherine had been ailing for several weeks and appears to have succumbed to a series of heart attacks. The only reproach which could be justly levelled at Henry was that he had not allowed Mary to visit her mother in what turned out to be her last illness. Messages had continued to pass, but that was small consolation to either of them. Catherine had, according to the surviving reports, behaved with perfect Catholic rectitude in her last days and had received extreme unction only hours before her death. Henry was hugely relieved, and for good reason, because the Emperor's sense of obligation towards his aunt had been one of the major stumbling blocks in the way of that improvement of relations which they both desired. Whether he really threw a party to celebrate, and dressed in yellow, is much more doubtful, although he may well have felt like doing so. More practically, he ordered that his late wife's obsequies should be supervised by the Controller of his Household, Sir William Paulet.<sup>40</sup> On 22nd January Richard Rich wrote from Kimbolton to Cromwell, acknowledging the King's instructions, and requesting that Paulet should bring with him the future disposition of Catherine's household after her interment. It was ordered from the King, via Cromwell, that Catherine should be buried in Peterborough Abbey, with the rites suitable to the Princess Dowager of Wales. Paulet organised the obsequies and distributed the mourning robes. On 10th February Chapuys reported, with the air of a man seeking a grievance, that although the Queen had been attended to the grave by four bishops and as many abbots, the only 'man of mark' present had been the Controller of the Household.<sup>41</sup> The chief mourner was Eleanor, Countess of Cumberland, Henry's niece, but the fact that she was 'conducted to the offering' by Sir William Paulet suggests that in this respect at least the ambassador was correctly informed. It was a politically sensitive event and the absence of leading courtiers and councillors may have been as much by their wish as the King's. However the choice of Paulet to act on Henry's behalf may not have been routine. It was a proper enough function for the Controller of the Household, but it would have been equally appropriate to have entrusted it to the Treasurer, or to the Vice-Chamberlain, or any of the other second rank household officials. In

<sup>40</sup> L&P, X, 41. Sir Edward Bedingfield to Cromwell, 'We are glad of the coming of the Controller hither by the king's commandment to order all things for the interring ...'.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid, 282. Chapuys to the Emperor, 10th February 1536.

spite of his closeness to Cromwell, Paulet was *persona grata* at Kimbolton and this seems to have been an example of his ability to steer between conflicting parties which he was later to develop into a fine art.<sup>42</sup>

The same talent can be seen a little later, when the tragedy of Anne Boleyn was unfolding. The story behind her fall was complex and is still controversial, but Anne had a powerful political intelligence as well as a lot of sexual magnetism. In many ways she was more suited to the council chamber than to the boudoir and Henry came to resent this. Also, he was an erratic sexual performer and this sometimes left his highly charged wife frustrated. To the King, her transformation from exciting mistress into Queen had been definitive. From being a 'loose cannon' she became part of the establishment and different rules of behaviour applied. Ann, however, found this unacceptable and continued to behave as before, complete with furious quarrels and passionate reconciliations.<sup>43</sup> At first Henry continued to find this fascinating, but over a period of three years the charm wore off and he became increasingly annoyed. There was also the unresolved problem of the succession. Elizabeth had been a welcome token of fertility, but had not provided a solution and when Anne miscarried of a male foetus in January 1536, Henry became again a prey to superstitious fears.<sup>44</sup> Catherine's death had freed him from any concern about being threatened or blackmailed into taking her back and this left Anne particularly vulnerable. Finally, she was a zealous Francophile and Thomas Cromwell was increasingly anxious to steer Henry back into an Imperial alliance now that the main obstacle to an *entente* was gone. By the spring of 1536 circumstances had conspired to expose the Queen to attack from the numerous enemies whom she had acquired since 1527. We do not know exactly what happened, but by April Cromwell appears to have become convinced that Anne was a political liability and would have to be removed. At the same time some indiscreet, but probably quite harmless gestures, persuaded the King that she was guilty of sexual misconduct. Quite suddenly his affection turned, first to irrational suspicion and then to hostile rage. Thanks (probably) to Cromwell's skill in working on his suspicions, he became absolutely convinced that his erstwhile bedfellow was an incestuous whore. Anne was consigned to the Tower and a miscellaneous group of her alleged paramours rounded up.<sup>45</sup>

At least one of the latter, Mark Smeaton, was tortured to provide incriminating evidence and several courtiers, including Henry Norris a

<sup>42</sup> Ibid, 284. An account of the funeral.

<sup>43</sup> The best account of this deteriorating relationship is contained in E.W. Ives, *The Life and Death of Anne Boleyn* (2004), pp. 291–305.

<sup>44</sup> The importance of this episode has been much stressed by Retha Warnicke, first in 'The fall of Anne Boleyn, a reassessment', in *History*, 70, 1985, and then more fully in *The Rise and Fall of Anne Boleyn* (1989). Ives is sceptical of her interpretation.

<sup>45</sup> Ives, *Life and Death*, pp. 319–37.

leading Gentleman of the Privy Chamber, were convicted and executed for adultery with the Queen. Being commoners, they were tried by a special commission of Oyer and Terminer, headed by Audley and including Paulet. The Marquis of Pembroke was, of course, tried by her peers, but the conviction of her accomplices left the verdict a foregone conclusion. On 19th May she was beheaded by the Calais swordsman. The Controller's role in this whole tragedy is shadowy and may well have been slight. As a senior Household officer he was an obvious candidate for the trial commission and nothing much can be read into that. The only direct evidence is contained in a letter to the Council from Sir William Kingston, the Lieutenant of the Tower, concerning Anne's demeanour during her imprisonment. This varied from sober protestations of innocence to near hysteria, but in the course of a long complaint about how her goodwill had been abused 'she named Mr. Controller to be a very gentleman'.<sup>46</sup> As far as we know there had never been any particular link between them and those who had been close to the Queen were running for cover. Her observation must mean that she had found in him that same irenic courtesy that had made him acceptable to the quite different, and antagonistic, household at Kimbolton. It was no mean achievement to remain close to Cromwell and to keep the good opinion of the beleaguered Queen in these trying circumstances. The whole episode reflects little credit on the King, who appears by turn unstable, gullible and vindictive. So consuming was his self-righteousness that he even convinced himself that his whole nine year infatuation with Anne had been the result of her sinister skills as a witch – an insinuation which his law officers wisely omitted from the official list of charges. Nor does Thomas Cromwell emerge unscathed from similar scrutiny, but upon the reputation of Sir William Paulet no shadow was cast.

He seems throughout to have maintained the image of a hard working and politically neutral civil servant. In March John Hussee, Lord Lisle's man of business, had his doubts, referring to one of the agents with whom he was dealing as 'a crafty fellow and much borne by Mr. Controller'; but by the middle of May he was able to write that his business would soon be settled 'now my Lord Controller is my Lord's friend'.<sup>47</sup> This description was no doubt a slip of the pen, but there were some indications that a peerage might be coming Paulet's way. In February 1536 he had been granted the office of Keeper and Governor of Pamber Forest, no great thing in itself, but it had been granted '... in consideration that Hugh St John, Lord St John, whose heir the same Sir William Paulet is, was seized

<sup>46</sup> L&P, X, 797. Sir William Kingston to Cromwell, May 1536.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid, 558, John Hussee to Lord Lisle, 26th March 1536 and 995, Hussee to Lady Lisle 30th May.

of the said office as of fee and inheritance'.<sup>48</sup> Hugh had died over 100 years before and why this element of inheritance should be remembered in the grant is not clear unless a new creation was in prospect. More significantly, perhaps in view of what was about to happen, in April he received a grant of Sir Thomas More's former house in Chelsea. This took a very unusual form, because it did not confer ownership, or even a lease, but merely 'custody during pleasure'; presumably conditional upon his doing what was expected of him in the forthcoming crisis. Meanwhile also in April, and in the final session of the Reformation Parliament, the act had been passed dissolving the small monasteries. Begging letters at once began to arrive on Cromwell's desk, and apparently on Paulet's also, because in August Richard Rich wrote to the newly created Lord Privy Seal to say that he had leased one site in Bristol to a suitor 'at the desire of Mr. Controller' without any hint that this was either improper or unexpected.<sup>49</sup> The impression is that the two men were working together harmoniously in this connection. However, there is also strong circumstantial evidence to suggest that the regular attendee at Council meetings, and 'well informed source' with whom Chapuys was doing business at this time, and whom he referred to as 'Mr. Quin', was actually Paulet.<sup>50</sup> Given Cromwell's known desire to revive the Imperial alliance, and his delicate relations with the 'Aragonese faction' following the fall of Anne Boleyn, this may not be as sinister as it at first appears. If Cromwell did not wish to deal directly with Chapuys – and the continuing problem of Mary placed strict limits upon that exchange – he may well have used Sir William as an intermediary. Whether Chapuys was aware of this connection, we do not know.

In the dramatic circumstances of Mary's eventual surrender to her father at the beginning of July, the Controller does not feature at all. If he was attending Council meetings he must have been aware of what was going on, but this time he was not called upon to attend the Duke of Norfolk when the latter visited Hunsdon on or about the 15th June to deliver Henry's final ultimatum. When she eventually gave way, she used a form of words which Cromwell had thoughtfully provided and it was to him that she addressed her letter of thanks. Mary's rehabilitation, however, gave the Controller a task which is largely taken for granted in the surviving records. Henry had married Jane Seymour with what most contemporaries considered to be indecent haste after Anne's execution and on 6th July the newly wed couple visited Mary at Hunsdon. What they mainly talked about

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<sup>48</sup> Ibid, 392.

<sup>49</sup> Statute 27 Henry VIII, c. 28. SR, III, pp. 575–8. L&P, XI, 307.

<sup>50</sup> Chapuys refers several times to 'Mr. Quin', but the identification is based on a comment made in a letter of September 1536, where he writes of 'the said three deputies, and also the controller, Mr. Quin, who were all the persons of the council then at hand ...'. L&P, XI, 479.

was the restoration of her household and since that would, like Elizabeth's, be a part of the Royal Household, it was very much Paulet's business. Insofar as Mary was now free to move independently around the available royal residences, the below stairs service would be provided by the King's servants, so it was only her Chamber which was restored at this point. This was to be a fairly low key affair. She was now 20 years old, so neither a tutor nor a Lady Governess was required. Nor was any Chamberlain or Steward appointed. She was allowed four gentlewomen, two chamberers, four gentlemen, a chaplain, a physician and a dozen or so lower ranking servants.<sup>51</sup> Nothing was said about management. It may have been assumed that that would remain under the control of Elizabeth's officers. However, it would appear that Mary objected to that (not surprisingly) and, as Henry was willing to stretch a few points to accommodate her wishes, the overall control remained with Paulet. How much influence he may have exercised over appointments we do not know, but probably not a lot. Most of those who filled these positions had served Mary before in happier times and a few had been with her throughout. He must have had some residual right of *veto*, but if he ever exercised it, there is no record. The whole arrangement seems to have been conceived as temporary, but was eventually to endure for over ten years. No doubt it was made simpler by the fact that Mary was to spend increasing periods of time at court and during the last four years of the reign lodged almost permanently with Queen Catherine Parr.<sup>52</sup> The only real evidence we have of the set up in the autumn of 1536 is a letter from Paulet to Cromwell in December, confirming the King's intention to maintain Mary's establishment and asking for a fresh allocation of money. Presumably this additional responsibility was not to be covered out of his ordinary budget.

Chapuys was greatly relieved by these developments and eased his own conscience by representing Mary as smitten with remorse at having purchased her father's favour by such a surrender.<sup>53</sup> He also indulged in some fairly wild speculation about the extent of her restoration. The Countess of Salisbury was returning to duty; Mary was to be created Duchess of York and recognised again as heir to the throne. None of this happened immediately, and most of it never happened at all, so either 'Mr. Quin' had stopped giving him information, or was leading him up the garden path. The Duke of Richmond, whom Chapuys seriously believed Henry was going to make his heir, died at the end of July. Whatever Henry's intention, this changed the situation, because if all Henry's children were illegitimate (which was the legal position), the son was clearly the superior. Without

<sup>51</sup> Loades, *Mary Tudor*, Appendix I, pp. 352–3.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid, pp. 116–117. In spite of their differences, the two women were similar in age, there appears to have been a close friendship between them.

<sup>53</sup> Chapuys to the Emperor, 1st July 1536. L&P, XI, 7.

a son, the elder daughter, legitimate or not, was, or could be, the heir. For the time being, nothing was said officially. It may well be that 'Mr. Quin' had dried up because Paulet was otherwise occupied. The outbreak first of the Lincolnshire rising and then of the Pilgrimage of Grace, concentrated the minds of the council on more urgent matters and from the middle of October Paulet was busy raising men to go against the northern rebels.<sup>54</sup> On 11th October he was instructed to mobilise 100 (later increased to 200) men and by the 17th was at Ampthill with the Duke of Norfolk overseeing the musters. On the 20th he was instructed, with others, to join the Duke of Suffolk in Lincolnshire, but it seems likely that he never went because he continued to report on the state of the musters over the next few days and, by then, the focus of the disturbances had shifted from Lincolnshire to Yorkshire. The whole Paulet clan was involved in these musters. The Controller's son, John, was instructed to provide 10 men, while his brothers Richard and George were expected to produce six each. Brother Thomas – the only member of the family with recognised military skills – was for some mysterious reason 'stood down' from the musters. Perhaps he was intended for some other duty, but in practice he disappeared from the records. It seems that eventually Sir William did not lead his men north in the King's service, but rather returned to the council in London. He was by this time over 60 years old and may well have been considered too old for active service. Perhaps his son John led his 'band' – we do not know.

As far as we can tell, Sir William was not lavishly rewarded for this diligent service, but he was able to use his position to pick and chose among the variety of small monastic properties which had come to the Crown as a result of the Act of Dissolution. Cromwell seems to have decided almost from the beginning that the best way to use this somewhat 'hot' property was to buy and reward loyalty rather than to enhance the King's ordinary income and in August his friend Paulet acquired the site, buildings and what must have been the entire property of St Mary's Abbey, Netley, not far from his seat at Basing. The value was given as £99 11s 7d per annum; no rent was reserved and no price specified, so it was presumably a genuine gift and, as such, rather uncommon.<sup>55</sup> He must have asked for it, but the request was probably verbal as he must have been meeting the Lord Privy Seal almost daily at this time. There is no suggestion that Paulet was particularly 'targeted' by the northern rebels in the way that Cromwell and Cranmer were – he was in any case a gentleman of impeccable ancestry – but like Cromwell he kept a very low profile during November. While the Duke of Norfolk was leading his forces north, and parleying with the rebels at Doncaster, Sir William

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<sup>54</sup> Ibid, 580, 750, 799.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid, 385. It was normal for non-preferential purchasers to pay 20 years annual value.

seems to have busied himself about the Council's business, such as paying the bills for the Ampthill musters, which were presented at the end of October and came to a massive £11,618.<sup>56</sup> If he was away from the board at all after Norfolk's departure, it cannot have been for more than a couple of weeks. His signature does not appear on council letters sent during this period, but that does not prove very much. He may well have been keeping a watchful eye on Mary, whose name was frequently on the rebels' lips, but who was careful to give them no encouragement. Chapuys was puzzled by her attitude, reluctant to believe that she had suddenly become the King's 'good daughter', but in truth she seems to have learned a painful lesson from her narrow escape. It is tempting to think that 'Mr. Quin' may have been a party to that, but there is no evidence to suggest it.

In January 1537, when the danger in the north had receded, Paulet's signature reappears on Council letters, notably on a set of instructions to Norfolk concerning appointments in the borders. On 19th February he must have had a fright, when the duke rather pointedly wrote:

And, good Mr. Controller, provide you of a new bailey at Embleton, for John Jackson your bailey there will be hanged Thursday or Friday ... and I think some of your tenants will keep him company ...<sup>57</sup>

Embleton (County Durham) was an outlying fragment of Paulet's estate and it is extremely unlikely that he had ever visited the place, but he was responsible for Jackson's appointment and indirectly for the leases which would now have to be reallocated. Given Norfolk's well known hostility to Cromwell, and the closeness of Paulet to the latter, there may have been more than the hint of a threat in this. If so, nothing came of it, except, no doubt the necessary reorganisation at Embleton. In February and March the Controller was assiduous in council and signed all the letters of instruction which were sent to the duke, who was busy exercising the sanctions of martial law following the opportune, but really rather ridiculous, outbreak led by Sir Francis Bigod, which had given Henry the pretext to tear up all the undertakings which had earlier made to the Pilgrims.<sup>58</sup> It was at about this time also that Norfolk advised the King that he would only be able to control the north satisfactorily by appointing a nobleman of suitable status as his lieutenant. It is unlikely that he was angling for the appointment himself, as he was anxious to return south; perhaps he had the Earl of Westmorland in mind, because the point was clearly to go with the grain of northern affinities rather than against it. This was not advice that Henry (or Cromwell) wanted to hear and when the Council wrote in response, on 17th March, he was told that both

<sup>56</sup> Ibid, 937 (31st October 1536).

<sup>57</sup> L&P, XII (i), 468.

<sup>58</sup> R.W. Hoyle, *The Pilgrimage of Grace and the Politics of the 1530s* (2001), pp. 378–84.

the King and his council 'marvelled' at the suggestion. This was a fairly strong rebuke in the context and should be seen in connection with the pressure which was then being applied to the ailing (and childless) Earl of Northumberland to make the King his heir.<sup>59</sup> The nearest that Paulet ever got to the action was to be named as one of the 13 commissioners of Oyer and Terminer for the trial of the Lincolnshire rebels, which was issued on 26th March. Although the offences had taken place in the north, the commission was issued for London and Middlesex as well as Lincoln and the trials took place in the capital. Early in April similar proceedings were ordered against Aske and Constable and, when the Commission of Oyer and Terminer was issued on 17th May, Paulet was again a member.

The Garter elections that year may have been a disappointment to him, because the military significance of the Order had long since waned and it had become a badge of honour for those particularly high in the royal favour. Paulet might reasonably have expected a nomination, but it did not come, and none of the four candidates whom he supported was successful.<sup>60</sup> However, shortly after Lord Darcy lost his stall when he was attainted for treason following his involvement with the northern rebels and, very unusually, a supplementary election was held in August. This time Paulet was nominated, albeit unsuccessfully. The man who secured the vacant stall was his old friend Thomas Cromwell. There was no doubt who was the senior partner by this time! By comparison with the two previous years, 1537 was a quiet summer. Francis and Charles were at loggerheads again and neither wanted to upset the strategically placed English; indeed there was even talk of a Portuguese marriage for the 21 year old Mary. By May Queen Jane was obviously pregnant and that had a calming effect upon the volatile King. Paulet can be glimpsed going about his normal business. He joined the commission of the peace for Wiltshire and was named to a jury of assessment to look at the quality of the coinage. He was referred to from time to time as one of those councillors who was 'about the king', but given his household responsibilities that was to be expected. Then in October Sir William Fitzwilliam, the Treasurer of the Household, was created Earl of Southampton. By custom both the Treasurer and Controller were commoners and, after his promotion, Fitzwilliam surrendered his household office. He had been Lord Admiral since the previous year, which was normally a peerage position, so his promotion was in a sense overdue and as Admiral he retained his position on the Council. At some time between then and the end of the year, Paulet succeeded him.<sup>61</sup> No formal grant of the office survives, but he was certainly in post by the time

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<sup>59</sup> L&P, XII, 667. M.L. Bush, 'The Problem of the Far North; A Study of the Crisis of 1537 and its Consequences', *Northern History*, 6, 1971, pp. 40–63.

<sup>60</sup> L&P, XII, 1008, 23rd April 1537.

<sup>61</sup> L&P, XIII (i), 1. In the New Year gift list Paulet is named as Treasurer.

that New Year gifts were exchanged. He was succeeded as Controller by Sir John Russell.

About three or four days before Fitzwilliam's creation one of the most momentous events of the reign had taken place. On 12th October Queen Jane was delivered of a son. For several weeks the King had been on tenterhooks, moving restlessly from place to place and issuing instructions to 'diminish all mens company' on coming to court. This, Cromwell was firmly told by Paulet and Fitzwilliam on 29th September, applied to him as well. If he was coming to the King, he should bring no more than six men with him. This was probably no hardship to the Lord Privy Seal, who is not known to have travelled in great state, but it was a gentle reminder that, whatever plans he may have been harbouring to reform the household, he was in this respect under the jurisdiction of the Lord Steward. Life was being made more difficult for the Treasurer and Controller at this time by rumours of an unidentified infection, tentatively identified as plague, which would necessitate the exclusion of some people from the forthcoming christening.<sup>62</sup> This may have been a diplomatic alarm, as there are no other references to plague and it was an unlikely time of the year for an outbreak, but it was a useful pretext to be selective over attendance. Paulet, of course, was present in his official capacity. The rejoicings, however, soon turned to grief. Queen Jane, who had had a hard labour, contracted puerperal fever and died a few days after the baptism. Just a month later Sir William was attending her interment. Lady Paulet was honoured with a place in the first carriage at the funeral and received several pieces at the customary hand out of the deceased queen's jewels. The newly promoted Treasurer did not miss many tricks when it came to establishing status.<sup>63</sup> A few days before Christmas he notified Cromwell of the expenses which had been incurred – rather incongruously wishing him a happy Christmas in the process!

Other members of the family continued to play their supporting roles. His son John was also present at Edward's christening and appeared on the sheriff roll for Somerset and Dorset in November, although he was not selected. In July brother George was one of those commissioned to deal with 'the affairs of Ireland', which really meant tidying up after the Fitzgerald revolt. A good deal is known about the working of this commission, which served until April 1538 and has been described at the 'high point of Crown involvement in administrative reform during the reign', but of the part played by George Paulet we really know very little. Nor is it clear why George should have been named rather than his brother Thomas, whose earlier work in Ireland is well attested. The latter was finally paid the last of the money owed to him in August 1536 and it is not until an account

<sup>62</sup> L&P, XII (ii), 774, 891–2, 911.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid, 973, 1060.

which was presented in December 1537 that we learn that he had also acted as escort to the Countess of Kildare ('Frances, wife to that traitor Thomas Fitzgerald') when she had accompanied her husband to England after his surrender in August 1535.<sup>64</sup> Such delays were not uncommon and even apparently clear cut lines of policy were fudged. Just over a year after the fierce preamble to the Act of Dissolution had denounced the 'manifest sin, vicious, carnal and abominable living daily used and committed among the little and small abbeys' and the monastery of Stixwold had disappeared, along with many others, in July 1537 the nuns from the dissolved house of Stansfield were moved to the site and endowed with Stixwold's former property.<sup>65</sup> A new charter appointed Mary Missenden as the prioress and specified that the purpose of the foundation was 'to pray for the good estate of the King's and Queen's souls'. Sir William Paulet was one of the witnesses and, although nothing can be deduced from that, it seems clear that Henry's personal piety was not always comfortable with his own publicly declared policy. The same may also have been true of his minister, because it is hard to imagine Thomas Cromwell being asked to attest such a document.

The first signs of tension between the Treasurer and the Lord Privy Seal came early in 1538 and reflect similarly divided counsels among those close to the King. Henry had been outraged to receive a copy of Reginald Pole's treatise on the unity of the church, which had attacked his divorce and its consequences unsparingly. Pole was not merely an ungrateful villain, he was a traitor.<sup>66</sup> There was some justification for the King's rage, because Pole, a cardinal since 1536, had been sent north as Papal Legate with instructions to (among other things) undermine Henry's government in whatever way might be possible, including incitement to disaffection and rebellion. This inevitably brought his family and all their friends into danger. The King apparently sent agents to the continent in a futile attempt to either kidnap or assassinate Reginald and, when that failed, he allowed Cromwell to strike at the Pole's family and all those connected with them. His mother, the Countess of Salisbury, was a neighbour of Paulet's in Hampshire and, although neither he nor any of his family were actually in her service, relations had always been amiable and continued to be so.<sup>67</sup> As Cromwell began to move against the Poles, his informers turned up all sorts of more or less relevant information, including some remarks attributed to George Paulet, probably while he was in Ireland,

<sup>64</sup> Ibid, 1310. He was paid £10. 3s 9d.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid, 411. G.W. Bernard, in *The King's Reformation*, p. 443, argues that the refoundation at Stixwold was a mere administrative rearrangement, and that no significance should be read into it in respect of the King's piety.

<sup>66</sup> Thomas F. Mayer, *Reginald Pole, Prince and Prophet* (2000), pp. 13–61.

<sup>67</sup> Hazel Pierce, *Margaret Pole, Countess of Salisbury, 1473–1541* (2003), p. 168.

although that is not clear. The Lord Privy Seal, he was alleged to have said, was always sailing close to the wind of royal favour and would have lost it long ago if Sir William and ‘my Lord Admiral’ (Sir William Fitzwilliam) had not kept him in ‘face’.<sup>68</sup> This was hardly high treason, and may well have been pretty close to the truth, but Cromwell chose to regard it as defamatory, and in May 1538, after the Irish commission had wound up, George found himself in the Tower. On the 14th Sir William, drawing on his own credit with the Lord Privy Seal, interceded for him, asking that Cromwell would hear the case in person and ‘show favour’ to the offender. ‘From henceforth’, he added significantly, ‘he will no more offend you nor other noble man with word or deed’. Not only does this letter testify to the essential truth of the charges, it also speaks eloquently of the power which the head of the Paulet family believed himself to have over his siblings, because George was hardly a child. He was an experienced royal servant in his 50s. Within a few weeks he was back as a commissioner of the peace for Hampshire, no doubt chastened by his experience and impressed by the length of Cromwell’s ears.

Sir William had not been threatened himself by this minor act of folly, but other things were coming to light at the same time which could have been much more dangerous. In spite of the perils which such exchanges involved, the Poles remained in touch with Reginald. Their principle messenger was one John Helyar, who was the Countess’s personal chaplain.<sup>69</sup> It is possible that Margaret did not know just how strongly Helyar sympathised with Reginald, or that he had written to him in July 1537 to encourage him in his mission against the King of England. Helyar was apparently a loose tongued fellow, given to sounding off about how many friends the pope had in England. Warned that these remarks were treasonable, he had taken fright and fled to Portsmouth, on his way, allegedly, to study in Paris. Cromwell, or one of his agents, had found out about this and, because it was an offence to leave the realm without licence, had ordered his goods to be sequestered. However, according to the informant, ‘Sir Geoffrey Pole and Mr. Pallet made such shift that the matter was clouded and his goods restored again ...’.<sup>70</sup> The informant, one Hugh Holland, had also been a messenger to Reginald, and was obviously singing for his life, but there is no reason to believe that he was lying about this. It is possible that Paulet simply believed Helyar’s cover story, and thought the matter unimportant, but he was keeping dangerous company, because Sir Geoffrey was in the whole business up to his neck. Holland was his servant, not the Countess’s, and the messages that he had borne

<sup>68</sup> L&P, XIII (i), 471, 9th March 1538.

<sup>69</sup> Pierce, *Margaret Pole*, pp. 44, 122.

<sup>70</sup> L&P, XIII (ii), 817. Interrogatories connected with the Countess of Salisbury, 13th November 1538.

were his master's. Replies had also come back, not only to Sir Geoffrey but also to Dr. Stuard, the Chancellor of Winchester, and to Sir William Paulet. Hugh Holland's testimony was more than sufficient to convict Sir Geoffrey Pole of treason, but his evidence against Paulet was much less clear cut. He never alleged, and nor did anyone else, that the Treasurer had ever sent any message to Reginald himself, nor is it clear that the communications sent to him were ever delivered. Dr. Pierce, who has examined the whole sequence of events in detail, concluded that Sir William was 'very lucky' to escape serious charges, but in truth he had been far too discreet for any change to stick.<sup>71</sup> He had recovered Helyar's goods and obtained for him a certificate of study from the University of Paris. Reginald Pole was alleged to have sent him messages – and that was about the total sum of the suspicions. Of course Paulet had done business with the Countess, and with her son Lord Montague, as well as with Geoffrey. In June 1538 he sued out a pardon for some technical infringement in land deals with them, but Hugh Holland's strong innuendos seem not to have damaged either his position or his favour in the slightest. The nature of his situation is well exemplified by the fact that his wife was listed at the end of the year among the servants of the Lady Mary, on whose behalf Reginald Pole and his adherents were ostensibly acting. But Mary gave them no countenance or encouragement and, like Paulet, she was untouched by the so-called 'Exeter Conspiracy'.

Whereas Paulet had been conspicuous on the commissions which had tried Fisher, More and Anne Boleyn's alleged lovers, he did not feature at all in the destruction of the Poles and the Courtenays. Of course the Countess, her son Lord Montague and the Marquis of Exeter were all tried by their peers. However, several commoners were tried by commission for their supporting roles and a number were executed, but Sir William's services were not called upon. These trials have been called a travesty of justice, because no overt act of treason had been committed – except by Reginald, who was out of reach. However, as Dr. Pierce has demonstrated, the disaffection of these families went far deeper than a general unhappiness about Henry's religious policies.<sup>72</sup> Their language, and the language of their servants, leaves no doubt about their hostility, not merely to Cromwell but also to the King. As long as there was any danger that either Charles or Francis would use Henry's excommunication as an excuse to strike at him, such networks of potential agents had to be destroyed. Cromwell certainly, and Henry probably, knew the long standing ties of neighbourliness which bound the Poles and the Paulets together, but the fact that they spared him the duty of participating in their condemnation does not mean that they suspected his loyalty. Indeed all the indications are the other way.

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<sup>71</sup> Pierce, *Margaret Pole*, pp. 166–7.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 141–71.

Sir William served on every commission of the peace that was issued for Hampshire, Wiltshire and Somerset. Both John and Richard also sat for Hampshire and the latter was appointed a Receiver of the newly established Court of Augmentations in April 1538.<sup>73</sup> His fees as Master of the Wards, and the wages of his clerk, were paid fully and on time. In November Sir Henry Capell, Sir Giles's son, consulted his 'good uncle' about some popish words spoken by a delinquent priest. Whatever distress the fall of the Poles may have caused him privately, there was no interruption in the even tenor of his own favour. If George was right about his efforts on Cromwell's behalf, he seems to have been amply repaid during this crisis.

On 1st January 1539, Paulet took his usual place in the new year gift list at court. By this time the court was again deeply divided, not over the issue of Reginald Pole and his misdemeanours, but over the more fundamental question of the direction in which the Lord Privy Seal was leading. Norfolk and Cromwell quarrelled publicly, although we do not know the reason. In January Sir Nicholas Carew was arrested and Chapuys speculated that this was in the hope that he would produce yet more damning testimony against the Marquis of Exeter.<sup>74</sup> Carew was a long serving member of the Privy Chamber, and had once been high in the King's favour, but he had been interrogated in 1536 over his indiscreet support for the Lady Mary and had a notoriously low opinion of the Lord Privy Seal. In February he was tried by Oyer and Terminer and this time Paulet was named to the commission. Having once again demonstrated his usefulness, the time had come for further reward – or perhaps Cromwell was strengthening his party for perceived battles ahead. On 7th March John Hussee wrote to Lord Lisle 'I hear that the treasurer is to be Lord St John ... and Mr. Controller shall also be made a Lord ...'.<sup>75</sup> His information was correct. Two days later, on 9th March, Sir William Paulet was created Lord St John of Basing, Sir John Russell became Lord Russell and Sir William Parr Lord Parr of Kendall. The first two were thus promoted out of their household offices. Sir William Kingston became Treasurer of the Household and Sir Thomas Cheney Controller.

<sup>73</sup> L&P, XIII (i), 1520. Fee £20 per annum, with profits.

<sup>74</sup> Pierce, *Margaret Pole*, p. 142.

<sup>75</sup> L&P, XIV (i), 453, 477.

## Lord St John

The title which William Paulet received on 9th March 1539 was one to which he had a remote ancestral claim on his father's side, but through the female line and going back to the early fifteenth century.<sup>1</sup> His was a new creation, but this background explains his choice of title. The ceremony at Westminster seems to have been attended by the entire court; at least the three new barons were presented with a lengthy list of rewards which they were expected to find, ranging from £15 for the officers of Arms to 6s 8d for the footmen. The whole bill came to over £32.<sup>2</sup> For the time being Lord St John was without a household office, and thus no longer an *ex officio* councillor, but he continued to exercise his other offices, particularly that of Master of the Wards. Within a matter of days, we are told that Henry had decided to fortify his kingdom and Paulet became busied about this new emergency. Francis and Charles had agreed a ten year truce at Nice in the previous June and by December 1538 the pope was sufficiently encouraged to make a partial promulgation of the Bull of excommunication against the English King. The word crusade was being uttered in Rome and on 12th January 1539 the Emperor and the French King had signed an agreement at Toledo not to enter into any fresh alliance with the heretic English. David Beaton was created a cardinal and sent to Scotland to motivate James V for the cause, while Reginald Pole appeared again in Northern Europe, like a bird of ill-omen, expressly charged to bring Charles and Francis to the point of open hostilities with Henry.<sup>3</sup> It appeared that England was in great danger. Calais and Guisnes were fortified, the garrison at Berwick reinforced, ships were stayed in harbour and musters were held. In a sense, Henry was not intimidated. Monasteries continued to go down, their stones being used for the new fortifications, and the last shrines were suppressed, but the fear of war was, for several months, real and compelling. Before the end of March Paulet was despatched with the Earl of Southampton to survey the Solent and the Isle of Wight and, as a result of their report, several new fortifications were created.<sup>4</sup> In the same month he was helping to conduct the musters

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<sup>1</sup> NA C82/750. G.E. Cokayne, *Complete Peerage*, rev. ed. by V. Gibbs (1910–1949) *sub* St John.

<sup>2</sup> BL Add Ms 6113, f. 91.

<sup>3</sup> Mayer, *Reginald Pole*, pp. 91–102.

<sup>4</sup> L&P, XIV(i), 398 (February 1539), 573 (20th March). For a description of the fortifications built, see H.M. Colvin, *The History of the King's Works*, Vol. IV (ii) (1982).

in Hampshire and these must have been the proceedings which he visited Cromwell to report in the middle of April.

The danger, it soon transpired, was more apparent than real. When it came to the point, Charles had not the slightest intention of taking any action against Henry and put off the papal emissary with empty words. Francis was not even willing to receive Pole and made any move on his own part conditional upon the Emperor moving first. In fact the treaty of Toledo was not worth the paper it was written on. As early as March the French had resumed diplomatic relations with England and the warlike preparations which continued in France were aimed against the Emperor and not Henry. By July the tension had relaxed and, although the fortifications which had been begun were completed, no further efforts were made. The summer was, however, eventful in other ways. The Marquis of Exeter, Lord Montague and Sir Edward Neville had been executed in December 1538. A few weeks later, when Pole's mission against Henry was known, his aged mother the Countess of Salisbury was arrested and interrogated.<sup>5</sup> Although no overt treason could be proved against her, her conservative sympathies were notorious and her involvement with her younger son and his activities – to say nothing of her elder son, now executed – reasonably suspected. She was not tried but attainted by act of parliament in June – and whatever pangs it may have cost him, Lord St John did his duty with the rest.<sup>6</sup> At the same time, and in case this success should deceive them, Henry put a sharp break upon his evangelical councillors, particularly Cranmer and Cromwell, by causing the Act of Six Articles to be passed. This laid down a standard of doctrine for the English church, particularly in relation to the sacraments, which was thoroughly orthodox in the Catholic sense. This should not be seen as a victory for any 'conservative faction' within the council, but rather as a sharp reminder that the King had a mind of his own in these matters.<sup>7</sup> It was a setback for Cromwell and his allies, but not at the hands of their opponents. Within a few days it was followed by one of the most unequivocal pieces of anti-papal theatre of the whole reign; a pageant upon the Thames which sunk a whole boatful of 'cardinals' at the hands of 'the king and his council'.

What little we know of Paulet and his opinions at this stage would suggest that he voted for the Act with some enthusiasm, but would not have seen that as a betrayal of his friendship with Cromwell and certainly not as an indication that he had aligned himself with any other group within the court. Although it is natural to suppose that all new peerage creations owed something to the influence of the Lord Privy Seal, and all the three who were promoted on 9th March were in some sense his allies, no such

<sup>5</sup> Pierce, *Margaret Pole*, pp. 173–4.

<sup>6</sup> JL (1846), Vol. I.

<sup>7</sup> G.W. Bernard, *The King's Reformation* (2006), pp. 497–505.

influence can be proved. Indeed a few weeks later Lord St John was again unsuccessful in the Garter elections, although Lord Russell, Sir William Kingston and Sir Thomas Cheney were all elected, which must have caused him a certain amount of chagrin.<sup>8</sup> Although he no longer held household office, he was very much a member of the court and seems at this time to have made an effort to ingratiate himself with the Lord Chamberlain, Lord William Sandys. When Lady Sandys died at the end of March 1539, Paulet was described as '... a great doer now at the Vyne, and says that he will be herald and conductor of everything himself ...'. The Sandys were Hampshire neighbours, so a friendly interest is natural, but there is a slightly sarcastic tone about this description which suggests a suspect agenda, especially as the writer went on to observe 'Lord St John tries to get the peoples' favour'.<sup>9</sup> Why he should have made such an effort is not clear, but the fact that he eventually succeeded to the Lord Chamberlainship (after it had been held vacant for three years) may be significant. There could have been a totally innocent explanation for his interest in Lady Sandys funeral, but it looks as though he was keeping his fences in good repair, both with the Lord Chamberlain and locally in Hampshire, where his preoccupations in London had led to a certain neglect of local business, except a notional appearance on the Commission of the Peace. He had, apparently, surrendered the stewardship of Winchester diocese some time before, probably to his brother Richard, because the same writer from the Vyne noted cryptically 'John Norton rides the bishop's progress in place of Mr. Pallet' and Mr. Pallet was certainly not Lord St John.

If material rewards are a good indicator of favour, then Sir William had not suffered from his marginal involvement with the Poles. In April 1539 he received a grant of extensive estates in Hampshire, mostly ex-monastic land, for the princely sum of £2091 10s 10d.<sup>10</sup> This was certainly a preferential price and also gives a good impression of the scale of his existing wealth – to say nothing of his credit in the City, where such a large cash sum would have had to be obtained. In September he made further purchases, but in that case he was one among many and neither the lands nor the price were specified. Paulet dealt extensively in land throughout his long career and many properties seem to have been purchased as speculations. In November he, with his wife and son (and heir) John sold the manor of Humanby (probably Humby) in Yorkshire to Sir James Strangeways. But the core estate in Hampshire continued to expand remorselessly. He was probably one of those who benefited from the Countess's attainder, because that would have brought a further

<sup>8</sup> L&P, XIV (i), 833. There is of course no evidence of chagrin (or of any other reaction).

<sup>9</sup> Ibid, 662. John Kyngesmylle to Wriothesley, 1st April 1539.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid, 906.

large estate, in Hampshire and elsewhere, into the clutches of the Court of Augmentations. Cromwell's accounts for 1537–1539, seized after his attainder, also record a number of payments to Paulet over that period, but the circumstances are not known and the business may have been either official or unofficial.<sup>11</sup> However, it would appear that the Lord Privy Seal was not averse to a little blackmail when the opportunity served. As late as December 1539 one Anthony Bridgewood testified that during George Paulet's trouble in the previous year, he had been required to write a letter 'certifying all the words and sayings between Lord Leonard Grey, deputy in Ireland, and that gentleman who was then in prison in the Tower, by name George Paulet, when we were in Ireland together ...'.<sup>12</sup> Lord Grey also testified to the same effect at the same time. No further action was taken against George, who was happily serving on the Commission of the Peace in Hampshire in the following month, but there must have been some reason for these statements to have been made more than a year after the episode had been closed and it is natural to suppose that Cromwell was storing them away in case he should need a weapon against the Paulets in the future.

If so, there was no hint of trouble at the end of 1539. In November both Lord St John and his son John were named amongst those appointed to receive Anne of Cleves, the former 'for the King's Majesty' with 20 men and the latter for Hampshire. Lady St John was also among those summoned to attend the new Queen.<sup>13</sup> Not much can be read into this, as it was a 'three line whip' for the court, but St John was no longer an officer, so he was being paraded as one of those who supported this rather odd quirk of Henry's foreign policy. The King had spent the early summer negotiating with the League of Schmalkalden, partly in the search for a new wife, but also partly to put pressure on the Emperor. He had been genuinely and deeply distressed by Jane Seymour's death and was aware of his own advancing years. One infant son was a slender lifeline for a dynasty and his council had been urging him for some time to take another bride. He was also anxious to end England's diplomatic isolation, which was painfully obvious at the beginning of the year. The Lutherans, however, were not enthusiastic and insisted that he subscribe to the Confession of Augsburg as a condition for an agreement. When he found out that the Schmalkaldic Diet at Frankfort had in any case come to terms with the Emperor, Henry felt that there was no longer any case for doing such violence to his conscience and sent the Leaguer representatives

<sup>11</sup> L&P, XIV (ii), 782.

<sup>12</sup> L&P, XIV (i), 1. Testimony of Anthony Bridgewood. See also Lord Leonard Grey to Henry VIII, 'Words spoken by George Paulet ...' Ibid, 994.

<sup>13</sup> L&P, XIV (ii), 572, 22nd November. XV (i), 14.

home.<sup>14</sup> The Cleves marriage arose from this breakdown because the duke was a catholic (of a sort), but an opponent of the Emperor and his sister Anne was well spoken of. Hans Holbein painted her portrait and the King was sufficiently impressed to complete a marriage treaty on 6th October. Her reception was elaborately prepared and she reached England by way of Dover on 27th December. Unfortunately the lady did not come up to expectations and the result was the celebrated fiasco of her rejection.<sup>15</sup> One of the advantages of the Duke of Cleves as an ally was that he could be offended with impunity.

Although William Paulet was the head of the family, and the standard bearer of its fortunes, at this stage both Richard and John were supporting him effectively. In addition to a fairly low key appearance at court, the latter was prominent on various commissions in Hampshire and featured again on the sheriff roll, although he was not selected. Richard was also exceptionally busy, this being the time when the last of the major religious houses were surrendering and the Receivers of Augmentations were taking these surrenders and assessing the properties. His jurisdiction extended to Hampshire, Wiltshire and Gloucestershire. In February he made certificate of the houses of friars within those counties, which had already been dissolved, and in September accounted for an exceptionally productive year.<sup>16</sup> The records are littered with certificates from the three counties, and from Bristol, bearing his signature and he must have spent most of the summer on the move. By January 1540 the work was mainly done. On the 5th he assigned pensions to the monks of St Peters, Gloucester, and at the end of the month put his name to the final certificate of the dissolution commissioners, testifying to the surrender of five houses in Gloucestershire, four in Hampshire and two each in Wiltshire and Bristol.<sup>17</sup> By the summer it was back to ordinary business as a commissioner of the Peace. It seems that his efforts were not unrewarded because in June Richard and his wife were given licence to alienate a number of properties which they seem to have acquired as a result of the expert knowledge which he derived from his service on the commission for surrenders. George may have been blissfully unaware of the renewed interest in his indiscretions in Ireland. Not only was he named to the January revision of the Hampshire commission of the Peace, he also served on that for Sewers in July.<sup>18</sup>

William, however, was concerned with much more difficult issues than any presented by these provincial concerns. It used to be thought

<sup>14</sup> Bernard, *King's Reformation*, pp. 540–42.

<sup>15</sup> Retha M. Warnicke, *The Marrying of Anne of Cleves* (2000), pp. 127–55.

<sup>16</sup> L&P, XIV (i), 289, 14th February. Ibid (ii), 237, 29th September.

<sup>17</sup> L&P, XV, (i) 19, 24. 4th and 5th January 1540.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid, 831 (47); 942 (14). For the continued rumblings in Ireland, see ibid 83 (18th January 1540).

that Henry's dramatic disenchantment with Anne of Cleves was one of the main reasons for the fall of Thomas Cromwell, who had been the principal architect of the policy which the marriage represented. However, it has more recently been pointed out that Cromwell had already devised a 'get out' clause in the event of such a contingency and could, if he had been given the chance, have secured an annulment almost as easily as was eventually done.<sup>19</sup> The issue had, in fact, become caught up in a more general struggle for credibility in the King's counsels and this was a struggle in which Lord St John became intimately involved. The epicentre of the storm was Calais, where evangelical radicals roughly aligned with the Archbishop and the Lord Privy Seal had been trying conclusions with papists, allegedly supported by the Deputy, Lord Lisle, and certainly countenanced by his wife, Lady Honor.<sup>20</sup> In 1538 a sacramentarian called Adam Damply had been denounced to the authorities and sent over to England for questioning. Although Cromwell professed to find his beliefs 'very pernicious', Cranmer apparently protected him and after a period in prison he was returned to Calais. There was no doubt that the King found such doctrine objectionable, because he had just conducted the show trial of John Lambert and consigned him to the flames for that very fault.<sup>21</sup> Because Damply was not brought to trial, the matter festered and early in 1540 appeared to offer opportunities for decisive success to both sides. By March, Cromwell was locked in a struggle with the Duke of Norfolk and Stephen Gardiner and if he could demonstrate that the Calais conservatives were in fact closet papists, his battle would be more than half won. If, on the other hand, it emerged that Damply and his allies were acting as his agents, and on his instructions, then his downfall would be assured. On the one hand, Damply's teaching was now illegal by the Act of Six Articles and on the other, there was the so-called conspiracy of Gregory Botolph, a chaplain in the Lisle household who, it was alleged, had undertaken secret missions both to Rome and to Cardinal Pole.<sup>22</sup> A commission was sent across, in the middle of March headed by Robert Radcliffe, Earl of Sussex and seconded by Lord St John 'to make enquiry touching the state of religion and the observance of the laws' at Calais. Marillac, perhaps significantly, described the commission as being 'against the anabaptists'.<sup>23</sup> Elaborate instructions were issued and, acting with unprecedented speed, the commission sent a preliminary report on 5th April. Damply and his

<sup>19</sup> Bernard, *The King's Reformation*, pp. 542–55. G.R. Elton, 'Thomas Cromwell's Decline and Fall', *Cambridge Historical Journal*, 10, 1951.

<sup>20</sup> Bernard, *The King's Reformation*, pp. 530–33.

<sup>21</sup> John Foxe, *Acts and Monuments of the English Martyrs* (1583), pp. 1101–1130.

<sup>22</sup> M. St Clare Byrne, *The Lisle Letters* (abridged edition, 1985), p. 495. L&P, XV.(i) 1017.

<sup>23</sup> Marillac to Montmorency, 19th March 1540. *Ibid.*, 370. This commissioners instructions, dated the same month, are *ibid.*, 316.

colleague William Smith were, they declared, responsible for the trouble and were under arrest. However, within a few days the other side of the picture began to emerge. Edmund Bryndleholme, the parish priest of Our Lady Church, was examined and details of Gregory Botolph's alleged activities began to emerge. A few days later, on 17th April St John and one or two other commissioners were withdrawn, leaving the Earl of Sussex and Sir John Gage to finish the work.<sup>24</sup>

On 18th April Thomas Cromwell was created Earl of Essex and Lord Great Chamberlain. Paulet was still in Calais at that point, not even having received his letter of recall, and we have no idea what his reaction may have been. Ostensibly this was a great triumph for the Lord Privy Seal and should have marked his victory over his enemies, but in fact it was just another round. A few days after his elevation Lord Lisle, the Deputy of Calais, was recalled and placed under arrest, while investigations of his dealings with the 'papists' continued. At the same time Damply and Smith were also sent over under guard. There seems to be little doubt that in his preoccupation with Pole and his supporters, Cromwell had given the sacramentaries too much rope and thus given his enemies an opportunity against him.<sup>25</sup> Although he was very close to the action, Paulet's role in all this is shadowy. We know that he had no sympathy with the sacramentaries and that he had had friendly dealings with the Countess of Salisbury and her sons, but there are no signs that he had distanced himself from Cromwell and he continued to benefit from royal favour. He would not have been present at the Council meeting when Cromwell was suddenly arrested on 10th June and we have no idea of his reaction. Unlike Cranmer, he made no attempt to intercede for the fallen minister and we must assume that he had quietly aligned himself with the Howard faction. When the office of the Wards was abolished in July 1540, and replaced with the Court of Wards, the Mastership of the new court was granted to William, Lord St John.<sup>26</sup> Had he been in any sense out of favour he would have been replaced, but that did not happen. Instead, this appointment heralded his most creative period in charge of the Wards. He sat judicially in the new court and so increased its business that the additional appointment of Clerk of the Wards was required. Whether the creation of such a court was Cromwell's idea or his own we do not know, but the administrative tradition which he established there long outlasted his own tenure of office and helps to explain his selection for higher offices thereafter.<sup>27</sup> His service on various commissions of the Peace and Oyer and Terminer continued

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid, 537.

<sup>25</sup> Elton, 'Decline and Fall'. J.J. Scarisbrick, *Henry VIII* (1968), pp. 375–80.

<sup>26</sup> L&P, XV, 942 (i) (112).

<sup>27</sup> H.E. Bell, *An Introduction to the History and Records of the Court of Wards and Liveries* (1953), pp. 10–13.

without a break. Rather oddly, his fees and expenses in the Office of the Wards, right down to the abolition of the office, continued to be paid to Sir William Paulet, even in lists where other payments – such as his diets for the Calais commission – are paid to him as Lord St John. Perhaps his clerks were more than usually conservative.<sup>28</sup>

While Cromwell remained in the Tower awaiting the attentions of the executioner, and Anne of Cleves was digesting her dismissal with creditable dignity, the King was rediscovering his manhood. On 21st July Francois Marillac, the French ambassador, reported to his King that convocation had dissolved the Cleves marriage and that Henry had secretly wedded a ‘lady of great beauty’. He was probably a little premature, because the sentence of annulment depended upon Anne confirming that the union had not been consummated, and that she actually did on the 21st, so it is likely that Henry married Catherine Howard a few days later. She was ‘shown as Queen’ at Hampton Court on the 10th August.<sup>29</sup> This marked the high point of Howard influence, because Catherine was the niece of the Duke of Norfolk and had been brought up largely in his mother’s household, a circumstance that he was later to regret. In theory all the girls so educated should have been taught the basics of literacy, piety and decorum and should have been strictly chaperoned. However, either the Dowager Duchess was careless, or she had her own ideas of what was good for young ladies. Catherine’s intellectual development seems to have been largely neglected, but she had access to several male admirers and slept with at least one of them. She was what would now be called ‘streetwise’ and ‘feisty’ and appears to have had enough contraceptive knowledge to conduct an affair lasting over two years without becoming pregnant. In other words, she was the exact opposite of Anne, who had been so innocent that she had not understood what was supposed to happen on a wedding night.<sup>30</sup> Howard influence had secured Catherine a position in Anne’s household, but that was long before anything was known to be amiss with the King’s fourth marriage and it would be wrong to suppose that she had been ‘planted’ with the intention of sabotaging it. However, after finding Anne so disappointing, Henry quickly became infatuated. ‘The king’s affection was so marvellously set upon that gentlewoman as it was never known that he had the like to any woman’ wrote one observer – and he had known Anne Boleyn!<sup>31</sup> The effect upon the King was dramatic.

<sup>28</sup> L&P, XVI, 55, 380 etc.

<sup>29</sup> D. Loades, *Henry VIII and his Queens* (1994), p. 124. Grafton’s *Chronicle of the History of England* (edition 1809), p. 475.

<sup>30</sup> John Strype, *Ecclesiastical Memorials* (1822), II, p. 462.

<sup>31</sup> Cranmer’s Secretary, Ralph Morice. J.G. Nicholas, *Narratives of the Days of the Reformation* (Camden Society, 77, 1859), p. 260.

He rose early, hunted with renewed zest and appeared at peace with the world.

Lord St John was not a member of the Howard dominated circle which controlled the new Queen's lavish household and which infiltrated the King's Privy Chamber. For this period there is no equivalent of the friendly correspondence which he had conducted with Cromwell and if he remained close to Audley – who was Lord Chancellor until his death in 1544 – there is no trace of it in the records. In September the council wrote to him as Master of the Wards upon a matter of routine business; it seems that when Cromwell was attainted, Paulet had been in the process of purchasing the manors of Boxley and Horsley (Essex) from him, but that the deal had been incomplete. The manors were seized with the rest of the estate and the King decided to retain these two, paying Paulet £900 to buy out his interest.<sup>32</sup> In December he was finally paid the outstanding balance of his diets for the Calais commission earlier in the year (£28 and £18) and two quarters wages as Master of the Wards (£50). Cromwell's fall had left him in sole possession of the office of Master of the King's Woods, in which capacity he appears from time to time in this period. A fresh patent to that effect was issued in June 1541.<sup>33</sup> He continued to attend upon Chapter meetings of the Order of the Garter, but was not proposed himself and the candidates whom he supported were uniformly unsuccessful.

During 1540 and 1541, Richard, George and John Paulet are more noticeable in the administrative records than William. George's former role as a commissioner in Ireland is several times referred to in the desultory process of tidying up after the Fitzgerald rebellion, but no further attempt was made to exploit his alleged indiscretions, Cromwell's fall having altered that perspective fundamentally. Some of his servants were imprisoned for allegedly hunting in the Earl of Hertford's park at Elvetham, but if that was intended as some kind of warning to George himself, the occasion is obscure. Richard was busy tidying up after a hectic year at the Augmentations. His account was presented on 29th September 1540 – Michaelmas Day – for the financial year which ended on that day and his Book of Arrears was made up at the same time.<sup>34</sup> Two months later he received the wardship of Anne Conyers, no doubt as a reward for his diligence. This looks like a cosy arrangement by William, but must have had the King's approval. John is visible mainly 'in his country', appearing on the Commission of the Peace in both Hampshire and Devon, and as a Commissioner of Oyer and Terminer on the Western Circuit in February 1541. He also appears on the sheriff roll for Hampshire in 1541, but was not selected. William continued to be named on routine commissions, but

<sup>32</sup> L&P, XVI, 745. August 1541.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid, 755.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid, 91. Hampshire, Wiltshire, Gloucester and Bristol.

it seems that by this time most of the work of maintaining the family position in Hampshire was devolved to his son. In June 1541 Lord St John served on the jury of peers which tried Lord Dacre of the South for murder. His lordship had beaten his gamekeeper to death in what he obviously regarded as a justifiable rage and his trial and conviction was mainly significant as a demonstration that the King intended to have his laws enforced with some show of equity.<sup>35</sup> After Dacre's execution, the council noted that his lands were now in the King's hands, but that was because of his heir's minority. Felony (unlike treason) did not corrupt in blood or involve the forfeiture of real property, so the council ruled that his wardship could be disposed of by Lord St John in the usual way.

Meanwhile Henry's romantic idyll was unravelling. For several months all was well. Catherine was given a far larger jointure than Jane Seymour had enjoyed, including a substantial part of the estates of the late Earl of Essex. Her lavish household, costing some £4600 a year was full of her family and her family's friends, but that was by the King's indulgence. Jewels, rich clothes and public adulation were lavished upon her as the court embraced the King's mood. At first she seemed a dutiful and submissive wife, but below the surface she was finding her aging husband profoundly unsatisfactory. Her animal magnetism went, naturally enough, with a powerful sexual appetite which Henry was quite unable to satisfy, although his own egotism concealed that fact from him. In the spring of 1541 he was quite seriously ill and his mood, so recently sanguine, became savage and morose. After about two weeks, the King had in a large measure recovered, but his depression was an ominous sign. Catherine simply did not have the resources to cope with a sick and elderly man. She needed an energetic lover, of the kind which Henry was still pretending to be in the autumn of 1540. Either out of desperation, or prompted by reckless stupidity, early in 1541 she took into her service a former lover, one Francis Dereham, and resumed an intimate relationship with him.<sup>36</sup> At the same time she was also flirting with another erstwhile admirer, Thomas Culpepper, a junior member of the King's Privy Chamber. When the royal couple went on progress to York in July and August, every stop was marked by clandestine assignments, during which Culpepper certainly and Dereham probably was admitted to the Queen's bed. Perhaps bribed, perhaps tempted with similar favours, Lady Jane Rochford, the chief Lady of the Queen's Chamber, connived at this behaviour, but there was no such thing as privacy in a sixteenth-century court and, in any case, Catherine had given too many hostages to fortune. The Howards also had enemies and in October one of these, Mary Hall, who had been in service with the Duchess of Norfolk a year or two earlier, disclosed what she knew of the

<sup>35</sup> Grafton, *Chronicle*, p. 476. L&P, XVI, 931.

<sup>36</sup> L.B. Smith, *A Tudor Tragedy* (1961), pp. 181–2. L&P, XVI, 1134.

Queen's past to her brother, who passed the news on to the Archbishop of Canterbury.<sup>37</sup>

There is no evidence that Paulet had accompanied the court on this ill-starred progress, nor any reason why he should have done so. In the spring, when the King's black mood was on him, according to the French ambassador 'He began to have a sinister opinion of some of his chief men ...' and to lament that he had been too hasty in trusting them against Cromwell. None of these 'chief men' were named, but the natural suspicion is that it was Norfolk and Gardiner who were being referred to. Lord St John was a councillor and an important office holder, but he was not politically significant and certainly not in the confidence of the Queen and her paramours. Henry at first reacted with incredulity to Cranmer's tale of infidelity, but he could not afford to ignore it. A secret investigation was ordered, conducted by Sir William Fitzwilliam, Earl of Southampton, and by early November the King had become convinced that his wife had not come to him as the innocent bride which he had believed.<sup>38</sup> Worse was to follow. Arrested and interrogated about his pre-nuptial relations with Catherine, Dereham confessed to their more recent intercourse and implicated Culpepper. Catherine was arrested and stripped of her dignities, whilst Henry, beside himself with rage, threatened to torture her to death. On 1st December Dereham and Culpepper were tried for treason by a special commission of Oyer and Terminer and St John was among the commissioners. A few weeks later, on 22nd December, a second commission was set up to try Lord William Howard and several other members of the family and once again William Paulet was called upon.<sup>39</sup> Whatever else he may have been, he was not by this time overly favourable to the Howards.

Catherine herself was not tried, for reasons which are not clear, but rather proceeded against by Act of Attainder. Parliament reconvened on 16th January 1542 and the relevant bill was introduced into the Lords on the 21st. This confirmed the attainders already judicially decreed and declared the ex-Queen and the hapless Jane Rochford guilty of treason. Paulet was present in the House, and voted for the bill, but is not known to have played any other part. The Act received the royal assent on 11th February and both women died by the axe on the morning of the 13th. Catherine's end was pathetic. She was 19 years old and well nigh helpless with terror. Whereas the King had been deeply grieved by Jane Seymour's death, this time he was morosely gratified. The damage which Catherine's thoughtless escapades had inflicted upon him was considerable. Like

<sup>37</sup> MacCulloch, *Thomas Cranmer*, pp. 287–9. *Proceedings and Ordinances of the Privy Council of England ... 32–33 Henry VIII*, ed. H. Nicolas (1837), pp. 352–5.

<sup>38</sup> Loades, *Henry VIII and his Queens*, pp. 129–30.

<sup>39</sup> L&P, XVI, 1395, 1470.

many men approaching old age, Henry had made a fool of himself over an attractive young woman and this deprived him of the opportunity to grow old gracefully. The Howard influence at court was temporarily destroyed. The Dowager Duchess of Norfolk was arrested on 10th December and the whole family, with the exception of the duke, were found guilty of misprision of treason.<sup>40</sup> They could have forfeited all their property and been consigned to perpetual prison. In fact most of them were pardoned over the next few months and the Dowager was released from prison in May, but the duke had retired to his estates in something like disgrace and the shock to the whole faction was paralysing.

Meanwhile, William Paulet had secured for himself a substantial London property. He must have had a base in the City before, but he probably rented and it is not known where it was. However in January 1541 he purchased from Sir Thomas Wriothesley the site and buildings of the former Austin Friars house in Bread street Ward adjacent to Throgmorton Street, in what was later to become the financial heart of the City. This was one of the choice properties which Thomas Cromwell had reserved for himself after its dissolution and it had reverted to the Crown on his attainder, before being granted or sold to Wriothesley.<sup>41</sup> Perhaps Paulet was the intended recipient all along and Sir Thomas merely acted as an intermediary to save him from the embarrassment of bidding so swiftly for his friend's property, because Wriothesley cannot have held it for more than a few months. According to John Stow, Lord St John promptly demolished the friary buildings, with the exception of the church, and replaced them with a large house which he went on extending into the next reign. Around the house he planted a 'fair garden', in the process blocking off the public footpath which had previously led by the West end of the church.

... straight north, and opened somewhat west from Allhallows church against London wall towards Moorgate ...<sup>42</sup>

'This great house', Stow continued, 'adjoining to the garden aforesaid, stretcheth to the north corner of Bread street, and then turneth up Bread street all that side to and beyond the East end of the Friar's church ...'

What Paulet did with the church itself in the short term is not known, but in 1550 it was divided, the West end being given to the Dutch community for their 'preaching place', while the remainder was used by the earl (as he then was) for the storage of grain and household goods. This very conveniently placed mansion remained Paulet's London base for the rest of his life and was in due course inherited by his son.

<sup>40</sup> Loades, *Henry VIII and his Queens*, p. 131.

<sup>41</sup> L&P, XVI, 503. Stow's, *Survey of London*, ed. H.B. Wheatley (1980), pp. 158–9.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

A statute which had received the royal assent in April 1542 amalgamated the office of Liveries with the newly established court of Wards and this required a fresh grant of the office of Master, which was duly made towards the end of the year, with the fee increased from £100 to 200 marks.<sup>43</sup> In other respects 1542 appears to have been a quiet year, during which Lord St John simply carried out his administrative responsibilities. In March he and his wife Elizabeth conducted an exchange of lands with the Crown. The property which he obtained, in Sussex, had formerly been in the possession of Henry Daubeney, Earl of Bridgewater, and may have come to the Crown as part of a deal whereby the earl had bought off legal proceedings against his wife, who had been arrested with the Duchess of Norfolk during the scandal over Catherine Howard's misdemeanours, but does not seem to have been proceeded against. Lord St John was as usual busy in the land market and obtained several licences to alienate at the same time as the exchange – although not of the same properties.<sup>44</sup> His fingerprints are all over the administrative records for the year. In April a file of warrants and receipts survives from him as Master of the Wards and in June he acknowledged receipt of 160 Privy Seal warrants for the loan with which Henry was endeavouring to bale out his war finances. In May Robert Swift, the Earl of Shrewsbury's man of affairs wrote mysteriously 'Mr. Pallete has entered into the new dyete, that no man can speak with him for no matters ...'. Assuming that it is Lord St John who is being referred to, which would seem to be the case from the context, this must mean that he was trying to protect himself against the pressure of suitors by restricting access. Swift's comment must have been made as a result of having been denied, because it could not possibly have been literally true.<sup>45</sup> Paulet was in no position to play the grandee and communication was the soul of his business. On 19th November he was again sworn as a councillor, this time to the re-vamped Privy Council, and was present at every recorded meeting of the Privy Council from 11th December 1542 to 20th July 1543 – and no doubt thereafter, but the register breaks at that point.<sup>46</sup> In February 1542 he was summoning defaulting Keepers to appear in his capacity as Master of the Woods, in April taking an inventory of the King's plate and jewels and in July (as Master of the Wards) arbitrating a dispute over the inheritance of Edward Griffith of Penrhyn in Caernarfonshire.<sup>47</sup>

The whole family was setting an example in diligence. John was muster commissioner for Dorset, Justice of the Peace for Hampshire and

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<sup>43</sup> L&P, XVII, 1154 (72).

<sup>44</sup> For example, L&P, XVII, 220 (March 1542) for an exchange with the Earl of Bridgewater.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid, 331, 18th May 1542.

<sup>46</sup> APC, I, p. 54.

<sup>47</sup> L&P, XVII, 136, 267, 466.

Commissioner of Oyer and Terminer on the Western Circuit. He delivered Dorchester gaol in October 1542 and narrowly avoided being pricked as sheriff of Somerset and Dorset in November. In August Richard took the surrender of Vaux College, near Salisbury, and allocated the pensions. In February 1543 he received £40 from the Earl of Hertford for the purchase of monastic goods and rendered his account as usual at Michaelmas.<sup>48</sup> Even George was written to by the council in February 1543 to arrest Thomas Stevens the parson of Bentworth and to 'avoid the country of vagabonds calling themselves Egyptians'. In what capacity he was supposed to do this is not clear, because he does not seem to have been serving on any relevant commission at the time. Stevens was examined by the council on 14th March and committed to prison. It must be presumed that William had allowed his son to take over the management of his properties in Devon, Dorset and Somerset, because whereas he himself remained on the Commission of the Peace for Hampshire, John appears for the first time on the Devon commission in February 1543. In November 1543 he was pricked as sheriff for Somerset and Dorset and must, therefore, have had a recognised base in one or other of those counties – although not, as far as we know, as the legal holder of any property there.<sup>49</sup>

1543 was another busy year for Lord St John. In March Chapuys reported somewhat mysteriously that he was seeking to buy arms – 100 harnesses for footmen and 100 pikes. This must have been in connection with the 'band' which he was expected to raise for the forthcoming French war and gives some indication of his wealth at this stage of his career.<sup>50</sup> At the age of 68 he can hardly have been expecting to lead them in person, but fortunately military prowess was no longer an essential qualification for the Garter and at the April Chapter he was finally elected, after many years of trying. In May, when Henry and Charles V swore to their new treaty of alliance, St John was one of the witnesses to the King's oath. On 17th June he was one of six commissioners named to negotiate peace with the Scots and the treaty was signed and witnessed on 1st July. This was the Treaty of Greenwich and was the high watermark of the King's success in the north.<sup>51</sup> Intending a new war with France, and mindful of what had happened in 1513, in the autumn of 1542 Henry had determined upon a pre-emptive strike against Scotland. He deliberately provoked a large scale Scottish incursion into the Debateable Land north of Carlisle and his forces had then trapped and destroyed the intruders at the battle of Solway Moss. This had not been a bloody battle as such encounters went, but it had resulted in the capture of a large number of Scottish nobles,

<sup>48</sup> L&P, XVIII (i), 160, 168; 15th and 17th February 1543.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid, 190 (21st February 1543), 276 (14th March), 226 (February), (ii) 449 (79).

<sup>50</sup> Ibid (i), 260, Chapuys to the Queen of Hungary, 10th March 1543.

<sup>51</sup> Scarisbrick, *Henry VIII*, pp. 439–42. L&P, XVIII (i), 719.

who were promptly removed to London to be used as bargaining counters. Events had then moved fast, although not unexpectedly. About a fortnight after the battle, on the 7th or 8th of December, James V's Queen, Mary of Guise, gave birth to a daughter and a week later, James died. He had been sick for some time and his death had nothing to do with the defeat of his armies. According to some contemporary reports it had more to do with his sexual proclivities. However the upshot was that Scotland lost its field army and its King within the space of less than a month and Henry immediately perceived his advantage. He had a six year old son and Scotland had an infant Queen. A marriage between these two children would surely settle relations between the countries (and in England's favour) for the foreseeable future. Although the prospect was repugnant to most Scots, the regency government was in no position to resist and the marriage formed the basis of the treaty signed in June 1543. A few days later St John was also one of the commissioners who negotiated the release of the Scottish prisoners, who were allowed to return home after swearing an oath to uphold the marriage settlement.

The agreement turned out to be worthless. Before the end of the year the Scottish parliament had repudiated the treaty and the 'sworn lords' adhered to their oaths only as long as it was convenient for them to do so.<sup>52</sup> Henry was left, frustrated and highly indignant, but committed to a campaign in France in 1544 and was unable to apply sufficient coercive force to keep the Scots to their commitment. War with France also inevitably meant French support for the Scots, so although Henry regarded the rejection of the marriage as a rejection of the peace settlement also, he was unable to do very much about it. There remained a pro-English party in Scotland, particularly among those sympathetic to Henry's robust repudiation of the papacy but, in the last years of the King's life, Scotland was dominated by the pro-French and pro-Roman interest, symbolised by the Queen Mother and Cardinal David Beaton.

At some point in 1543 Lord St John also became Lord Chamberlain. This was a personal appointment by the King and no Patent is recorded, but he is first referred to by that title in January 1544.<sup>53</sup> This was not only an expression of the very high favour in which he was held, it also represented the abandonment of the Household reforms planned by Thomas Cromwell and introduced in 1540. Under that scheme, it was intended to remodel the household along French lines, the offices of Lord Chamberlain and Lord Steward being abolished in favour of a Lord Great Master who had executive control over both sides. The incumbent Lord Chamberlain, Lord

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<sup>52</sup> Elizabeth Bonner, 'The Genesis of Henry VIII's 'Rough Wooing' of the Scots', *Northern History*, 13, 1997, pp. 36–53. Gervase Phillips, *The Anglo-Scots Wars, 1513–1550* (1999).

<sup>53</sup> L&P, XIX (i), 25. A draft bill in favour of William, Lord Dacre and Greystoke.

Sandys, had died in 1540 and the Earl of Sussex was ‘stood down’ as Lord Steward, his declining health perhaps being used as a pretext. He died in November 1542. In their place Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk, was appointed Lord Great Master.<sup>54</sup> However, it would seem that the removal of Cromwell’s energising direction meant that little else changed. With St John’s appointment the ‘upstairs’ household regained its autonomy and the Lord Great Master became effectively a grandiose Lord Steward, until the latter office was restored and the Great Mastership abolished at the beginning of Mary’s reign in 1553. There may also have been another aspect to Paulet’s appointment. Since Cromwell’s fall the Council had been largely dominated by political and religious conservatives, such as Thomas Wriothesley, Stephen Gardiner and the Duke of Norfolk until he was temporarily put out of action by Catherine Howard’s disgrace. Cranmer, although he retained the King’s favour, was constantly on the defensive in council. At the same time the Privy Chamber was largely staffed by Cromwell’s appointees, who continued to follow his (roughly) evangelical agenda. Sir Anthony Denny, who became Chief Gentleman, was very much of that persuasion, as was the new Queen, Catherine Parr, whom the King married in July 1543.<sup>55</sup> St John was as near to being neutral in this conflict as it was possible to be. His religious tastes were almost certainly on the conservative side, but that had never inhibited his friendship with Cromwell, nor his willingness to acquire as much former monastic property as he could lay his hands on. He was probably, therefore, acceptable to both of the parties which were becoming increasingly polarised. Henry would not have allowed such a consideration to determine his choice, but it was a useful additional qualification in a man who was also an ‘old, wise and grave councillor’ and a man of proven administrative competence.

The Court of Wards and Liveries was exceptionally active in this year, when an unusually large number of notable liveries were sued; Henry Radcliffe, Earl of Sussex in February, Henry Clifford, Earl of Cumberland in May, Sir Thomas Wyatt in September and Francis Englefield and Edward Waldegrave in November. All this was in the normal course of duty, but Paulet also managed to pick up another wardship for himself in November and in December (jointly with Elizabeth) the manor of Nunney in Hampshire, with which his family had had a long connection but which had belonged to the recently dissolved monastery of Glastonbury. Some of these lands he passed on to John and Anne in the following April and other portions he seems to have sold to his brother George and to cousins Thomas and Giles.<sup>56</sup> By this time William was a patriarch whose family, like his properties, spread all over the south west of England. In addition

<sup>54</sup> S.J. Gunn, *Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk, 1484–1545* (1988).

<sup>55</sup> Loades, *Henry VIII and his Queens*, p. 138.

<sup>56</sup> L&P, XIX (i), 444.

to John's presence on numerous commissions, William himself was also named early in 1543 to the Commissions of the Peace for Somerset and Wiltshire, although it is extremely unlikely that he ever sat there.

The following year was dominated by war. Henry's policy in Scotland was in disarray after the repudiation of the treaty of Greenwich in December 1543. He wanted revenge for the affront and was bitterly angry at the failure of the 'sworn lords', but he also wanted to breathe new life into the Anglophile party. The opportunity to do this came with the defection to his cause of the young Earl of Lennox and in March the King set up an elaborate scheme whereby Lennox was to secure control of the Scottish government, and of the young Queen, with English support. This swiftly turned out to be over ambitious. Lennox simply did not have the resources and Henry felt that both his honour and his interests required direct action. In May he therefore launched the Earl of Hertford on a brief but immensely destructive raid against Edinburgh and its hinterland. He was determined to prevent the Scots from playing any part in his war against France and in that he was successful, but it was his only success. The Earl of Arran was removed as Regent following the raid, but he was replaced by the Queen Mother and neither French nor catholic influence in Scotland was in any way diminished. Although Lennox remained loyal to the English cause, the main effect of Hertford's efforts was to make the French ascendancy more popular. It was lack of resources rather than lack of will which prevented Mary of Guise from going to the aid of her kindred when Henry invaded France in July. St John did not go anywhere near Scotland, but he was involved with Hertford's enterprise from the beginning to the end. As early as February, before any definite plans had been formed, a force began to be mobilised and Paulet, along with Gardiner and Sir Robert Bowes was given the job of victualling 'the army against Scotland', a task for which £6000 was allocated to them.<sup>57</sup> Short of money in spite of the recent sale of monastic estates, the council also decided in March to dispose of more land and Paulet headed the commission which was set up for that purpose. In April, when the force was mustered and in the north, but before the campaign actually began, Hertford and John Dudley, who was assisting him, wrote to the council complaining vigorously about the inadequacy of the victuals which St John and Gardiner were providing.<sup>58</sup> The council responded with excuses, but the complaints continued. Gardiner got most of the blame, probably because he was a conservative leader, while Hertford and Dudley were both by this time inclining to the evangelical side. The complaints may have been justified, or they may have been part of a political campaign against the Bishop of Winchester; in either case Paulet seems to have emerged unscathed. One of

<sup>57</sup> Ibid, 194, 13th March 1544.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid, 411, 27th April 1544.

the reasons for the difficulties may have been that the commissioners were required to pay nearly £6000 of their scarce cash to Sir Ralph Sadler, who had been the English resident in Scotland and who had been dispensing bribes in an effort to keep the English ship afloat.

Henry seems to have ignored the complaints coming from the north. His main priority had always been the forthcoming campaign in France, which he intended to lead in person, much to the alarm of his more practical commanders. He appointed Queen Catherine to act as Regent in his absence and the parliament which ended in March 'took order' for the succession in the event of his succumbing to the rigours of campaigning. Prince Edward was, of course his heir, but in the event of them both expiring without further male offspring, the Crown was to pass to the Lady Mary, his natural daughter and her heirs. If she also died childless, Elizabeth, his 'other daughter' was to inherit. Although partly concealed by the provision that Henry might either confirm or alter these arrangements by his last will and testament, this was as succinct a demonstration of parliamentary sovereignty as could well be asked for.<sup>59</sup> It was clearly drafted by the council in consultation with the King's legal advisers, of whom we know that the Lord Chamberlain was one and it would be interesting to be able to assess his input. The statute simply ignored the requirement of legitimacy and similarly passed over the person with the best hereditary claim after Edward – that is Mary Stuart. If he was able, eventually, to enforce the treaty of Greenwich her claim would be irrelevant and if he failed it would be a threat.

When the musters were drawn up for France in March 1544, the whole Paulet family seems to have been called upon. In addition to the 101 demi-lances and 80 archers which William was expected to provide, John, George and Richard were all listed for smaller contingents in the Hampshire list. Lord St John's contribution was that of a magnate and an indication of his perceived reliability. He was also responsible for the mobilisation of horses for transport purposes and drew up an allocation by shires. In spite of what Hertford and Dudley had said, his victualling commission with Winchester seems to have been simply extended to cover the much larger French operation.<sup>60</sup> Within few weeks Norfolk (in France) was complaining just as loudly. The rates which the commissioners had set were too low, the supplies were inadequate and in poor condition and so on. Gardiner and Paulet responded, but the complaints continued and

<sup>59</sup> Statute 35 Henry VIII, c.1. G.R. Elton, *The Tudor Constitution* (1982), p. 3.

<sup>60</sup> Paulet was also appointed with Gardiner and Sir Robert Bowes to victual the army against Scotland. L&P, XIX (i), 141 (26). His role as a victualler in France is deduced from a letter of Sir Thomas Seymour to the Council in November 1544, where he reports 'My Lord St John told me at Dover that most of the victuals for Boulogne were already gone ...'. Ibid (ii), 580.

the duke became increasingly querulous with the council for not doing anything about it. Victualling was always the short straw in any sixteenth-century logistics, so it is quite likely that no one could have done any better – and the council knew that.

In St John's case the trouble may partly have been that he had too many other things to do. In June he was assigned with Sir John Gage 'to see the transporting of the army to France', a vast task which must have begun many weeks before with the summoning of transport ships. He was at Dover about eight or ten days upon this business, wrote several times to the Council and won a golden opinion from the Duke of Suffolk, who described them both as 'wonderfully diligent'.<sup>61</sup> On 14th July, when Henry crossed over himself, the Lord Chamberlain went with him, in spite of the fact that he was now 69 years old. By 22nd July he was in the camp before Boulogne, and in the final push on 12th September he was described, perhaps with some exaggeration, as commanding one of the assault parties. On the 18th September Boulogne fell and three days later Henry returned quietly to England. It would appear that Lord St John remained behind, because on the 25th he was instructed to proceed to Montreuil with 5000 reinforcements for the Duke of Norfolk, who was in danger of being trapped by a larger French army led by the Dauphin.<sup>62</sup> Norfolk extricated himself from this perilous situation with some skill and presumably Paulet was with him. By 10th October he was back at Dover, where he received instructions from the council that the troops who had accompanied him were to be returned forthwith to Boulogne, as a reinforcement for the garrison which the King had established there. The campaign had not been a great success. Boulogne was won, but the French were vowing to recover it and Henry had lost his ally. On the same day that he had entered the town in triumph, Charles had signed a separate peace with Francis at Crespy, having become thoroughly disillusioned with the King's preoccupation with the siege and failure to respond to the other needs of the alliance. Although it is hard to imagine him doing any active soldiering. Paulet had emerged with his credit intact, and even enhanced; and his son John had been knighted during the campaign.<sup>63</sup>

He seems to have remained on the South coast for some weeks after the return of the main army. On 18th October the council instructed him to hold the ships which he had mobilised for supply runs to both Calais and Boulogne and on 9th of November Sir Thomas Seymour informed their Lordships, with reference to a recent conversation 'My Lord St John told me at Dover that most of the victuals for Boulogne were already gone, and the rest ready ...'. From which it seems clear that his responsibilities in

<sup>61</sup> Ibid, (i), 819.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid (ii), 424. Scarisbrick, *Henry VIII*, pp. 447–50.

<sup>63</sup> L&P, XIX (ii), 334, 20th September 1544, 'Knighthoods won in France'.

that connection were continuing, although probably not by virtue of the original commission since they now embraced naval victualling in general. It was at this time that the administration of the navy was completely overhauled by the institution of the Council for Marine Causes, but naval victualling continued on a decentralised basis until Edward Baeshe was appointed as Surveyor General in 1550.<sup>64</sup> It may well have been Paulet's effectiveness as an *ad hoc* Surveyor General which persuaded the King not to create such a post on the new council from the beginning. Stephen Gardiner had been with St John at Boulogne in September, but by this time seems to have returned to normal duties. In view of his many other commitments, Paulet had been replaced in April as a commissioner for the sale of lands by Sir John Baker; but when a fresh sale was deemed to be necessary in December, the original commission was revoked and he was again appointed to lead the new operation, of which Baker and Robert Southwell were also members.<sup>65</sup>

All this was over and above the normal duties of his offices. The Lord Chamberlain was responsible for accommodating every movement of the court and that would have included the King's lodging during his trip to France. He was signing letters as a councillor until 26th of June, just three days before his first message from Dover and had resumed his attendance by 23rd November. He was signing warrants for the payment of wages due for the campaign while still on the South coast during October and had earlier granted liveries to the new Earls of Arundel (Henry Fitzalan) and Huntingdon (Francis Hastings) as Master of the Court of Wards. He was commissioned to take the accounts of specific officers and contributed an unspecified amount to the special war loan. For a man approaching 70 and at a time when his monarch (who was 20 years his junior) was a physical wreck, Paulet's physical energy and stamina are astounding. Every move involved days on horseback or in the cramped quarters of cumbersome sailing ships, but there is never a hint of sickness or weariness. Unfortunately, we can only see his public face at this strenuous time. Personal letters, if any survived, might tell a different story, but none do survive and it may be that not many were written. His local interests were being well cared for by John, who when not campaigning in France, was very energetic in the government of Hampshire, Wiltshire, Dorset and Somerset. In the absence of evidence it is also reasonable to suppose that Elizabeth was a more than competent manager of the Basing estate and that his London interests were in the equally capable hands of his Capell cousins. It is remarkable that we simply do not know the names of his men of business, although if Dudley had not ended up in the Tower, it is possible that we would never have

<sup>64</sup> D. Loades, *The Tudor Navy* (1992), p. 86.

<sup>65</sup> L&P, XIX (i), 278 (March 1544); *ibid*, 812 (77); *ibid* (ii), 800 (December 1544).

heard of John Hussey either.<sup>66</sup> Similarly the vast store of knowledge which is derived from the papers of Thomas Cromwell would never have entered a public archive if it had not been for his attainder. The fact that William Paulet never fell foul of the law in all his long and very full life contributes to the fact that his personal relations and communications are so elusive, even in a hectic year like 1544.

The war continued in 1545, with no let up, but rather a mounting sense of emergency as the campaigning season approached. Without the distraction of having to fight the Emperor as well, it was believed that a French invasion was certain. Musters began to be taken as early as March and by July the Lord Chamberlain was responsible for a 'band' of no less than 590 men out of the Hampshire contingent of 2681.<sup>67</sup> This time he did not propose to lead them in person and another 'Mr. Paulet', who was probably George, was appointed as captain. George was certainly involved, because at the beginning of October, when the invasion fears were subsiding, he was appointed paymaster of the key garrisons at Portsmouth and the Isle of Wight.<sup>68</sup> Lord St John's main involvement in the action of the summer was as victualler of the fleet and, when he was not actually present at council meetings, the board bombarded him with written instructions. The first of these was dated 27th March, ordering emergency provision. The nature of the emergency is not clear, but it was probably connected with the Lord Admiral's urgent desire to get his fleet to sea before the French should put in an appearance. Dudley was also no doubt mindful of the fact that a French attack on Boulogne was inevitable, but that it could not be taken if the English held the command of the sea. Part at least of the English fleet was at sea during May and English privateers took about 50 prizes, but it was early June before a battle fleet of any significance could be deployed.<sup>69</sup> By that time it was known that the French objective would be to destroy Portsmouth and take the Isle of Wight and that the French Admiral, Claude d'Annebault, was assembling a fleet of 200 ships in the Seine estuary for that purpose. On 24th June, when he had still not ventured forth, Dudley attempted to disrupt his preparations, but was defeated by the weather. A few days later, on 6th July, he attempted to attack Le Havre, but that time was repulsed by the defenders. All this while St John would have been mobilising supplies, but the only instruction we have is dated 28th May, when he was at Portsmouth and the Council was at Westminster.<sup>70</sup> After that he returned to London

<sup>66</sup> M. St Clare Byrne, *The Lisle Letters*, *passim*.

<sup>67</sup> L&P, XX (i), 1329, 31st July 1545.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid*, (ii), 520.

<sup>69</sup> Loades, *Tudor Navy*, pp. 130–33.

<sup>70</sup> C.S. Knighton and David Loades, *Letters from the Mary Rose* (2002). pp. 106–11. L&P, XX (i), 821.

and continued to attend meetings at Westminster and Greenwich in late May and throughout June. Van der Delft, the new Imperial ambassador, reported rather mysteriously that Norfolk and St John had just returned 'from the north and west' on 12th June, where they had put those areas into a state of defence. Either it must have been a very short trip, or the ambassador was mistaken, because Paulet was at council on both the 7th and the 13th of June. On 18th June he was reported to have visited Southampton about the business of mustering men and ships and the same day the council authorised a payment of £2000 to him for victuals. He was back in Greenwich by the 21st and a further £2000 was paid to him on that day for the same purpose.<sup>71</sup>

During the second half of July the whole council moved to Portsmouth, which must have been a great relief to Paulet as it spared him the need to commute between London and the South Coast. They were there, along with the King, when d'Annebault's expected attack arrived on 19th July. The English fleet was actually held in Portsmouth harbour by the lack of wind and it looked as though the French would attain at least part of their objective. A force was landed on the Isle of Wight and the Admiral was able to deploy his galleys, which did not depend upon the wind, in a frontal attack. However at the critical moment a wind got up and the English Great Ships moved out to the counter. The most dramatic consequence was the sudden sinking of the *Mary Rose*, not by enemy action but by inept seamanship. The French retreated without trying conclusions any further, picking up their battered landing force from the Isle of Wight, where it had suffered the indignity of being driven off by the local levies. After so much preparation, it was something of an anti-climax, because no one in England knew the truth, that plague had broken out on the French ships and a few days later d'Annebault would be forced to abandon his campaign altogether.<sup>72</sup> We are told that the King watched the sinking of his great ship in helpless dismay and there is no doubt that his council was with him. For a few days at least the Lord Chamberlain had come to rest. The council continued to meet at Portsmouth until 30th July, when it appears to have returned to London with Henry. Paulet remained behind as the fleet was still in commission and its need of supplies as great as ever.

He was also now the King's man on the spot and expected to field whatever matters came along. As early as 2nd August he was reporting that there was sickness in Portsmouth and that some of the victuals with which the suppliers had provided him were decayed before they were unloaded. Emergency arrangements were being put in place. On the 3rd and again on the 5th he reported, along with the Duke of Suffolk and Sir

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<sup>71</sup> Ibid, 922, 970, 984, 997, 1055.

<sup>72</sup> *Letters from the Mary Rose*, p. 111.

Richard Lee, on the state of the fortifications.<sup>73</sup> On the 9th he wrote to Sir William Paget, lamenting the fact that the self styled Venetian experts who had been trying to salvage the *Mary Rose* had failed in their attempt. Meanwhile Dudley was at sea, seeking a decisive engagement with d'Annebault which would relieve the pressure on the South Coast. The French Admiral, however, was at the end of his tether and although the two fleets did encounter off Beachy Head on 10th August, he slipped away under cover of darkness the following night and, having landed 7000 soldiers, demobilised the remainder of his fleet. It was some time before Dudley realised that the threat had finally evaporated. On 20th August, while he was still at sea, Dudley wrote to St John to tell him that plague had broken out in his fleet also and complaining that his victuals were running low. The following day he wrote again, because the promised victuallers had still not arrived.<sup>74</sup> By this time the King, not knowing of d'Annebault's withdrawal, was becoming seriously alarmed. The reports of plague in the fleet had clearly reached him and at about this time he caused Sir William Paget to draft a letter to Dudley and St John, wanting to know at once the number of men afflicted with the sickness. The letter was never sent, probably because word had reached him in the meanwhile that Dudley had returned to Portsmouth and was getting rid of his casualties as quickly as he was able. It was not until 11th September that Dudley and St John finally came clean about the scale of the problem. Throughout this period the latter seems to have been responsible for paying the garrison at Portsmouth, and meeting various other casual expenses, as well as providing the victuals, for which another £2000 was sent to him on 18th August. On the 21st he was instructed to continue his tour of duty until November and it was not until the 18th that Paulet finally returned to the Council table in London. Once back, he then attended almost daily until the end of the year.

Apart from this outline, we can only occasionally glimpse Lord St John at work during this period. On 12th August, when he had many other things to think about, he was approached by two merchants of Arras, whose cargo of wine had been stolen by person or persons unknown. The offenders were probably English privateers, but the outcome of their appeal is unknown. On the 30th the council wrote to him to warn him that some of the cargoes of wheat which he had requisitioned were not fit for human consumption and that he should find others.<sup>75</sup> How this information had come to them is not disclosed. Meanwhile the sickness which had been reported earlier in Portsmouth, which whatever it may

<sup>73</sup> L&P, XX (ii), 13, 24, 38.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid, 175, 184.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid, 156, 176, 106, (ii) 247. A number of payments of £2000 to Lord St John for victualling were made during these months.

have been was not the plague, had not spared the Lord Chamberlain. On 19th September Edward Vaughn reported to the Council that the infection was spread far and wide and that Paulet had fainted twice that afternoon. 'The Lord Chamberlain is in great danger of death ...' he wrote.<sup>76</sup> The King, alarmed, as well he might be by such information, wrote to the sick man 'letters of comfort', but they both underestimated Paulet. Within a month he was back at his desk and within two months back in London, apparently none the worse.

Meanwhile the Duke of Suffolk had died, perhaps of the same sickness, *in media res* and almost with his pen in his hand. He had been a boon companion in the days of Henry's youth and for a number of years the King's brother-in-law. The estate must have gone into wardship, because his son Henry who succeeded him was only nine years old, but it seems to have remained in the King's hands, perhaps out of consideration for his friend. He also now needed a new Lord Great Master, unless he wished to revert to the pre-1540 situation and appoint a Lord Steward instead. For some unknown reason the King decided not to be logical and it was already being rumoured that the Lord Chamberlain would be promoted while he still lay on his bed of sickness on 22nd September. At what date the appointment took effect we do not know, but on a commission to take accounts in November 1545 he was described as Lord Great Master of the Household and, when parliament reconvened on 23rd November, Paulet was present in that capacity.<sup>77</sup> He also succeeded the duke as Warden and Chief Justice of all forests south of the Trent, which gave him the duty to hold Forest Courts and was quite distinct from the Mastership of the Woods. He was succeeded as Lord Chamberlain by Henry Fitzalan, Earl of Arundel. He had now worked his way up through every level of Household office from Controller to Lord Great Master, but in terms of public office, he remained in the second rank; Master of the Woods and Master of the Court of Wards and Liveries. By the time that parliament was prorogued on Christmas Eve, Lord St John could look back on a prosperous and successful year, both for himself and his family. In April he had made another substantial land purchase in Hampshire, paying £1744 into Augmentations, and it may partly have been to facilitate that deal that he had been taken off the sales commission at the same time.<sup>78</sup> Some of this land seems to have been sold on in June, when he and his wife obtained a licence to alienate. He had served on innumerable commissions, in addition to the musters and victualling assignments which we have already noticed. In January he was authorised to stamp warrants and to subscribe bills of

<sup>76</sup> Ibid, 405, 706.

<sup>77</sup> Gunn, *Charles Brandon*, p. 184. L&P, XX (ii), 427, 706, 1029 (a report of 24th December).

<sup>78</sup> L&P, XX (i), 620 (51).

sale; in April he was collecting the benevolence in Hampshire; in May he was named to a commission of Array covering not only Hampshire and Wiltshire, but also Surrey, Sussex, Oxford and Berkshire; and in June, just before he went down to Portsmouth, he was licensed to alienate the lands of Hyde Abbey. In October, probably while was still on the South Coast, he headed a commission to adjudicate upon prize ships taken during the war. None of these jobs carried fees and some were no doubt burdensome, but they all had some opportunities for profit, not least in the allowances for expenses. These were often paid very late, but if you were not in financial difficulties they were worth waiting for. Whether he risked his life in the siege of Boulogne is not known. Nobody actually says so, although in April when noblemen and gentlemen were providing themselves against the forthcoming campaign, he spent £8 on body armour.<sup>79</sup> This was an average layout and suggests that he did go through the motions, although whether he ever got close enough to the action to need it is another matter.

His eldest son, now Sir John Paulet, was only slightly less active. He continued on the Commission of the Peace for Hampshire, Dorset and Devon and served on two separate commissions of Oyer and Terminer, both covering Hampshire, Wiltshire, Somerset, Dorset, Devon and Cornwall. The first also included the City of Oxford and the second the City of Exeter. He was also commissioned to collect the benevolence in Dorset. In May, described as 'the King's servant' he was granted an annuity of £30 a year out of the manors of Powderham and Hilton in Devon, 'in the king's hands by the minority of the heir' – something which the Master of the Wards was no doubt happy to arrange.<sup>80</sup> Richard continued to serve as Receiver of Augmentations, but beyond the regular rendering of his accounts, nothing specific is known about his activities. All the religious houses had been dissolved by this time and their pensions assigned. The sale or otherwise of the lands was not his to decide.

Meanwhile, the war continued. Henry's relations with the Emperor went from bad to worse after the treaty of Crespy and by the summer of 1545 each was bitterly listing the grievances which he had against the other. In spite of some spasmodic efforts, the English made no headway in Scotland and, notwithstanding subsidies, benevolences and the sale of land, the King was virtually broke. The campaign of 1544 had cost about £650,000 and by September of 1545 a further £560,000 had been spent.<sup>81</sup> Whether all this money had been wasted is a matter of opinion. Henry had secured Boulogne, which was not of much practical use but was a symbol

<sup>79</sup> Ibid, 558, 21st April 1545. A list of noblemen and gentlemen equipping themselves with harness 'for tilt and field' at the King's command. Nobody has ever suggested that William Paulet went jousting.

<sup>80</sup> L&P, XX (i), 622, 623, 846.

<sup>81</sup> F.C. Dietz, *English Government Finance, 1485–1558* (1964), pp. 144–58.

of his 'premier league' status as a monarch; he had also frustrated French efforts to recover it and repulsed a seriously intended invasion threat. In a fit of gloom, during the autumn of 1545, Stephen Gardiner had painted a black picture.

'We are at war with France and Scotland, we have enmity with the bishop of Rome; we have no assured friendship here with the Emperor (an understatement), and we have received from the Landgrave, chief captain of the protestants, such displeasure that he has cause to think us angry with him ... our war is noisome to our realm and to all our merchants that traffic through the Narrow Seas ...'<sup>82</sup>

The coffers were empty and by November 1545 Henry's council was urging him to make peace on almost any terms. The King would have none of such defeatism. He was not averse to settling with France, but knowing or suspecting that Francis was in similar difficulties, he was not prepared to make many concessions. He started the new year in a bellicose mood. On 17th January, having consulted his council, but probably not paid much attention to their advice, he decided to send the Earl of Hertford to France and to launch a major new campaign in the spring. Musters were held, but on a smaller scale than in 1545. Sir John Paulet was one of those supposed to raise 100 men from Dorset and George Paulet was briefed for duty at Portsmouth. Lord St John continued to be responsible for victualling the fleet, but beyond that was not involved in these preparations. He sat regularly in council throughout the first half of the year and may have made his reservations about the campaign clear. For whatever reason he was not called upon either to provide men or to serve in person. In March he was busy about victualling again, with a wider responsibility. He was commissioned along with others to be responsible for the garrison supplies for both Calais and Boulogne and appointed one Thomas Boyes to deal directly with the former.<sup>83</sup> In early April he was again at Dover, conferring with Dudley and drew sums of money on a regular basis throughout the spring and summer: £3000 on 8th April; £1000 on the 13th, £1500 on the 16th; another £2000 in June; £1000 in July and £2000 in August. Altogether he is known to have spent upwards of £10,000 in the course of these duties and must have been given a high priority when cash was so short.<sup>84</sup>

Although both the garrisons and the fleet remained in being, the planned campaign never happened. For reasons which are not now apparent, but may have had to do with the increasing reluctance of his 'men of war',

<sup>82</sup> Gardiner to Paget, 13th November 1545 (from Bruges). J.A. Muller, *The Letters of Stephen Gardiner* (1933), pp. 185–90.

<sup>83</sup> L&P, XX (i), 821, 970.

<sup>84</sup> On the shortage of cash, see Dietz, *Government Finance*, pp. 155–7. Scarisbrick, *Henry VIII*, p. 456. L&P, XXI (i), 643.

Henry changed his mind and on 17th April he authorised negotiations with the French. Talks actually started on the 24th, the English Commissioners being Paget, Dudley and Hertford. After much posturing on both sides and threats to break off the negotiations, agreement was finally reached on 15th May and, after one final wobble, a treaty was signed on 6th June. Henry allowed the Scottish issue to be shunted aside and in return got what he really wanted – the retention of Boulogne. From the fact that it was signed in a tent halfway between Guisnes and Ardres, this was known as the Treaty of Camp. The treaty was ratified by an exchange of missions in early August and ostensibly the former belligerents became friends.<sup>85</sup> However, in reality mistrust remained on both sides, which is why the fleet was maintained and the garrison of Boulogne reinforced during the autumn. Paulet was still drawing large sums for victualling expenses into October.

In other respects, the Lord Great Master's duties reverted to civilian priorities. In May he was commissioned with several others to survey the King's plate and jewels, a task which was eventually to be overtaken by the inventory prepared after Henry's death eight months later. In June, more significantly, he headed another commission which was appointed to examine the state of the King's revenues in the various courts and to gather in debts and arrearages.<sup>86</sup> It was this commission which was eventually to lead to the overhaul of the whole revenue system during the short reigns which followed. When the French mission came over to ratify the Treaty of Camp, the Lord Great Master was naturally in attendance, but he also managed to ensure that his son, Sir John, was one of those specially summoned from the counties to attend. He represented Hampshire. Sir John, and George and Richard all continued to serve on routine commissions and George was Sheriff of Hampshire for this year. Apart from the month of September, when he was probably attending to his estates, Lord St John continued to be a regular attender at Council and a regular signatory of council letters for the remainder of the year. His wife's nephew, Sir Henry Capell, described as 'the king's servant', received in November a large grant of land in Somerset, for which he paid the substantial (but almost certainly preferential) sum of £1952.<sup>87</sup> St John himself continued to serve on many commissions. In May there was more Crown land to be sold and in June an account to take of Sir Edward Peckham, the Treasurer of the Mint. This could have been difficult as the King had been using the debasement of the coinage to bolster his flagging finances, so St John was a good man to ensure that awkward questions were not asked. In May he sold an estate in Lincolnshire back

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<sup>85</sup> Loades, *John Dudley*, pp. 78–81.

<sup>86</sup> L&P, XXI (i), 970 (18); *ibid*, 1176 (71).

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid* (ii), 476 (64).

to the Crown for £2078, presumably making a profit on the transaction and in August he became chief steward of those lands formerly of Romsey Abbey which were still in the hands of the Court of Augmentations; not a big thing in itself, but another recognition of his paramount position in Hampshire.<sup>88</sup>

Although there are relatively few references to it after the summer, it is clear that his role as Surveyor of the Victuals continued to occupy a good deal of time and attention. On 20th September the Council in London wrote to the King complaining that the treasury was empty and on the 28th Sir Thomas Wriothesley confided to William Paget that 'My Lord Great Master lacks for victualling ... and poor men who delivered victuals remain long unpaid ...'; in spite of the large sums which had been disbursed over the previous three months. Another £10,000 worth of warrants were issued to St John and his agents in December, but whether they were ever honoured is unclear.<sup>89</sup> St John had never played a conspicuous part in the King's foreign policy negotiations and it is often difficult to know where he stood on such issues, but there are one or two indicators in the latter part of 1546 which become more significant in the light of subsequent events. In August a certain Guron Bertano arrived quietly in England to attempt a resolution of the ten year old ecclesiastical schism on behalf of pope Paul III. This may well have been in connection with the pope's strenuous, and eventually successful, attempts to convene a General Council. He had no desire to see so important a country as England unrepresented, although it does not seem that Henry had given any indication of a willingness to negotiate. Bertano's mission made no headway at all, but during September he turned to Paulet as a man who might possibly be able to allay the King's inveterate hostility to the Pope.<sup>90</sup> If the Lord Great Master attempted such a role, it did not work, but it is significant that he should have thought it worth trying. Paulet, along with Gardiner and Wriothesley, was noted at this time as being sympathetic to the Imperial cause and the Emperor was at war with the heretics in Germany. In the eyes of some foreign observers this apparently made him a possible intermediary for a conservative settlement of the English problem, but Paulet was far too old a hand to be drawn.

Within a few weeks he was deeply embroiled in the last great crisis of the reign – the fall of the House of Howard. The family had come close to ruin before, when Queen Catherine had disgraced herself, but had survived, and the duke and his son the Earl of Surrey had apparently been restored to favour. However, some extremely indiscreet behaviour by the Earl, coupled with some rash ineptitude during the French campaign of

<sup>88</sup> Ibid (i), 643, 1538.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid (ii), 134, 172.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid, 194. Scarisbrick, *Henry VIII*, pp. 469–70.

1544, aroused the King's suspicions. By late 1546 Henry, whose health was in terminal decline, was paranoid about the succession and about what would happen after his death. First he became convinced that Stephen Gardiner, in spite of his long and distinguished service, was not to be trusted on the Royal Supremacy and excluded him from the Council and from the executors of his will.<sup>91</sup> Events were to prove this suspicion to be well founded. Then he believed, on the evidence of some foolish and controversial heraldry, that Surrey was aiming to remove Edward and secure the Crown for himself. The Howard claim was extremely remote and it is hard to see who would have supported them, but the earl certainly suffered from *hubris* and was given to boasting about his ancestors. That was apparently sufficient for a king who was deeply suspicious of any claims to status or authority which did not derive from himself. Surrey and his father were both arrested and charged with treason. Henry may well have been encouraged in his suspicions by those like the Earl of Hertford and Dudley, who were high in his confidence at that time and fearful of Norfolk's power in any minority government, but the decision was the King's own. Before Christmas Paget and St John had examined the duke, raking up charges and suspicions (particularly over his dealings with the French) going back many years. What they found was enough to support a formal indictment. The identity of the interrogators is significant, because the Lord Great Master was clearly the senior and was selected because he might appear to be neutral. Neither Cranmer nor Hertford, who may have been closer to Henry, were involved because both were known to be the duke's enemies. Thomas Howard 'confessed' and submitted, which was enough to make his trial before his peers a formality. He was in prison awaiting execution on 27th January 1547, the night that the King died. Henry Howard, although by title a peer, was so only by virtue of being the duke's heir and was therefore tried as a commoner by commission of Oyer and Terminer. Lord St John was a commissioner. The trial took place at the Guildhall on 13th January and, less fortunate than his father, he was executed on the 21st, St John being one of those who bore the special mandate of the King's assent to both attainders.<sup>92</sup>

St John was also a commissioner for the dry stamp, which was created earlier in 1546, when the King was finding the business of writing increasingly difficult. Many documents of all kinds survive which were authenticated in that way and most of them also bear Paulet's signature as an endorsement. As President of the Council – a somewhat shadowy position to which he had been appointed at the same time as the dry stamp was instituted – he was named as an executor of the King's will, a service for which he received a bequest of £500. At the time of Henry's death he

<sup>91</sup> Glyn Redworth, *In Defence of the Church Catholic*, pp. 244–47.

<sup>92</sup> L&P, XXI (ii), 697, 759. For the duke's 'confession', see *ibid*, 696.

was, in a sense, the pre-eminent statesman of England and yet he is easily overlooked. Always there, even at the highest level, his political impact remains problematic. As Lord Great Master he was responsible for all the preparations for Henry's funeral and, as President of the Council, he was the nominal head of the minority government which was to follow – but he has never been thought of as the shaper of events in February 1547.

# Lord President of the Council

Henry's death was concealed for a couple of days. There was nothing sinister about this, but certain matters had to be resolved before a public announcement could be made. Most particularly, the young King had to be in the right place when he was proclaimed, that is in London. He was in fact at Hatfield on 28th January and, when the Earl of Hertford arrived early the next morning, accompanied by Sir Anthony Browne, to escort him to the capital the boy thought at first that he had been summoned in connection with his forthcoming creation as Prince of Wales.<sup>1</sup> When he learned the truth, we are told that he wept copiously. How well he had ever known his father is uncertain, but such a reaction would have been expected. Elizabeth was at Enfield and was collected on the return journey. Her response to the news was similar. Mary's feeling may well have been a good deal more complicated, but we do not know just what they were. She later complained that she had been kept in the dark about her father's death and that may have been deliberate. She was by English law the next heir to the throne after Edward, but in the eyes of catholic Europe took precedence over him because she was legitimate.<sup>2</sup> For ten years she had given no hint of resistance to her father's will, but no one could be absolutely sure that she would not make a claim as soon as he was dead. In fact she seems to have had no such intention, but from the point of view of those who had to manage the transition to the new regime, it was important that Edward should be established before she was informed.

Significantly, the man who took the initiative in this situation was Edward Seymour, Earl of Hertford, not St John. Whether Paulet actually presided at the very early meetings of what was soon to become Edward's council is not clear. He had been called President of the Council since at least March 1546 and is so described again on 21st March 1547.<sup>3</sup> The lists of the late King's executors, on the other hand, were headed by the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Lord Chancellor, with Paulet appearing third or fourth. For a few days there was no council, and if it comes to

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<sup>1</sup> W.K. Jordan, *The Chronicle and Political Papers of King Edward VI* (1966), p. 4.

<sup>2</sup> By the canon law Edward was illegitimate because he had been born while the realm was in schism and the King excommunicated. Henry's marriage to Jane Seymour was therefore invalid.

<sup>3</sup> APC, II, p. 67. This is the Royal Commission which formally confirmed the membership of the Council, following the granting of the protector's patent. He may have succeeded to the Presidency after the death of the Duke of Suffolk, who had held that position. Helen Miller, *Henry VIII and the English Nobility* (1986), p. 174.

that no office holders, as all appointments terminated with the demise of the Crown. Only the Archbishop of Canterbury stood apart from that situation and it may well have been he who formally presided when the executors met on 31st January and pledged to carry out the late King's wishes.<sup>4</sup> Unfortunately it was not entirely clear just what those wishes were. Henry had named a body of 16 executors, including all his senior office holders, and empowered them to take whatever steps they thought to be necessary for the safety of the country, but he had not indicated how he expected the executive to function, nor named a chief officer. All we know is that the nomination of the Earl of Hertford as Lord Protector was signed by 12 of his colleagues, including Paulet, and that the reasons given were the need for a 'single person' to head the government and the suitability of Hertford as the King's maternal uncle. This arrangement was confirmed by the King on 1st February.<sup>5</sup> At some point Wriothesley must also have been confirmed as Chancellor, and St John as Lord Great Master, presumably by the King personally, because both began to function as such straight away. Wriothesley, as Chancellor, announced Henry's death to parliament on 31st January and dissolved the session. St John was immediately put in charge of the late King's obsequies as Great Master. On 12th February, along with the Keeper of the Privy Seal, he was required to surrender the seal of his office as Master of Wards and Liveries, '... to receive the same again personally of his Majesty',<sup>6</sup> but there is no record of that having happened to the Great Seal, or to the Great Master's wand of office.

The old King was suitably laid to rest at Windsor on 16th February. Catherine, the Queen Dowager, was present although she played no part in the ceremony. Edward, in accordance with custom, was not there, the Chief Mourner being Henry Grey, Marquis of Dorset, who, as the husband of the late King's niece Frances Brandon, was the nearest thing to a male kinsman that he possessed apart from his successor. Although he had been responsible for the arrangements, no one remarked what role St John played in the funeral rites. He was certainly present as a principal Officer of the Household and presumably broke his old staff of office, along with the rest of Henry's household officers. His son Giles was one of the six harbingers. In fact none of the power brokers of the new regime were conspicuous on 16th February and it is not even certain that any of them were there. They probably had more urgent business to attend to, because on 6th February the Council had called upon Sir William Paget, Sir Anthony Denny and Sir William Herbert to testify as to their knowledge of another important piece of unfinished business. It was known that Henry had intended to 'replenish the nobility' in the last days of his life. He had

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

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, p. 7. Loades, *John Dudley*, p. 89.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid, pp. 9, 27.

often talked of this intention, but had left no written instructions. Invited by the Council, Paget recalled several such conversations, but either his memory was unclear or, more likely, the King himself had been less than specific.<sup>7</sup> The Earl of Hertford was to be a duke and Lord Treasurer (the office recently held by the Duke of Norfolk); the Earl of Essex was to be a marquis; Viscount Lisle Earl of Coventry and Great Chamberlain; Lord St John Earl of Winchester; Lord Russell Earl of Northampton; and Lord Wriothesley also Earl of Winchester.<sup>8</sup> Several intended barons were also listed and various land grants in support of these new dignities. Quite apart from the fact that there could not be two Earls of Winchester, the document in which these intentions are noted shows every sign of hasty and tentative drafting. The opportunity was too good to miss especially if, as seems likely, the whole process was being driven on by the new Lord Protector.

The matter was also urgent, as the coronation had been fixed for 20th February and it was important that the new dignities should be in place by then. The creations duly took place on 17th February, but not strictly in accordance with Paget's recorded plan. Hertford became Duke of Somerset, Essex (the Queen Dowager's brother, William Parr) Marquis of Northampton, Lisle Earl of Warwick and Wriothesley Earl of Southampton. However neither Russell nor St John were promoted and the latter, who had been pencilled in for lands worth £200 a year, in fact received only £100. The reasons for this are obscure. Neither Paulet nor Russell were particularly modest men and it is unlikely that the preferments would have been refused if offered.<sup>9</sup> Nor does it indicate that they were out of favour. Both were confirmed in their appointments at about the same time and St John was entrusted with all the ceremonial arrangements for the coronation, an event in which he duly bore the sword before the King. It may be that neither was particularly noted as a supporter of the Protector, but then neither was Wriothesley, as was soon to become apparent. The fact that Paget's list contained no promotion for himself probably indicates that it was authentic, as far as it went. St John duly signed the schedule of new creations on the 16th February, along with the rest of the Council, and if he felt any disappointment, nobody noted or recorded the fact. He was an assiduous attender at Council meetings at this time, his signature appearing on every record of routine business

<sup>7</sup> NA SP10/1, no.17. APC, II, p. 16. Helen Miller, 'Henry VIII's unwritten will: grants of lands and honours in 1547', in *Wealth and Power in Tudor England*, ed. E.W. Ives, R.J. Knecht and J.J. Scarisbrick (1978), pp. 88–91. R.A. Houlbrooke, 'Henry VIII's will: a comment', *Historical Journal*, 37, 1994, pp. 891–99. E.W. Ives, 'Henry VIII's will: a forensic conundrum', *Historical Journal*, 35, 1992, pp. 779–804.

<sup>8</sup> APC, II, p. 16. NA SP10/1, no.11. The two lists differ in a number of particulars.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid. Miller believed that the promotions had been declined, but there is no real evidence for that.

during February and March, but no one suggested that he was taking a leading role.<sup>10</sup> The man who was dictating both the pace and the direction of policy was the Lord Protector.

Somerset was dissatisfied with the original terms of his appointment, which, although it had made him Governor of the King's Person as well as Protector, had bound him to act only with the consent of the rest of the Council and had said nothing about recruitment to that body. So within a matter of days he began to press for an amplification of his powers and this, it seems clear, was resisted by the Lord Chancellor. Wriothesley was an abrasive man and also a religious conservative, either of which would have made him a difficult colleague in the climate of February 1547, but the conflict which now arose seems to have been specifically about the role of the minority council. What the Chancellor wanted was corporate government, with the Protector as a figure head, largely for diplomatic purposes. He seems to have envisaged the Council replenishing itself by a process of co-option. What Somerset wanted was quasi-monarchical position, with the power to act after consultation, but without formal consent and the power to appoint councillors on his own initiative. Whether the council was divided on these issues or Wriothesley more or less isolated is not clear. He seems not to have had any determined body of support and the indications are that St John backed the Protector. In late February, the Chancellor made a mistake. In order to spend (as he said) more time on the important business of the council, he put some of his functions as Lord Chancellor into commission. This he believed that he was entitled to do *ex officio*, without specific authorisation. The Protector and some of his leading supporters disagreed and, on 5th March, presented formal charges against him for the abuse of his office.<sup>11</sup> Eight councillors signed the 'charge sheet', including both Somerset and St John. They had consulted the judges, and technically they were probably right, but the circumstances make it appear that the motivation was political rather than legal. Two days later the Chancellor was dismissed and heavily fined. The minute recording this decision then continued:

We could not call to our remembrance any person so meet to be put in trust and credited in that behalf as the Lord St John, Lord Great Master of his Majesty's Household, whom therefore we required in respect of the singular service that he should herein do his highness, and notwithstanding his manifold occupations in service to his highness other ways, he would accept and take upon him this charge for a season ... until a chancellor should be specially admitted ... Whereupon the said Lord St John was contented to obey this new

<sup>10</sup> APC, II, pp. 3–157.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid, p. 57. The charges were signed by St John, Somerset, Cranmer, Russell, Dudley, Browne, Denny and Herbert.

order ... and so the Great Seal was in our presence delivered into his custody by the hands of his Highness ...<sup>12</sup>

The intention specified was 'for the space of 14 days or less', but in fact Paulet was to hold the appointment until Richard Rich was promoted on 23rd October.<sup>13</sup> Lord St John headed the signatories of his own encomium! On 12th March Letters Patent were issued under the Great Seal, granting the Lord Protector the additional powers which he had sought, although when they were registered by the Council the following day only six councillors, apart from Somerset and St John, were actually present.<sup>14</sup> Although it must have imposed an additional burden upon him, Paulet was not exactly unrewarded for his duties as Lord Keeper. Shortly after his appointment, the Chancellor of Augmentations was authorised to pay him at the rate of £961 a year.<sup>15</sup>

At the same time the Council was augmented by the inclusion of several of those who had been named as assistant executors by Henry VIII and one or two others. A royal commission on 21st March, in addition to endorsing the Protector's extended powers, also listed the Marquis of Northampton, the Earl of Arundel, Sir Richard Rich, Sir Thomas Cheney, Sir John Gage, Sir Anthony Wingfield, Sir William Petre, Sir Ralph Sadler, Sir John Baker and Sir Richard Southwell as councillors, as well as excluding the disgraced Southampton.<sup>16</sup> Apart from taking recognisances from the Earl of Southampton on 29th June, the council seems to have busied itself with routine administrative business and St John signed the record of almost every meeting for the rest of the year and into January 1548. By that time he had resigned his temporary appointment as Lord Keeper, but continued as Lord Great Master, President of the Council and Master of the Court of Wards and Liveries and of the Woods. 'Manifold occupations' indeed for a man now in his early 70s. Paulet's assiduity at this time was not matched by visibility in the records. When the commissions of the Peace were revised in June 1547 he was named as Lord Keeper on every commission, although it is highly unlikely that he sat on any of them. At about the same time he was granted the office of Keeper of the King's forests of Aisholt and Walmer in Somerset and Hampshire with all the relevant fees and

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid, p. 58.

<sup>13</sup> There appears to have been an intermission of a few days during July when the office was held by Somerset himself. The reason for this is not known.

<sup>14</sup> Cal. Pat., Edward VI, I, p. 97. APC, II, p. 63.

<sup>15</sup> Cal. Pat., p. 137. '... as Thomas, Earl of Southampton had them'. The sum was made up of £542 from the Hanaper, £64 from the Butlerage, £45 'for attendance' and £300 'over and above', the latter presumably being a discretionary payment. There were also perquisites, which were not specified.

<sup>16</sup> APC, II, p. 67.

duties.<sup>17</sup> The latter he would have discharged by deputy and the grant is no more than an indication of his increasing grip upon his home county. His son, Sir John, was not only a commissioner of gaol delivery for the whole South West, but also sat as a Justice of the Peace for Dorset and Devon, as well as Hampshire. Richard also sat for the latter county.

With Scotland there was neither war nor peace in the early months of Edward's reign and at just what point Somerset decided to pick up this unfinished business is uncertain. The Council wrote in the King's name to muster commissioners on 16th April to make a survey of available weaponry, partly on the grounds that there was no peace with Scotland and on 18th July it was declared (mendaciously) that the Scots were mustering and that an attack was feared,<sup>18</sup> so it is probable that at some point between those two dates the Protector decided to try conclusions with his northern neighbours. As early as 27th February instructions were issued to Andrew Dudley, the Earl of Warwick's brother, as admiral of a fleet operating out of Harwich, to lie off the Scottish coast to inhibit possible communications with France. Dudley was to remain on station until his supplies were exhausted and to retreat to Holy Island for 'refreshment'. If circumstances then required, he might return to Harwich, or some other East coast port '... by order of Lord St John, Great Master of the Household'.<sup>19</sup> Exactly why Paulet should have been responsible for the navy's back up plans is not clear, unless it was because his role as General Surveyor of naval victualling had been carried over from the previous reign. There is some evidence for that later in the year, when he was negotiating for naval supplies with Hamburg and Bremen, but no specific record of such an appointment. When the northern campaign was actually launched in August, it seems that that function was taken over by Sir Ralph Sadler, as Treasurer of the War. At some point Paulet also seems to have been given responsibility for the logistics of the Boulogne garrison and several letters from him relating to pay and victualling there remain among the council's foreign correspondence.<sup>20</sup>

In addition to his regular duties as Lord Great Master, Lord Keeper and Master of the Wards, other occasional duties came thick and fast. On 14th September he was commissioned, along with Warwick, Russell and Sir Walter Mildmay '... to repair to the King's houses or palaces ... to inventory all ready money, household stuff, munitions' and other things that had been *in situ* when the late King died and to make 'a fair book or ledger' of the same. The same team had already (2nd July) been commissioned to take

<sup>17</sup> Cal. Pat., I, p. 326. It is recorded that this grant was surrendered in 1561 in favour of a joint grant with his son, John, by then Lord St John.

<sup>18</sup> NA SP10/1, no. 36; SP10/2, no. 2.

<sup>19</sup> NA SP10/1, no. 23.

<sup>20</sup> Cal. For. 1547–1553, pp. 303, 315.

the accounts of Sir Anthony Denny, the holder of the 'Privy Coffers', so he was effectively put in charge of a massive stock taking operation, which would have been made all the more difficult through having been delayed for several months.<sup>21</sup> On 30th September an audit of all the financial courts was also ordered, '... to examine what yearly revenues do or ought to go to them' and to do a stock check of lead, bells and other residual goods. All officers were to be summoned and examined 'with convenient speed'. The commission was issued to Paulet, Petre, Mildmay and Robert Kelleway.<sup>22</sup> Another piece of tidying up on 20th September alerts us to an otherwise unrecorded aspect of Paulet's function as a trusted magnate. At some point late in Henry VIII's reign, probably at the time one of the invasion scares of 1539 or 1545, he had built a 'stone tower or fortress and two barbicans' on the Hampshire coast at Netley. Although this work had allegedly been carried out at the King's request, he had neglected to obtain a proper licence for the same. This oversight, which could have carried a heavy penalty, was now pardoned. He was, moreover, licensed to maintain and extend his little fortress and to appoint (at his own expense) a garrison of nine men – three officers and six soldiers. The manor itself must have been in the King's hands, because Paulet was also given the right to muster the tenants.<sup>23</sup> A little earlier he had been similarly granted for life the office of Keeper and Captain of another, but this time royal, castle of St Andrews 'upon the sea coast at Hammell' (Hamble) – also in Hampshire – with the right to appoint a porter and gunners. This being a regular appointment, it carried a fee of £19 13s 4d, with an additional allowance for the soldiers. On 15th November, admittedly after he had ceased to be Lord Keeper, Paulet, Mildmay and Sir Thomas Moyle were given the potentially onerous and time consuming task of taking the accounts Sir Ralph Sadler, the Scottish campaign then having officially come to an end, although the operations continued. In December he was belatedly granted the £100 in lands which had been allocated in February. The properties, in several counties, were valued at £140 17s 0d, but he was required to pay £32 6s 10d in rents and fees; a modest, but useful, addition to his rapidly accumulating wealth.<sup>24</sup>

On 24th December 1547, Somerset's Patent as Protector was confirmed. The reason for this seems not to have been any challenge, but rather a desire to modify the terms. He was now appointed, not for the duration of the minority, but 'until the king shall declare otherwise' – in other words, during the king's pleasure. The reason for this change is obscure, because it could hardly have strengthened his position, but at the same

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<sup>21</sup> Cal. Pat., I, 139, 261.

<sup>22</sup> NA SP10/2, no. 9.

<sup>23</sup> Cal. Pat., I, p. 66.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid, p. 42.

time he was nominated as ‘Chief of the Privy Council’ and a list of the councillors was appended.<sup>25</sup> If this was intended to clarify Paulet’s position as President – or indeed replace him, that is not specified. The latter does not appear to have been referred to as President thereafter, but the Council records for 1548 are thin and formal. St John disappears entirely between January and June, but that does not prove that he was not present at least part of the time, because the minutes appear to have been made up after the meetings, several days at a time, and signed by whoever happened to be around when the Clerk needed them.<sup>26</sup> A letter to St John from Sir Richard Cotton shows him busy about paying the Boulogne garrison on 28th May. The confirmation of the Protector’s patent appears to have ushered in a period, during which the Council as such became largely a formal body and Somerset conducted policy with the aid of those whom he chose to consult, rather than the full board.<sup>27</sup> It may not be an accident that Paget’s first warnings to Somerset about his methods date from this period. It is also distinctly possible that Paulet was being to some extent sidelined politically and kept busy with routine tasks, because of his lack of sympathy with the religious policy which was being shaped during 1548. In the autumn of 1547 he had been named, with several other councillors, to a commission aimed at restraining unlicensed iconoclasm in London, but after that he does not appear again, although his brother George was a chantry commissioner for Berkshire and Southampton in July 1548.<sup>28</sup> Writing later John Knox (admittedly a hostile witness), called him Shebna – the crafty fox – ‘showing a fair countenance to the king, but under it concealing a most malicious treason’.<sup>29</sup> He was commissioned, along with Sir Edward Peckham, to control the exchange rate of bullion at the mint in November 1548, but apart from that there are very few indications of his activity during that year. It was not until January 1549 that he again became visible in the proceedings against Lord Seymour of Sudeley, the Protector’s brother.

As far as we can tell, his role in that dramatic sequence of events was completely marginal. Thomas Seymour was a swashbuckler with a very persuasive tongue. Within weeks of Henry’s death he had persuaded the Queen Dowager, Catherine, to marry him and, knowing that his brother the Protector would oppose the match, had induced the boy king to authorise it in person.<sup>30</sup> His

<sup>25</sup> Cal. Pat., II, 96. The reasons for the reissue of the patent at this point are obscure and very little commented upon. It is possible that some continuation of power after the King attained his majority was in mind, but what form that might have taken is not known.

<sup>26</sup> D.E. Hoak, *The King’s Council in the Reign of Edward VI* (1976), pp. 112–116.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid, pp. 178–9.

<sup>28</sup> Cal. Pat., II, p. 136.

<sup>29</sup> P.F. Tytler, *The Reigns of Edward VI and Mary* (1839), II, p. 148.

<sup>30</sup> NA SP10/1, nos 12, 13. Also the deposition of John Fowler, SP10/6, no. 10. Loades, *John Dudley*, pp. 112–113.

bad relations with the Protector then continued to deteriorate. There was a quarrel between them over the jewellery which Catherine claimed had been given to her personally, but which Somerset insisted was the property of the Crown. Moreover, although he had been created Lord Admiral and a Privy Councillor in the February reorganisation, Thomas bitterly resented the fact that he received only a barony and that the office of Keeper of the King's Person had travelled with the Protectorship, instead of being given to him. When his wife was pregnant in the summer of 1548, he began to make improper advances to the princess Elizabeth, who had continued to live in Catherine's household after her re-marriage. The girl (she was 14 at the time) was sent away in disgrace.<sup>31</sup> In September Catherine died in childbirth and Seymour immediately renewed his attentions to Elizabeth, this time speaking of marriage. She was no longer under his roof and there was no possibility of the Council consenting to such a match, so the talk was bluff, but he was becoming a dangerous man. For some months he had also been entertaining an ambition to get his brother's patent of office overturned by parliament and had been lobbying individual peers with the apparent aim of creating a party for that purpose.<sup>32</sup> None of this was strictly treasonable, but in the context of a royal minority it was certainly threatening. Moreover Thomas was – or claimed to be – 'making a power'; that is recruiting and retaining men who could be used as soldiers and collecting arms. On 17th January 1549 the Council arrested him and sent him to the Tower. Over the next few weeks he was interrogated several times and a number of peers and others were called upon to testify as to their dealings with him. The depositions survive, but we do not know who conducted the investigations. It would be surprising if Paulet had not been to some extent involved, especially in questioning the more senior peers, such as the Marquises of Dorset and Northampton, but it cannot be proved and his name was not mentioned by any of them. He was not among the eight named councillors who received Seymour's own deposition on 24th February.<sup>33</sup>

Elizabeth was also questioned, along with her Controller, Thomas Parry, and her guide and mentor Katherine Ashley was sent to the Tower. The unfortunate Mrs Ashley was terrified by these threatening surroundings and testified with increasing desperation, although she had nothing of great significance to say. On 4th February she remembered an occasion, presumably after Seymour's arrest, when Paulet and Denny had been

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<sup>31</sup> Loades, *Elizabeth I*, pp. 64–7. She lodged for several months with Sir Anthony Denny and his wife.

<sup>32</sup> NA SP10/6, no. 7, no. 11, no. 12. Depositions of the Marquis of Dorset, Lord Clinton and the Earl of Rutland. See also John Maclean, *The Life of Sir Thomas Seymour, Knight* (1869), pp. 73–7.

<sup>33</sup> NA SP10/6, no. 27.

supping at Hatfield and the Parrys were of the company. ‘... Parry’s wife looked on her husband, wept, and told her (Ashley) that she was afraid they would send him to the Tower ...’.<sup>34</sup> That was all. It does, however, indicate that Paulet was *persona grata* in Elizabeth’s circle and that was significant in the circumstances of January 1549. He did not sign another Council agenda until 15th March, by which time the bill of Attainder against Seymour had passed and received the royal assent. The death warrant was issued by the Council on 17th March and Paulet’s signature appears with the rest. His name then disappears until 27th July, when he signed a recognisance for Sir John Arundel. No action was eventually taken against Elizabeth or any of her servants and she did not suffer, except in reputation. If she had ever entertained any affection for Seymour it was probably dead by this time and did not appear at the time of his execution. It is tempting to think that she may have been protected by the friendship of Lord St John, but that is pure speculation.

Paulet may have been ill for a while in the spring of 1549, because on 18th May a quarrel which he had been arbitrating was sent to William Cecil for resolution, but references to him by the middle of June suggest that he was certainly active again by then. On the 22nd Sir Thomas Smith wrote a letter of general business to the Protector concerning the operation of the mint and the general shortage of money. Although most of the lay subsidy was paid, the clerical subsidy was not due until October and the ‘relief of sheep’ not until November. St John and Sir Anthony Aucher were controlling the export of corn and other victuals. ‘I have sent your letters’, Smith continued, ‘to the Lord Great Master, whom I reminded of his promise to redress everything if you committed the matter to him with Aucher. Now he has better matter to work on ...’.<sup>35</sup> Enclosed with this letter was a long complaint from Sir Edmund Peckham, the Treasurer of the Mints, about the shortage of bullion. ‘You wrote that the Lord Great Master has warrants for payments from the mints for provision of victuals; it will be hard to do, whatever the sums. I will pay him £2000 on receipt of his bullion, as promised ...’ The exact nature of Paulet’s continuing involvement with victualling cannot be reconstructed, but in this case it was presumably connected with the Protector’s determination to resume full scale hostilities in Scotland, for which purpose troops, including foreign mercenaries, were already mustering in the north. That campaign was shortly to be aborted because of the disturbances which were breaking out in the south, and the mercenaries re-deployed to Norfolk and Devon, but St John’s supporting role seems to have remained the same. He was among those summoned to attend what appears to have been a muster of loyal gentry at Windsor on 1st July, intended to co-ordinate

<sup>34</sup> Ibid, no. 20.

<sup>35</sup> NA SP10/7, no. 38 and 38 (i).

reactions to the spreading disaffection, but what role he eventually played is not known. A Paulet, who may well have been the experienced George, served with Lord Russell in the South West, but St John himself is not known to have left London. The Earl of Arundel pacified the protesters in Sussex and wrote on 29th June, 'These parts remain as well as may be in a quavering quiet ...',<sup>36</sup> and it is tempting to think that Lord St John, as the greatest landowner in Hampshire, might have done the same in his country. However, no one said so and there is no circumstantial evidence. He must have sent a number of men, probably to serve under whichever member of the family it was who represented him in Lord Russell's army, while he confined himself to the anonymous but essential task of making sure that the field armies which were operating against the rebels were properly supplied and paid. As there was no sign of mutiny or desertion, we can assume that he was successful.

Until the autumn of 1549, Lord St John had been the model of a Senior Civil Servant – always available, constantly at his desk and hardly observable in the controversial politics of the time. However in September a storm began to brew which even he was unable to avoid. The Protector's dithering over the summer disturbances, and particularly over the 'camping movement', had been the last straw as far as most of his colleagues were concerned. His methods of government were not only arrogant, insensitive and controversial, they were also incompetent. The Earl of Southampton had had his fine remitted and had been again admitted to the Council in January 1549, but he had not forgotten his humiliation at Somerset's hands two years earlier. Now his opportunity for revenge had come. He began to canvas the opinion that the Protector must go and was soon supported – rather unexpectedly – by the Earl of Warwick. Warwick had been one of Somerset's closest allies and rumours that he was jealous of the Protector and had been plotting against him for some time appear to have been no more than part of the 'black legend' which subsequently gathered around him. However at some stage during August their friendship fell apart. While still on campaign against the Norfolk rebels, Warwick was reported to be muttering against the duke's ineffectiveness and, when he returned after defeating Kett, he carefully kept his army in being not far from London on the grounds of general insecurity.<sup>37</sup> Lord St John must have been a party to this deployment, because several thousand men continued to need food and pay. They could hardly live off the country and Warwick did not otherwise have access to the resources. According to the Imperial ambassador, Francois Van der Delft, by the middle of September, Southampton and Warwick were in touch with the princess Mary and Lord

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<sup>36</sup> Ibid, no. 44. Andrew Boyle, 'Henry Fitzalan, 12th Earl of Arundel: Politics and Culture in the Tudor Nobility' (Oxford University, D.Phil., 2002).

<sup>37</sup> Loades, *John Dudley*, pp. 128–9.

St John and the Earl of Arundel were in their company. Van der Delft's source of information was Mary herself, but the reason for the approach is unclear. The princess was a famous opponent of Somerset's religious policy and the ambassador wished to believe that their real objective – having got rid of the Protector – was to restore 'true religion'. However, if any such idea was canvassed, Mary probably did not believe them and she made it clear that she would be no party to a plot against Somerset, however much she might dislike what he was doing.<sup>38</sup> In any case Warwick would be the key man in any possible *coup* because of the armed force at his disposal and he had for a long time been a keen supporter of the protestant changes. Both William Paget and Warwick were in touch with Van der Delft in the last days of September, but no more than vague hints were dropped about any possible religious reaction, and they were clearly designed to dissuade the Emperor from making any attempt to interfere.

As late as 4th October those members of the Council who were with Somerset at Hampton Court were continuing to discharge routine business as though nothing was amiss. They even authorised warrants for the payment of Warwick's troops and Lord St John was present at the meeting. The storm broke the following day. According to Richard Grafton, the London Chronicler:

... many of the Lordes of the Realme, as well counsailors as other myslyking the gouvernment of the Protector, began to withdrawe themselves from the Courte, and resorting to London, fell into secret consultation for redresse of things, but namely for the displacing of the sayde Lorde Protector, and sodainely of what occasion many marvelled and fewe knewe, every lorde and counsaylor went thorowe the Citie weaponed, and had their servauntes likewise weaponed ...<sup>39</sup>

At the same time Somerset issued a letter over the King's sign manual, commanding all subjects to repair armed and in haste, to Hampton Court to defend the King against a most dangerous conspiracy.<sup>40</sup> Which was the cause and which the effect between these two events we do not know, because Grafton's record is not precisely dated, but they were clearly connected. The Protector did what he could to mobilise support, including writing to Lords Russell and Grey who were on their way back from the South West with the only substantial force in being apart from Warwick's men. On the 6th he apparently armed his own and the King's household servants and attempted to fortify the main gate at Hampton Court, having been mistakenly warned to expect an immediate attack. Lord St John by this time was with the other councillors in London where he was swiftly joined by Sir William Petre, leaving only Cranmer, Paget and Smith with

<sup>38</sup> Van der Delft, summary of advices, September 1549. Cal. Span, 1547–9, p. 445.

<sup>39</sup> Grafton, *Chronicle*, p. 522.

<sup>40</sup> NA SP10/9, no. 1. Although not strictly a proclamation, this is printed in Hughes and Larkin, *Tudor Royal Proclamations*, I, p. 493.

the Protector. Events must have moved fast on that day, because according to one account, Edward sent 'Wulfe, one of his previe chamber to take the Tower of London and prepare for the King ...', but Edward Wolf was beaten to the stroke, 'for lighting at Batell Brige he might see Sir William Pawlett ... Sir Richard Southwell and others take the Tower for the lordes'. Whereupon he hastened back to Hampton Court and Somerset promptly decided to remove the King to Windsor, realising that Edward was now his only card, and that the castle was more defensible than the palace.<sup>41</sup> According to another account 'the Lord Great Master entered the Tower to the King's use, made Sir Edmund Peckham lieutenant, and gave him table allowance ...'. Although these narratives are not entirely consistent, they agree in making it clear that Lord St John was responsible for securing the Tower and replacing the lieutenant, in the interest of the 'London lords', 'to the king's use' no doubt representing what was claimed.

On that same busy day the council in London met at Ely Place, the Earl of Warwick's London residence, apparently with Lord St John presiding and drew up a list of charges against the Protector, alleging misgovernment on a sweeping front.<sup>42</sup> Meanwhile Somerset's friends in London, who must have been equally quick off the mark, began to circulate hand written bills in the City accusing the lords of plotting to murder both the Protector and the King '... and to restore popery', which accurately reflected Somerset's own perception of events. When the lords reconvened at Mercer's Hall on the 7th, they realised that they had a problem. Perhaps as many as 4000 ill equipped peasants and citizens had answered the Protector's plea, but they were not the problem because they would be no match for the council's troops. The problem was that they had no access to the King, nor any means of judging his true mind. They could (and did) call Somerset a traitor and accuse him of trying to spirit the King out of the country, but the fact remained that the Protector could issue letters over the sign manual and they could not.<sup>43</sup> They wrote to Edward the same day, and Paulet was one of the signatories, professing their loyalty and explaining that they were acting as they did because Somerset had refused to listen to reasonable protest or advice. At the same time they wrote to Paget and Cranmer, who were still with the Protector, urging them to act as mediators to bring about a peaceful settlement. By this time Russell and Grey had aligned themselves with the London lords, having 'stayed the country' as they advanced.<sup>44</sup> They had done this, as they said, after receiving advice

<sup>41</sup> BL Add. MS 48126, f. 11. 'Certayne brife notes of the controversy between the Dukes of Somerset and Duke of Nor[t]humberland'. *Religion, Politics and Society*, p. 131.

<sup>42</sup> APC, II, p. 330.

<sup>43</sup> E.g. NA SP10/9, no. 8. A call to Russell and Herbert to attend with all the force they can muster.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, nos. 22, 23.

from the Lord Great Master. So Somerset had no chance in the short term of being able to make a fight of it. However, time was not on the council's side and if they were constrained to use force there could be no guarantee that Edward would not be injured, or even killed – although that would be no-one's intention. On the 8th they convened again, this time at the Guildhall, and decided to send Sir Philip Hoby, an experienced diplomat, to Windsor in an attempt to break the deadlock. Meanwhile they asked the Lord Mayor for the token support of 500 men. Sir John Amcotes prevaricated, having received a similar demand from Windsor, but with the council camped on his doorstep, he had little option but to accede to their request.<sup>45</sup> The following day, the 9th, while they were meeting at Sir John Yorke's house (the sheriff of London and a supporter of Warwick), word reached them from Paget and Cranmer that the Protector would be willing to stand down, on certain conditions.

This gave the opportunity for the breakthrough which then followed. Exactly how the deal was struck, or who were the parties to it, we do not know. Sir Philip Hoby was given a lot of the credit at the time and he was certainly trusted by both sides, but he had no mandate to negotiate. It is reasonably clear that someone on behalf of the council gave Somerset enough of the reassurance which he was seeking to persuade him to surrender. Paget and Cranmer must have negotiated for the Protector and later events suggest that Warwick was the principal spokesman for the council, but others must have been involved. In spite of his leading role, Warwick could hardly have spoken for all the lords without their authority. At the same time it seems that neither Arundel nor Southampton, both of whom were present at the London meetings, were aware of the details. The only officers who could plausibly have spoken for the council without actually asking it were Rich as Lord Chancellor and Paulet as President. Both were present at all the recorded meetings and on 10th October the meeting actually took place at St John's London house.<sup>46</sup> The terms of the agreement were never set down, but can be partly reconstructed from later events. In return for giving up his office (which he held during the King's pleasure) and surrendering control over public policy, Somerset would have been promised his life, his status, his lands and perhaps the continuation of his religious policy. The latter would have been very important to Cranmer and Warwick would have been happy enough to grant it. Rich would also have been content with that and Paulet, who may have been less enthusiastic, would not have wanted to stand in the way. Those who would have been most unhappy were Arundel and Southampton, which may have been why they were not told. At the meeting on the 10th, the lords were cheerfully informed that:

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<sup>45</sup> APC, II, p. 337. Loades, *John Dudley*, p. 136.

<sup>46</sup> APC, II, p. 342.

... by the diligent travaile also of tharchebisshop of Canterbury and sir William Paget then being at Wyndsour, the Kinges Majestes owne servauntes were agayne restored to their places of attendance about his Majestes person, and that the Duke of Somersettes and other of his bandes were sequestered ...<sup>47</sup>

They promptly sent Sir Anthony Wingfield, the Vice Chamberlain, to take charge of the situation at Windsor and he reported on the following day that Somerset himself, Sir Thomas Smith, Sir Michael Stanhope, Sir John Thynne, Edward Wolf and William Cecil were all under arrest. On 12th October the whole council presented itself at Windsor to receive the King's heartfelt thanks and a full meeting, attended by no fewer than 24 councillors, was held at the castle on the following day. Edward's gratitude may well have been genuine enough. He was 12 years old and it had been a very frightening experience. Moreover, if he had ever had any affection for his rather distant uncle, these days effectively ended it and that was to be important in due course.<sup>48</sup> Quite typically, Paulet had been present throughout, his role unspecified and his opinions unrecorded. His only proven initiatives were the critical taking of the Tower of London, and his timely letter to Russell and Grey, but he was a very senior and much respected figure and his part in the final settlement can be reasonably deduced.

It seems that the Council could hardly at first believe the completeness of its victory. On 14th October Somerset and his main associates were sent to the Tower, with instructions that no unauthorised person should have access to the duke, for fear of 'secret practices and intelligences'.<sup>49</sup> Whose machinations were feared is not clear, because the fallen Protector seems to have been without a friend, either at home or abroad. Within the council, only the hapless Thomas Smith had stayed with him to the end and had lost both his office and his liberty in consequence. It may have been feared that Somerset retained some influence in the Privy Chamber, which would have been reasonable given that his brother-in-law Sir Michael Stanhope had been Chief Gentleman since August 1547. There would be dangers if the Privy Chamber and the Privy Council were to take different views, particularly during a minority. The Protector had taken no particular pains to keep them in alignment and that lack was now addressed. On the same day as Somerset was imprisoned, the King returned to Hampton Court, none the worse for his adventure – apart from a cold. On the 15th the council – 'with my consent' as he noted in his journal – appointed six lords of the council to be in regular attendance on him and four principal

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<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> The detached manner in which Edward eventually wrote of his uncle's trial and execution (*Journal*, p. 107) has been frequently commented upon. Although he was by that time fourteen, the King seems to have made no attempt to intercede for him.

<sup>49</sup> Loades, *John Dudley*, p. 140.

gentlemen, who were not councillors but were closely aligned with them. Two lords and two gentlemen were always to be present. The six were; the Marquis of Northampton, the Earls of Arundel and Warwick and Lords Wentworth, Russell and St John.<sup>50</sup> Northampton and Wentworth were political lightweights and neither at this point held any household office, but Warwick took over Somerset's role as Lord Great Chamberlain, St John was Lord Great Master, Arundel Lord Chamberlain and Russell Lord Privy Seal. As yet neither the shape nor the direction of the new government was clear, but what was clear was the determination of the Council not to allow the Privy Chamber to develop any political identity or influence of its own.

Van der Delft was deceived by his own expectations. He had convinced himself that the main motive behind Somerset's overthrow had been a desire to reverse the Protector's religious policies. 'Every man among them' he wrote optimistically on 17th October, 'is now devoted to the old faith' – except the Earl of Warwick and the Archbishop of Canterbury, whose survival he was at a loss to explain.<sup>51</sup> Paulet was certainly a conservative in a sense. He had voted against the Prayer Book in the House of Lords, but he had no intention of allowing such preferences to influence his professional conduct. Arundel and Wriothesley shared a similar approach. Neither was a reformer in any sense, but their priority was political power. The strength of Cranmer's position lay in his unique relationship with the King (who was his godson) and in the part which he had played in negotiating Somerset's surrender, none of which the ambassador understood. Van der Delft convinced himself that the delay in getting rid of the Archbishop, and in making some declaration of intent over religion, was simply 'that all may be done in proper order'. In fact there are no signs of division among the councillors along religious lines in the immediate aftermath of the *coup*. It could be argued that the admission of Sir Richard Southwell and Sir Edward Peckham and the readmission of Dr. Nicholas Wotton, all of which occurred on 6th October, was designed to strengthen the conservative 'party', but all were long standing civil servants whose recruitment can be readily explained in other ways. For the time being the emphasis was on 'business as usual'. On 16th October, for example, selective musters were held and Paulet, and the Earls of Arundel and Sussex, were each expected to raise 150 men from Hampshire and Sussex respectively.<sup>52</sup> However, this was almost certainly for the reinforcement of Boulogne, which was under constant harassment and had nothing to do with the recent disorders. The *coup* had disrupted the regular payment of

<sup>50</sup> APC, II, pp. 344–5. Edward VI, *Journal*, p. 18. Paulet was not present at this meeting.

<sup>51</sup> Cal. Span., IX, pp. 462–3.

<sup>52</sup> NA SP10/9, nos. 46, 47.

wages in the household and the admiralty, because councillors had been for several days too preoccupied to sign the necessary warrants. This was now (20th November) to be redressed by a special commission of councillors headed by Paulet, whose powers were significantly backdated to 6th October.<sup>53</sup> There was also other routine business. A certain Peter Pawle, an Italian sea diver, had been committed to the Tower by the Protector for walking off with certain valuables which he had recovered from the wreck of the *Mary Rose*. Sir Edward Peckham was instructed on 22nd October to examine him and told that the Lord Great Master knew all the circumstances of the case. On 31st October the council also tried to bring some additional order to its own affairs, by allocating responsibilities to particular councillors. For some unexplained reason Lord St John and Sir William Herbert were to have oversight of the affairs of Ireland.<sup>54</sup> Perhaps Warwick, who had assumed a leading role by this time, wanted to ensnare him in the perennial quagmire which was that troubled province, but why is not apparent and it seems to have made little difference to his normal pattern of work. A special embassy was sent to the Emperor to try (again) to persuade him to extend the 1543 treaty of mutual aid to cover Boulogne and Sir Richard Cotton was sent on another special mission to survey the state of the Scottish borders. The disorders of the summer, followed by the *coup*, had left the Protector's Scottish policy in tatters and it was necessary to know what – if anything – could be salvaged. To all these actions and decisions Lord St John was a party.

At the beginning of November, just as Van der Delft was beginning to have doubts about his assessment of the Council, a genuine division also appeared. Sir John Arundel, possibly prompted by the Earl of Southampton tried again to broker a deal with Princess Mary. The reason for this seems to have been a desire to clip the wings of the Earl of Warwick, who was showing increasing signs of stepping into the Protector's shoes. At the same time Arundel, who was a strong religious conservative, was proposed for the council and St John may well have been sympathetic to that, which would help to explain his subsequent actions. Warwick sensed trouble and, according to one near contemporary account, 'by means of the Archbishop of Canterbury procured great friends about the king'.<sup>55</sup> As a result Arundel's candidature was blocked and Thomas Goodrich, the Bishop Ely, joined the council instead on 6th November. Goodrich was a protestant and his promotion was significant of future policy. Among 'the preachers' rumours of impending catastrophe began to be replaced by hopes of continuing reform. 'The gospel', as one reported, 'is yet with us'. Although Van der Delft continued to believe, as late as the

<sup>53</sup> Cal. Pat., II, p. 250.

<sup>54</sup> NA SP10/9, no. 50.

<sup>55</sup> BL Add. MS 48126, f. 15. *Religion, Politics and Society*, p. 135.

beginning of November that Southampton was in some sense leader of the Council, in fact he had not attended a meeting since 21st October. This seems to have been the result of a genuine indisposition and not a politically manufactured one, but it certainly contributed to the protestant drift which is discernable in official policy.<sup>56</sup> Sir Edward Peckham, who seems never to have taken the council oath, also disappeared after 30th October and he seems to have been a client of Southampton's. By the end of November a confrontation was developing. Wriothesley returned to the board, although not to every meeting, on 24th November and he seems to have believed that, if it came to a showdown, that he could count on the support of the Lord Great Master. Needless to say, we have no direct evidence of Paulet's attitude.

Neither the sequence of events, nor the timing of the so-called plot against the Earl of Warwick are very clear.<sup>57</sup> There were later rumours that the Earls of Southampton and Arundel, assisted by lesser figures such as Sir Richard Southwell, had conspired to have Warwick arrested and executed. Given the balance of power within the council at the time, that seems an implausible ambition. On 29th November the Marquis of Dorset had also been sworn, further strengthening the protestant party. What appears to have happened is that Arundel and Southampton, who were presumably ignorant of the terms upon which Somerset's surrender had been secured, were pressing hard for the fallen Protector to be executed. Warwick had been notoriously close to Somerset until the late summer of 1549 and they seem to have believed that if they could secure the Duke's conviction for treason, Warwick would become an accessory. 'I thought', Southampton is alleged to have said, 'ever we sholde fynde them traytors both; and both is worthie to dye for by my advyse ...'.<sup>58</sup> If he ever said such a thing, it was unrealistic, but it might have been possible to use Somerset's fate as a way of discrediting Warwick and overturning his ascendancy in the Council. The protestant advance, they calculated, could then be halted and the influence of the Archbishop proportionately reduced. Even this more modest ambition proved to be beyond them. It might have been so in any case, but they could conceivably have taken advantage of Warwick's indisposition in mid-December to manage a temporary majority – provided that the earl was unaware of their intrigue. The slim possibility that this might happen was ended by Lord St John. As we have seen, Van der Delft believed him to hold 'the right religion' and his colleagues clearly regarded him as being a conservative. Either Arundel or Southampton, or possibly someone on their behalf, approached Paulet to join the plot. Given his

<sup>56</sup> Hoak, *King's Council*, pp. 54–7.

<sup>57</sup> *Religion, Politics and Society*, pp. 135–6. Loades, *John Dudley*, pp. 143–6.

<sup>58</sup> BL Add. MS 48261, f. 15. Paulet was one of the commissioners, along with Arundel, appointed to examine the duke.

seniority and prestige, his adherence would have meant more than just one vote – he would certainly have swayed a few others who were wavering. However, St John went straight to Ely Place and told Warwick what he knew of what was afoot. He seems not to have been the only person in this position, the Chancellor Lord Rich and the Privy Seal Lord Russell were also approached, but it was St John who acted decisively.<sup>59</sup> As soon as he had done so, the other two immediately backed off and joined him. Armed with this information, Warwick appears to have moved rapidly. Summoning the council to his sickbed at Ely Place, probably on the 11th or 12th December, he allegedly staged a dramatic confrontation; ‘with a warlyke wisage’ he told Southampton ‘my lord you seek his (Somerset’s) bloude, and he that seekethe his bloude woulde have myne also ...’.<sup>60</sup>

Needless to say, the Privy Council records make no mention of any such event and we are dependant upon a single suspect source, but something of that nature must have happened. The conspirators had been stopped in their tracks and on 13th December the Duke of Somerset was allowed to sign 31 articles of submission, which indicates that a decision had then been taken not to seek his attainder, either by trial or parliament. On 25th December the Council issued a proclamation reaffirming its commitment to the Prayer Book and the Act of Uniformity, because:

... divers unquiet and evil disposed persons, since the apprehension of the Duke of Somerset, have noised and bruted abroad that they should have again their old Latin service, their conjured bread and wine, and suchlike vain and superstitious ceremonies.<sup>61</sup>

Paulet, who was present at every Council meeting throughout this period, duly appended his signature. On 14th January 1550 Van der Delft reported sadly to the Emperor:

The Master of the Household, the Chancellor and the Lord Privy Seal, who still hold to the good faith, seeing Warwick’s determination have gone over to his side ... Sir Thomas Arundel, who openly belonged to the good faith and was an active instrument against the Protector, has been cast into prison ...<sup>62</sup>

Sir Richard Southwell had already been dismissed from the council for writing ‘certain bills of sedition’, but no action had been taken against the more senior plotters. January must have been a tense month. Assuming that subsequent developments can be connected to the confrontation of mid-December, the rewards came more quickly than the punishments. On 19th January Patents were issued creating Lord Russell Earl of Bedford and Lord St John Earl of Wiltshire. The latter was signed by nine Councillors, including Cranmer and Warwick, and by three peers who

<sup>59</sup> Van der Delft to the Emperor, 14th January 1550. Cal. Span., X, p. 8.

<sup>60</sup> BL Add. MS 48216, f.16. *Religion, Politics and Society*, p. 136.

<sup>61</sup> *Tudor Royal Proclamations*, I, p. 485.

<sup>62</sup> Cal. Span., X, p. 8.

were not councillors, the Earls of Derby, Westmorland and Oxford.<sup>63</sup> It was a promotion which in a sense was long overdue, having been indicated in Paget's list of January 1547, but the grant of £20 a year in lands which went with it was a mere gesture. We do not know exactly how much the new earl was worth at this point, but it is safe to say that this would have represented no more than 100th part of his wealth. On 16th January Warwick's loyal supporter Sir Thomas Darcy first appears as a councillor and ten days later Walter Devereux, Lord Ferrers, also joined the board, further strengthening the now obvious protestant ascendancy.<sup>64</sup>

Both Arundel and Southampton appear to have been placed under house arrest at some point during the month, although this was not mentioned by Van der Delft and denied in a letter of Richard Scudamore to Sir Philip Hoby on the 18th. Scudamore indeed had heard that the council had reassured Southampton that it had 'no displeasure against him'.<sup>65</sup> Rumours were rife and either Scudamore was misinformed or the council quickly changed its mind, because he was under restraint by the end of the month. Somerset's friends were reported to be expecting his release within a matter of days. He confirmed the terms of his submission on 27th January and the Council fixed his recognisance at £10,000 on 6th February. He was then released into house arrest at Syon and told to avoid the court.<sup>66</sup> Parliament was prorogued on 1st February and several significant changes then followed. This may have been coincidental, but it seems likely that controversy was feared if the session had still been in being. On 2nd February the Earls of Arundel and Southampton were formally dismissed from the Council and the former was also deprived of the office of Lord Chamberlain. He was replaced by Lord Wentworth. Sir William Paget had already been created Lord Paget of Beaudesert on 3rd December, apparently in anticipation that he would succeed to that office and had given up the Controllershship in consequence. This was generally seen as a reward for his part in bringing about Somerset's surrender, but at some time after his promotion he must have fallen foul of the Earl of Warwick, because Wentworth's promotion left him without an office. He retained his seat on the council and was subsequently used in some delicate diplomatic work, but for some unknown reason Warwick never trusted him.<sup>67</sup> The most important change, however, was the further promotion of the Earl of Wiltshire.

<sup>63</sup> Cal. Pat., III, p. 4.

<sup>64</sup> Hoak, *King's Council*, p. 54.

<sup>65</sup> S. Brigden, 'The Letters of Richard Scudamore to Sir Philip Hoby', *Camden Miscellany*, 30, 1990, p. 109.

<sup>66</sup> APC, II, pp. 384–5 Loades, *John Dudley*, p. 150.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid, p. 149. S.R. Gammon, *Statesman and Schemer: William, First Lord Paget of Beaudesert* (1973).

The office of Lord Treasurer had been vacant since October, when Somerset had been ousted and the Protectorship abolished. It was being rumoured in January that the Earl of Warwick would take it himself, but instead, on 3rd February, it was conferred on Paulet.<sup>68</sup> The reasons for this may have been positive – an appreciation of his undoubted administrative talents and considerable experience in financial matters – or they might have been negative – Warwick's desire to secure control over the offices which he already held. In view of the debt which Warwick owed him he could hardly have been deprived of the Great Mastership and the Presidency of the Council, but when he was promoted those offices would naturally be declared vacant on the grounds that even a man of Paulet's energy could not be expected to do so much. Whatever the thinking behind the move, after a short interval, on 20th February, Warwick took both those offices himself.<sup>69</sup> Dudley had no desire to style himself Protector, which would have been appropriate to his real power, thanks partly to the fact that the title was discredited and partly because he was thinking long term. Edward was now 12 and by the terms of his father's will would achieve his majority in rather less than six years time. Any title of regency would come to an end with the King's majority, but the Presidency of the Council could be renewed and form the basis for a power and influence which would extend unimpeded into Edward's adult reign. Meanwhile, if he could use the Great Mastership to secure control over the boy's political education, which he had already begun to do, his influence after 1555 could be well-nigh guaranteed. There may, therefore have been rather more to Paulet's upward mobility than any recognition of his own talents. One of his own previous offices, the rather shadowy one of Lord Great Chamberlain, Warwick handed over to his friend, and ally, the somewhat ineffectual Marquis of Northampton. The other – the Admiralty – he kept for the time being. Sir Anthony Wingfield was moved from the Vice-Chamberlainship to become Controller in Paget's place and Sir Thomas Darcy became Vice-Chamberlain and Captain of the Guard.<sup>70</sup> At the end of this reshuffle the Earl of Warwick's grip over both the council and the offices of government was greatly strengthened. Whatever the truth about the December plot, it had enabled him to remove two senior and potentially difficult challengers and to bring in several of his own supporters. Cranmer's influence was also increased and the future of the protestant Reformation (in the medium term at least) assured. There were, however, three senior officers who retained a degree of independence – those who had been identified by Van der Delft as turncoats – and who were allies of Warwick rather than his

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<sup>68</sup> Cal. Pat., III, p. 177.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid., p. 189.

<sup>70</sup> 'Scudamore Letters', pp. 116–117.

creatures – Rich, the Chancellor, Russell, the Privy Seal and Paulet, now the Lord Treasurer.

One of the reasons why Paulet's defection hit the conservatives so hard was that he was a man who had hitherto contrived to be trusted by everyone. He had built up a close working relationship with Van der Delft, because he had been commissioned by the council in June 1547 to sort out the acrimonious affair of Robert Reneger. Reneger was a Southampton merchant and sea captain, who had become so exasperated with the harassing tactics employed by the Inquisition against the English community in Sanlúcar, including the arbitrary confiscation of their goods, that he had seized an incoming Indiaman and made off with a cargo worth many thousands of ducats.<sup>71</sup> This had happened in 1545, when relations with the Emperor were particularly strained. In response to indignant diplomatic representations, Reneger had been mildly reprimanded – and given command of one of the King's ships. Nothing had been done about recovering the loot. After Henry's death, and when he was finally convinced that Mary was not going to make a bid for the Crown, Charles instructed his ambassador to take the matter up on behalf of the plundered merchants. When Van der Delft approached the Council on 16th June, he was informed that 'they had ordered the Lord Great Master within the next two days to visit me and confer about this'.<sup>72</sup> This obviously happened and the ambassador found Paulet easy to deal with. On 18th August he wrote to Prince Philip that they had agreed to settle the affair amicably; 'I expect this will shortly be done' he concluded optimistically. However, Lord St John was in no hurry, in spite of the fact that he stayed in London throughout August (when most councillors had gone to their estates), as Van der Delft believed to complete this negotiation. On the 6th September he reported again on St John's diligence and spoke of 'finishing off' the business of the Spanish Merchants.<sup>73</sup> Several further meetings followed, but it was not until January 1548 that he was finally able to report a settlement. This was not imposed by Paulet, or by anyone else, but had been arrived at by the parties themselves. In fact Lord St John had contrived to keep everyone talking, apparently quite amicably, for 18 months and had eventually done precisely nothing. It was Philip II who said 'time and I against the world' but the Lord Great Master might have used a similar motto. Van der Delft apparently continued to believe in both his goodwill and his diligence.

Nor was this the only long running saga in which Paulet played a leading part. When Mary made her high profile protest against the Prayer Book at Whitsun 1549 and the Emperor demanded exemption from the

<sup>71</sup> Loades, *England's Maritime Empire*, p. 35.

<sup>72</sup> Cal. Span., IX, p. 104.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid, pp. 135, 147.

law for his cousin, Paulet and Paget were the councillors who were sent to bear the Protector's decision to the princess. Exactly what was said was not written down at the time and was subsequently a matter of dispute. Somerset's response to the Emperor insisted that the King's laws must be obeyed and that no general dispensations could be granted.<sup>74</sup> Unofficially, however, he indicated that Mary's 'weakness' might be indulged, provided that it was done discreetly, without any public involvement. Paget subsequently insisted that that was the message which they had conveyed, but the princess understood them differently – or so she claimed. Her understanding was that, thanks to the Emperor's intercession, she had been granted an indulgence which covered her chapel and her household. If anything was said about discretion, or about services conducted in her absence, she chose not to hear it. The stand-off continued throughout the summer, with Charles attempting to insist on a formal written guarantee and the Protector and council resisting his pressure. Mary herself, rather surprisingly, was not keen on receiving any written permission, because such an instrument could not avoid referring to the Act of Uniformity as a law. Her conscience, she declared, refused to accept it as such. 'If letters were accepted', the ambassador reported '... they might amount to a recognition of the laws against religion, which she would always deny, for these innovations were no laws, for they were not duly given, but contrary to God, to her father's will, and to the welfare of the realm'.<sup>75</sup> In addition to testifying to the strength of her conscience, this also suggests a certain incoherence of thought, because her father's will was based upon the same legal foundation – that is a properly constituted statute. Mary, meanwhile continued to make a public spectacle of her mass and in September Paulet and Paget paid her a second visit. It was probably Paulet, who was the senior of the two, who was responsible for the formula which was then offered. This hinged upon a more precise definition of 'private', which should be deemed to embrace the princess's domestic household, but not outsiders and her chapel or closet, but not any church which happened to be within reach. Mary, who had been warned that her intransigence could land her in worse trouble, professed herself satisfied with this, but nevertheless remitted the whole problem to her mentor the Emperor, a response for which neither the council nor the ambassador were particularly grateful.

When the conservative reaction against the Earl of Warwick was thwarted in December 1549, the princess told Van der Delft that is was like the hardening of Pharaoh's heart and that her own troubles were bound to increase in consequence. Towards the end of January, when the ambassador was feeling particularly frustrated by what he felt was

<sup>74</sup> Loades, *Mary Tudor*, pp. 147–8.

<sup>75</sup> Summary of Van der Delft's instructions to Jehan Dubois, September 1549. Cal. Span., IX, 444.

an increasingly hostile regime, he wrote that the only two people on the council who understood his business, or had any sympathy with it, were Lord Chancellor and the Lord Great Master.<sup>76</sup> The latter was also, he declared, the only person who understood ‘the affairs of the lady Mary’. By this he may have meant no more than a recollection of the fact that Paulet had been involved in the various negotiations which had taken place with her from the beginning – but the suggestion is that Lord St John was the only surviving councillor with any sympathy for her. Mary herself was apprehensive and indignant. She had been invited to spend the Christmas at court, but had declined, being convinced that the invitation was simply a pretext to deprive her of the mass; ‘I would not find myself in such a place for anything in the world’.<sup>77</sup> Her fears communicated themselves to the ambassador, who became convinced that she was in danger and when he approached the new Earl of Wiltshire the response was less than encouraging. When the subject of the princess’s predicament was raised ‘the latter lord (Paulet) did his best to avoid being drawn into it’ referring him instead to other members of the council.<sup>78</sup> Too much should not be built on this very slight evidence, but it seems that Wiltshire had become convinced that Mary was a liability and that the Earl of Warwick was likely to adopt an altogether tougher line than the Protector had done. Having been a prime mover in securing the earlier understanding, he may well have had no desire to be a party to its dismantling – by either side. By the time that he stood down as President of the Council, there was clearly a storm brewing in that quarter and he no longer felt that it was incumbent upon him to take any lead.

The evidence for Paulet’s personal fortunes during this period is even more fragmentary than that for his public life. On the 1st June 1549 he and Elizabeth were given a licence to alienate the manor of Wade (in Eling) in Hampshire to one William Kettell. Kettell appears to have been one of Lord St John’s men of business, because the condition of the licence was that the manor would be immediately regranted to his son Chidiock, presumably a part of setting the not-so-young man up in the world.<sup>79</sup> On 26th January 1550 the somewhat notional £20 a year in lands which had received with his earldom was supplemented with a rather more generous grant of an assortment of property to the value of £300 per annum, ‘for his good services’.<sup>80</sup> At about the same time he purchased a further £30 worth in Basingstoke and Andover from the Earl of Westmorland. Much of this property was ‘loose’ former monastic land and did not signal the

<sup>76</sup> Cal. Span., X, p. 17.

<sup>77</sup> Van der Delft to the Emperor, 14th January 1550. Cal. Span., X, p. 6.

<sup>78</sup> Cal. Span., X, p. 17.

<sup>79</sup> Cal. Pat., III, p. 66.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid., II, p. 375.

take over of any consolidated estate. A few days before he became Lord Treasurer, he was also named as a feoffee to use for the young William Somerset, Earl of Worcester, who had inherited his estate at the end of the previous November. In July 1547 and again in July 1548 he was listed among those to supply 'great horses', presumably for military purposes.<sup>81</sup> On both occasions he was named under the Council rather than under a county and it may well be that most of the work of sustaining the family's place in Hampshire and Dorset had already fallen to his son John, who of course also became Lord St John when his father took the title of Wiltshire. As we have seen, John was a busy local commissioner, but other members of the family, George, Richard and Giles appear only occasionally in the records during these years and Thomas not at all, so it is impossible to reconstruct any kind of family strategy for the Hampshire Paulets. The most prominent member after William was his Devon cousin, Sir Hugh, who in addition to being a regular Justice of the Peace was also Governor of Jersey and in 1549 a commissioner to assess the needs of the garrison of Boulogne.<sup>82</sup>

As we have seen, the reasons for the elevation of Paulet to the Lord Treasurership were probably political rather than functional. The Earl of Warwick was unusually frank about his own limitations when it came to financial matters and it was perhaps for that reason that he decided not to take the office himself. By contrast the Earl of Wiltshire not only had great experience in the taking of accounts, and of spending large sums of money on food and naval stores, he also knew something of exchange rates and of the operation of the mint. Interestingly, it had been to Paulet that Somerset, as Lord Treasurer, had turned for advice in November 1548 concerning the coinage. On the 2nd of that month Lord St John had written:

To answer your letter concerning the coining of testons to groats, in which you doubt there may be a disorder in debasing the king's coin from standard; no man may depress from the standard. Therefore every man that has testons or receives them must stand to the danger of the loss if they are counterfeit. The officers of the mint must take heed what they receive for in receipt of counterfeits. I told them they shall not charge the king for it ...<sup>83</sup>

At about the same time Paulet was also involved in the importation of bullion for the mint, so although it would be impossible to construct a *curriculum vitae* of his qualifications for the Treasurership, they appear to have been substantial. It is probably true to say that through his numerous connections with the City of London, the Earl of Wiltshire had immediate access to every kind of financial expertise and it was probably through his influence rather than that of the Earl of Warwick, that Somerset's

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<sup>81</sup> NA SP10/2, no. 1, SP10/5, no. 17.

<sup>82</sup> NA SP10/13, no. 74.

<sup>83</sup> NA SP10/5, no. 11.

debilitating habit of debasing the coinage was finally brought to an end. The government was so dependent upon the City to underwrite its debts that it would have been foolhardy – not to say impossible – to ignore its wishes. Having renewed his offices of Master of the Wards and Master of the Woods at the beginning of the reign, Wilshire continued to discharge both functions after his elevation. He does appear to have shed a few minor responsibilities. For example the day before he became Lord Treasurer the Marquis of Dorset was granted his position as Justice in Eyre of the forests South of the Trent.<sup>84</sup> This was sufficiently substantial to be re-granted by patent, but lesser positions he may well have re-granted himself or continued to discharge by deputy. It seems quite likely that he did not know himself how many such offices, stewardships and other minor functions were discharged in his name and in the absence of any personal accounts they are very hard to trace. However, when he became Lord Treasurer at the age of about 75, William Paulet changed gear. For the first time he was identified principally by his public office. Until 1550 he had been primarily an officer of the court, whose state function was that of a councillor. Apart from a six month stint as Lord Keeper of the Great Seal, his offices in the royal administration, although important, had been of the second rank. Now he was, after the Lord Chancellor, the most senior officer of the realm. The fact that he was overshadowed politically by the Earl of Warwick should not be allowed to conceal this. By diligence, by adroit manoeuvring and indeed by sheer longevity, he had now reached the summit of his career. No one, including himself, can have expected that situation to endure for long. In fact it was to last for 22 years and to embrace some critical financial decisions, but first it meant establishing a working relationship with John Dudley, Earl of Warwick.

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<sup>84</sup> Cal. Pat., IV, p. 27.

## Lord Treasurer, 1550–1558

In what was possibly an unguarded moment, the Earl of Warwick confessed that he had no expertise in financial matters. This may have been a thinly disguised boast that he had no merchants among his immediate kindred, or it may have been a simple statement of fact.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless at the beginning of 1550 a crisis point had been reached. The total debt was probably not overwhelming – a little over £200,000 – but it was expensive to service and was not being properly managed. It was also increasing steadily because of the high costs of waging war. The capture, fortification and keeping of Boulogne had cost £1,342,550 since 1544. The garrison of Calais was costing £5000 a year more than the revenues of the town and the fortifications, and other works there, were running at £19,000 a year.<sup>2</sup> The navy was costing about £25,000 each year to maintain, over and above the costs of its actual use, and Berwick was absorbing an unknown sum which was probably about the same. To set against this the government enjoyed an ordinary income of about £150,000 p.a. and in addition to that it had sold nearly £800,000 worth of former monastic land and had milked the mint of a further £900,000 since 1544 by way of debasement.<sup>3</sup> All these three factors were damaging to financial stability, because the sale of land diminished income and debasement of the coinage caused (or rather added to) inflation. To the Duke of Somerset the Treasurership had been largely honorific. His priorities had been elsewhere and in any case the office had been vacant for three months when Paulet took it over. What was needed was a Treasurer who could concentrate his energies on the demands of that office, without the distractions of having to manage general policy. It was this consideration, with or without his unaccustomed modesty, which seems to have dissuaded the Earl of Warwick from taking the office himself.<sup>4</sup> The Earl of Wiltshire's track record in financial management was not conspicuous, but it was real enough and he had all the right contacts. To put a London Draper in charge of the country's finances was a bold and imaginative move.

<sup>1</sup> HMC, Salisbury MSS, I, 86–7. The Earl of Warwick was always a shade touchy about his father's status and anxious to emphasise that he came of 'an ancient noble line'.

<sup>2</sup> NA SP10/15, no. 11. A brief declaration of principal military and naval charges, September (?) 1552.

<sup>3</sup> NA E351/2077. F.C. Dietz, *English Government Finance, 1485–1558* (1964), pp. 177–8. On the technicalities of debasement, see C.E. Challis, *The Tudor Coinage* (1978), pp. 81–133.

<sup>4</sup> Scudamore Letters, p. 116. 30th January 1550.

Nevertheless the first priority was political, not fiscal. The war with France must be brought to an end. Fortunately the actual conflict had become stalemated by the end of October 1549. Henry had expected to find Boulogne an easy prey, especially when the out forts were over run with comparative ease. However the town itself proved a different matter. Supplied and reinforced from the sea, it resisted all attacks. Given the option, the Duke of Somerset would have preferred an Imperial alliance and was hostile to France, but Warwick was prepared to be pragmatic and take his friends where he could find them. He was, moreover, unsentimental about Henry's last conquest and was prepared to bargain. As early as 7th November he persuaded the Council to take some unofficial soundings, using a Florentine merchant named Antonio Guidotti as the intermediary.<sup>5</sup> Guidotti apparently approached the French Admiral, Coligny, who was known to Warwick from earlier negotiations and the response was positive. By the end of November, the balance of power had swung in England's favour as the French army began to be plagued by desertions and their own financial problems became apparent. Consequently, although the French position remained basically the stronger, by January Henry was willing to negotiate and representatives were accredited on both sides, the French on the 8th and the English on the 10th.<sup>6</sup> At first the French attempted to demand the unconditional surrender of the town, but this was bluster rather than a negotiating position and serious bargaining soon followed. By the end of March agreement had been reached. Henry would indeed recover Boulogne, but he would have to pay 400,000 crowns in two instalments as the price of its redemption.<sup>7</sup> This was certainly far more than he would willingly have parted with and the treaty should be regarded as a drawn match. Warwick and Lord Paget (who did most of the negotiating) were reviled both at the time and afterwards for having betrayed England's interests, but in truth it was a good bargain. Not only was the English Council relieved of the huge burden of defending the town, which was of little strategic importance, but they had also gained £133,000, as much as a full parliamentary subsidy.

On 6th May 1550 a start was made towards putting the King's financial house in order, when the Council instructed the Lord Treasurer to 'take order' for £54,800 worth of debt owed to the Fuggers and due on 15th August. There was no likelihood that it could be discharged, so he was instructed to prolong it for 12 months on the best terms he could get.<sup>8</sup> A

<sup>5</sup> Cal. Span., IX, p. 469. When Châtillon responded positively, the Council was at some pains to make it appear that he had made the first move. BL Harley MS 284, no. 38, f. 56.

<sup>6</sup> D.L. Potter, 'Documents Concerning the Negotiation of the Anglo-French Treaty of March 1550', *Camden Miscellany*, 28, 1984, pp. 74–5.

<sup>7</sup> T. Rymer, *Foedera, Conventions, etc.* (1704–1735), XV, pp. 212–15.

<sup>8</sup> APC, III, p. 26.

few days later Rich, Paulet, Paget, Sadler and North were commissioned to devise ways to discharge of the King's debts in general. All the officers of the revenue courts were to be sent for and their accounts taken, presumably in order to establish a factual base from which policy calculations could be made.<sup>9</sup> If such accounts were taken over the next few months, they do not appear to have survived, but the instruction is a possible sign that new thinking was taking place. At this stage the Exchequer was handling only between 25 and 30 per cent of the government's cashflow, being exceeded by both Augmentations and the Mint, but it did have a very good record for the secure receipt and issue of cash, largely because its procedures were so bureaucratic and interlocking. The Upper Exchequer, or Exchequer of Audit, was a court which adjudicated financial disputes and enforced payments and it was largely untouched by the subsequent changes. The Exchequer of Receipt was in theory governed by rules going back to the reign of Henry II and set out in the Black Book of the Exchequer.<sup>10</sup> In accordance with these rules the Receipt should have been run by the Treasurer and Chamberlains and warrants of issue were still so directed, but over the years the actual management had changed and responsibility now lay with the Under-Treasurer (a post unknown to the Black Book) who at this point was Sir John Baker. However Baker held many offices and the actual work was largely done by Thomas Felton, the writer of the tallies and Auditor of the Receipt. Felton received all the money paid into the Exchequer and allocated it to the Tellers, who then held it in their own houses. He also directed all warrants of issue to the appropriate Teller, according to his knowledge of their holdings. It is fairly clear that Paulet saw part of the answer to the government's financial problems in a revised and extended use of the Exchequer under his own personal control. He had no time for Baker (or Felton) and realised that the existing system with its multitude of agencies leaked cash at every pore.<sup>11</sup> How far his thinking may have progressed by the time of Edward's death we do not know, but little had been done because the political will was lacking to tackle the numerous vested interests which were involved. Paulet on his own lacked the clout and Dudley had too many other urgent things to do.

A further debt of £30,000, probably also owed to the Fuggers in Antwerp was recycled on 9th May, as a condition of which the English government apparently agreed to buy some 300,000lbs of gunpowder for which it had no immediate need. The only new initiative at about this time was what Jordan describes as a 'bizarre venture' on the Antwerp exchange, which

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid, p. 29. 11th May 1550.

<sup>10</sup> NA E36/266, ff. 20–47.

<sup>11</sup> Christopher Coleman, 'Artifice or Accident? The Reorganisation of the Exchequer of Receipt, 1554–1572', in C. Coleman and D. Starkey, *Revolution Reassessed* (1986), pp. 163–98.

involved feeding sterling into the investment system in small but frequent doses and, when this eased the exchange rate, to sell the holdings which had been acquired and take a profit.<sup>12</sup> The operators were Sir John Yorke, Sir Andrew Judd and Sir John Gresham, all eminently respectable London merchants and bankers. Yorke, as the Master of one the Tower mints, was the front man, although whether the scheme was his idea we do not know. Yorke undertook to 'pay all my debts to the sum of £120,000', as Edward enthusiastically noted and was given £15,000 'in prest' to work his magic on the exchanges.<sup>13</sup> It all ended in tears in the following March when the English were caught trying to smuggle £4000 worth of silver bullion (presumably their profit to date) out of the country. The silver was confiscated and there was a diplomatic fracas. Yorke lost £2000 of the King's money, and Judd and Gresham similar amounts, while the King's debts remained untouched.<sup>14</sup> As usual, there is no direct evidence that Paulet was a party to this scheme and Yorke's main patron and contact on the Council was the Earl of Warwick himself. Nevertheless so ambitious an undertaking could not have proceeded without the knowledge and approval of the Lord Treasurer. It is possible that the £15,000 advance was smuggled through the Privy Coffers, but unlikely, and it may well be that the scheme was not as hare-brained as Jordan believed. If it had not been for the rather obvious drawback that it involved operating illegally, it might even have succeeded. Probably the Lord Treasurer thought that it was worth a shot, provided that he could avoid the flack if it failed – and in that he was entirely successful.

Apart from the taking of accounts, there are some other signs that financial strategy was being rethought by the end of 1550. In 1549 the coinage had been debased, not by reducing the fineness but by reducing the weight. The effect had been the same – the exchange had dipped and prices had shot up. By the autumn of 1550 someone was clearly arguing for a restoration of the coinage, if it could be achieved. On 18th December the officers of the Southwark mint were instructed to produce a limited range of gold coins at the old fineness.<sup>15</sup> They did so, but as far as we can tell the improved coin was quickly driven out of circulation. Nevertheless plans for a restoration of the silver standard continued to be discussed and some experiments were carried out. They proved abortive in respect of mint operations as a whole and instead it was decided to 'cry down' the value of the shilling and the groat to something a little closer to the true value of the bullion content. A proclamation was issued to that effect

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<sup>12</sup> W.K. Jordan, *Edward VI: The Threshold of Power* (1970), p. 458.

<sup>13</sup> *Chronicle and Political Papers*, pp. 48–9.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 54. The King attributed this loss to 'treason of Englishmen', but did not elaborate.

<sup>15</sup> Challis, *Tudor Coinage*, p. 105 and n.

on 30th April 1551, but unfortunately the date of implementation was fixed for 31st August. As alarm and speculation gathered pace, the council realised its error and on 8th July advanced implementation to take place immediately.<sup>16</sup> Meanwhile, in what can only be described as a deliberate scam, on 10th April the mints were authorised to coin £288,000 of new issue silver at the uniquely low rate of 3oz fine. This, it was calculated, would yield a profit of £160,000, which bears a suspicious resemblance to the scale of the royal debt at that time.<sup>17</sup> As a predictable result sterling declined on the Antwerp exchange to 13s Flemish (as against 26s pre 1545) and the crown debtors refused to accept the debased coin. By the end of the year 1551 both Scheyfve and Barbaro were commenting that the English coin had lost half its value and that good coin (such as survived) was being driven out of the country.

It could be said that after nearly two years in office, Paulet's empire was in total disarray and yet it is clear that someone close to the King was arguing that only a restoration of the coinage could offer any remedy to the increasingly desperate financial mess. What seems to have happened is that Paulet lost the political argument with Warwick and Yorke, who seem to have been behind both the debasement and the 'crying down'. The consequent deterioration in the situation discredited Yorke as a financial adviser and persuaded Warwick of his own lack of expertise. From the beginning of 1552 an improvement can be discerned, which can be directly attributed to superior financial skill. William Daunsell the Crown's agent in the Low Countries was dismissed as early as March 1551<sup>18</sup> and, paradoxically, while the Council was in the midst of making one of its biggest mistakes, it was simultaneously seeking the advice of the City of London about his replacement. As a result Thomas Gresham was sent for and persuaded to take the assignment. Daunsell's mismanagement, which may well have led to his dismissal, had resulted in a concentration of debts which were all due to mature in the spring of 1552 when, as it appeared, there would be virtually no money available to discharge them. Gresham's memorandum merely says that 'the Council' offered him the Antwerp job, but it is reasonable to suppose that it was Paulet's London contacts which had identified him as the most likely man and absolutely certain that for an appointment of this kind the Lord Treasurer would have to be the protagonist.<sup>19</sup> This seems to have been Paulet's first victory in the struggle to secure control over what should have been from the beginning his patch and it resulted from the disastrous failure of alternative counsel.

<sup>16</sup> *Tudor Royal Proclamations*, I, pp. 518–9 (30th April 1551), 525 (8th July 1551).

<sup>17</sup> Grafton, *Chronicle*, p. 58. Challis, *Tudor Coinage*, p. 107.

<sup>18</sup> Jordan, *Threshold*, pp. 463–4.

<sup>19</sup> BL Cotton MSS Otho E.x, f. 43.

His relations with Gresham were later to become strained, but they never ceased to share the same objectives.

The operations of the mint at this time were central to financial strategy. In August 1550 the Council instructed Paulet 'to cause to be molten down into wedges all the church and chapel plate remaining at the Tower' and to hand over £6000 worth to Sir John Yorke 'for such purpose as his Lordship knoweth' – in other words Yorke's ill fated investment scheme.<sup>20</sup> During the same month Peckham was also called upon to find the £48,000 necessary to meet all the warrants which the Lord Treasurer had recently signed. In September Paulet himself received 521 ounces of gold from Sir Anthony Auger for a purpose undisclosed, but which was probably connected with the same scheme.<sup>21</sup> Whether the Lord Treasurer approved of Sir John's manoeuvrings or not, he was certainly a party to them. However by the autumn of 1551 a corner had been turned. As Christopher Challis observed, August 1551 was spent paying away the last of the base money to the best possible advantage.<sup>22</sup> It was also decided to close the Southwark mint. By September discussions about a recoinage were in full swing and Peckham was instructed to hand over an assay sample of £400, so that some informed judgement could be made as to the desirable level of fineness required. It was then decided to proceed with an issue of 11ozs fine. On 5th October the appropriate commission was issued and the work commenced, almost entirely at the Tower.<sup>23</sup> It was only half a solution, because the base coin continued to be legal tender at its reduced rate and only bullion in the King's hands, or that which came in voluntarily could be so recoined. Nevertheless it had a stabilising effect upon prices and assisted Gresham's crusade to restore the exchange rate. It also marked the end of debasement as a fiscal expedient and a victory for Paulet and his City friends.

Gresham faced his first big test when the 'bunched' repayments negotiated early in 1551 started to fall due in March 1552. About £106,000 was to be repaid over the next four months or so and there was no more than £16,000 available. He was consequently forced to reborrow £90,000 at enhanced interest. Sir Philip Hoby returned £65,000 of discharged bonds from the Fuggers on 15th March, but the price of this apparent success had been high.<sup>24</sup> The best that the new agent could do was to stagger the repayment dates, so that the same crisis was not repeated in the following year. This he did successfully and the record of the return of bonds to the

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<sup>20</sup> APC, III, p. 109.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid, pp. 116, 129.

<sup>22</sup> Challis, *Tudor Coinage*, p. 109.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid, p. 317.

<sup>24</sup> BL Cotton MS Otho E.x, f. 43; Galba B. xii, 46, ff. 186–7. Loades, *John Dudley*, p. 211. APC, IV, p. 27.

Lord Treasurer and the City are appropriately spaced out in the Council records. The secret of managing this unwieldy debt and eventually of reducing it, lay not so much in increasing the availability of cash as in controlling the credits available from the valuable trade in unfinished English cloth. This trade was controlled by the Merchant Adventurers and, by persuading them to allow the credits accruing to be partly used to discharge royal debts as they fell due, Antwerp obligations could be transformed into London ones. They still had to be met, but repayment dates were more flexible and interest rates lower, as the Council records show.<sup>25</sup> From the Adventurers point of view, their profit was differed, but a political ‘trade off’ with the Council was established, one of the results of which was the decision on 24th February 1552 to terminate the privileges of the Hanseatic League. The Adventurers had fought a long running battle against these privileges since they had been introduced following the Treaty of Utrecht in 1475. Not only had they conferred a privileged status on Hanse merchants in London, they had also frozen the Adventurers out of the potentially lucrative Baltic trade and even enabled the Germans to undercut the English in their supposed monopoly with the Low Countries. This last, which was not strictly covered by the privileges, was a particular grievance. Scouting the opportunity created by the cloth credits, the Adventurers bombarded the Council with complaints and were eventually successful.<sup>26</sup> To soften the blow to the Emperor’s subjects, the privileges of the Flemings which, it was alleged, had not been abused, were confirmed in May 1552.<sup>27</sup>

In a good year the cloth trade to Antwerp could be worth £300,000. 1552 was not a good year, but the Adventurers were still able to place some £60,000 at Gresham’s disposal, which enabled him to discharge £36,000 without re-borrowing – in Antwerp at any rate. By August 1552 Edward’s debts on the Bourse, which may have stood as high as £150,000 at the beginning of the year, were down to £108,000 and probably dipped below £100,000 by the end of the year.<sup>28</sup> A neat example of how this system worked is provided by the Council minutes of 5th May 1553, when the officers of both the Staplers and the Adventurers appeared and agreed to discharge Crown debts in Antwerp to the considerable sum of £36,371, due on five different obligations, ‘in consideration whereof the Lordes have promised that the seyd Mercauntes ... shall be answered here of the sayd sumes that they shall disburse beyonde the sees after such rate as hereafter shalbe

<sup>25</sup> F.C. Dietz, *English Government Finance*, pp. 196–7. Dietz describes this as a part of ‘Northumberland’s failure’, but it was successful in reducing the overall indebtedness.

<sup>26</sup> NA SP10/14, nos.10, 11. APC, III, p. 489.

<sup>27</sup> APC, IV, p. 38, 8th May 1552.

<sup>28</sup> Loades, *John Dudley*, p. 211.

agreed upon ...'.<sup>29</sup> A frigid stand-off with the Emperor over the Hanseatic privileges was an acceptable price to pay for such progress. Meanwhile, Gresham was carrying out his own variant on Sir John Yorke's scheme of the previous year. By feeding £200–£300 a day into the exchange, he was able to accumulated Flemish pounds and create a shortage of bills on London. This had the effect of steadily forcing up the price of sterling on the exchange, first from 13s Flemish to 16s, then to 18s and finally in April 1553 to 25s, almost back to where it had been in 1545 – in spite of the fact that there was still a lot of base English coin in circulation.<sup>30</sup> Unlike Yorke's scheme this was perfectly legal in that it did not involve taking a cash profit and, consequently, did not involve any illicit movement of bullion. Either Gresham had learned from his predecessor's misfortune, or he had a better grasp of financial and legal realities – probably the latter. The Earl of Warwick had no known connections with the Merchant Adventurers, while the Lord Treasurer, who was free of the Draper's company and still active in its business, undoubtedly did. Consequently it would seem that relations with the City, at least from the spring of 1551, were being conducted by Paulet with Dudley's support, rather than the other way round. This possibility is also strengthened by the fact that when the efforts of John Dee and Sebastian Cabot resulted in the formation of the Cathay Company in 1552, designed to open a North East passage to China, the leading subscriber among the courtiers and councillors was the Marquis of Winchester.<sup>31</sup> Although generally supportive, the Duke of Northumberland did not venture his money. It was probably as a result of this *entente* also that the customs dues, which had not been revised since the reign of Henry VII remained frozen although everyone, including the Lord Treasurer, knew perfectly well that they were due for an increase.

Throughout the two years which separated the spring of 1550 from the end of 1552, Paulet was an assiduous attendee at Council meetings – even occasionally signing letters addressed to himself – and played a full part in the regular business. The Council even met at Basing on 7th September 1552. In July 1550 he was one of those assigned to bear to the imprisoned Stephen Gardiner the articles which he would be required to sign to secure his reinstatement and on the 19th of the same month waited on the King to declare the Bishop's recalcitrance and his consequent deprivation.<sup>32</sup> In September there was a crisis in the Household, when the Lord Chamberlain did not have enough cash in hand to pay the diets of the Chamber servants. A similar problem afflicted the Office of Works in

<sup>29</sup> APC, IV, p. 267.

<sup>30</sup> BL Cotton MS Galba B.xii, 46, ff. 186–7; 54, ff. 105–106.

<sup>31</sup> Richard Hakluyt, *Principall Navigations* (1589), ed. 1905, III, 331.

<sup>32</sup> APC, III, p. 65. NA SP10/10, n.14. For a discussion of the proceedings against Gardiner, see Redworth, *Defence*, pp. 285–8.

December 1552, the record of which carries a note from Paulet to Cecil saying ‘cause a warrant to be made I will see it paid out of the Wards’ – there were advantages in wearing more than one hat! In December 1551 commissions were issued to enquire into the causes of the inflation, which were so much less obvious to contemporaries than they are to historians. This was organised on a county basis and returns do not appear to have survived. The Earl of Wiltshire served for Dorset and his brother George for Hampshire.<sup>33</sup> A similar commission early in 1553 to inventory remaining chantry goods, saw the Lord Treasurer serving for Hampshire. By analogy with the Commission of the Peace, in those for investigations of this kind it might have been expected that the Treasurer would be named for every county, but that was not done in either of these cases. In April 1552 he authorised a warrant to himself for £1000 to pay for the ‘band’ of 100 horsemen which he was providing for the ‘new gendarmerie’.<sup>34</sup> Not all the causes with which he was involved had financial implications, although it could be argued that the proceedings against the Bishop of Winchester were of such a nature. In May 1552, and again in the following year, he was named as Lord Lieutenant of Hampshire and the Isle of Wight in the scheme of Lieutenancies designed to secure the country against possible invasion.<sup>35</sup>

Particularly he is often revealed as working closely with Sir William Cecil. A typical letter written on 15th May 1551 survives among the State Papers. Accusations had just been made against Cuthbert Tunstall, Bishop of Durham involving alleged treason with the Scots and Paulet informs the Secretary that he has written to Tunstall and his Dean (Thomas Watson) summoning them both to court the Monday following. He has also ‘stayed the men of Carlisle’ and drafted a letter to Cranmer, which he encloses for the secretary to finalise and send on. He has also summoned the Treasurer and Surveyor of Calais on different business and written to the Lord Chancellor to issue commissions of lieutenancy and Oyer and Terminer. He will see Cecil at Court shortly.<sup>36</sup> A few other letters of a similar nature survive and Paulet often features in Cecil’s own memoranda of business. On 11th October 1552 he was commissioned to sort out a mess that had arisen because the late Duke of Somerset was alleged to have sold lands belonging to his first wife, Katherine Fyol, without her consent, presumably a case arising from the resolution of the duke’s affairs following his attainder and from the statute passed in February repealing

<sup>33</sup> Cal. Pat., Edward VI, IV, p. 142.

<sup>34</sup> APC, IV, p. 14. This ‘gendarmerie’ had been authorised at the time of Somerset’s alleged treason in December 1551. *Chronicle*, p. 100. Paulet had been licensed to retain 100 men ‘over and above his household’ as early as April 1550. APC, III, p. 327.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid, pp. 49, 276. 16th May 1552, 23rd May 1553.

<sup>36</sup> NA SP10/13, no. 17.

an entail which the then Earl of Hertford had made in 1541 in favour of the heirs of his second marriage.<sup>37</sup>

The act of judicial homicide which had disposed of Somerset had been engineered by the Duke of Northumberland, who feared that his continued influence and popularity carried a risk that he would divide the Council. His alleged treasons were far fetched and largely invented, but he was technically guilty of the felony for which he was eventually condemned.<sup>38</sup> Paulet was complicit in this *coup* to the extent that he played a full part in the Council's investigations and served as Lord High Steward for the court which tried the duke, as well as presiding over the commission which convicted some of his alleged accomplices. Two days after Somerset's arrest, on 18th October 1551, Jehan Scheyfve reported to the Emperor:

I have been informed that the Duke (Somerset) was taken secretly from his house to the Tower by water, by means of the persuasion of the Treasurer, now Marquis of Winchester ... and the new Duke of Suffolk.<sup>39</sup>

The source of the ambassador's information is not known, but the person concerned appears to have been given to exaggeration, because when he reported Somerset's execution in February 1552, he also believed that Lord Paget and the Earl of Arundel were in danger of a similar end – and that Lord Rich and the Marquis of Winchester were under arrest.<sup>40</sup> Paget and Arundel were indeed in trouble as alleged accomplices of the duke, but there is no other evidence that either Rich or Paulet were out of favour – indeed in Paulet's case the indications are the opposite as he was regularly attending to Council business throughout the period. In March 1552 his influence appears to have been at its height, when a major new commission was established 'for the survey and examination of all his majesties courts of revenue'. This appears to have been the culmination of a series of *ad hoc* commissions of investigation and account which had been set up over the previous two years and represented a further initiative on the Treasurer's part to get to grips with the chronic cash-flow problems which constantly bedevilled the government and made his own role so frustrating. The commissioners were financial experts rather than senior councillors and neither Winchester nor Northumberland served.<sup>41</sup> When the commissioners reported in December 1552, they claimed to have discovered a surplus on the ordinary revenue of some £32,000 a

<sup>37</sup> Cal. Pat., Edward VI, IV, p. 278.

<sup>38</sup> For a full discussion of this coup, see Loades, *John Dudley*, pp. 182–9. He was tried for offences against the statute of 3 and 4 Edward VI, c.5, which prescribed the penalties of felony for assembling the King's subjects and refusing to disband when ordered to do so.

<sup>39</sup> Cal. Span., IX, p. 386. He added 'It is said that Lord Paget has been ordered not to leave his house ...'.

<sup>40</sup> Scheyfve to the Emperor, 12th February 1552. *Ibid.*, p. 453.

<sup>41</sup> BL Add. MS 30198, ff. 5–52. Harley MS 7383, no. 1.

year. This may have been so, but it ignored the fact that the real problems arose from extraordinary expenditure, which far exceeded the alleged surplus and which could only be met by the continued sale of Crown lands. The report may have been a disappointment to Paulet, because it also contained draconian recommendations for economies which were politically impossible and which were eventually not put to the council at all.<sup>42</sup> On the other hand, it further strengthened his desire to rationalise the revenue administration and, in particular, to eliminate one office (the Privy Coiffers) which did not even account through any normal machinery. Moreover, one of their recommendations was that all the revenue courts should be fused into one ‘as in the time of divers his Majesties progenitours hath be used’, which they calculated would result in a saving of £10,242 in a full year and which suited the Lord Treasurer’s agenda admirably.<sup>43</sup>

After he had seen this report, in late December 1552 or early January 1553, Winchester drew up a series of ‘remembrances worthy examination’, ostensibly for the King but more realistically for his colleagues. Then in the parliament, which opened on 1st March 1553, an Act was passed which included a permissive clause authorising the King by Letters Patent to dissolve or amalgamate such revenue courts as he thought fit. ‘This’ as Geoffrey Elton observed, ‘was the act which made Winchester’s real plans possible.’<sup>44</sup> Amid all the confusion of commissions of sale, *ad hoc* payments and emergency provisions which make the financial affairs of 1550–1553 so hard to follow, an emerging strategy can be seen: stabilise the coinage with issues of adequate fineness; persuade the City of London and its companies to cover the King’s debts; and rationalise the financial administration. Although the problems had been perceived before 1550, it is only with the emergence of Paulet as Lord Treasurer that realistic remedies began to be sought. It was a confused progress, with setbacks occasioned both by misinformation and by other priorities, but its shape can be readily perceived and, in spite of Paulet’s lack of political exposure, his influence can be seen throughout.

In spite of the disagreements which seem to have afflicted their early debates about financial strategy, Paulet’s relations with John Dudley, the political leader of the minority government after December 1549, appear to have been good. He was always treated as a trusted member of the inner circle – for example his band of 100 horsemen was one of the largest – and the rewards were commensurate. On 1st May 1550 he was granted a long

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<sup>42</sup> W.C. Richardson, *The Report of the Royal Commission of 1552* (1974), p. 393 et seq.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> G.R. Elton, *The Tudor Revolution in Government* (1953), p. 239. The statute was 6 Edward VI, c.1. Elton discusses the reforms in detail, assuming the Lord Treasurer to be responsible. The Court of General Surveyors had already been merged into Augmentations.

list of lands in Hampshire, many of them former monastic properties, to the value of £393, in return for £93 in Augmentations.<sup>45</sup> In October 1551 he received also the Lordship of Waltham in Essex, formerly belonging to the bishopric of Winchester, although on this occasion he was expected to pay the full assessed value of £229, which was probably an underestimate of the real worth of the property.<sup>46</sup> Apart from outright grants, there were more subtle advantages to be gained from his position. In June 1552, for example, Thomas Broughton (who may well have been his servant and a kinsman of the man who wrote the encomium on Paulet after his death) was licensed to grant him a half of the manor of Warneford, presumably in return for some favour or as a part of some service arrangement. At about the same time Paulet and two of his sons were permitted to grant their manor of Wade, in Hampshire, to Thomas White, probably another servant, who was then to regrant it to Chidioc Paulet in a deal of fiendish legal complexity. In May 1553 he was granted an annuity of £40 a year out of the Crown lands in Hampshire, for no stated reason, and in March of the same year he and his wife were licensed to eat meat during lent ‘not withstanding the Act of the second year of King Edward VI’.<sup>47</sup> Meanwhile the church of the Austin Friars, which had been withheld from the original grant of the possession of the house to Paulet, was allocated in February 1550 for the use of the Dutch congregation, it being noted that the body of the church ‘is a suitable place for divine service and preachings, as well for subjects s aliens’. Paulet undertook to repair the premises at his own expense for that purpose, in return for a grant of ‘the whole upper part of the said church, the churchyard and the building next adjoining’. Whether this was a generous gesture towards the Dutch congregation or a subtle means of extending his own control over the premises is not clear – perhaps it was a bit of both.<sup>48</sup> Most important of all, on 11th October 1551 the Earl of Wiltshire became Marquis of Winchester. This was one of a number of promotions made at the same time. The Earl of Warwick became Duke of Northumberland and the Marquis of Dorset Duke of Suffolk.<sup>49</sup> It was also a date which coincided suspiciously with the arrest and rapid disgrace of the Duke of Somerset. There is no firm evidence to connect these events, but as we have seen Paulet was reported to have been responsible for Somerset’s original arrest and was certainly seen as a close ally of Dudley at the time. Taken together, the events look like a demonstration of political ascendancy and, if that was the case, then Winchester was in the ascendant. In December 1552 Scheyfve picked up a rumour that he was to be created Duke of

<sup>45</sup> Cal. Pat., Edward VI, III, p. 196.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid, IV, p. 139.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid, p. 245 Cal. Pat., V, pp. 5, 173.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid, IV, p. 15.

<sup>49</sup> NA SP11/4, no. 21. A seventeenth century copy of the ceremonial account.

Somerset and Lord Chancellor. That turned out to be false, but was a measure of the status which he was perceived to hold.<sup>50</sup>

In the midst of all this prosperity, there was one small dark cloud and it related to Elizabeth, the Countess of Wiltshire, rather than to Paulet himself. On 3rd July 1550, in a letter to the Queen Dowager, Mary of Hungary, Scheyfve reported that three days earlier a group of men had been arrested for practicing magic and the ‘art of invocation’. He did not name the men, although it is likely that one of them was John Dee, who was already known for such dubious practices. The trail of the investigation quickly led to the Countess, which increases the probability that Dee was involved as he was a member of the Earl of Warwick’s household at the time.

My Lord Treasurer’s Lady, being questioned by certain commissioners, confessed that she had asked to be told the fortunes of her husband, of my Lord Privy Seal, Lord Warwick and others, but that she did it only out of curiosity ...<sup>51</sup>

It seems that no charges were brought and that Elizabeth was not guilty of anything more sinister than naivety, but it was a potentially dangerous situation, because casting the King’s horoscope (for example) could carry the penalties of treason. Probably Paulet used his position and his considerable political influence, to have the whole matter hushed up. The most significant thing is perhaps that no one seized upon his wife’s indiscretion as a means of damaging the Lord Treasurer himself.

As far as the Council was concerned, it was business as usual. Throughout the three and a half years during which Paulet was Edward’s Lord Treasurer, he very seldom missed a meeting and neither illness nor private business seems to have kept him from the Board. Throughout 1552 he missed only occasional days and he remained in attendance, sometimes presiding, until 11th June 1553, when Edward’s increasingly dangerous illness and eventual death put a temporary end to the systematic recording of ordinary business. By 1st March the King was sufficiently unwell to be unable to open parliament in the normal fashion, but over the next three months opinions as to his condition fluctuated and contradicted each other. In early May both Cecil and Northumberland were writing as though a complete recovery was in prospect, although on the 5th the Council had to take action against some who were reporting that he was already dead.<sup>52</sup> Scheyfve certainly believed that he was mortally sick, but that seems to have owed more to his political agenda than to reliable information. On 15th May Peter Osborne, who had been responsible for the Privy Coffers, handed over his cash balance to Sir Andrew Dudley who was holding the

<sup>50</sup> Cal. Span., IX, pp. 591–2.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid, p. 121.

<sup>52</sup> APC, IV, p. 266.

Privy Purse and Walter Mildmay and William Berners were commissioned to take his account.<sup>53</sup> [53] The date may have no particular significance, but the intention seems to have been that the King should hold the Privy Coffers himself and this account could well have been a preparation for the hand over. If that was so, neither Winchester nor Northumberland thought at that point that the King's death was imminent. The Lord Treasurer's attitude to Osborne's empire cannot be clearly defined. In the sense that it was outside his control, he was probably suspicious of it, but it was politically convenient and there is no direct evidence that he had tried to bring it to an end. An account held by the King himself would not, of course, be answerable to any of his servants, but on the other hand Edward would not attain his majority for another two years. So whether this closure should be seen as a success for Paulet, or an event of no particular significance is not really known. Whatever may have been intended, Edward's health put an end to the discussions. In early June he suddenly deteriorated and his physicians, who only a week or two earlier had been predicting recovery, were now saying that his death was not only inevitable, but imminent. It was this news which threw the council into confusion and caused that old school room exercise the King's 'Device for the succession' suddenly to become of critical importance.<sup>54</sup> Whatever intrigues may have been going on behind the scenes, it is certain that Paulet had no hand in them. This was not because he was thought to be of no importance, but because Northumberland, who was the chief mover after the King, believed that he would accept whatever arrangement might eventually emerge.

He might have been right, if events had worked out differently, but the Lord Treasurer was not happy. On 24th June Scheyfve reported, correctly that the King was near death. By that time he knew that there was a plot to deprive Mary of the succession, which was her right by English law, but he did not know any details and inevitably attributed the whole scheme to Northumberland. The duke, he wrote, would be opposed by the Lord Treasurer, the Earl of Shrewsbury, and several other members of the council.<sup>55</sup> By 4th July he knew that Jane, the Duke of Suffolk's daughter and Northumberland's daughter-in-law, was the intended heir and that Edward had commanded his councillors upon their allegiance to sign the instrument embodying his wishes. Paulet, Arundel, Shrewsbury, Bedford and Sir Thomas Cheney had all demurred, but had eventually yielded.<sup>56</sup>

<sup>53</sup> HMC, Salisbury MSS, I, p. 127. BL MS Royal 18C 24, f. 253. Loades, *John Dudley*, p. 250. D.E. Hoak, 'The Secret History of the Tudor Court: The King's Coffers and the King's Purse, 1542–1553', *Journal of British Studies*, 26, 1987, pp. 208–31.

<sup>54</sup> On the status and significance of this document, see Loades, *John Dudley*, pp. 231–3, 238–41.

<sup>55</sup> Cal. Span., XI, p. 66.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 70.

It was, after all, high treason to refuse the King's explicit order. Edward died on 6th July, but his death was not at once disclosed and on the 7th Scheyfve was reduced to deducing it from the fact that Paulet, Clinton and Shrewsbury had taken control of the Tower. For several days it looked as though Edward's wishes would be respected. Northumberland was fully committed to them and it seemed that he was carrying the Council with him. Mary had herself proclaimed at Kenninghall in Norfolk, the centre of her estates, but the Council responded commanding her allegiance to Queen Jane and Paulet signed the letter with the rest.<sup>57</sup> According to a later story it was the Lord Treasurer who took the crown to Jane, inviting her to try it on and promising to have another made for her husband. No contemporary records this exchange and if it was authentic it can hardly have been welcome as one of the few things Jane had time to do as Queen was to make it clear that Guildford would not be given the Crown Matrimonial. The Emperor's special ambassadors, who had arrived in England literally hours before the King's death, were swiftly briefed by Scheyfve and took over his reporting role almost at once. At what point the superficial unity of the Council began to break down is not entirely clear, but it was probably after Northumberland departed for East Anglia on 13th July to confront Mary's growing forces. According to Simon Renard, who was the driving force of the new embassy, he had succeeded in persuading some of the council on the 12th that Jane's accession was a French plot and that she was really a stalking horse for Mary Stuart.<sup>58</sup> [58] We have only his own word for that, but it seems that as soon as Northumberland's back was turned, some of his colleagues began to change their colours. No one suggested that Paulet led this disaffection, but on 16th July a resident of the Tower noted:

The Lord Treasurer was going to his house in London at night, and about vii of the cloke the gates were shut and the keys carried up to Quene Jane ... The noyse in the tower was that there was a seal missing, but many ... surmised that but the truth was that she feared some packing in the Lord Treasurer, and so they did fetch him at xii of the cloke at night from his house in London to the Tower ...<sup>59</sup>

This must have been the last shout for Jane's party, because on 19th July, in the same letter which announced Mary's proclamation in London, Renard wrote that the leaders of the *coup* were the Earls of Arundel, Pembroke and Shrewsbury 'together with the Lord Treasurer, whom they know to be of their opinion ...' which suggests that rather than taking the initiative, he had simply aligned himself with what he now perceived

<sup>57</sup> BL Lansdowne MS 3, ff. 50, 52. Loades, *Mary Tudor*, p. 176.

<sup>58</sup> Ambassadors to the Emperor, 12th July 1553. Cal. Span., XI, p. 85.

<sup>59</sup> *The Chronicle of Queen Jane*, ed. J.G. Nicholas (Camden Society 1850), p. 9.

to be the stronger party.<sup>60</sup> By 22nd July Jane's party had simply faded away, leaving its committed survivors to face the music. Paulet had shown no greater reluctance than Archbishop Cranmer to sign the King's instrument, but unlike Cranmer, did not consider himself to be bound by that commitment once Edward was dead.

This, it transpired, was critical. None of those who were subsequently indicted for high treason because they had supported Jane were charged with any offence committed before 6th July.<sup>61</sup> Edward's death upended the whole situation and it was because Jane lost, not because Edward had bequeathed his crown to her, that her followers became guilty of treason. Jane had had no time to form a council, let alone appoint officers of state, so the people who were endeavouring to run the country between the 6th and 19th July were simply an interim body with no formal status. This gave Mary sufficient ground to exercise her discretion over who she pardoned and who she referred to the law. Arundel and Paget headed straight for Framlingham castle, to which Mary had moved a few days earlier, bearing the good news from the capital and an obsequious letter from those members of the 'council' who remained behind.<sup>62</sup> They were also determined to mend their own fences and were in a good position to do so since neither had been close to Northumberland and indeed each had good reason to detest him.<sup>63</sup> Both were accepted and sworn in as members of that body of advisers which Mary had already assembled and which had properly been the Privy Council since 8th July, when the news of Edward's death had reached Norfolk and Mary had caused herself to be proclaimed. Those members of Edward's now redundant council who remained in London were consumed with doubts and fears. The Imperial ambassadors, who had been under strict orders not to interfere while the issue was in doubt, now began to relax and celebrate. In their report of 22nd July they recorded one of the few glimpses which we can obtain of the stress in the air at Westminster:

The Duke of Suffolk went to the Lord Treasurer and said to him that s they had been friends in the past, they must remain so in the future, and he hoped that the Treasurer would pay the part of a friend and obtain the Queen's pardon to save him and his family. The Treasurer answered that he was in the same position as the other, and no surer of his safety, though if he could he would certainly help him ...<sup>64</sup>

<sup>60</sup> Cal. Span., XI, p. 95.

<sup>61</sup> For example NA KB8/26, 32. Loades, *Two Tudor Conspiracies* (1965), pp. 89–113.

<sup>62</sup> Loades, *Mary Tudor*, pp. 182–3.

<sup>63</sup> Both Arundel and Paget had been disgraced and heavily penalised by Northumberland for their supposed involvement in the Duke of Somerset's 'plot'. Both had been recalled to the Council in the last days of Edward's life.

<sup>64</sup> Cal. Span., XI, pp. 113–114.

This is revealing in several ways. Whether Henry Grey had ever been a close friend of William Paulet, we do not know, but it was a sufficiently plausible line to take at this moment of crisis. At the same time the duke was assuming that Winchester would have enough influence with the new regime to get him off. He did not appeal to one of the more obvious leaders of the Marian party, such as the Earl of Arundel. In fact both Suffolk and Winchester had been far too close to the Duke of Northumberland for Arundel to have regarded either of them with any affection, but such was the marquis's reputation for sure footedness that he could be the recipient of this apparently hopeless appeal. Extraordinarily enough, although Henry Grey did eventually go to the scaffold, it was for a subsequent offence and, in the short term, he was pardoned on 17th November, in one of the Queen's more inexplicable acts of clemency.<sup>65</sup> It is tempting to see the subtle hand of Paulet behind this success, but we have no proof and even Renard did not speculate.

The Lord Treasurer said nothing but the truth when he said that his own position was no more secure than anyone else's. However he probably had friends among those already with the Queen and had been careful to distance himself from the Council's more determined measures against her. He had not, for instance, been among the councillors who had visited her on 29th August 1552 and earned such withering contempt for their pains.<sup>66</sup> During the second half of July 1553 he kept a very low profile, doing nothing that anyone noticed or thought worth recording. Even the ostentatiously well informed Robert Wingfield, who spared no eulogy of Mary's partisans nor obloquy of their opponents, had nothing to say of the Marquis of Winchester, noting merely that he joined the Queen as she was about to enter London on 2nd August.<sup>67</sup> The Imperial ambassadors were slightly better informed – or slightly more forthcoming. In a letter which was obviously written in stages between the 4th and 6th August they said first that Pembroke, Shrewsbury and Winchester had arrived at court on the 2nd 'to beg the Queen's pardon'. Their welcome had been somewhat chilly. Although they were admitted to kiss hands, Mary reproached them for their part in Northumberland's conspiracy and refused to pardon them. After this intimidating gesture, however, she seems to have rapidly changed her mind, because before they closed their letter on the 6th they were able to add 'The Queen has decided to admit the Earl of Pembroke and the said Lord Treasurer to her council'. They could have added the

<sup>65</sup> Suffolk was eventually executed in February 1554 as a result of trying to raise a power in Leicestershire in support of Wyatt. The reason for his earlier pardon remains unknown.

<sup>66</sup> APC, III, p. 347. 'I pray God to send you to do well in your souls and bodies, for some of you have but weak bodies ...'

<sup>67</sup> 'The Vitae Mariae Reginae of Robert Wingfield of Brantham', ed. D. MacCulloch (*Camden Miscellany*, 28, 1984), pp. 222, 271.

Earl of Shrewsbury as well, who in fact took the Council oath on the 10th of the month, while Pembroke and Winchester took theirs on the 13th.<sup>68</sup> His re-appointment as Lord Treasurer must have come almost at once, because as soon as the regular council minutes resume on 8th August, he was sitting and receiving instructions proper to that office. Before the end of the month he was receiving warrants from Gresham as though nothing had happened. The note by the Tower chronicler that on 11th August 'The Lord Chancellor, the Lord Treasurer and the Earl of Pembroke are commanded to keep their houses ...' looks like an order for house arrest, but must refer to something different.<sup>69</sup> There is certainly no sign that the Lord Chancellor was even momentarily out of favour. Paulet's patent as Lord Treasurer was not issued until 30th September, but it was backdated to 6th July in order to authenticate all the actions which he had taken and to guarantee his emoluments.<sup>70</sup> Paulet served on the Marshall's court which tried the Duke of Northumberland and presided over the commission of Oyer and Terminer which convicted Sir Andrew Dudley and the Gates brothers. It is not surprising that the accused complained that they were being tried by judges who were as guilty as themselves. It may be that the Lord Treasurer was working hard to build up his credibility after a shaky start, because a little later, on 1st November, Renard reported an otherwise unrecorded fall from grace. 'The Lord Treasurer', he wrote, 'is a prisoner in his own house, and there is talk of giving his post to councillor Walgrave'.<sup>71</sup> There is no mention elsewhere of any such order being given, but Paulet was absent from Council meetings during the latter part of October. Renard was no admirer of the marquis (he was not a sufficiently committed Imperialist) and went on to note:

The Lord Treasurer is held to be the richest man in England, and he has made his fortune out of church property and by devouring the substance of wards and minors, of whom the kings of England have the keeping until they are 18 ...<sup>72</sup>

In which, of course, he was no different from many others, except that his opportunities were better. Interestingly, when Northumberland wrote his somewhat desperate appeal for clemency on the eve of his execution, he addressed it not to Winchester but to the Earl of Arundel. By that time he was well past help, but if anyone within the new establishment could be regarded as his friend, it would surely have been Winchester rather than Arundel. Perhaps the duke also knew something about his former colleague which has now passed beyond recall, although it could hardly have been this kind of self-serving. When Mary was crowned on 1st October, the

<sup>68</sup> Cal. Span., XI, p. 150. APC, IV, pp. 315–6. Loades, *Reign of Mary*, Appendix.

<sup>69</sup> *Chronicle of Queen Jane*, p. 15.

<sup>70</sup> Cal. Pat., Philip and Mary, I, p. 175.

<sup>71</sup> Cal. Span., XI, p. 331.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

marquis appeared in his proper place and delivered the orb into her hand; his lady rode in the first chariot with the Marchioness of Exeter and his grandson (also William) was one of the four knights who held the pall during her anointing.<sup>73</sup>

Whether the Marquis of Winchester should be regarded as high in Mary's favour, or merely as a man perceived to be indispensable in his function, is a difficult question. Such evidence as there is continues in the same contradictory vein in which it started. After having been, apparently, under some form of restraint at the beginning of November 1553, Paulet surrendered his patent as Warden of the Forests south of the Trent, which was regranted to the Earl of Sussex on the 19th.<sup>74</sup> More significantly, he finally parted company with the Court of Wards on 1st May 1554, when he surrendered his patent as Master in favour of Sir Francis Englefield. This position had played such a key part in the building of his fortune that it is difficult to imagine him giving it up without considerable pressure, but there is no direct evidence. He also seems to have surrendered some lands, although whether voluntarily or not is not known. In May 1555 a certain William Clowe received a grant from the former lands of Crowland Abbey 'late parcel of the possessions of William Lord St John', although the use of this title suggests that the surrender may have been made before the end of 1549.<sup>75</sup> It is not otherwise recorded. When proposals were under discussion for the reform of the Council in November 1554, presumably in response to representations from Phillip, Renard reported to the Emperor that the proposal was likely to be still born because the new body did not include Paulet and also left out several others, such as Rochester, Waldegrave and Englefield, who were known as the Queen's 'old servants'. There would have been a good case for relegating these loyal but essentially second rate men to an inferior role, but how any Privy Council could function without the Lord Treasurer is not explained. The ambassador went on that those whose exclusion was proposed were highly indignant, declaring that 'they consider themselves to be as deserving as those who, as they say, rebelled against and resisted the Queen'.<sup>76</sup> This was to reopen the old sore of July 1553 and the reference was clearly to men such as the Earls of Pembroke, Shrewsbury and Bedford, but the classification of Paulet with the 'loyalists' rather than the 'resisters' is curious in the light of his actual experience.

Apart from these scattered negative hints, most of the evidence is positive. On 22nd August 1553 the Lord Treasurer headed a special commission to investigate the deprivation of Edmund Bonner, Bishop of London. This

<sup>73</sup> BL Royal MS, Appendix 89, ff. 93–99.

<sup>74</sup> Cal. Pat., Philip and Mary, I, p. 205.

<sup>75</sup> Cal. Pat., Philip and Mary, II, p. 339.

<sup>76</sup> Simon Renard to the Emperor, 23rd November 1554. Cal. Span., XIII, pp. 101–102. The need to reduce the size of the council was a constant theme in Renard's reports.

was a pure formality, because although the commission duly reported in the Bishop's favour, it took several months and Bonner was in fact restored at once – with a fine disregard for legal technicalities!<sup>77</sup> On 3rd September, he was one of those peers who witnessed the creation of Edward Courtenay as Earl of Devon. On 17th of October, when Renard believed him to be in serious disfavour, the Lord Treasurer was commissioned to take custody of the seals of the Court of Augmentations and to manage the affairs of the Court. Sir Richard Sackville had already surrendered his patent as Master and this was clearly in anticipation of the abolition of the court, which was affected by statute a few months later.<sup>78</sup> Paulet also received a few other routine commissions in the latter part of 1553, but these were simply indicative of the fact that he was doing his job. He was not apparently prominent in the negotiations for the Queen's marriage, which dominated the political agenda between October 1553 and January 1554. Renard simply noted him as present when the special embassy was received by the Council on 4th January. Nor did the ambassador (or anyone else) suggest that he was a prime mover in the reaction to the Wyatt rebellion. On 25th January, the day upon which Wyatt raised his standard at Maidstone and, when it had already become clear that his intentions were serious, Paulet went to the Guildhall to consult with the Mayor and Aldermen and 'declared to have 2000 men for the safeguard of the City'.<sup>79</sup> Whether the whitecoats who so conspicuously deserted the Duke of Norfolk a few days later were part of this provision is not apparent. There was never any suggestion that either the City authorities or the Lord Treasurer colluded in that fiasco. When the news of that setback reached London, Paulet was not apparently at court, but probably at his house in Austin Friars. He wrote immediately to Sir William Petre, proposing to raise 500 foot and 100 horse by his own means for the Queen's defence, although he admitted that they could hardly be ready in less than a week. 'I am not in health', he continued, 'yet pressed with business which keeps me from my Lords ...'<sup>80</sup> Nevertheless he would repair to the court, which he presumably did before Wyatt reached Southwark on 3rd February. The men which he raised formed part of the force commanded by Pembroke and Clinton which eventually confronted the rebels at Temple Bar on 7th February. They were led there by his son Chidioc, who notably failed to distinguish himself. Unlike William Cecil, Paulet seldom confessed to being even slightly out of sorts and seems to have been anxious that no-one should think that he

<sup>77</sup> The Commission reported on the 2nd March 1554. Cal. Pat., Philip and Mary, I, p. 121. Machyn says that on the 5th August 1553, 'The sam day cam out of the Marsalsay the old bysshop of London, Bonar, and dyvers busshopes bring hym home unto ys plasce at Powles ...' (p. 39).

<sup>78</sup> Cal. Pat., Philip and Mary, I, p. 300.

<sup>79</sup> *Chronicle of Queen Jane*, p. 36.

<sup>80</sup> NA SP11/2, no. 30.

was malingering. As far as the evidence goes, this indisposition was slight – but he was a man approaching 80.

Within a few weeks the Lord Treasurer was presiding over the trials of the defeated rebels. On 13th February he was appointed to head a special commission of Oyer and Terminer for Middlesex which sat at Westminster, mainly for the trial of the leaders. A series of indictments were received between the 13th and 16th and the total number tried amounted to 97, including William, George and Thomas Brooke and Cuthbert Vaughn all of whom were subsequently pardoned.<sup>81</sup> According to the Tower chronicler, Vaughn argued that he had already been pardoned in the field by a royal herald ‘and if this be of no authority, then the lord have mercy upon us’. He also, apparently, resorted to bluster. ‘It farethe not, my Lord’, he is alleged to have said to the presiding judge, ‘we shall go before and you shall not be long after us ...’.

Whether this was *ad hominem*, or a general follow up to the rebel propaganda about the English nobility being displaced by Spaniards is not clear.<sup>82</sup> According to the official record they all pleaded guilty and no writ of *venire facias* was sought. On 18th March he was entrusted, along with the Earl of Sussex, with the delicate task of escorting the Queen’s sister, the Princess Elizabeth, to the Tower. Elizabeth begged her escorts for permission to write to her sister, and Winchester, according to John Foxe’s version of the story, demurred, pointing out that they would miss the tide. Sussex, however, supported her and the Treasurer conceded. He was not trying to be difficult, but knew perfectly well that it would be a waste of time and effort, as indeed proved to be the case. Paulet was concerned to perform his allotted task efficiently and when the party reached the Tower insisted that all the doors be carefully locked upon the prisoner, an attitude which caused Sussex (whose political antennae may have been a shade more sensitive), considerable distress.<sup>83</sup> The following month the Lord Treasurer was one of those councillors given the unenviable task of interrogating this already formidable young woman, a task which he seems to have performed with his customary detachment. It was not until 19th May that he was finally discharged of these difficult assignments, when he escorted Elizabeth by water from the Tower to Richmond, where he handed her over to Sir Henry Bedingfield.

In spite of his relative lack of proactivity, in the Spring of 1554, Paulet was perceived by its enemies and critics as a pillar of the regime. On 22nd April Renard reported that the Queen had shown him a seditious writing which she claimed had been ‘thrown on her kitchen table’ full of threats against her, Gardiner, the Lord Treasurer and others, and ‘speaking strangely of his

<sup>81</sup> Loades, *Two Tudor Conspiracies*, pp. 107–112.

<sup>82</sup> *Chronicle of Queen Jane*, p. 60.

<sup>83</sup> John Foxe, *Acts and Monuments* (1583), p. 2092.

highness and the Spaniards'.<sup>84</sup> Renard was in a highly nervous state by this time, so one need not take this below-stairs demonstration too seriously, but it was not only the ambassador who was tense and apprehensive as the time for Philip's arrival began to be due. Paradoxically enough, it was Lord Paget who was under particular suspicion. This arose partly from the latter's long standing feud with Gardiner. Renard had hitherto regarded the Chancellor with suspicion and had favoured Paget because of their respective attitudes to the marriage between Philip and Mary. Now, because Paget was obstructing measures which Gardiner wished to take to restore the Church and which (unknown to Paget) had the Queen's blessing, he suddenly became the 'bad guy', thought to be intriguing with the French and leading a subversive party among the aristocracy.<sup>85</sup> There was no substance behind all this fume and the panic does neither the ambassador nor the Queen any credit, but apparently there were genuine fears for Mary's safety.

The queen has taken counsel with the Chancellor, the High Treasurer and the Controller (Rochester). They reviewed the state of affairs, and remembering that there was nothing definite to go on, dissembled with Arundel, Paget and others of that party ...<sup>86</sup>

Apart from demonstrating that the Queen's advisers had more common sense than she did, this would appear to suggest that Paulet was one of the two or three most trusted men to whom Mary would turn in a crisis, real or imagined. It was decided that, as a precaution, no gentleman should be allowed to bring more than two servants to court and that the peers should be encouraged to disperse to their estates. As it was May, this was unusually early for the summer diaspora and presumably no explanation was offered. Paulet remained behind in London.

At the beginning of June the ambassadors sought from the Queen permission for such as had already been named for Philip's service to go to Southampton to make the necessary preparations – a request to which the council acceded. Paulet apparently went with them, partly because of his position of trust and partly because it was his home country. By the 11th he was already at Southampton, because on that day a messenger was sent to him, and to the Lord Admiral at Falmouth, to ascertain the nature of a French fleet which was supposed to be in the offing and to forestall any hostile plans which it might have. As the French did nothing and the

<sup>84</sup> Cal. Span., XII, p. 224. Two months later he used the same words to describe the attitude of Philip's English servants who were beginning to pack up and go home 'speaking largely' of his Highness.

<sup>85</sup> See particularly Renard to the Emperor, 22nd March 1554, Cal. Span., XII, pp. 164–70. Loades, *Mary Tudor*, pp. 217–20.

<sup>86</sup> Renard to the Emperor, 13th May 1554. Cal. Span., XII, p. 251.

fleet appears to have been imaginary, this was not too difficult.<sup>87</sup> There the reception party waited, with mounting frustration, until 20th July, when a slightly seasick Prince arrived in the midst of a rainstorm. Paulet and Arundel were on the quayside to welcome him. Meanwhile, behind the scenes, Philip's advisers had been sizing up the English council and nobility and, convinced that they were all for sale, put a cash value on them in the form of proposed pensions. In the highest bracket, at 2000 English Crowns (£500) they put the Earls of Pembroke, Arundel, Shrewsbury and Derby. In the second category (£250), they placed Lord Dacre, Rochester, Petre, Sir Thomas Cheney – and the Lord Treasurer.<sup>88</sup> Whoever was responsible for this list, it shows a curious sense of priorities. Why the Earl of Derby, who had done virtually nothing, was worth more than the marquis is obscure, nor is it clear why the Lord Chancellor and the Lord Privy Seal do not feature at all. The full pension list was eventually a long one and these suggestions were not followed to the letter. However Bedford was finally rewarded and Gardiner was not, while Paulet remained in the second rank. On 25th July, St James's Day, Philip and Mary were married in Winchester cathedral and there 'the Marquis of Winchester, the Earls of Derby, Bedford and Pembroke, gave her highness in the name of the whole realm'. Because the Duke of Norfolk was still a minor, the marquis was actually the premier peer of England, as well as being the senior by some margin.<sup>89</sup> At the wedding feast which followed, he presented the napkin. Four days later, on the 29th, a Spanish report relates that the King and Queen dined in public, accompanied by the Earls of Arundel and Pembroke, the Lord Chancellor and the Lord High Treasurer. Perhaps the relatively meagre pension was a back handed compliment. Here was a man whose loyalty and service were above question and who was not likely to be influenced by money. On 31st July Mary acknowledged that with the graceful compliment of a royal visit to Basing. As their household servants remained at Winchester it is unlikely that the visit was protracted, but the point had been visibly made.<sup>90</sup>

Meanwhile a major revolution had taken place within the Lord Treasurer's domain. As we have seen, in October Sir Richard Sackville had resigned the seals of Augmentations and a commission headed by the Lord Treasurer had taken over. On 5th December 1553 Sir Edmund Peckham was commissioned to receive and disburse all the Crown revenues for a limited

<sup>87</sup> There was considerable anxiety in England about French threats to intercept Philip at sea. The ships which caused this alarm appear to have been fishing boats.

<sup>88</sup> Cal. Span., XII, p. 295 'Notes for Philip' (undated, but June 1554) and p. 315 the pension list itself (July).

<sup>89</sup> The old Duke of Norfolk did not actually die until 25th August, but he was in no condition to attend the wedding. The next oldest peer was the Earl of Bedford, who was about 70, and was to die the following March.

<sup>90</sup> Cal. Span., XIII, pp. 12–13.

but unspecified period, thus putting the whole financial administration into partial abeyance. Peckham's mandate covered all the financial institutions, not just the Exchequer and Court of Augmentations, and seems to have been designed to enable a major structural reorganisation to take place without interfering with the essential business of getting and spending cash. In the event his commission was not to expire until 23rd October 1555, so for all of that time the Receipt of Exchequer was receiving no money at all, which gave ample time to readjust to its new responsibilities.<sup>91</sup> The parliament which had been dissolved the same day had already made statutory provision for such a reorganisation and that no doubt explains the date of the commission, which would have coincided with the royal assent. The act was scheduled to come into force on 23rd January following, but it was an enabling act, like its predecessor, dependent for implementation upon Letters Patent. These were in fact drawn up at the same time and annexed to them were complex schedules setting out the manner in which the revenues were to be administered under the new regime.<sup>92</sup> These schedules bear all the marks of long and meticulous planning and had probably been in gestation since at least the previous year. Nevertheless there seem to have been some late adjustments. The Court of First Fruits and Tenths had not been included in Winchester's commission of October, perhaps because that had been based on plans drawn up in Edward's reign when the future of that court had not been in question. Now, however, it was becoming increasingly clear that Mary intended to return First Fruits to the church, so the court was in line for abolition. Also, Sir Richard Sackville was recalled to Augmentations on 20th January, just three days before the court was due to be abolished. It seems to have escaped the Lord Treasurer's attention that he would not be eligible for a pension if he were not in post at the actual time of dissolution.<sup>93</sup>

By the end of 1555 The Tellers of the Exchequer were handling about 80 per cent of the Crown's centrally administered income, some £265,000 a year and about three times the proportion which they had dealt with under Edward.<sup>94</sup>

The enabling act provided that any court being amalgamated with the Exchequer under its terms should surrender not only its identity but also its procedures, so that:

<sup>91</sup> Cal. Pat., Philip and Mary, I, p. 72. W.C. Richardson, *A History of the Court of Augmentation* (1961), p. 249–50. Coleman, 'Accident or Artifice?', p. 169.

<sup>92</sup> NA C54/500. Loades, *Reign of Mary*, pp. 140–42. Peckham's mandate seems to have expired on the 23rd October 1555, when payments by direct warrant were resumed. NA E405/511.

<sup>93</sup> Or to make an official hand-over. Richardson, *Augmentations*, p. 250.

<sup>94</sup> An estimate based on E407/71. Coleman, *loc. cit.*

all things within the survey of the said court so conveyed, shall be ordered in like manner to all intents as the said Court of Exchequer is or ought to be by the common laws and statutes of this realm ...<sup>95</sup>

This should have meant a complete return to the ‘Ancient course’, whereby all crown properties in England accounted through the sheriffs and in Wales through the Chamberlain. All accounts should have been rendered at Michaelmas and the sums due paid into the Receipt by Christmas. Audits should have been completed by 24th February and sworn to by the accountant or his agent ‘according to thauncient usage’. Such accounts would then be enrolled in the Pipe Office. This would have left each dissolved court represented only by an ‘office’ within the Exchequer, which would have been little more than a record repository to keep track of outstanding obligations.<sup>96</sup> That, however, is not what actually happened. In the first place only two courts were absorbed – Augmentations and First Fruits and Tenths – the others, Wards and Liveries and Duchy of Lancaster, remained independent.<sup>97</sup> The Privy Coffers had disappeared after Peter Osbourne handed over his balances in the previous summer and the Privy Purse, which was also excluded, was relatively small scale during the whole reign. More important the two Offices, and particularly Augmentations, retained much of the structure and ethos of the dissolved Courts. Augmentations continued to operate through its 12 Receiverships and retained its modern double entry system of book keeping. The Receivers now paid into the Exchequer and the money was accounted for by the Tellers, but did not follow the ‘ancient course’. For the time being First Fruits and Tenths also continued much as before, even retaining its own Remembrancer, which was not done in the case of Augmentations. The main effect of these changes was not so much an increase in efficiency as a major increase in the degree of control exercised by the Lord Treasurer. This was assisted in December 1555 by the death of Richard Brown, the Clerk of the Pells and his replacement by Edmund Cockerell. Cockerell had been Deputy and his appointment was no surprise, but he turned out to be an energetic campaigner for his office and that suited the Lord Treasurer very nicely.<sup>98</sup> In supporting Cockerell at this juncture, Winchester was undertaking a long and complex campaign to increase his own control over the Receipt, which was to last well into Elizabeth’s reign. In the sort term even the savings achieved were comparatively minor, because although a number of offices were abolished, their former incumbents had to be pensioned

<sup>95</sup> Statute 1 Mary, st.2, c.10. SR, IV, pp. 208–209.

<sup>96</sup> Richardson, *Augmentations*, pp. 444–5.

<sup>97</sup> Loades, *Reign of Mary*, p. 141.

<sup>98</sup> Cockerell began immediately to campaign for what he considered to be the ancient rights of his office. Coleman, ‘Artifice or Accident’, p. 170.

as their offices were a form of property.<sup>99</sup> Only with their deaths did any significant benefit appear.

The whole administrative settlement which was achieved in January 1554 looks very much like a compromise between different vested interests. The 'Exchequer conservatives' who appear to have been responsible for the original plan and who had a clear interest in promoting the ancient course, were forced to retreat on a number of key issues. Article 32 of the schedule which had accompanied the Letters Patent had envisaged this possibility, giving the Lord Treasurer and Barons 'full power and auctoritie from tyme to tyme to amende refourme and correcte any clause or article' in the remainder of the schedule in the light of their experience. It was this discretion which Winchester exercised to affect the compromises mentioned.<sup>100</sup> In 1556 he authorised Cockerell to establish a new Pells Office and the detection of some malpractices among the Tellers seems to have strengthened his resolve to use that Office for a clean up operation. Where he stood himself on other issues can only be conjectured. It looks as though he was the original conservative, who set out to reduce the whole financial machinery of the Crown to the traditional procedures of the Exchequer, but was then forced to accept, first the continued independence of Wards and Liveries and then the procedural autonomy of the Augmentations and First Fruits offices. On the other hand, given his close links with the City, it is hard to believe that he did not appreciate the superiority of Augmentations book keeping (for example). It may therefore be that it was the powerful Exchequer officials who were the arch-conservatives in this equation and that Winchester, while sharing their ambition for centralised control, wished to remain flexible on how that was achieved and introduced the permissive clause 32 into the schedule for that very reason.<sup>101</sup> The latter hypothesis would be consistent with his known methods of operating, which were usually subtle and seldom confrontational.

In the Michaelmas term 1557, however, he brought the whole issue of how the Ancient Course should be applied to the Exchequer Court and submitted it to the adjudication of the barons. His case was largely based upon the malpractices of the Tellers, but he was opposed, not only by Sir John Baker but also by Nicholas Brigham, whom the Queen had appointed as a 'super teller' and who was at that point handling about 70 per cent

<sup>99</sup> In the case of Augmentations the saving on salaries and fees was £3769 a year, while pensions came to £3302. For First Fruits and Tenths the corresponding figures were £956 and £733. Richardson, *Augmentations*, pp. 252–7.

<sup>100</sup> BL Cotton MS Titus B.IV, f. 140. Richardson, *Augmentations*, pp. 256–7.

<sup>101</sup> Loades, *Reign of Mary*, pp. 143, 245. Draft proposals were drawn up later for a full restoration of the Ancient Course and the absorption of the Duchy of Lancaster. These appear to have emanated from the Exchequer officials and were not implemented. BL Cotton MS Titus B. IV, f. 135.

of the money. This quickly changed from being a technical battle into a political one and Mason and Brigham turned out to have the Queen's ear.<sup>102</sup> On this issue the Lord Treasurer was defeated and the version of the Ancient Course which was endorsed was not the one which he would have preferred. Nevertheless, it would not be wise to make too much of this setback. Exchequer management was a jungle and many issues and many personalities were involved. The Lord Treasurer was forced into another compromise which he would sooner have avoided, and his management was compromised up to a point, but he had won a number of other battles and was quite prepared to return to this one when circumstances changed. If he learned a lesson, it was probably that the Exchequer Court was best avoided in future. If he had given up his Mastership of the Wards as part of a political bargain, he may have been regretting it by this time, but the chances are that that was an unconnected sacrifice, which owed more to the Queen's desire to reward Englefield than to any machinations on the part of Paulet.

The history of Mary's finances, as distinct from her financial administration, similarly shows the Lord Treasurer's fingerprints. Thomas Gresham continued to manage the Antwerp debt, with the same degree of success as under Northumberland and the exchanges fluctuated only slightly. He regularly returned the discharged bonds to the Lord Treasurer and the City via the Council, where the transactions were recorded. In March 1554 Gresham appears to have initiated another scheme to borrow 300,000 ducats in Spain and repay in Antwerp. In spite of the personal union of the crowns, this ran into endless problems over the need for export licences for money out of Spain and took best part of a year to resolve.<sup>103</sup> A transaction on this scale must have had the Lord Treasurer's blessing, but there is no direct sign of his involvement. Similarly we do not know what advice he gave over the essentially political decision to remit the last payment of Edward's final subsidy, although given his record he probably advised against it. Although there was no attempt to recall the base coin, throughout Mary's reign the mints continued to issue specie of good weight and fineness, in continuation of the policy of Northumberland's last year and again to be attributed to continuity of control.<sup>104</sup> In January 1556 Gresham calculated that the Queen's debt in Antwerp stood at £109,000, which was more than she had inherited but by no means out of control and significantly less than it had been a year previously. Soon thereafter he changed his tactics to some extent, persuading the London merchants

<sup>102</sup> BL Lansdowne MS 106, ff. 14–15.

<sup>103</sup> NA SP69/3/135. Cal. Span., XII, pp. 57, 205, 232, 269.

<sup>104</sup> Challis, *Tudor Coinage*, pp. 112–19. A full recoinage was discussed several times during Mary's reign, but the prevailing opinion seems to have been that the cost would be too great.

to remit cash to Antwerp instead of settling with them in London.<sup>105</sup> Calculations are difficult, but it is likely that by the early part of 1557 the Antwerp debt was well below £100,000 and the Queen's total indebtedness not very much more. Thereafter the advent of war with France ruined both Paulet's and Gresham's careful strategies and by the end of the reign the total was probably approaching £300,000, but that was not the Lord Treasurer's fault. The real test of his financial sure-footedness came less in the influencing of council decisions than in the maintenance of working relations with the City. This had been relatively easy under Edward because the Council and the Court of Aldermen had enjoyed a broad consensus. Mary, however, had other priorities. She restored the privileges of the Hanseatic League in order to please the Emperor and made no attempt to protect the citizens when Philip tried to bully them into giving up the Guinea trade.<sup>106</sup> London was also full of nicodemites, who regarded her religious policy with covert hostility. Towards the end of the reign (and for this Paulet must bear some responsibility) the customs rates were revised upwards. This was long overdue, but the Merchant Adventurers in particular protested shrilly and Elizabeth shortly afterwards climbed down.<sup>107</sup> Although Crown backing for the Muscovy Company was well received and religious dissent was kept under control, managing relations between the Council and a volatile and powerful city must have taxed Paulet's diplomatic talents to the full. There were signs of strain, and at least one request for a loan was tuned down, but overall the continuation of Gresham's programme, which depended upon goodwill, should be seen as a triumph for the man who most conspicuously had a foot in both camps – the Marquis of Winchester.

Throughout the reign Paulet served regularly on commissions, but neither more nor less than any other senior Councillor. Nor does there seem to be any significant pattern to his service. In spite of her expressed intentions, Mary went on selling church land. There were two such commissions in March and August 1554, on both of which the Lord Treasurer served and others in 1556, 1557 and 1558 on which he did not, perhaps out of deference to his known hostility to the policy.<sup>108</sup> When council committees were set up on 23rd February 1554, just a month after the financial reorganisation, that 'to call in debts and provide for money' was headed by Gardiner and did not include the Lord Treasurer, who instead headed the committee to 'supply all manner of wants' in Calais, Berwick and Ireland.

<sup>105</sup> NA SP69/8/461. R.B. Outhwaite, 'The Trials of Foreign Borrowing', *Economic History Review*, 1966, pp. 289–305.

<sup>106</sup> Cal. Ven., VI, p. 218. Philip to Feria, 4th February 1558. Cal. Span., XIII, p. 351. Loades, *Reign of Mary*, pp. 186–7.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid, pp. 343–4. F.C. Dietz, *English Public Finance, 1558–1641* (1932), p. 7.

<sup>108</sup> Cal. Pat., Philip and Mary, I, pp. 265, 301.

The thinking behind such an allocation of responsibilities is elusive, unless it was a warning to Paulet not to take his Exchequer control for granted.<sup>109</sup> More logically, he headed further commissions in January and April 1556 for the discharge of Crown debts, particularly those owed to ‘merchants and other strangers’ as well as to the Staplers and Adventurers. This was thoroughly familiar ground. He was named regularly to the Commission of the Peace for Hampshire and Wiltshire (but not for other counties) and took a number of important accounts, including those of Sir Edmund Peckham and Richard Wilbram, Master of the Jewel House.<sup>110</sup>

A variety of other duties also continued to come his way, which had nothing to do with finance. He supported the Count of Feria who was Chief Mourner for the King’s grandmother, Juana of Castile, when her obsequies were observed at St Paul’s in June 1555. He caused a search to be made in the archives to support the English claim to Sandingfield (Calais) in June 1556, set up beacons in Hampshire in May 1557 and headed a commission in the same month to examine weights and measures and to control smuggling.<sup>111</sup> In July of that year he was also put in charge of the Lieutenancies for the South of England and in January 1558 given special instructions to raise 1000 men from Hampshire for the bid to recover Calais which was subsequently aborted. In May 1558, when there was a further alarm about a French invasion, Mary’s special security arrangements included the provision:

We have appointed the Marquis of Winchester to be Lieutenant about our person and of the shires adjoining London, to muster forces for our defence in all events ...<sup>112</sup>

No higher accolade of confidence could have been given, especially bearing mind his age and lack of relevant military experience. All these commissions were cancelled in October 1558, presumably to reduce the risk of force being used to contest the succession. Paulet also continued to maintain his London connections, for reasons which we have already noticed. His son Giles (‘Lord Giles’) became free of the Drapers Company in 1558 by patrimony and, when the Muscovy Company was launched in 1555 with Sebastian Cabot as its Governor, the Lord Treasurer headed a distinguished group of courtiers, councillors and aldermen who subscribed to its capital. When the Queen was in urgent need of a loan of £100,000 from the City in March 1558, Paulet headed the commissioners appointed to negotiate with the Lord Mayor, on that occasion successfully. His name appears in connection with just about every aspect of government activity; compounding with the surviving offenders from the Wyatt rebellion;

<sup>109</sup> NA SP11/3, no. 31. APC, IV, p. 397.

<sup>110</sup> Cal. Pat., Philip and Mary, I, p. 196, II, p. 312.

<sup>111</sup> NA E101/427/14, f. 1. Ibid, p. 317.

<sup>112</sup> Queen to the Earl of Huntingdon, 20th May 1558. NA SP11/13, no. 10.

authorising shipments of coal from Newcastle to Calais; and serving along with Pole, Gardiner and half a dozen others on the ‘Select Council’ set up in August 1555 to manage Philip’s interests in England.<sup>113</sup> There is absolutely no evidence of how he related to the King, or whether he ever spent any time in his company. Paget was the King’s man and his relations with the Treasurer were not, apparently cordial.

When his ambassadors reported to Charles on 8th August 1554, their theme, apart from the recent wedding, was the general uselessness of the English Council, which they claimed to be riven with quarrels and intrigues. Paget had apparently been bending their ears:

and the thing that rankles with him most is that the very men who tried to prevent the match are now in the highest favour; besides which he hates the Chancellor, High Treasurer, Chamberlain and others of the Queen’s old servants for private reasons of his own ...<sup>114</sup>

We know why he hated Gardiner and that feud was of long standing.<sup>115</sup> Why he should have felt similarly about Gage and Paulet is not apparent and it is possible that the ambassadors were hearing more than they were told – which had been a weakness of Renard’s, as we have seen. Two months later they were much more positive about Paulet, who had apparently been undertaking a charm offensive. He was saying (at least to them) that ‘help ought to be furnished against the French’, which was certainly not the prevailing view of the council. This time their target was Gardiner, who was reported to be discontented that he had not been given a pension by the King and about whom the Treasurer was apparently telling tales out of school ‘(he) tells us that (the Chancellor) is very remiss in everything to do with administration ...’. This may well have been true, but was unhelpful in the context and suggests that Paulet was seeking to ingratiate himself with the Imperialists as a way of securing his position with the King.<sup>116</sup> It seems that he succeeded, because when Dominic d’Orbeo, Philip’s treasurer, took stock of the pensions owing in the spring of 1559, the Lord Treasurer was owed for only half a year. Feria seems to have used some of his available cash to pay him up to the time of Mary’s death, while most of his colleagues were owed between one and two years.<sup>117</sup>

For some reason which is not now apparent, the administration of the navy had been causing the council some concern. Early in 1556 the Lord Admiral was instructed to take musters of seamen and others in pay,

<sup>113</sup> NA SP11/6, no. 16.

<sup>114</sup> Ambassadors to the Emperor, 8th August 1554. Cal. Span., XIII, p. 23.

<sup>115</sup> Paget had testified against Gardiner at his trial in 1550, and the latter had never forgiven him. Redworth, *Defence*, pp. 317–21.

<sup>116</sup> Simon Renard to the Emperor, 13th October 1554. Cal. Span., XIII, pp. 65–7.

<sup>117</sup> ‘Feria’s dispatch’, p. 316. Archivo General de Simancas, E811, ff. 119–22, 124, 127–8.

without informing the other officers, which suggests that some malpractice was suspected. If that was the case, nothing culpable seems to have been discovered and no admiralty official was disciplined. On 6th June in the same year, when Paulet was commissioned to survey and repair the forts and bulwarks in Hampshire, he was also instructed 'to take order with the Lord Admiral and the officers of the admiralty' for the repairing and new making of the Queen's ships.<sup>118</sup> The admiralty was a major spending department, disbursing between £25 and 30,000 a year and it looks as though the Lord Treasurer had his eye on it. On 8th January 1557 new instructions were issued, wherein it was explained that the Queen had asked the Lord Treasurer to assume the main responsibility – 'with the advice of the Lord Admiral', who thus lost his controlling interest. Paulet, the memorandum continued, had agreed, but upon certain conditions. In the first place an 'ordinary' of £14,000 a year was to be paid to the treasurer, Benjamin Gonson, to be defrayed at the Lord Treasurer's discretion. Secondly, those ships which needed to be 'new made' should be dealt with immediately and timber from the royal forests made available for the work. Thirdly, that all maintenance work, payment of wages and victualling should be brought up to date before the takeover; and finally that victuals for 1000 men should be allowed on permanent standby. In these circumstances he would undertake the work and when the backlog of repairs had been completed, would be prepared to drop the ordinary to £10,000 a year. Meanwhile the two spending officers, the Treasurer and the Surveyor General of the Victuals, should account separately and to him.<sup>119</sup> There is no sign in the surviving naval accounts of any of this being implemented at that time. The outbreak of war in May 1557 sent Gonson's expenditure soaring and the ordinary seem to have been postponed until peace was concluded in the different circumstances of 1559. Edward Baeshe went on accounting to Gonson for the duration of the war and if Paulet did exercise a controlling influence, it has left very little trace. On 3rd July, the day upon which the King and Queen departed for Dover, Paulet wrote to them 'of points concerning the admiralty, requiring knowledge of their pleasure'. We do not know what those points were, but the fact that he raised them suggests that he was performing his new duties in some sense.<sup>120</sup> There is no sign that naval affairs were not being efficiently conducted before and the most likely explanation is that the admiralty, as a relatively new department was not defended by the same entrenched vested interests which protected – say – the royal household.

Meanwhile the Marquis of Winchester continued to be the premier peer and as such performed various ceremonial functions on the Queen's behalf.

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<sup>118</sup> APC, V, pp. 220–21.

<sup>119</sup> Ibid.

<sup>120</sup> Ibid, p. 629.

On the 20th March 1555 he represented Mary at the funeral of her long serving councillor the Earl of Bedford, where the young earl was the chief mourner.<sup>121</sup> In August 1557 the Marchioness Elizabeth was chief mourner at the burial of Anne of Cleves, who was accorded the full honours due to a Princess Dowager, which was her official status in England. Later in the same month Paulet was himself Chief Mourner at the obsequies for John III of Portugal, another royal kinsman, which boasted a magnificent hearse ‘the wyche was never sen ... in England of that fassyon’, although Henry Machyn, who recorded this opinion, seems to have thought that it was in honour of the King of Denmark.<sup>122</sup> On 26th September 1558 death struck his own family when his daughter Eleanor, the wife of Sir Richard Pecksall, Master of the Royal Buckhounds was buried with appropriate ceremony, although what part he may have played is not recorded. By the later part of Mary’s reign William was over 80 and Eleanor was only one piece in an expanding clan of Paulets, the male members of which were all prominent in the royal service. His brother George was still serving as a Justice of the Peace for Hampshire in 1554 and as a loan commissioner in the same county in 1557, although he handed over his office as Clerk of the Liveries to Sir John Bourne in December 1556. It looks very much as though the Paulets were being removed from the Court of Wards, which they had had in their grip for many years.<sup>123</sup> George was to die in 1559, leaving four sons. The other brother, Richard, who had been Receiver of Augmentations disappears from the records after 1547 and the date of his death is not known; nor is it known whether he left any children. The marquis’s eldest son John, Lord St John served for three counties in 1555, was Lord Lieutenant of Dorset in 1557 and of the Isle of Wight in 1558. He was also called upon every time there was money or troops to be raised and served as a commissioner of Oyer and Terminer for Devon in May 1554. He would succeed his father and die in 1576.<sup>124</sup> At this point he also had four sons, the eldest of whom had been born in 1532 and was knighted by Mary at the beginning of her reign. Thomas, the second son, served as a JP for Dorset, but seems otherwise to have done little. He had two sons, neither of whom was to feature in public life. Chidiock, who was number three, was appointed to the responsible position of Captain of Portsmouth in June 1554 and was receiver of Augmentations for Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. He took musters in March 1558 and was called upon to supply 200 men for the Lord Admiral in August the same year.<sup>125</sup> He had one son and was to die in 1574. Giles was with his brother at Portsmouth

<sup>121</sup> Machyn, *Diary*, p. 83.

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 147.

<sup>123</sup> Cal. Pat., Philip and Mary, III, p. 362.

<sup>124</sup> See below, p. 164.

<sup>125</sup> Cal. Pat., Philip and Mary, I, p. 273. NA SP11/13, no. 59.

during the investigations into the Dudley conspiracy in 1556, but otherwise seems to have confined his activities to London where, as we have seen, he was made free of the Drapers in 1558. William and Elizabeth set up a feofment to use in September 1558 in respect of the manor of Whaddon in Hampshire for the benefit of Giles and his wife Mary, but it is not known whether they had any children.<sup>126</sup> So William had at least four nephews, four sons and at least seven grandsons – counting only those through the male line. The oldest of these must have been about 26, but none of them had, as yet, made much impact outside their families. John's eldest son, another William, would become the third marquis in 1576 and held that rank for over 20 years, but had nothing like his grandfather's stature in the affairs of the realm.

As Mary's health began to give cause for concern in the summer of 1558, the Lord Treasurer seems to have been mainly occupied with the war effort. On 6th June Feria reported to Philip that 'the Marquis Treasurer' had been instructed to supply the fleet, 'so that it should be able to go to sea this month'. Whether this was an aspect of his recently acquired responsibility for the navy, or the continuation of a function which went well back into the reign of Henry VIII is not clear. The fleet did indeed sail later in the same month, as part of a planned Anglo-Flemish attack on Brittany, but it was diverted on report of a French move against Dunkirk and ended by accomplishing little. That, however, was not the Lord Treasurer's fault. He did his bit, and earned an unusual accolade from Feria in the process 'the Marquis Treasurer ensures that everything concerning your majesty's service (is carried out) more efficiently than do other ministers ...'.<sup>127</sup> It may have been because of this perceived rapport, but more likely because of his working relations with Gresham that it was Paulet who was seeking licence to export arms from the Low Countries at the end of June. After 4th July the Lord Treasurer, who had been an assiduous, but not invariable, attender at Council meetings, disappeared until the 'crisis meeting' on 11th November with Feria, when 23 members were present.<sup>128</sup> There are no references to his being ill and the natural suspicion is that he was anxious to avoid any possible in-fighting over the succession. In spite of the fact that Feria thought well of him and ensured that his pension was brought up to date, the ambassador's well known despatch of the 14th makes absolutely no mention of him. The prospects of most of the leading councillors, and quite a few others, are discussed in terms of their likely favour under the new regime of Elizabeth, which was now imminent, but neither the person nor the office of the Treasurer

<sup>126</sup> Cal. Pat., Philip and Mary, IV, p. 441.

<sup>127</sup> Feria to Philip, 6th June 1558. Cal. Span., XIII, p. 394.

<sup>128</sup> APC, V, pp. 'Feria's dispatch', p. 329.

feature at all.<sup>129</sup> The reason for this can only be a matter for speculation. Paulet had never gone out of his way to make himself agreeable to the heir apparent – quite the reverse if Foxe is to be believed – and had never been mentioned as a councillor who favoured her. The explanation can only lie in the fact that he had been extremely scrupulous in the performance of his duties and had taken no initiative which could be interpreted as political. He had been virtually invisible in the various crises of the reign, until it came to the process of clearing up afterwards. It may be that Feria was assuming that old age would force him into retirement, especially as he was famously conservative in his religious views. The one thing that he cannot have anticipated is that the indestructible Lord Treasurer would survive once again.

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<sup>129</sup> Ibid, pp. 330–33.

## The Ancient of Days, 1558–1572

It is probable that no one (including himself) expected the old Lord Treasurer to survive a second regime change. He had not been particularly close to Queen Mary, but on the other hand he had never made (as far as we know) any gesture of sympathy with Elizabeth, or of support for her. The Count of Feria had been about 50 per cent right when he had attempted to read Elizabeth's mind in mid-November, but even he had ventured no opinion on the Marquis of Winchester. Paulet was over 80 by this time and of an age when infirmity might reasonably have been expected to take over from ambition. Even the indefatigable Cuthbert Tunstall had slowed down almost to the point of stopping and was excused the long journey south for the parliament in January.<sup>1</sup> The marquis, however, was unbowed by either age or infirmity and seems to have been admitted to the new council almost at once. Elizabeth had had the time, during her sister's last illness, to decide the shape of her new regime. She had consulted Sir William Cecil, and probably Sir John Mason, but no other members of the existing Council, if Feria's report is to be believed.<sup>2</sup> Balance was a key issue. In her household she cleared out all Mary's intimates – particularly from the Privy Chamber – and filled the places with her own servants and kindred, notably Kate Ashley and Sir Thomas Parry. In her Council, on the other hand, she was careful to retain a number of prominent Marians. As early as 21st November Winchester, Shrewsbury and Derby were written to in terms which implied that their membership had been renewed, one of their functions being to balance the 'new men' such as Bacon, Bedford and Cecil.<sup>3</sup> Indeed Winchester must have been given the nod almost at once, because he had already written to the Queen about the arrangements for her late sister's interment, a ceremony for which he had apparently been given responsibility. His request for an advance of £3000 to pay the expenses was deferred.<sup>4</sup>

When Feria wrote again to Philip on the 25th November, he understood that:

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<sup>1</sup> Charles Sturge, *Cuthbert Tunstall* (1938), p. 316. SP12/1, no. 37. 'Having consideration of your great age, the shortness of the time, and the season of the year, unmet for a man of your years to travel in ...'

<sup>2</sup> Feria's despatch, p. 328.

<sup>3</sup> For a discussion of Elizabeth's strategy of council appointments, see Wallace MacCaffrey, *The Shaping of the Elizabethan Regime* (1969), pp. 30–35.

<sup>4</sup> APC, 1558–70, p. 4, 21st November 1558.

... the Chancellor (Nicholas Heath), the Lord Treasurer and Privy Seal (Paget) have been received into the Council (but) they have not been confirmed in their offices. Lord Robert, the Master of the Horse, is in the Council. A Mr Rogers has been made vice-chamberlain ...<sup>5</sup>

He was again about half right. Sir Edward Rogers was indeed Vice-Chamberlain and the Queen had retained all three senior offices in her own hands. Winchester, it seems clear, had been 'received'. However, Lord Robert Dudley was not to be a Privy Councillor for several years and there is no sign that Nicholas Heath had been retained in any capacity. Paget was ill at home throughout these events and seems to have thought that his service would be reinstated. As it turned out, he was wrong. It was not until mid-December that Elizabeth made her dispositions public. Feria had already reported that the Earl of Arundel (a widower of 46) was making something of a fool of himself over his hopes to marry the Queen. On the 19th he reported:

The affair has ended with his again being made Lord Steward, while they have returned to the Marquis of Winchester the office of Treasurer, which the Earl wanted.<sup>6</sup>

The ambassador had already declared that he considered Paulet to be a good catholic and he now repeated his opinion of the summer 'I think this old man is a good servant of your Majesty, and the others respect him'. He continued 'He looks younger and better than I have ever seen him'. Perhaps the sheer relief of having weathered another crisis had taken years off his appearance. It was at this same time that Elizabeth appointed Sir Nicholas Bacon as Lord Keeper of the Great Seal 'who is married to a sister of the wife of Secretary Cecil – a tiresome bluestocking ...'. Paulet's patent was actually dated 21st January 1559, but it was backdated to 17th November. Whether the Queen had ever seriously contemplated appointing a different Lord Treasurer we do not know. While he was still uncertain of the outcome, Feria reported an odd little story that Paulet 'without orders from the Queen (Mary)' had caused Henry VIII's tomb at Windsor to be dismantled early in 1558, leaving the grave 'all bare'. When John Boxall (who was Dean) found out about this, he told Mary 'whereupon she was very angry'. She had, however, done nothing about it and it was the new Queen who had caused it to be restored as before.<sup>7</sup> Why Winchester should have taken such a bizarre risk is not explained. As the story is prefaced by a tell-tale 'They say ...' it probably originated in a bit of scandalous gossip, put about by someone who coveted the Treasurer's office – perhaps the Earl of Arundel.

<sup>5</sup> Cal. Span., 1558–67, p. 6.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid, p. 18.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid, p. 6, 25th November 1558. From what was said later, it seems likely that the tomb had not yet been built.

At about the time that his new patent was granted, William lost his companion and partner of more than 40 years when his wife, Elizabeth, died at their house in Austin Friars. Apart from her brief flirtation with sooth saying, the Marchioness seldom appears in the records. She seems to have performed both her ceremonial and her domestic duties conscientiously and discreetly. She bore her husband four sons and four daughters and quietly maintained the profitable links between the Paulets and her father's kindred, the Capells, who were by this time well settled as county gentry in Essex as well as continuing to function in the City.<sup>8</sup> On 4th February she was:

... cared in a charett with vi banerolles, and a-for a grett baner of armes, and iiiii baners of santtes alle in owlles, and thos iii borne by iiii haroldes of armes in ther cott armurs, with a vii xx horssse toward Bassyng to be bered ther ...<sup>9</sup>

Not only had her husband made sure that the honours were properly done, but it is clear from the parading of the banners of the saints that the full traditional liturgy was observed as well. At about the same time William was voting against the bill of Uniformity in the House of Lords. However, politically these gestures counted for little. Just as the Lord Treasurer had kept his head down while Cranmer and Ridley had run Edward's church, now he prepared to do the same when Parker took over. His sympathies were clear, but neither he nor the Queen ever made an issue of them. By the time that the issue became unavoidable after the Bull of 1570, William Paulet was dead.

Meanwhile, in the first year of Elizabeth, it was business as usual except in one respect. The Lord Treasurer is not recorded as having attended a council meeting until 21st April 1559.<sup>10</sup> There is no obvious reason for this. From the number of letters which were written to him it is clear that he was fully operational, there is no mention of any indisposition and, as we have seen, he was sitting in the House of Lords for part of the time. In the case of many councillors such an absence would hardly be remarkable, but Paulet had always had a very good attendance record – and he was one of the most senior office holders. His wife's death may have been a factor, although that does not seem to have prevented him from attending the coronation. We know very little of William's relationship with Elizabeth, as we know very little about his private life at all, but it may well be that he mourned her deeply and went about very little in the two months or so which followed her funeral. On 19th December 1558 he had written to Cecil about the obsequies for the Emperor, which were to be held at Westminster rather than at St Paul's as had been originally intended. Charles had died

<sup>8</sup> NA SP11/5, no. 6 etc.

<sup>9</sup> Machyn, *Diary*, pp. 187–8.

<sup>10</sup> APC 1558–70, p. 91. He also attended on the 24th and 29th April, and on the 7th and 11th May, after which the record breaks.

in September, but presumably Mary's illness had caused any observation to be postponed. It took place now on 23rd December. They reused Queen Mary's hearse for the occasion, but the proper rites were observed with 'durge and morrow masse'. Henry Machyn did not know the name of the Chief Mourner, so it is unlikely to have been Winchester, although he seems to have been responsible for the organisation.<sup>11</sup> As Feria was still in England at the time (and indeed newly married), he is likely to have filled that role. The Treasurer requested a warrant for only £100, although this seems to have been no more than a fraction of the outlay. It was essentially a piece of tidying up.

Not surprisingly, a fair amount of stocktaking was going on at this time. On 23rd December Winchester was named to a committee established 'to understand what lands have been granted by the late Queen' and the following day he was written to again about the temporalities of the bishops, presumably of those sees which were vacant and 'the Queen's debts due in the Exchequer'.<sup>12</sup> Cecil at the same time was making notes to himself to investigate ways in which the late Queen's government had damaged the realm, although in that he could hardly have expected to look to the Lord Treasurer for co-operation. With Cecil, Paulet seems to have picked up their relationship where he had dropped it in the summer of 1553. There is no sign of either cordiality or hostility – it was simply a matter of business. When Sir John Baker died early in December, the Treasurer had no hesitation in recommending Sir Walter Mildmay to succeed him as Chancellor of the Exchequer, although it is interesting that the suggestion was that way round.<sup>13</sup> Mildmay was duly appointed, but only to the Chancellorship, because the under-Treasurership which Baker had also held, went to Sir Richard Sackville until his death in 1566. Both these offices had once been in the gift of the Lord Treasurer, but they had become rather more important in recent years and Baker's death seems to have been a considerable relief to Paulet in working out his plans for the Exchequer.<sup>14</sup> Sackville was a close friend of Sir William Cecil, but his appointment seems to have marked the return of the under-Treasurership to a virtually honorific status, because Paulet corresponded directly with the Tellers, notably Richard Stonley, instead of going through him as he would have done with Baker.<sup>15</sup> Henry Stafford, another Teller, was also

<sup>11</sup> CSPD, 1547–1581, pp. 117–118. Machyn, *Diary*, p. 184. The space for the name of the Chief Mourner has been left blank.

<sup>12</sup> APC 1558–70, pp. 27–8.

<sup>13</sup> CSPD, 1547–1581, p. 118. In the following month, Winchester was reminding Cecil of the payments which were due in Ireland and Berwick (*ibid.*, p. 131), which confuses still further the question of who was responsible for what.

<sup>14</sup> Coleman, 'Artifice or Accident', p. 180.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 181. The correspondence between Winchester and Stonley survives in the Essex Record Office, MS D/DFa 04.

able to take advantage of the support of the Secretary to secure control of the massive records of the Exchequer. This again seems to have happened with the Lord Treasurer's connivance, as Stafford was thus distracted from challenging his control. Stafford in any case died in 1563 and by coming to some kind of arrangement with Thomas Felton, it would appear that by then Paulet's control of the Lower Exchequer was more secure than at any time since his appointment.

The coinage also represented a large area of unfinished business. As we have seen, great efforts were made to maintain the quality of the new coin issued by Mary, and Thomas Egerton, the under-Treasurer responsible for the Tower mint, got himself into terrible difficulties over the handling of bullion. Whether he was guilty of fraud or ineptitude is not clear, but he was unable to account properly for £20,000 in Spanish money at the end of December 1555 and was deprived of his office.<sup>16</sup> Two months later he was committed to the Fleet and spent most of the following two years in prison. He was replaced by Thomas Stanley and it was Stanley, who remained in office until December 1571, who was in operational control when the decision to re-coin was made in 1560. As might be expected, where many different denominations of coin and several different degrees of debasement were involved, this operation was neither straightforward nor uncontroversial. Elizabeth appears to have decided even before her coronation that the nettle would have to be grasped, and when proposals were drafted for a number of commissions to investigate various departments of government in December 1558, that for the mint was headed by Sir Edmund Peckham and included Sir Walter Mildmay. Many of these commissions seem never to have materialised, but that for the mint was issued in February 1559 and included both Peckham and Mildmay, although it was headed by Lord North. Its terms of reference were comprehensive, including an assessment of how much base money had been produced, how base it had been and how much remained in circulation.<sup>17</sup> It says a great deal, both for the record keeping of the mint and for the diligence of the commissioners, that a 'valuation of the base moneys now current in England' could be produced by 15th April. It probably helped that Stanley had carried out his own assessment, and come to rather similar conclusions. There was about £620,000 worth of fine gold and silver in circulation and about £1,200,000 worth of base coin.<sup>18</sup> Of the latter, some £900,000 was mildly debased and the remaining £300,000 very debased – that is of 3oz fine. Because Ireland was not to be included in the reform, it was suggested that most of this very base coin could be recycled at the same level of fineness,

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<sup>16</sup> Challis, *The Tudor Coinage*, p. 114. APC 1554–6, p. 210.

<sup>17</sup> Cal. Pat., 1558–60, p. 66. Challis, p. 119.

<sup>18</sup> BL Harleian MS 40,061, ff. 11–14. NA SP12/13, no. 27.

for use there.<sup>19</sup> Other officials and interested parties produced their own calculations and estimates of the outcome ranged from a cost to the Crown of £40,000 to a profit of £53,000. Over a year was then spent in further calculation and debate, while the settlement of religion and the affairs of Scotland took precedence in the Queen's mind. It was not until September 1560 that the value of the base coin was 'cried down' to encourage its voluntary surrender – a messy business because of the variables of time and distance, to say nothing of rumour – and November before a German company headed by Daniel Ulstate was hired to carry out the refining which was an essential part of the process.<sup>20</sup> Ulstate was a business contact of Sir Thomas Gresham, who seems to have been closely involved in this business from the start.

So far, the Lord Treasurer was conspicuous by his absence, but on 29th October 1560 what was clearly a supervisory commission was issued to inspect and oversee the work of the mint and to 'reform anything which might be amiss'. This commission, which included the usual suspects, Sackville, Cecil and Mildmay, was headed by the Marquis of Winchester.<sup>21</sup> Earlier in the same month the Lord Treasurer and the Master of the Jewel House had been commanded to set an example in the Queen's name by sending all unserviceable plate to the mint to kick start the process of production. Stanley reported that they were producing about £7000 worth of new coin a week. That was the good news. The bad news was that production proceeded thereafter by fits and starts, because it proved extraordinarily difficult to persuade the holders of base coin to surrender it and various threats and inducements were resorted to.<sup>22</sup> It was not until October 1561 that the process was substantially complete, by which time some £775,000 had been coined at the two operational mints and the Queen had made – as the original commissioners had calculated, a profit of about £50,000. The only people who were not pleased were the Irish, who were still saddled with a debased currency. Although the administrative machinery had creaked and rumbled alarmingly, it had eventually delivered an outcome which both Northumberland and Mary had desired, but had been unable to achieve. The credit for forcing the issue must go to the Queen, because she was the new element in the equation. Both Winchester and Cecil had been in office under the duke and Winchester under Mary. There is every reason to suppose that the Lord Treasurer wanted the recoinage, and did his level best to help bring it about, but he was not in the position to make a policy decision of that

<sup>19</sup> Challis, *The Tudor Coinage*, p. 120.

<sup>20</sup> NA SP12/12, no. 58; SP12/14, nos. 43, 55. J.W. Burgan, 'On the amelioration of the coinage, AD 1560', *Numismatic Chronicle*, 1839–1840, pp. 12–17.

<sup>21</sup> CSPD, 1547–1581, p. 162.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid, p. 161. NA SP12/14, nos. 4, 8, 9, E351/1953, ms 5–7. Challis, p. 124.

magnitude. He had probably advised Mary of its necessity, but she, for unknown reasons, had lacked the will to carry it through. Cecil, Mildmay and Gresham were all actively involved between 1559 and 1561 and the latter two were certainly close to Paulet, if not particularly friendly by this time, so by a process of reconstruction we can probably trace the initiative back to him, although none of the plethora of reports, comments, opinions or calculations are in his hand, or unequivocally by him. When he was commissioned in December 1562, along with Cecil, to take the accounts of Stanley and of Thomas Fleetwood, the Under-Treasurers of the second Tower mint, the process can be said to have been completed and tidied away.<sup>23</sup>

The Lord Treasurer appeared at some half dozen council meetings in April and May 1559, when the record breaks until 1562. Thereafter he seems not to have appeared at all and not to have attended at court unless he was specifically summoned. In 1564 he sought exemption from the St George's feast at Windsor.<sup>24</sup> On the other hand Elizabeth chose him to preside over the House of Lords in the second parliament of her reign (which sat in 1563 and 1566), in preference to Lord Keeper Bacon, who would have been the more natural choice. It was he who delivered, in the name of the Lords, the 'humble suit and petition' in relation to her marriage in February 1563, although it is highly unlikely that he composed it and was reported to have disagreed with its contents. As he lived for most of each year in Austin Friars, this duty would not necessarily have involved attendance at court, although most of the peers who came up for the parliament saw it as a golden opportunity to make their mark. Such considerations no longer influenced the marquis. He was a very old man (in his late 80s) and the court of an energetic young Queen still in her 20s and surrounded by her contemporaries, probably had little appeal. There may also have been another factor, because diplomatic reports suggest that he may not have been at ease with his colleagues. In October 1562, when the Queen had an attack of small pox, there was something akin to panic, both at court and in the council. De Quadra, the Spanish ambassador, noted this disarray with some relish. Some were saying that Henry VIII's will should be adhered to and that Catherine Seymour was the heir, others were apparently favouring the Earl of Huntingdon, presumably as the most proximate male.<sup>25</sup>

The most moderate and sensible tried to dissuade the others from being in such a furious hurry, and said that they would divide the country unless they summoned jurists of the greatest standing to assess the rights of the claimants ...

<sup>23</sup> Cal. Pat., 1560–63, p. 483. 10th December 1562.

<sup>24</sup> CSPD, 1547–1581, p. 237 Winchester to the Queen, 6th April 1564.

<sup>25</sup> De Quadra to Philip, 25th October 1562. Cal. Span., p. 263. For a recent discussion of these events, see Loades, *Elizabeth I*, pp. 144–5.

The Marquis Treasurer, he declared, was of this opinion, although few were supporting him because ‘the rest understood that this was a move in favour of the catholic religion’. Delay, de Quadra believed, would favour the old faith, not only because most of the jurists were of that persuasion, but also because it would enable Philip to bring his influence to bear. That Paulet favoured caution is entirely probable, but the rest of the ambassador’s diagnosis seems to have been little more than wishful thinking. In any case, the Queen recovered and the crisis passed. Interestingly, none of the council seem to have favoured Mary Stuart, even those of a catholic persuasion, although this again may have been de Quadra hearing what he wanted to.

A couple of months later, rumours were again flickering around the Lord Treasurer, who was alleged to be in a state of disillusionment bordering upon disaffection. On 6th December De Quadra reported that he was about to resign, both as Treasurer and as Councillor ‘as he says that on two subjects of grave importance they have rejected his advice, and he is not willing that they should do it a third time’.<sup>26</sup> It seems fairly clear from the context that one of the subjects upon which he had been rebuffed was the decision to intervene at Le Havre, over which his influence had failed to check that of Lord Robert Dudley – in which case he was not alone in his dissatisfaction. He, after all, would be charged with finding the money. The other matter was, by implication, the religious settlement, which we know from other sources he found distasteful and opposed both in Council and in parliament. Parliament had again been summoned to meet in January and it was presumably known that further reform would be lobbied for by certain of the commons. De Quadra believed that ‘these catholic gentlemen’, among whom he counted the Lord Treasurer, were planning ways in which they could check this evangelical advance, but he believed them to lack the strength to do so. The ambassador probably had his ear to the ground, but the signals he was picking up were confused. Paulet could hardly have been planning to retire from public life and scheming a rearguard action in parliament. In the event, far from retiring, he presided over the House of Lords and it was the Queen rather than ‘the catholic gentlemen’ who checked the Puritan Choir. Some time later, after de Quadra’s death, it was alleged that one of Paulet’s secretaries (unnamed) had been a close confidant of the ambassador and had been the source of these stories.<sup>27</sup> This was probably John de Vic, a Guernsey man by origin who had been in the marquis’s service since at least 1552 and whom he described as his secretary in 1555. Nothing is known about

<sup>26</sup> Cal. Span. 1558–67, p. 275. ‘He and others are deeply dissatisfied ...’

<sup>27</sup> Ibid, p. 354. The writer went on ‘these people are in great trouble, and can see no way out’, but he then made his agenda clear by continuing ‘If his Majesty was in Flanders he could do whatever he liked and redeem Christendom ...’.

de Vic's religious sympathies, although the unnamed secretary was alleged to be 'a good catholic'. He acted as Winchester's attorney in a land case in 1566 and was still in his service in 1570. He had died by 1581.<sup>28</sup> As far as we know none of the alarms which Cecil inspired over recusancy came any where near the marquis's household, which led a charmed life in that respect. Elizabeth was relaxed about the catholic sympathies of some of her nobles and may have vetoed any witch hunt against the Lord Treasurer's servants, but that would only have happened if she had been absolutely sure of his loyalty. If Paulet had been anyway implicated in suggestions that Philip might interfere in England, that toleration would have abruptly disappeared, so although it may well be that Paulet grumbled and found the court uncongenial, he continued to serve his mistress to her satisfaction – and that is what mattered. He was, by general consent, the ablest of the Queen's councillors, after Cecil and Bacon.

The key to his financial strategy in the first decade of Elizabeth's reign was the same as it had been in Mary's – the centralisation of control. It had been that which had prompted the Exchequer reforms, and decided their limits, because once Augmentations had been absorbed into the Exchequer, there were obvious advantages in continuing its distinctive accounting system. Thanks to Baker's death, and a practical working relationship with Cecil, Paulet's own control over process was appreciably stronger under Elizabeth than it had been under Mary, reaching a high point in 1566, as Christopher Coleman has demonstrated.<sup>29</sup> He was able to appoint some of his own servants, particularly Robert Hare and Humphrey Shelton, to minor but important offices and he was able to establish a better working relationship with Thomas Felton, the writer of the Tallies, who had formerly challenged his jurisdiction.<sup>30</sup> A similar priority can be seen in the methods used to discharge and control the foreign debt. This had perforce increased during the war, but the system used had not broken down. Council recognisances had been used since the reign of Edward VI to ensure against default, but it was default in London which was covered, not Antwerp.<sup>31</sup> When a debt was discharged, the bond to the banker was returned to the City, but the bond to the City was returned to the Lord Treasurer. The Act Books of the Council are littered with the records of such transactions throughout Paulet's time

<sup>28</sup> Bindoff, *House of Commons*, sub John de Vic. De Vic sat for Portsmouth in November 1554, under Paulet patronage.

<sup>29</sup> Coleman, 'Artifice or Accident?', p. 179.

<sup>30</sup> Essex RO D/DFa 04. Winchester to Felton, 27th March 1566. Hare is described both as a long term dependent of Paulet's, and also a 'man devoted to popery'. Coleman, 'Artifice or Accident', p. 183.

<sup>31</sup> BL Royal MS 18C 24, f. 75. Recognisance to Anthony Fugger in April 1551.

in charge.<sup>32</sup> Direct loans by the City were different and were resorted to only when necessary; £30,000 was borrowed in this way in the summer of 1558. In return for these services, the privileges of the Hanseatic League, restored by Mary, again came under attack. Even the old Queen's council had not been entirely easy over the restoration, which had been granted for purely political reasons, and on 28th June 1556 had placed a temporary embargo upon Easterling shipments to Antwerp.<sup>33</sup> Relations had become strained within a year of the restoration, thanks very largely to the clout which the Merchant Adventurers retained in London. The *coup de grace* was administered in the spring of 1559, when parliament received from the City, 'certain considerations' which recommended the permanent revocation of the Steelyard privileges on the grounds that the Queen was losing an excessive amount in customs revenue through the 'engrossing' by the Hansards of trade which rightfully belonged to Englishmen.<sup>34</sup> The parliament was not invited to legislate, but in July Elizabeth summoned the League to a consultation, in the course of which the events of 1551 were largely repeated. The Merchant Adventurers duly presented their list of grievances, to which the Hanseatic delegates (mainly Lubeckers) were invited to respond; until they did so, no further concessions would be made. The response did not come until the spring of 1560 and, when it did, it was met by a positive barrage from the City. Sir William Gerard, Sir William Chester, the Recorder and several Aldermen presented a petition to the Lord Keeper, outlining their total opposition to all 'pretensed privileges'.<sup>35</sup> When the Council met to deliver its verdict on 7th June, the Hanse were offered a deal. They might export English cloth to their own towns at the same customs rates as English merchants – a concession of 12d per cloth over other 'merchant strangers' – but this was conditional upon a reciprocal arrangement in the Hanse towns. No such reciprocity was ever conceded and the Hanseatic privileges were effectively dead, although the Steelyard was not finally closed until 1598.

The forcefulness of the council's action is usually attributed to Sir William Cecil, who had also been Principal Secretary at the time of the first revocation. Paulet's opinion seems to have been much more equivocal. In April 1561 he wrote somewhat regretfully:

... thaldermen and marchauntes of the Stillyard be verie honest and conformable and do good service dailie to the queen and the realme in bringing in of corne and other commodities.<sup>36</sup>

<sup>32</sup> APC *passim*. For the loan of £30,000, see CSPD, 1547–1581, p. 161, Winchester to Cecil, 10th October 1560.

<sup>33</sup> D.R. Bisson, *The Merchant Adventurers of England: The Crown and the Company 1474–1564* (1993), p. 65.

<sup>34</sup> LRO Rep. 14, f.329, 42. BL Add. MS 48,010, p. 368.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid. The Order is dated 22nd June 1559.

<sup>36</sup> NA SP12/16, f. 139.

However, he must have known that that was not really the point and it seems to have been provoked by one of a series of spats which he had with the Merchant Adventurers, whom he seems to have suspected of getting too big for their boots. In 1564, when for political reasons the Staple had been moved to Emden, he was particularly incensed by what he saw as the Adventurers unreasonableness and greed:

If I suffer any wares to be brought into the Quene's realme whereunto they have any color or if I suffer the Stillyard or any other marchauntes to ship that they may by the lawes or by the Quene's speciall licence shipp they say I shall utterly undo them ...<sup>37</sup>

It may well have been relations with the Hanse which constituted the second of the issues over which the Lord Treasurer's advice had been rejected, rather than religion. He was certainly not happy when the Adventurers sought, and obtained, the right to appoint searchers of the customs, which had been Exchequer appointments.<sup>38</sup> Nevertheless, in spite of protesting, he issued the relevant warrants and this seems to have been typical of his method of proceeding. Whether he really objected to the increasingly monopolistic grip which the Adventurers were acquiring over the cloth trade, or whether he was cautiously trying to keep a foot in both camps we do not know. It may be that Gresham and Cecil, who were working closely together, had by this time distanced themselves from the Lord Treasurer over matters of trade, but the nominal control remained in his hands. There is no sign, in spite of his querulousness, that Winchester's financial dealings with the City were in any way disrupted by his doubts about the Merchant Adventurers. On the other hand, it may be that Gresham and Cecil were simply bypassing him in order to keep the debt discharging mechanism in working order.

The Lord Treasurer had probably been responsible for the decision to revise the Book of Customs rates early in 1558 and that may have been part of the problem because the new rates, while greatly increasing the customs yield, had clearly cost the merchants a lot of money.<sup>39</sup> Aware of this, early in Elizabeth's reign he allowed a number of challenges which to some extent restored the balance. This may have been a trade off to protect his overall control, because he always had been, and remained, adamantly opposed to the idea of farming the customs. This had been mooted by a council committee in Mary's reign and Elizabeth favoured it, but in Winchester's view it inhibited trade, particularly from the outports. Anxious to protect their profit margins, the farmers harried merchants and the crown gained

<sup>37</sup> NA SP12/34, f. 126. 29th August 1564.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid, f. 33. Bisson, *Merchant Adventurers*, p. 69.

<sup>39</sup> Dietz, *English Public Finance*, p. 7. The return had risen from £29,315 in 1556/7 to over £80,000 in 1558/9, and this was not due to a proportionate increase in the volume of trade.

nothing. Common informers were not much better. They were tried, but Paulet did not approve. 'I am daily molested with the trouble they make to merchants', he wrote in 1566<sup>40</sup> and it may well be that keeping control in his own hands and seeing imperfectly what was going on was his method of retaining the friendship of merchants with whom he otherwise stood in serious danger of quarrelling. When his opinion was sought in February 1568 on a proposal to farm the customs on beer, he again advised against such a move.<sup>41</sup> In spite of disagreements, the Queen's confidence in her Lord Treasurer seems to have remained unimpaired. On 4th November 1564 he was placed in charge of a commission to enquire about the import of all foreign wares since 1550 and of the losses sustained by the customs as a result of the number of special licences which had been issued.<sup>42</sup> The main issue was illegal exports, and over this at least he probably saw eye to eye with the merchants. If there was any target in such an investigation, it would have been Elizabeth herself.

As we have seen, in 1557 Winchester's concern for control had extended to the navy, but his ambitions in that direction had been suspended by the war and there is no clear evidence that they were ever realised. When Elizabeth first instated the Ordinary for the navy in 1559, she set it at £12,000 a year – halfway between the sum specified by Paulet in 1557 and that on which he eventually expected to manage.<sup>43</sup> There is no sign that he was consulted over this, or that he conducted the stocktaking which was going on at the same time. When the revenue courts were to be surveyed, the Lord Treasurer was commissioned, but the survey of the navy seems to have been carried out by its own officers.<sup>44</sup> In May 1564, when Paulet was commissioned to take the accounts of a number of officers who had been involved in the Le Havre campaign, one of them was Benjamin Gonson, the Treasurer of the Navy. If the Lord Treasurer had been in overall charge of the navy, then Gonson should have accounted to him anyway, without a commission. So although the decision of 1557 was never formally rescinded, it looks as though it remained a dead letter and that the Lord Admiral continued in charge once the war was over. Winchester retained an interest in the navy and wrote to the council about its affairs on several occasions, but not in a manner which suggested that he was reporting on a direct responsibility.

<sup>40</sup> Dietz, pp. 307–311.

<sup>41</sup> NA SP12/46, f.34. Winchester estimated that such a farm would cost the Crown £4000 a year.

<sup>42</sup> Cal. Pat., 1563–6, p. 31.

<sup>43</sup> APC 1556–8, p. 39 [see above, p. 133] Bod. Rawlinson MS A.200, f. 165.

<sup>44</sup> 'The Book for Sea Causes', NA SP12/3, no. 44, ff. 131–4. According to Conyers Read, it was Cecil who was primarily responsible for naval affairs from the beginning of the reign, rather than the Lord admiral. *Lord Burghley and Queen Elizabeth* (1960), p. 410.

Once the war was over in April 1559, the biggest contrast between the financial situation in the reign of Mary and in that of Elizabeth was the role of taxation. Mary had managed for over two years without calling upon parliament and had indeed cancelled the second instalment of the subsidy voted by the last meeting of Edward's reign, apparently on the grounds that it was not needed and had been demanded solely because of the Duke of Northumberland's greed.<sup>45</sup> What the Lord Treasurer made of this thinking is not recorded! A subsidy had indeed been granted against some fairly determined opposition, in the assembly of 1555, and a Privy Seal loan had been demanded in the subsequent year. This latter had been considerably resented. It had been paid, to the tune of £109,000, but only after the application of considerable pressure by the council.<sup>46</sup> The subsidy, in two instalments of about £75,000 each, was paid in 1556 and 1557. When a further subsidy was demanded in 1558, there was further complaint in spite of the recent loss of Calais. A subsidy was duly voted, but only the first instalment was demanded – the rest was to await a further vote when the parliament reassembled in the autumn. In the event that session was cut short by the Queen's death, so the second instalment was never collected. From these two sources, over about three years, Mary had received some £335,000. Elizabeth, admittedly with a war still going on, did not wait at all. Although the tone of the demand was somewhat apologetic, the 1559 parliament voted a subsidy and two tenths and fifteenths without undue fuss and that realised about £130,000 in the course of 1560.<sup>47</sup> In 1563 the begging bowl went round again, and was replenished with tenths and fifteenths, clerical and lay subsidies, to the tune of some £250,000. If the forced loan is discounted as not being normal taxation, Mary received £225,000 from parliament and Elizabeth, over a similar time span, £380,000.<sup>48</sup> Cecil and Bacon are normally given the credit for steering these grants through and that may be correct, but they were also in accord with the Lord Treasurer's thinking. He was altogether in favour of using 'proper' sources of revenue and, although parliamentary taxation counted as extraordinary, it was quite normal when circumstances required and this was one of the things that William Paulet had learned of his mentor Thomas Cromwell. However, the compliance of the House of Commons could not be taken for granted and when money was asked for again in 1566, there was substantially more resistance. A much reduced vote, over which there was severe controversy, produced only £118,000 over

<sup>45</sup> Hughes and Larkin, *Tudor Royal Proclamations*, II, pp. 9–10.

<sup>46</sup> NA SP11/13, no.36. Loades, *Reign of Mary*, pp. 341–2.

<sup>47</sup> Dietz, *Public Finance*, pp. 22, 392.

<sup>48</sup> NA SP12/40, no.85. This total does not include a Privy Seal loan of £44,886, raised between 1562 and 1564, because that was promptly repaid. E351/1964.

the following five years.<sup>49</sup> This meant that increased customs returns, the recovery of First Fruits and Tenths and the sale of Crown land remained important if the books were to be balanced.

Paulet did not like selling lands. This had nothing to do with the fact that much of this property had been acquired from the church – he had picked up quite a lot himself from that source – but because it diminished regular income. For every £20 realised by such sale, £1 had to be deducted from the Exchequer's annual revenue. Nevertheless, he was a regular commissioner for such sales. On 28th June 1559 he and Nicholas Bacon, with others, was given such a commission of indefinite duration and he himself urged further sales in 1561 to meet the exceptional costs of the intervention in Scotland.<sup>50</sup> Such a solution was at least preferable to an increase in debt and a similar consideration seems to have inspired further commissions in 1563 and 1567. Much more to the Lord Treasurer's taste was the improvement of returns by economies and careful administration. As with the customs, he was opposed to the farming of Crown manors and, already before Mary's death, had produced a scheme for grouping the supervision of such lands under the Queen's Receivers General – sufficient proof, if any were needed, that he was no great friend of the 'ancient course' of the Exchequer.<sup>51</sup> In January 1561 the Lord Treasurer drew up another elaborate table of remembrances containing detailed suggestions for the increase of land revenue, which included sales of woods and underwoods, but not of the lands themselves.<sup>52</sup> Indeed the suggestions were very conservative, not even extending to a general increase in rents. Careful attention to copyhold rights was urged, a more thorough collection of casualties and the reduction of expenses on repairs. Again he urged the consolidation of estates in each county under the Receivers General, instead of the time wasting procedure of retaining the integrity of lands as they were gained, usually by escheat or forfeiture. Pensions and annuities, he urged, should be kept to a minimum and in no case should take the form of land grants. In December 1562, after the book of the various revenue courts had been examined, a further paper was drawn up, of 'doubts to be resolved'.<sup>53</sup> Again some fairly minor economies were recommended, but the sins of omission in the collection of revenues were deemed to outweigh the sins of commission in overspending. Most particularly there were doubts about the collection of customs in the outports. Winchester apparently wanted to use a system of General Surveyors (or Receivers),

<sup>49</sup> One subsidy, and one tenth and fifteenth. Dietz, pp. 382–3.

<sup>50</sup> Cal. Pat., 1558–60, p. 119.

<sup>51</sup> Dietz, pp. 291–3. Under the 'Ancient course' if that had been reinstated, Crown lands would have accounted via the sheriffs.

<sup>52</sup> NA SP12/1, no. 57.

<sup>53</sup> BL Harleian MS 6850, ff. 103–106.

similar to that used for the Crown Lands, but in this case he was not successful. The problem was that the levels of trade tended to fluctuate wildly from year to year and the council wanted its resources to be as predictable as possible. Receivers were experimented with and Paulet may have succeeded in staving off the farming but on this issue he did not agree with Cecil. In Michaelmas 1568 the impositions on beer and wine were farmed and this proved to be the beginning of a complete system which culminated in the lease to Sir Thomas Smith in 1570 of the farm of all customs on imports to London, except wines, and both imports and exports from Chichester and Sandwich.<sup>54</sup>

The problem which forced this issue was the sharp fall in the customs revenue in 1562 and 1563 caused by the intervention in France and embargoes which were being applied in the Low Countries. Farming, of course, was a means of cushioning such blows, but Winchester did not concede the logic of this at once. His first reaction was to appoint deputy collectors to cover the creeks and inlets adjacent to ports, which had hitherto been used as a quasi-legal means of evading customs payments and in 1564 issued a new book of orders designed to increase the efficiency of all collectors. Port Books began to record arrivals and clearances in a new detail and the Lord Treasurer's intention seems to have been to place all this activity under the control of the General Surveyors.<sup>55</sup> Other experiments were also in train at this time. In August 1566 a private proposal was received to plant informers in the customs houses to keep the receivers up to scratch – and take a cut of the increased profit. Winchester opposed this, which would have cut right across his own proposals and no concession was awarded. A similar grant was made, however, in September 1567 in respect of the export of cloth and the import of wine, from which a profit of between £2000 and £3000 a year was anticipated.<sup>56</sup> Whether the Lord Treasurer was over ridden in this case, or made the appointments himself is not clear. In any case the grant was not renewed after the first year. Meanwhile Winchester was preparing his own proposals for the appointment of Surveyors when he was stopped in his tracks by the Queen's own decision to go for a farming system in 1568. One of the reasons for this was the pressure from potential farmers, among whom was the Earl of Leicester; a second was that such a straightforward and centralised system of control would have destroyed the delicate balance of vested interests which presently existed among Receivers and Surveyors, each with their own designated commodities and methods; and finally – not unrelated – the idea of General Surveyors was deeply unpopular among the merchants themselves.

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<sup>54</sup> Dietz, pp. 317–9.

<sup>55</sup> NA SP12/38, no. 30. Dietz, pp. 308–309.

<sup>56</sup> NA SP12/42, no. 36; /43, no. 55; /44, nos. 2, 3. Dietz, p. 309.

In the midst of all this manoeuvring, the Lord Treasurer suffered a period of illness. He was not attending council meetings by that time and seems to have been working from home, so no one commented upon his failure to appear and we do not know how long his illness lasted. However, on 3rd May 1563 Bacon, Pembroke and Cecil were commissioned to execute his office during his period of sickness, which suggests that his indisposition was taken seriously and was expected to last for some time.<sup>57</sup> Given his extreme age, it may well have been doubted that he would ever return to duty. He seems to have neither written nor received official letters for about six months. Apart from a commission to sell Crown lands, dated later in May but possibly issued earlier, there is nothing obviously addressed to him until 18th November when the council wrote about the difficulties of the customs. He may well have been out of action for upwards of year, because that letter is an isolated instance and, as we have seen, he excused himself from the Garter feast in April 1564. As late as July of that year he was still professing himself unable to wait upon the Queen at Greenwich, although no explanation was offered on either occasion.<sup>58</sup> The parliament had been prorogued on 10th April 1563 and, by the time that it reconvened in September 1566, Paulet was back in his place. His surviving correspondence, which was in any case becoming sparse by this time, was renewed in the autumn of 1564, but we have no idea when Bacon's commission was deemed to have come to an end.

Both Dietz and Richardson claim that Paulet was an outstanding financial administrator and argue that his best service was given to Elizabeth, but the evidence which supports those statements is fragmentary and circumstantial.<sup>59</sup> As Christopher Coleman has noted, when he tried to introduce new practices for the Tellers, of the Exchequer in 1559, they ignored him, but nevertheless he did make procedural changes, thanks to good working relations with Mildmay, Sackville and Felton and, ultimately, one suspects, with Cecil.<sup>60</sup> On most of the policy issues of which we have any direct record, such as land sales, customs administration and dealings with the Merchant Adventurers, his advice was either rejected or greatly modified in practice. He advised against interfering in Scotland, probably opposed Dudley's Spanish policy in 1560 and certainly deplored the Le Havre expedition. On the other hand, he retained a firm grip on the expenditure of money, constantly concerned with locating the resources necessary to pay the bills with which the council saddled him. It may well

<sup>57</sup> HMC, Salisbury MSS, 1, no. 889.

<sup>58</sup> CSPD, 1547–1581, p. 242. 11th July 1564.

<sup>59</sup> Richardson, *Augmentations*, p. 457. 'Unquestionably Winchester was the ablest of the revenue administrators turned out by the Tudor system, and one who had profited immeasurably from the fundamental Cromwellian precepts of efficiency and loyalty.'

<sup>60</sup> BL Lansdowne MS 106, f. 10. Coleman, 'Artifice or Accident', p. 185.

be that Elizabeth's notorious parsimony sprang as much from the Lord Treasurer's preoccupations as her own. We would now describe most of his problems as 'cash flow' and the priority of placing money where it was needed caused him to be hard on himself, as well as on others with whom we would have expected him to sympathise, such as the Merchant Adventurers and the bishops. On 21st November 1559 Cecil and Sir Thomas Parry were commissioned to survey all the jewels plate and other goods which had been left in Winchester's charge after the inventory of Henry VIII's possessions and to check what he had made over to Edward or Mary. They were rather severely instructed 'to cause the said Treasurer to answer for any found wanting without warrant' and to report to the Queen.<sup>61</sup> This looks as though Paulet was under suspicion for some kind of malpractice, but was probably his own way of making sure that his integrity was above suspicion. At about the same time, Elizabeth decided to take advantage of the large number of episcopal vacancies following the deprivation of the Marian incumbents by relieving the sees of some of the land with which Mary had reendowed them. Altogether six sees, including Canterbury, lost land to the value of almost £4000 a year.<sup>62</sup> This, together with the recovery of first fruits and tenths, boosted the Exchequer by almost £30,000 per annum and must have had at least the connivance of the Lord Treasurer. Had he tried to resist Mary's policy of restitution? Or was he now resigned to seeing good work undone? From what we can gather of Paulet's priorities, he would probably have sided with Elizabeth on this issue, however sympathetic he may have been to the Old Faith. Nor is there any evidence that he quarrelled openly with either Cecil or Gresham, in spite of disagreeing with each of them. It is probably safe to say that the real evidence of his value to Elizabeth lies not in what we know about his policy advice, but in the day by day evidence of his work in the issuing of warrants, taking of accounts, scraping money together and cajoling Crown debtors. His directing principle of central management and control served well as long as he was actively engaged, but it was compromised by vested interests and distorted by expediency. This unfortunately led to the Exchequer becoming entangled in a series of scandals and malpractices as old age finally overtook him after 1568.<sup>63</sup> In that respect he left his successor a difficult legacy, but he also bequeathed a viable financial situation over all – provided that there was no more war.<sup>64</sup>

In spite of his routine absence from council meetings, Winchester's work during the first decade of the reign was by no means confined to

<sup>61</sup> Cal. Pat., 1558–60, p. 483.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid, pp. 354, 440.

<sup>63</sup> Coleman, 'Artifice or Accident?', pp. 190–91.

<sup>64</sup> Dietz, *Public Finance*, pp. 25–9.

financial matters. Along with Lord Keeper Bacon he was regularly named to every commission of the peace as he had been under Edward – but not, interestingly, under Mary. This probably meant little or nothing in terms of actual work, but he was also named to numerous other commissions upon which he did serve. In 1559 he was appointed to survey the ports of Great Yarmouth and King's Lynn in Norfolk, which may have been connected with the customs, although that is not clear.<sup>65</sup> In July 1562 he received a commission for the survey of decayed, forts, castles and towns in the four northern counties and in June 1565 two further commissions for similar surveys within 20 miles of the Scottish border.<sup>66</sup> In both cases he seems to have travelled north in order to discharge these duties. In August 1562 he was given a similar responsibility in North Wales and in June 1567 appointed to survey the Tower armouries.<sup>67</sup> In addition to his commissions to sell Crown lands, he was also named on several occasions to similar bodies set up to review Crown leases, although these were no doubt considered to be part of his regular responsibility for estate management. In August 1559 we find him reminding Cecil that building materials were required for the repairs at Windsor castle, which presumably may have come under the same heading and in June 1567 submitting plans to the Secretary for the tomb of Henry VIII in the same place. According to the Spanish ambassador, this work had been ordered within weeks of Elizabeth's accession and by the Queen in person. It seems unlikely that it would have taken eight years to implement such a royal decree, so it looks as though the ambassador's sources were more than usually suspect.<sup>68</sup> In August 1559 there were rumours in court circles that Philip of Spain would visit England on his way from the Low Countries back to Spain and Winchester was instructed to give orders for his courteous reception. Where this rumour came from and how much inconvenience it may have caused along the south coast, we do not know, but it is significant that it was Winchester, who was presumably thought to be *persona grata* with Philip, who was given the responsibility for receiving him. At about the same time, with what looks like a mischievous touch, the marquis was informed that the Dean and canons of Winchester were among those refusing conformity to the Queen's visitors. He was instructed to 'take order' for them.<sup>69</sup> As this would normally have been the responsibility of the commissioners themselves, it looks suspiciously as though Paulet was being given a little test of his own conformity – if so, he passed with credit,

<sup>65</sup> Cal. Pat., 1558–60, pp. 31–2.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid, p. 274. Cal. Pat., 1563–6, p. 213.

<sup>67</sup> Cal. Pat., 1560–63, p. 278. Ibid, 1566–9, p. 125. 9th June 1567.

<sup>68</sup> CSPD, 1547–1581, p. 296. Winchester to Cecil, 27th June 1567. The proposal; had obviously been prepared earlier.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid, p. 133. 30th June 1559.

no matter what impression he had managed to make on Bishop de Quadra. In November 1566, when the Lords and Commons petitioned the Queen about her marriage, a petition which Paulet presented as Speaker of the Lords, Guzman da Silva was told that he had done his best to resist such a motion, but that he had been alone in his opinion. ‘They are all against her but the Treasurer’ da Silva wrote, realising how unhappy Elizabeth was with the petition.<sup>70</sup> Perhaps this is another clue to his retention of the royal favour.

His services also received further reward. As we have seen, he got little out of Mary, or at least little that left any record, but in January 1561 he was granted the manor of Shenfield (Essex) and various other lands ‘late of Catherine, late Queen of England’. The value is unspecified in the grant, but he paid £1805 to receive them in fee simple, so presumably the value was at least £100 a year.<sup>71</sup> In July 1563 he also received the manor of Hoddesdon in Hertfordshire, with other lands, similarly valued at £100 a year and, on this occasion (a special favour) with issues from 17th November 1558, a bonus of some £450.<sup>72</sup> Other less obvious favours also included, in January 1561, the conversion of his 1548 patent as Keeper of the forests of Aishott and Walmer into a grant in survivorship with his son John and the wardships (in December 1560 and January 1561) of the son and heir of Sir William Courtenay and of Alice Pacy, who became the second wife of his nephew George.<sup>73</sup> Other little favours also appear from time to time, suggestive of a man at ease with the patronage system. In April 1567 he was given control of the small stream which ran beside his London house of Austin Friars and the right to alter its course, presumably to serve his own domestic purposes. In June of the same year he was also given a licence to grant in mortmain lands to the value of £13 6s 8d a year to the College of St Mary of Winchester.<sup>74</sup> This would no doubt once have been called an obit or chantry. Of course no such conditions were attached to this grant, but it is indicative of the way in which wealthy patrons of conservative sympathies could adjust to the new ecclesiastical rules. In May 1566 he gave some land to Richard Richardson, the Rector of Chelsea, a man of whom he presumably approved and in whose parish he had a house, although he did not normally live there. During the summer progress of 1569 both he and his son John were favoured with royal visits. From the surviving accounts it would appear that the Queen took dinner

<sup>70</sup> Guzman da Silva to the King, 4th November 1566. Cal. Span., 1558–67, p. 591. For Elizabeth’s speech in response to the petition, see *Elizabeth I, Collected Works*, ed. Marcus, Mueller and Rose (2000), pp. 93–100 (two versions).

<sup>71</sup> Cal. Pat., 1560–63, p. 49. 20th January 1561. The lands are specified as being ‘late of Catherine, late Queen of England’ – presumably Catherine Seymour (nee Parr).

<sup>72</sup> Ibid, p. 487. 29th July 1563.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid, pp. 186, 65, 180.

<sup>74</sup> Cal. Pat., 1566–9, pp. 54, 107.

with Lord St John at Abbotstone before staying a couple of nights at Basing. It was her normal custom to send in teams of workmen to modify the accommodation, no matter how brief her stay. At Abbotstone two new door locks were provided and the stairs mended, while at Basing a team of seven carpenters spent a week modifying partitions and making new presses, consuming a good deal of timber and 1000 nails in the process. Although the marquis had been excused attendance at the first trial of Mary, Queen of Scots on the grounds of his great age, he was presumably at home to receive his royal mistress on this occasion. Basing was too large and grand simply to be vacated for a royal visit.<sup>75</sup>

Winchester did not remarry. The Winifrid Brydges sometimes described as his second wife was in fact the wife of his son John, who succeeded him in the title. John married three times. His first wife was Elizabeth Willoughby, whom he had married before 1528. She had died by 1551 and before March 1554 he had taken as his second wife another Elizabeth, the widow of Gregory, Lord Cromwell. She had also died by 1570, when he married for the third time. John continued to serve on all sorts of local commissions in Hampshire and Dorset, but received no office of other than local importance. A tidying up operation in the Wards and Liveries disclosed that he had received a wardship without patent in 1552 and for that offence he was pardoned in October 1559.<sup>76</sup> Along with his second wife he received a grant of lands in Rutland in March 1559, but this seems to have owed more to her favour than to his. William's brother Sir George, who had been active outside the county as we have seen, died in March 1559 and his office of Clerk of the Liveries was granted to Thomas Fanshawe in July.<sup>77</sup> It is not known when he was knighted. By the following summer his widow had remarried. Thomas Paulet, William's second son, was still serving on the commission of the peace for Dorset in February 1562, but died in 1566, when he was described as 'of Netherby, Dorset'.<sup>78</sup> Giles, his fourth son, was still active in London in April 1570, when he was named in a commission to survey the archery grounds in the City.<sup>79</sup> He survived his father, and seems to have been the longest lived, dying in 1580. The most active of the marquis's sons on the national stage was the third, Chidioc. His appointment as Captain of Portsmouth was renewed on 20th April 1559, with effect from the previous November and he received various instructions and rewards connected with that office. However, he lasted only just over six months, being replaced on 6th

<sup>75</sup> The total expenditure at Basing was £8 4s 10d, while that at Abbotstone was 54s 7d. Bod. Rawlinson MS A.195 C, ff. 300–301.

<sup>76</sup> Cal. Pat., 1558–60, p. 16. 30th October 1559.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid, p. 90. 26th July 1559.

<sup>78</sup> PCC Wills. The Thomas who died in 1587 was probably a grandson. NA C142/215, no. 245. Bod. MS Ashmole 836, f. 211.

<sup>79</sup> Cal. Pat., 1569–72, p. 29. 23rd April 1570. NA C142/189, no. 50.

December by Sir Adrian Poynings. No explanation for this change remains on record. On 27th September 1562, the council notified his father that they had appointed Sir William Kelleway in Poynning's place. Again no explanation appears, but he had apparently upset the townsmen. When a further dispute between the town and the captain of Portsmouth was referred to the Lord Treasurer in 1565, it was with Kelleway and not his son or Poynings that he had to deal. Chidioc continued to serve on local commissions of the peace and of sewers and succeeded his father in law Sir Thomas White as the Bishop's treasurer in 1564. In the same year he was noted by Bishop Horne as a recusant, but 'loyal and conformable' in other respects. No action was taken against him. He had sat twice in the House of Commons on his father's patronage (in 1547 and 1553) and on several occasions commanded his father's 'bands' when these had been raised for Crown service. However, after his dismissal from Portsmouth, his father must have deemed it inexpedient to put him forward again. His first wife, Elizabeth White, whom he married in 1535, had died by 1561, when he remarried Frances Neville of Borley, Essex.<sup>80</sup> He had by his first marriage two sons and two daughters, but one of his sons appears to have died in infancy. He also survived his father, although not by long, dying in 1574. The Paulet clan was far less active in the 1560s than it had been in the 1540s and both religious sympathy and advancing years contributed to this. John was over 60 when he succeeded his father and even Chidioc would have been well into his 50s – debilitating ages by the standards of the time. One tends to forget amid the evidence of continuing activity, just how very old the Lord Treasurer was by the later 1560s.

By then even William Paulet's formidable energies were beginning to flag. Secondary studies occasionally refer to 'senility' and 'dotage', but the main sign is the diminishing frequency of his correspondence rather than any lack of grasp – except, perhaps in the Exchequer. In September 1568, when he was clearly absent from London on business, he wrote to Cecil expressing his intention to return 'within 20 days' and in December he requested the Secretary to send him a warrant for the extraordinary expenditure on the navy. This raises the interesting possibility that Cecil had already assumed the principal responsibility for the Admiralty, although there appears to be no Patent of authorisation. Normally the Treasurer himself signed such warrants and it might be expected that he would have issued it for payment to be made to Gonson. However, he sought it from the Secretary and, although the money would undoubtedly have ended up with the Treasurer of the Navy, this suggests that it may have passed through Winchester's hands on the way. Shortly after, probably in 1570, the marquis appears to have written (or at least drafted) a memorandum

<sup>80</sup> Bindoff, *House of Commons*, sub Chidioc Paulet. He sat in the Commons for Bamber in 1547 and for Gatton in October 1553.

lamenting the decay of the navy and pleading for more resources. At about the same time he wrote another memorandum on the revenues of the Duchy of Cornwall and was commissioned to survey the Ordnance office.<sup>81</sup> All this makes it extremely difficult to define with any clarity just what the limits of the Lord Treasurer's office actually were. It is probable that he had no very clear idea himself and that bureaucratic definition, however strong it may have been within the Exchequer, did not extend to the national administration as a whole. What is apparent is that Paulet undertook functions as a councillor which had nothing to do with his main office. For some reason now unknown at the end of November 1569, when the northern rebellion was already on the point of collapse, Thomas Wentworth wrote to the Lord Treasurer, complaining that 'the country (Yorkshire) is sorely charged in meeting many kinds of musters', which had been called against the rebels. Presumably it was the cost rather than the purpose to which he was objecting. Paulet, who was not at court, simply forwarded his letter to the council with a covering note.<sup>82</sup> He is believed to have fallen out with Cecil over the latter's intervention in the matter of the Duke of Alba's payships in 1568 and that would be consistent with his known caution in diplomatic matters, nor would he have been alone in that reaction, although the critical decision seems to have come from the Queen herself.<sup>83</sup> His involvement in the court plot against Cecil in the following year is little more than speculation, as he was getting increasingly out of touch by that time. When the last parliament of his life met in April 1571, the Lord Treasurer for the first time in his career appointed a proxy and gave that responsibility to Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, a man with whom he is not otherwise known to have had any friendly communications.

According to W.C. Richardson, towards the end of his life 'the crown owed Paulet a great deal of money'<sup>84</sup> but the evidence suggests that the indebtedness was the other way round. In August 1571 he sold the manor and rectory of Worting, Hampshire, for an undisclosed sum and in January 1572 a group of London bankers were licensed to lend him money at interest, irrespective of the laws against usury.<sup>85</sup> In spite of his considerable resources, he was clearly in financial difficulties. His total indebtedness was probably in excess of £46,000, of which £34,141 was

<sup>81</sup> CSPD, 1547–1581, pp. 399, 401.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid, p. 351. 3rd December 1569.

<sup>83</sup> W.T. MacCaffrey, *The Shaping of the Elizabethan Regime* (1969), pp. 199 et seq. Suspicion of involvement in the plot is occasioned less by any direct evidence of Winchester's own actions than by the fact that both his 'Exchequer servants', Shelton and Hare gave up their positions and fled the country in 1570. NA E36/266, f. 77. BL Lansdowne MS 67, f. 25.

<sup>84</sup> Richardson, *Augmentations*, p. 460.

<sup>85</sup> Cal. Pat., 1569–72, p. 375. 18th August 1571.

owed to the Queen.<sup>86</sup> On 17th June 1569 he had entered into a bond for the repayment of this massive sum ‘by reason whereof all his lands are chargeable’. However, this proved to be an unsatisfactory arrangement and, at some time between then and the end of 1571, he struck a bargain with his royal mistress. He and his heir agreed to alienate to the crown manors and other lands to an annual value of some £647, in return for which the remainder of the estate would be unburdened. This was finally sealed by a grant made on 26th February 1572, just a couple of weeks before his death.<sup>87</sup> Apparently this sale was calculated at the massive rate of 60 years purchase, which would have amounted to £40,400 and, although the deals were not completed before William’s death, this inflated figure must be seen as some sort of a reward for his immensely long service. The late date of that settlement and the fact that it was completed by John, may well have left William with insufficient time to set his affairs in order in other respects, because unusually for a man in his position, he appears to have died intestate. During a later dispute over the estate, William the third marquis alleged that Winifrid, his mother in law, had suppressed his grandfather’s will in order to give his father full control over the estate, but this was never substantiated. In view of the value placed on the alienated lands, presumably John was able to settle both the Crown debt and about half the private debts of some £12,000, out of the proceeds of the sales and to satisfy the hundred and odd descendants that his father had lived to see.<sup>88</sup> Soon afterwards the second marquis’s income was estimated at between £2000 and £3000 a year and this was entirely from land as he held no offices. This would not have left him the richest peer in England, but it would have placed him within the top half dozen, so it can be assumed that before the alienations of February 1572, the total estate would have been worth substantially more than £3000 per annum. William died at Basing, apparently after a short illness, on 10th March 1572 and was buried a few days later in the parish church there, his funeral costing the princely (but not quite royal) sum of £1122.<sup>89</sup> The office of Keeper of St Andrews Castle upon the Hamble was immediately granted to John and on 15th September 1572 William, Lord Burghley was appointed Lord Treasurer.

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<sup>86</sup> NA SP12/148 no.18. L. Stone, *The Crisis of the Aristocracy, 1558–1640* (1965) pp. 423–4. His private debt of £12,000 was ‘largely due to his ambitious building projects at Basing and Chelsea’, the latter of which had allegedly cost more than £14,000. *Ibid.* p. 554.

<sup>87</sup> Cal. Pat., 1569–72, p. 405.

<sup>88</sup> NA SP12/110, no. 30. Paulet Commonplace Book.

<sup>89</sup> NA SP12/148, no. 18.

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## Epilogue

The 10th March 1572 was a Monday and William's extremely long life came to an end 'between the hours of 10 and 11 o'clock'. We do not know what rites attended his passing, but it would have been typical of the man if they had been in strict accordance with the prescription of the established church.<sup>1</sup> Although he was regarded by the Spaniards as 'a good catholic' and had certainly conformed to Mary's church most scrupulously, in November 1552 he had been described very differently in a letter from Thomas Naunton to no less a person than John Calvin. Naunton was describing the arrangements which had been made for the family of the attainted Duke of Somerset. His widow had been reduced by the attainder to 'the lowest level of nobility'; his eldest daughter, Anne, was already married to the Earl of Warwick. Four other daughters, all unmarried, had been entrusted by the Council to their aunt Elizabeth, recently widowed by Lord Gregory Cromwell and soon to marry Lord John Paulet. The youngest daughter, less than two years old, was in the care of another aunt, Dorothy, the widow of Sir Clement Smith. His heir, Edward, aged 13 and his two brothers, aged 12 and five, were wards of the Crown and were 'with the Lord Treasurer of England'. They were, he reported, being liberally educated – 'I retain my old office of instructing them'. He continued:

But you may perhaps feel uncomfortable at their residing in the house of that individual, the Marquis of Winchester, of whose religion you may have been led from the reports of others, to entertain a doubt. This doubt, however, I am able to remove. As far as I can perceive he is a worthy and religious man, nor do I see in what respects he differs from us, so that even supposing he were to think differently, which I do not believe to be the case, yet as he does not draw us aside, but even goes before us in religion by his own example, there is no danger.<sup>2</sup>

John Knox, as we have seen, had a rather different view, as did Richard Morison, who described him as having 'a tongue fit for all times with

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<sup>1</sup> Bod. MS Ashmole 836, f. 214. The special prayer which was written for the Lord Treasurer's funeral was little more than a list of his titles and offices, with a conventional pious invocation. Nothing can be gathered from it as to the nature of his beliefs.

<sup>2</sup> Thomas Naunton to John Calvin, 13th November 1552. H. Robinson, *Original Letters Relative to the English Reformation, 1531–1558* (Parker Society, 2 vols., 1846–1847), II, pp. 339–42.

an obedience readie for assurance',<sup>3</sup> but Naunton was much closer to the action and clearly reported what he believed to be the truth. Neither Paulet nor Elizabeth Cromwell appear to have received any grant of wardship, so that presumably remained vested in the King, and the council 'farmed out' the children in the way which Naunton described as a way of discharging the King's obligations. Elizabeth received 400 marks a year for the maintenance of the girls, but Edward had a reserved income from his father's estate (the bulk of which went to the Exchequer) which amounted to £2400 a year<sup>4</sup> and if the marquis received all that for his pains, he was hardly acting out of the kindness of his heart – or at least not only for that reason. In what sense Paulet 'went before' the reformers by his example we do not know, but it is safe to assume that the following summer either Mary did not know of it, or did not take it seriously.

William was attended to the grave by all his four sons and by numerous other members of his extended family. Garter, King of Arms was in attendance, with two pursuivants and the presence of 30 poor men in black gowns indicates a highly traditional ceremony. According to the notes which survive for his funeral, there was to be no 'dole' apart from the black gowns and the preacher was to be 'not under the degree of a Dean'.<sup>5</sup> The whole cortège seems to have numbered about 100, led by John Paulet the second marquis as Chief Mourner and by the 'Controller, Treasurer, Steward and all other officers of his house ...' who unfortunately are not named. Several chaplains, also unnamed, were in attendance. We do not know who preached, or who conducted the funeral, although it is reasonable to assume that Robert Horne, the veteran Bishop of Winchester would have done one or the other. All that we can learn from the plans for his obsequies is that he was a great man and that his passing seems to have been clouded by no shadow of controversy. Although some members of his family were suspected of recusancy and none had ever been accused of heresy, William Paulet went to his last rest, as he had lived, a model of conformity. If he had ever been inclined to 'go before' the reformers, there was no sign of it on this occasion. The burial was followed by a ceremonial offertory and by what Henry Machyn would have called 'a grete bankett', the outlines of both of which survive in the notes.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Richard Morison, 'A Discourse ... shewing the godly and virtuous resolution of Edward VI upon the Emperor's demand to have the ladie mary the king's sister to be allowed libertie of conscience in England' (1552) BL, Harleian MS 353, f. 131v. I am indebted to Dr. Tracey Sowerby of Pembroke College, Oxford, for drawing my attention to the relevance of Morison's work.

<sup>4</sup> *Original Letters*, II, pp. 339–42.

<sup>5</sup> Ashmole MS 836, f. 214.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.* Two alternative arrangements were prepared, and a note of 'the proceedings' appended, which included the appointment of sewers and gentlemen ushers 'for the Chamber' and yeomen ushers 'for the Hall'; *ibid.*, f. 211.

John, the second marquis of Winchester was already a man of about '66 years of age and upwards' when he succeeded his father.<sup>7</sup> He had been the heir for a very long time and had shared a number of grants in survivorship with the old Lord Treasurer, but in spite of having been Lord St John of Basing since 1550, his public career had been very limited. Almost his only claim to distinction was that he had been knighted at Boulogne in 1544. Within days of his father's death he had been granted the Keepership of St Andrews castle, on the Hamble, which was virtually a Paulet fiefdom and it was presumably in that capacity that he wrote to the Council in November 1572, outlining the preparations which were being made to put Portsmouth and the Isle of Wight into a state of defence.<sup>8</sup> However he held no other office beyond that of Justice of the Peace and was probably regarded as a man of small ability. It may also be that he had not aged as well as his formidable sire, because he seems to have been dominated by his third wife, Winifrid, and by his son-in-law, Henry Ughtered. He died in his turn in 1576 and, within weeks of his death, his son William, the third marquis, had lodged a bitter complaint with the Council about the way in which he had disposed of the estate.<sup>9</sup> William alleged that his grandfather had left the whole estate and all his possessions to John, with the intention that it should all pass in time to him; 'by his said will continued my father so left it to me'. However, after the elder William's death, Winifrid 'conspired and brought to pass that my father should suppress the said will and take the administration'. According to the official record the old Lord Treasurer died intestate, so if there was such a plot presumably it succeeded, although why the other executors made no attempt to stop it is not explained.<sup>10</sup> It is probable that 'will' in this context means 'known and expressed intention', rather than an actual document.

In an attempt to prevent this coup, William claimed that his uncles (not named) 'persuaded my father to call me and my brother (probably George, but also unnamed) home to him'. Winifrid, however, had countered this by sending for her step-daughter Elizabeth and Elizabeth's third husband Sir Henry Ughtered to come and 'abide with' the second marquis. In what must have become a very tense and claustrophobic household, Ughtered had then persuaded John to make a jointure for Winifrid of £400 a year 'out of the best land'. Since she was not otherwise provided for this looks reasonable enough, but William clearly regarded it as a grievance. More pertinently, 'in December last' (that is December 1575), the house in Chelsea and £1400 worth of land had been sold. According to William,

<sup>7</sup> NA C142/161, no. 93. London IPM for William, Marquis of Winchester.

<sup>8</sup> NA SP12/110, no. 1. Winchester to the Council, 5th November 1572.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid, no. 30. Undated but 1576. 'The griefes of me William, Marquis of Winchester against Winifrid Lady Marchjiness and her complices'.

<sup>10</sup> C142/161, no. 93.

the Lord Treasurer's debt to the Crown had not been finally settled at the time of his death. The figures, although seemingly precise are probably not accurate. According to this complaint only £12,000 had actually reached the Exchequer by 10th March 1572 and the sale of the lands which had been licensed to pay the debt was only partly complete. The second marquis then apparently entrusted the completion of these transactions to Sir Henry Ughtered, who continued to sell lands and woods to the value of 'above £40,000', of which some £30,000 passed through his own hands.<sup>11</sup> John received a further license to sell lands in Somerset, some of which had not been included in the original arrangement, on 26th November 1573, and these were presumably included both in Ughtered's brief and in the totals alleged.<sup>12</sup> For this money, according to the complaint, he had never accounted, being 'released of such' by the marquis. This was one version of the story, but a slightly different version claimed that the value of the lands sold was 'but £32,000' and that this was provable by the accounts of Swithin Thorpe 'late secretary to the late Marquis'.<sup>13</sup>

It is immediately apparent that these two versions are not quite consistent. Although the difference between £32,000 and £40,000 may be accounted for by the fact that the first figure does not include wood sales, the stories about accounting are not compatible. If Swithin Thorpe held the account and kept track of the money, then there was no cause for Henry Ughtered to account as well, whether he was 'released' by the marquis or not. Presumably the sums collected by Ughtered and recorded by Thorpe were eventually handed over to the Exchequer, although whether that had happened by the time that the complaints was made is not clear. William clearly felt that he had been cheated out of part of his inheritance and he was on very bad terms with his step-mother and with Sir Henry Ughtered. The first complaint was launched almost before the second marquis was buried, in November 1576, the second not until March 1581, so the rancour clearly went on for quite a long time. Perhaps it was the choice of the lands to be sold which really annoyed William. There is a suggestion that he was particularly cross over the sale of the Chelsea house, upon which so much money had been spent. But the picture which this dispute presents of the second marquis is a sad one, because the impression given is that of a man abdicating his responsibilities and clearly not looking after the interests of his heir in the way that the latter thought that he should. John was clearly expecting trouble from his heir, which confirms that relations between them were strained before his death, because in his will, which disposes of his moveable property and cash but makes no mention of lands or houses,

<sup>11</sup> NA SP12/148, no. 18.

<sup>12</sup> Cal. Pat., 1572–75, p. 338. The pattern of sales is unclear, because some of the manors listed in this license had also been licensed earlier, while others – the majority – had not.

<sup>13</sup> SP12/148, no. 18.

he decreed that William should not receive the movables at Basing 'before he the said Lord St John hath put in good and sufficient assurances to my executors ... that he shall not vex nor disturb his said wife Dame Winifid or any other' concerning his bequests. Winifrid had been left the movables at Chelsea, and at one or two other houses, and Sir Henry Ughtered was given the task of clearing up the debt to the Crown.<sup>14</sup>

It is not clear that anything was done about these protests and the third marquis remained a very wealthy man. However, in spite of the fact that he was England's premier peer, his public career was even less distinguished than that of his father. His only significant office was that of Lord Lieutenant of Dorset in 1580, which was also the only year in which his nomination for the Garter attracted any support (four votes).<sup>15</sup> He never came anywhere near being elected and one can only conclude that very few of the old Lord Treasurer's talents were transmitted to his descendants.

William died in 1598 and his son the fourth marquis (also William) was still listed as owing £12,000 to private debtors in 1601, although these were presumably not the same debts and the Crown debt, having been eliminated, had not reappeared.<sup>16</sup> This was probably a measure of the lack of engagement by both the third and fourth marquises in public affairs, rather than of any particular prudence. However, only eight peers out of more than 50 were noted as being in a worse position. Paulet's gross income in the following year, 1602, has been estimated at somewhere between £1800 and £3599, which is quite a wide margin.<sup>17</sup> He was probably towards the upper limit, because his son John, the fifth marquis (who had succeeded in 1628) is similarly estimated to have had an income in excess of £4500 a year in 1641. Apart from the Royal Princes, Henry and Charles, who were respectively Dukes of Cornwall and York, the fourth marquis continued to be the premier peer of England until the creation of George Villiers as Duke of Buckingham in 1623, but his wealth never reflected that status. In 1602 14 peers are estimated to have had incomes in excess of £3599, while 11 are higher rated in 1641.<sup>18</sup> Charles, the sixth marquis, was created Duke of Bolton in 1689 and the male line came to an end with the death of his son, the second Duke in 1722.

As we have seen, the wealth of the first marquis is exceedingly hard to estimate. Before 1525 he must have been in occupation of some of the Paulet manors in Hampshire in order to qualify as a JP and Sheriff, but

<sup>14</sup> Will of John Paulet, 2nd Marquis of Winchester. NA NAB 11/59, f. 347.

<sup>15</sup> ODNB.

<sup>16</sup> Stone, *Crisis of the Aristocracy*, Appendix XXI.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid, Appendix VIII (B).

<sup>18</sup> Ibid, Appendix VIII (C) Howard (Arundel), Percy and Seymour were all rated at £13,000+.

we do not know which they were, or on what terms he held them. His grandfather's will of 1494 is infuriatingly uninformative, mentioning only his widow and his son John. It is clear that he was a man of exemplary piety, leaving bequests to the churches of Fisherton, Delamere and Nunney and ordaining 1000 masses to be said for the repose of his soul, but nothing else is said about the disposal of his main estate, which must presumably have been already determined.<sup>19</sup> The IPM for William's father, John, in 1525, makes it clear that the main estate at Basing was enfeoffed to use, because it includes an instruction to the trustees that they 'shall suffer and permit the said William my son to have the rule and disposition of the said manors with all their appurtenances'. He was also to pay his mother 200 marks a year for the rest of her life, plus wood for fuel and to provide for his siblings at the rate of 40 marks or 20 marks.<sup>20</sup> There are references in the IPM to a more detailed will, but that was either never made, or does not survive. William was living and working for the most part in London, but again we do not know where until he acquired the house in Austin Friars which was subsequently known as Staple Hall and Winchester House. It is unlikely that his landed income before his father's death was more than about £200 or £300 a year and it is probable that he was earning more from his legal work in London, although we do not know exactly what that was. In spite of his enrolment in the Draper's Company, and long association with it, he never seems to have practiced that trade.<sup>21</sup> To judge from his father-in-law's will of 1515, at that time he was thought of primarily as a lawyer. The Basing estate, when he took over his father's interest in it was probably worth in the region of £1000 a year. We know that John was one of the wealthiest (if not the wealthiest) gentlemen in Hampshire and held lands also in other counties.<sup>22</sup> On the other hand he was not an office holder in any professional sense, so there would have been little to add to that in terms of fees. When William began his career at court in 1526, his combined resources probably amounted to about £1500 per annum, bearing in mind that his Hampshire manors would have been absorbed back into the main estate, until his eldest son John came of age in about 1532 and had to be provided for.

The first contemporary estimate we have of his income from land is the subsidy assessment of 1545, when he was taxed as Lord Great Master, at £1000. That list is headed by the Duke of Norfolk at £3000 and included a handful of other peers at £2000 or £1200.<sup>23</sup> Lord St John was not a

<sup>19</sup> NA NAB11/10 (22 Vox).

<sup>20</sup> NA C142/44/94.

<sup>21</sup> There is no record of his having taken an apprentice, which is the best test of active participation.

<sup>22</sup> For example, in Yorkshire. E142/43, no. 56.

<sup>23</sup> NA E179/69/54.

commissioner in 1545 and, by comparison with subsequent efforts, that assessment is considered to have been fairly realistic. Consequently it is quite likely that his real income from land was between £1500 and £2000. However, he was a courtier and an office holder – most particularly he was both Lord Great Master and Master of the Court of Wards. The official fees for those positions, and other lesser ones such as Master of the Woods, are known, but the perquisites are not. The fees came to between £250 and £300 a year, but the casual income must have more than doubled that, so even a conservative estimate of Paulet's gross income in 1545 would be about £3500 a year. That would not have made him 'the richest man in England' as he was later described, but would have placed him within the top ten or so. When the next surviving assessment was made in 1559, William, by now Lord Treasurer and a commissioner, had gone up from £1000 to £1200. At the same time the Duke of Norfolk had come down from £3000 to the same figure.<sup>24</sup> The Dukedom of Norfolk had been subjected to forfeiture in 1546 and recovery in 1553, so that it is likely that there really had been some decline there. It has been estimated that Norfolk's gross income in 1559 was actually about £6000,<sup>25</sup> but there had been rapid inflation of almost 100 per cent since 1545, so we should probably deduce that the duke's real income had been between £4000 and £5000 a year at the time of his forfeiture. Nevertheless we should also conclude that the assessments made in 1559 were a good deal less realistic than those of 14 years earlier.

The same estimate that places the duke at £6000 calculates Paulet's income at somewhat below £3000, which would mean that the Lord Treasurer was being a great deal more conscientious about his own assessment than he was about Norfolk's. The obvious conclusion is that the estimate for Paulet is too low, perhaps by as much as 50 per cent. As a rough guide, in 1547 the Duke of Somerset was assessed at £1700, a time when his grandson later claimed that his real landed income had been £4,400.<sup>26</sup> If this statement was accurate, it would mean that *pro rata* Paulet's landed income in 1545 was about £3000, to which would have to be added the income from his various offices. By the same token, the Lord Treasurer's gross income in 1559 would have been more like £5000 than £3000 and that would have placed him in the top half dozen. Interestingly, the Earl of Derby's assessment remained the same, at £2000 on both occasions, which may reflect inflation, or a lack of political influence. The estimates already referred to list Stanley's income in 1559 as a little short of £5000.

<sup>24</sup> NA E179/69/78, 79.

<sup>25</sup> Stone, *Crisis of the Aristocracy*, Appendix VIII (A).

<sup>26</sup> Helen Miller, 'Subsidy assessments of the peerage in the sixteenth century', *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research*, 28, 1955, pp. 15–34.

The son of a marquis ranked as a Baron and John, Lord St John duly appears in the first assessment of Elizabeth's reign, with an income returned at £400 a year.<sup>27</sup> He had by that time received some land grants in his own right, as well as an inheritance from his first marriage, but it is impossible to judge what level of reality this figure represents.

When the second Elizabethan subsidy was assessed in 1566, the Earl of Derby was still on £2000 and the Duke of Norfolk on £1200, but the Marquis of Winchester (who was not a commissioner this time) had come down to £800.<sup>28</sup> There was, as Helen Miller observed many years ago, no valid reason for this.<sup>29</sup> He had certainly given up the Mastership of the Wards and that would have diminished his income in real terms, but not by 33 per cent, and it would not have affected the income from lands upon which he was supposed to be assessed. In fact this was an even more blatant under-assessment than before and was quite in keeping with the general tendency of the time. William Cecil, who was a commissioner, was an even more unscrupulous tax-dodger than Winchester and may be presumed to have done this favour for him. In the same return, Lord St John's income was alleged to have diminished from £400 to £150 and again there is no reason to suppose that this corresponded with any real decline. When the return for the first part of the 1571 subsidy was made, the situation remained unchanged and this was the last of the old Lord Treasurer's lifetime. By the time that the second part of the same subsidy was demanded, the Duke of Norfolk had disappeared and the list was headed by Lord Treasurer Burghley, at a ludicrously inadequate £250. The second Marquis of Winchester – once again the premier peer – followed on 1000 marks (£666 – 13s – 4d).<sup>30</sup> This may not have been quite so unjustified, because as we have seen the sale of some £650 worth of lands was in hand at that time and John's income may well have been significantly lower than his father's. If we conclude that William's last assessment represented about 25 per cent of his real landed income, then probably John's was about the same. Having settled some at least of his debts to the Crown, the remaining estates of the second marquis were worth between £2500 and £3000. As a partial confirmation that this assessment was no less realistic than the last, Lord St John – by this time William – had advanced from £150 to £300.

Although the first William Paulet dealt extensively in land throughout his public career, his attitude to his estates resembled that of the older

<sup>27</sup> NA E179/69/78.

<sup>28</sup> E179/69/83.

<sup>29</sup> Helen Miller, 'Subsidy assessments'.

<sup>30</sup> E179/69/86. There is no realistic estimate of William Cecil's income in 1571/2. Stone estimates his son's revenue in 1602 at between £5400 and £7199 per annum. Stone, Appendix VIII (B).

peerage families such as Stanley and Talbot, rather than that of his own contemporaries, such as Dudley and Seymour. He inherited a firm base at Basing, with a clutch of manors surrounding it and went on adding to this Hampshire core, particularly by the purchase of monastic property. The feofment to use was not mentioned in 1572 and must have been terminated at some point, but we do not know when. Dudley, by contrast, built up and disposed of a number of patrimonies in the course of his career, including major interests in both Warwickshire and the North, but never seems to have settled anywhere outside London.<sup>31</sup> According to his grandson, William died seized of five major houses, two in London – Austin Friars and Chelsea – and three in Hampshire – Basing, Abbotstone and Nettle. He seems to have divided his time mainly between Austin Friars and Basing and it was at these two properties that his ‘household stuff’ was kept, some of which would be sent to the other properties as and when required.<sup>32</sup> Although he probably spent more of his working life at Austin Friars, his ‘seat’ was undoubtedly Basing and it was to this Hampshire base that Henry VIII, Edward VI, Mary and Elizabeth all came in turn – which must surely constitute a record for any peerage family. In 1554 it was being rumoured in the court that the marquis was about to give Basing to the Queen, presumably for the same reason that Wolsey had given Hampton Court to Henry VIII, but the rumour was false and as far as I can discover, never had any basis.<sup>33</sup> Of course it had the advantage of being ‘on the way’ to Portsmouth, where the fleet was based, and to Winchester where Queen Mary was married. Basing must have been just about the only private house which King Philip visited during the 15 months or so which he spent in England. How these estates were managed, and who was responsible for them, we have no idea. We know that his four sons, John, Chidiock, Thomas and Giles, with their wives and families occupied some family properties. Others were leased. So it is probable that stewards appointed by Paulet and accountable to him, were installed in only a minority of manors, but this is little more than guesswork. Apart from John de Vic, latterly his secretary, and Rowland Broughton, a gentleman servant and probably his Steward at the end of his life, we do not even know who his ‘men of business’ may have been and the natural suspicion is that he handled all the important issues himself. In spite of his wealth and status he was not a grandee by instinct. In his various official capacities he operated through the servants of the Office – Household, Wards, Exchequer and so on and privately seems to have used either his relations or anonymous gentlemen servants. All this presents a complete contrast with the style of his contemporary the Duke of Somerset, who was, admittedly, a little

<sup>31</sup> Loades, *John Dudley*, Appendix I.

<sup>32</sup> SP12/110, no. 30.

<sup>33</sup> *The Chronicle of Queen Jane*, p. 82.

wealthier, but who entertained lavishly and retained not only a private council, but also a retinue of aristocratic retainers. When references occur in the records to ‘my lord of Winchester’ man, the allusion is nearly always to the bishop rather than the marquis.

The story of his dealings at Austin Friars seems to have been typical of his methods of doing business. It was originally granted to Thomas Cromwell, but in 1536 Paulet leased a part of it and, on that, built a house which was then granted to him in April 1539, ‘with all the houses, curtilages, gardens etc. thereunto belonging’ for a rent of £11.12s 5d. In November 1546 Laurence Herwarde and Stephen Tenant, who appear to have been agents working on his behalf, were granted other parts of the site, the Prior’s Chamber, the garden, the ‘little house adjoining’ and so on, which they then received license to alienate.<sup>34</sup> Paulet thus acquired the whole site, and proceeded to expand his house. Later, as we have seen, he was authorised to divert the nearby brook. How much he may have spent on this property is not clear, but if the estimate for Chelsea is anywhere near the mark, it must have been a great deal. Austin Friars remained in the family well into the seventeenth century.

Did the Paulets enjoy anything which could be described as *manred*? They were a long established Hampshire family, and also exercised some of the Bishop’s patronage on his behalf, as can be seen in the parliamentary elections of 1529.<sup>35</sup> Between these two aspects of their position, they could certainly command a following, but there is no evidence that William, even as marquis, retained gentlemen in his service other than as his officers. He was called upon on several occasions to raise men for the King’s (or Queen’s) wars, or against rebellion, usually to the extent of 100 or 200. That happened in 1536, in 1544 and again in 1554 and on each occasion he performed his duty without fuss or difficulty. However, it is not at all clear to what extent these bands consisted of his own men, to what extent of the bishop’s men, or to what extent they were simply local levies. Although he may have served in person at Boulogne, it was not as the captain of any band which he may have raised. On that occasion his men were commanded by his son John and the men he provided for service against Thomas Wyatt in February 1554 were led by his younger son Chidiock.<sup>36</sup> John was also called upon to provide footmen in smaller numbers on similar occasions, although whether these should be thought of as his own men, or his father’s, or whether they were simply hired is not at all

<sup>34</sup> L&P, XXI, 236 (98).

<sup>35</sup> As Steward, Paulet would also have had the leading of the ‘bishop’s men’ when it came to any kind of muster, although it is not clear that he ever exercised that function in person.

<sup>36</sup> ‘... certain of the lorde treasurers band, to the number of CCCC men, met them (the rebels), and so going on the one side passyd by theym coming on the othersyde without eny whit saying to theym ...’ *Chronicle of Queen Jane*, p. 50.

clear. As Lord Treasurer William was involved in the purchase of armour and weapons, but that was on behalf of the Crown and had nothing to do with any retinue of his own. By 1576 there was a modest armoury at Basing, with up-to-date equipment for 20 footmen, which presumably had been assembled by William, but there is no record of his having done so.<sup>37</sup> Although he was later given military responsibility in the form of Lieutenancies, William Paulet was a complete civilian. He was also well past the normal age of military service before his public career began. He would have been of fighting age at the time of the Cornish revolt in 1497, but there is no sign that either he or his father were called on for that occasion and he was probably a law student in London at the time. Men were raised for the French war of 1512–1514 and William served as a muster commissioner, but there is no evidence that he either raised a band, or went to war himself. Unlike his brother-in-law Giles Capell he was never a jousting, and his favour with Henry VIII owed nothing to good companionship. William was a very good administrator, but he was not a nobleman by birth, or a soldier by inclination. He does seem to have been very conscious of the fact that he was a gentleman of coat armour and he could put on an aristocratic show when the occasion demanded, as witness his wife's funeral in 1559, but he was a service nobleman with no military pretensions. He seems to have invested his money in land and in the maintenance of his large brood of children and their offspring. Those who did not like him accused him of avarice and he may well have spent generously on jewels and plate, rather than on maintaining a lavish lifestyle. We do not know how much his movables were worth at the time of his death, because his grandson does not tell us, although his son's will indicates a value of several thousand pounds. The younger William may simply not have known the terms of that will, which was largely aimed at satisfying the rest of the family. William's complaint hints, but does not say, that he suspected Henry Ughtred of having made off with quite a lot of it. Whatever John inherited, only that at Basing seems to have reached his son and Winifrid secured the lion's share of the rest. Both the second and third marquises continued to be wealthy peers, but to what extent the family position in Hampshire was maintained is hard to say.

By comparison with the Duke of Buckingham, the third and fourth Dukes of Norfolk, the Duke of Somerset or the Duke of Northumberland, the Marquis of Winchester remains an elusive figure. One of the reasons for this is that, unlike all the others mentioned, he was never attainted, so his papers were never seized, or his goods inventoried.<sup>38</sup> Although a

<sup>37</sup> NA NAB 11/59, f. 348.

<sup>38</sup> Cromwell, particularly owed the survival of his papers to his attainder and the details of Northumberland's wealth at the time of his fall were recorded in the inventories then taken. NA LR2/118.

good deal was sold in the five years after his death, the core of his estate passed to his heirs and remained in the family until the late seventeenth or eighteenth century, when the Orde-Poulets eventually moved to the north. The documentation has consequently seeped away. For some of the Basing manors there are court rolls going well back into the middle ages, but they tell us very little about the estate as a whole and nothing about how it was managed in William's long lifetime.<sup>39</sup> Unlike William Cecil he made no attempt to build up a private archive and such papers as he must have kept have been long since disposed of by conscientious housekeepers. Again unlike Cecil, his heirs had scant interest in such things and even in Cecil's case the archive surviving from before 1558 is very patchy. Most of what we know about William Paulet comes from the tracks that he left in public affairs and much of that is very unrewarding matter. We have many licenses which he issued as Master of the Wards, detailed correspondence about victualling contracts, instructions to Receivers and (more rarely) opinions upon technical matters of administration. In a period of oversized personalities, and dangerous and exciting politics, he was always the 'safe pair of hands'. Even those who knew him well were uncertain about many aspects of his life. He was married only once and his wife is almost unknown to the public records. He had four sons, all of whom lived to ripe old ages, but with the possible exception of Chidiok they are as colourless a bunch as could well be found. He was, by general agreement, an effective, even an innovatory Lord Treasurer, who was responsible both for the Exchequer reorganisation of 1554 and for the re-coinage of 1561. However, detailed examination demonstrates that he was often out of sympathy with the policies actually adopted, even in those instances. He was an advocate of strong central control of the finances and in that achieved a large measure of success, but even there he was defeated in detail both by William Cecil and by Elizabeth. If his most lasting legacy was an Exchequer which worked, we should be at a loss to explain the bitter wrangles which broke out under his successor, the origins of some of which can be traced back to his regime.<sup>40</sup>

The religious regime which suited him best was probably that of Henry VIII. Unlike most of his contemporaries of similar eminence, we have no first hand evidence either of his piety or of his intellectual interests – indeed of theological awareness there is no sign whatsoever. The objective evidence, which is virtually confined to his voting record in the House of Lords, suggests conservatism but little more; while his survival indicates strict conformity to whatever regime was in power. In this he was by no

<sup>39</sup> Hampshire Record Office 11M49, M29, M50, M51. These are records of manorial courts, which are informative mainly about land use disputes.

<sup>40</sup> G.R. Elton, 'The Elizabethan Exchequer: War in the Receipt', *Studies in Tudor and Stuart Politics and Government*, I (1974), pp. 355–88.

means alone, either among the nobility or the population at large. Indeed it was those with convictions prominent enough to get them into trouble who constituted the small minority. Because the practices of religion played such a large part in people's lives, we tend to assume that most of the population had strong convictions. That was not the case. What most people had was habits and customs going back over many generations.<sup>41</sup> They also had deeply ingrained traditions of obedience, particularly to the King. When Henry VIII broke with the Pope, most of the nobility supported him, thinking the pontiff to be at best an irrelevance and at worst an interfering foreigner. William Paulet belonged in this camp, not unaware (as were many others) of the opportunities which the new situation created for his own enrichment. To monasticism as a way of life, such men were largely indifferent. The *opus dei* had long since lost its appeal, except to the zealous few.<sup>42</sup> Among the clergy the situation was rather different and that has distorted our picture of the Reformation in general. The educated clergy did have convictions and knew where they stood in the theological conflicts of the day. They divided pretty evenly into those who supported the King and those who did not and it was against these dissenters that the oppressive face of the regime was most often displayed. The uneducated clergy (who formed the vast majority), tended to steer by the compass of tradition and were deeply uneasy when that was disturbed. Some of them grumbled audibly against the King's proceedings, and were duly punished, but many could see little to get excited about as long as the traditional rites of the church were undisturbed. Henry was nothing if not insistent about getting his own way over the Royal Supremacy and this gave the cue to most of his subjects, lay and clerical. Let the King be answerable to God. If he was wrong he would be accountable and the duty of obedience absolved the consciences of those who followed him. If William Paulet gave any thought to his religious allegiance before 1547, it was probably along these lines.

After that the situation changed. With the minority of Edward VI power passed into the hands of those who had, or claimed to have, protestant convictions. Paulet was opposed to further change, but not sufficiently opposed to risk his career. No doubt he had looked forward to a traditional *ars moriendi*, until the chantries act of 1547 swept it away.<sup>43</sup> Yet his relations with Protector Somerset were good and the Act of Uniformity was (as far as we can tell) strictly obeyed in his household. His conscience,

<sup>41</sup> For a particularly telling exposition of this (although it is not the author's main intention) see Eamon Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars* (1992).

<sup>42</sup> The *opus dei* was the daily routine of prayer and praise which was the monks main purpose. By the end of the fourteenth century this had lost its appeal to lay benefactors, who preferred the more engaged lifestyle of the friars, or educational foundations.

<sup>43</sup> The original Chantries Act of 1545 had never been implemented, so the impact of this move only became clear with the issue of the commissions of implementation in 1548.

however, was becoming exposed. With the Royal Supremacy in the hands of the council, it was no longer quite so easy to leave responsibility for the faith to the King and at some point, between 1549 and 1552, Paulet moved from grudging acquiescence to more positive support. We do not know why he became involved in the *coup* against Somerset, but it is unlikely to have been in the interest of religious conservatism. It probably had more to do with identifying the winning side. The same rather bleak explanation accounts for his adherence to the Earl of Warwick at the end of 1549, because the one thing that Warwick was not was a religious conservative. Warwick rewarded and promoted him and he obviously gave a convincing impression of being a Calvinist, which was probably necessary given the suspicion with which he was by this time surrounded. The trouble was, he was trying to be all things to all people, as Richard Morison noted. The same author wrote shrewdly, and with obvious reference to the coup of 1549, that he:

thought it always aim to be slave to a chief Privy Councillor of what side soever he were, no villainye to help to betraye his Master so he might thereby please his fellowe counsellor ...<sup>44</sup>

The Emperor's ambassador thought of him as sympathetic, particularly in trade matters and yet he was almost certainly supporting the Merchant Adventurers in their conflict with the Hanse. The same ambassador thought he was a catholic and sympathetic to Mary, yet he was entrusted with the protestant upbringing of the sons of the Duke of Somerset. It is not surprising that he seems to have feared that he had given too good an impression of Protestantism when faced with Mary's accession.

In July 1553 Paulet had foot in both camps and would probably have survived whoever had won, but Mary's standards of orthodoxy were high and there is no doubt that the marquis had frequented the new services in a way which she had explicitly refused to do. He was probably saved less by the fact that the Queen considered him to be a secret catholic than by the fact that he had switched sides in the nick of time during the crisis. He thus became one of those councillors whom Mary urgently needed because of their experience and whose misdemeanours she decided to overlook for that reason. It is very likely that he found the return of Henrician conformity a huge relief after three years of pretending (quite successfully) to be a protestant. How he reacted to the next stage of the catholic reaction is, however, a different matter. With the return of the Pope, Mary became a zealot and there was nothing of the zealot in Paulet's make up. Unlike Lord Rich, with whom he otherwise had a certain amount in common, he avoided all connection with the religious persecution.<sup>45</sup> Along with

<sup>44</sup> Morison, 'Discourse', f. 132 r.

<sup>45</sup> Lord Rich had been an active promoter of evangelical causes under Edward, but turned around completely under Mary, and was active in the persecution of several Essex

everyone else he paid his formal respects to Cardinal Pole, but there are no indications that he sought his company – nor indeed would Pole have found such a totally unintellectual person congenial. The Lord Treasurer went to mass, organised funerals and other ceremonies, and kept out of the firing line. He had plenty to keep him busy without interfering gratuitously in events with which he had no concern. As a councillor, he cannot entirely avoid a share of the responsibility for what happened, but to him it was simply another piece of business.

Elizabeth was a very different proposition. When he had been responsible for her custody, Paulet had shown her no particular favour – but then he had a job to do and she understood that. In November 1558 the new Queen recognised no obligations to anyone and had no particular affection for her sister's extremely venerable servant. He however, represented an achievable continuity.<sup>46</sup> In religious terms she probably did not care much what he believed, as long as he did as he was told. She had been a Nicodemite herself and believed that the Lord Treasurer would conform himself to whatever establishment she might choose. That was not true of the Lord Chancellor, Nicholas Heath, nor of any of Mary's more intimate servants. Winchester was not alone in being amenable, but he was by far the most senior and respected figure in that position. A little blind eye was a small price to pay to retain his services. Once that decision was taken, he applied himself to business with the same energy and competence as before. He did not subscribe to any personal cult of the new Queen and stayed away from court as much as he could and probably more than he should. He appears to have become resentful when his advice was not taken, but continued working as before. Although he occasionally addressed Cecil as his 'very good and loving friend' this seems to have been no more than conventional.<sup>47</sup> Their relationship remained strictly professional and they frequently disagreed. For several years the Spanish ambassadors continued to regard him as a friendly voice in the council, but it is not at all apparent what he did to deserve that opinion – apart from quarrelling with the Merchant Adventurers. It is highly unlikely that he supported clandestine masses after they had become illegal, or that he conspicuously absented himself from public worship. From his point of view the voice of authority had once again spoken on religious matters, and another conformity was in place. This did not mean that he had no faith, or was indifferent to ecclesiastical matters, it was just that his type of commitment was not engaged by the issues in controversy. It was an unreflective faith, typical of

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protestants. For this he was much vilified by John Foxe. See *Acts and Monuments* (1570), esp. Book 11.

<sup>46</sup> Her refusal to acknowledge any obligation to Philip for his support was a cause of great *angst* to Feria. See 'Feria's Despatch'.

<sup>47</sup> HMC, Salisbury MSS, I, p. 149.

a man who held no coherent theory of anything, but who was extremely good at the ways and means of solving practical problems.

Not everyone liked the old Lord Treasurer. Some regarded him as a hypocrite, some as avaricious and many as self-serving. On the other hand he never inspired the kind of hatred which helped to destroy Wolsey, Cromwell, Anne Boleyn or Edward Seymour. Nor did he display the weaknesses which destroyed the Duke of Northumberland and two Dukes of Norfolk. He was, first and foremost, a civil servant; politically a part of the furniture. That he became a great nobleman was largely an accident of Tudor policy. When we look at the careers of his children and grandchildren we may well wonder whether his talents were not also exaggerated by circumstances. But if we want a symbol of continuity in a period full of discontinuities, some of them quite radical, we could do worse than look at William Paulet.

# Land Grants and Alienations

[1493. Death of John Paulet. John Paulet his heir has the castle, manor and Lordship of Nunney. *Inquisitions Post Mortem*, 1504–1509, p. 583.

A writ of *diem clausit extremum* was sued on 13th October 1492, showing that he died possessed of land in Somerset, Hampshire, Wiltshire and Sussex. Cal. Fine, 1485–1509, no 443.

7th May 1504. License for John Paulet, knight, son and heir of Eleanor Paulet, deceased, to enter on her lands. Cal. Pat., 1494–1509, p. 368.

A writ of *diem clausit extremum* was sued in respect of Eleanor on the 24th November 1503, showing that she died possessed of land in Somerset, Wiltshire, Hampshire and Sussex. Cal. Fine, 1485–1509, no. 785.

[Manors of Norton and Ludshot held of the Bishop of Winchester. Abbotson, held of the Abbot of Hyde, and Bromley. (IPM, 1504–09, p. 194.)]

On the death of Sir John Paulet in 1525, Basing was enfeofed to use. NA C142/44/94. This enfeofment is first recorded on 13th November 1487, but it seems to have taken place in 1475, when John Paulet settled it on his son. Cal. Fine, 1485–1509. VCH Hants., vol. 4, p. 116.

In January 1531 he was licensed to build walls and towers and to fortify his house at Basing. Also to empark 300 acres of land and 20 acres of woods. L&P, V, 80 (11). He was called upon to prove his title to the estate in 1537. VCH Hants., vol. 4, p. 116.

In June 1531 Henry Courtenay, Marquis of Exeter, sold lands to William Paulet. License to alienate, L&P, V, 318.

In April 1533 William Blount, Lord Mountjoy, sold lands to William Paulet. License to alienate, L&P, VI, 418.

In March 1536 William Paulet was granted ‘custody during pleasure’ of the chief message ‘lately belonging to Sir Thomas More’ in Chelsea. L&P, X, 777 (5).

On 3rd August of the same year he was granted the site, buildings and lands of the late abbey of Netley, Hants, valued at £99 11s 7d p.a. L&P, XI, 385. The grant included the manors of Hound, Townhill and Waddon. VCH Hants., vol. 4, p. 148. L&P, XI, ii, 385 (3).

In the same month he was also granted the site and lands of the nunnery of Witney. VCH Hants., 4, p. 151.

In April 1539 Lord St John was granted lands which had belonged to the dissolved religious houses of St Denis, Hyde, St Mary's Winchester and Maiden Bradleigh. The grant included Shamblehurst, Aldington, Breem, Candover, Worting, Itchin Abbas and Itchen Stoke. He paid £2091 10s 10d in Augmentations. L&P, XIV, 906 (i).

In January 1540 Sir James Strangeways sold the manor of Boxsted in Essex to Lord St John and his heirs. License to alienate, L&P, XV, 144.

In the January 1541 Cromwell's former messuage at Austin Friars in London was sold to Lord St John by Sir Thomas Wriothesley, to whom it had been granted. L&P, XVI, 503 (11).

In August 1541 Lord St John was paid £900 by the Crown, in compensation for the manors of Boxsted and Hanley, 'late of the Earl of Essex', so the sale of January 1540 was presumably blocked. L&P, XVI, 745.

In March 1542 Lord St John carried out an exchange of lands with the Crown, which had formerly belonged to the Earl of Bridgewater. L&P, XVII, 220 (5).

During the same year he was granted a number of lands which Edward Seymour Earl of Hertford had held of the Prior and Convent of Witney, which had been granted to him on the dissolution of the house and which he had sold back to the Crown in 1541. These were to be held in chief, by knight service. The listed land includes messuages called Woodpills, Beles, Abrahams, Godfreyes and Gollowayes. VCH Hants., vol. 4, p. 80.

On 3rd March 1542 the manor of Abbots Ann, formerly of Hyde Abbey, was granted to Lord St John. Ibid, p. 334.

In 1544 the manor of Winterbourne Kingston was sold to Lord St John by Sir George Darcy, *ibid*, p. 246. L&P, XIX, i, 648.

In June 1545 Lord St John was licensed to alienate part of the Hyde Abbey lands. L&P, XX, i, 1081 (50).

At some time in 1545 the manor of Holdshot, formerly of Merton Priory, was granted to Lord St John. VCH Hants., 4, p. 46.

Assessed wealth in lands for the subsidy of 1545: £1000. NA E179/69/54.

On 20th April 1545 he sold lands at Chedney, Lincolnshire to the Crown for £2078. L&P, XXI, I, 643 (f. 87).

In 1546 the manor of Frobury was sold to Lord St John by William Unwin. VCH Hants., IV, p. 255.

In 1546/7 Weston Patrick manor, formerly of the Duchy of Lancaster, was granted to Lawrence Herwood and Stephen Tennant, who were agents for Lord St John. Thereafter it seems to have descended with Basing. VCH Hants., 4, p. 108.

20th August 1547. Grant of land to the value of £140, in fulfilment of the late King's wishes. Cal. Pat., Edward VI, i, p. 42.

20th September 1547. Grant of lands 'late of Laycock Abbey', to the annual value of £80, *ibid*, pp. 66–7.

At some time in the same year the manor of Nether Wallop, formerly of the monastery of Amesbury, granted to Thomas Wriothesley in 1545, was sold by him to Lord St John. At about the same time the manor of Palton (Redbridge Hundred) was granted to Lord St John by the Crown. VCH Hants., 4, p. 525.

In 1549 a part of the borough of Andover was granted by the Crown to the Earl of Westmorland and then alienated by him to Lord St John, who thus gained control of the whole town. VCH Hants., 4, p. 348.

On the attainder of Thomas, Lord Seymour in 1549, 'all his estates' were granted to Lord St John. *Ibid*, p. 189.

In 1550 the Earl of Wiltshire received a grant of Romsey Abbey lands, valued at £15 14s 6d. VCH Hants., 4, p. 460.

On 26th January 1550 the Earl of Wiltshire was granted land to the value of £300 ‘for his services’ and on the 1st May received land in Hampshire to the value of £393 13s 11d, for which he paid £93 4s 0d in Augmentations. This was almost certainly the same transaction. Cal. Pat. Edward VI, 2, p. 375; 3, p. 196.

On 22nd July 1550 he received a grant of ‘le body’ of the site at Austin Friars. Cal. Pat., Edward VI, 4, p. 15.

On 9th October 1551 Wiltshire was granted the Lordship of Bishops Waltham and other lands, recently surrendered by John Ponet as part of the deal whereby he secured the bishopric of Winchester. He was required to pay £229 13s 1d in rent – which was the same as the valuation of the property. Cal. Pat., Edward VI, 4, p. 139.

In the same year Thomas Boughton was licensed to grant the moiety of the manor of Warneford to the Earl of Wiltshire. Presumably a purchase. Ibid, p. 247.

Paulet received very few grants during Mary’s reign. On 15th September 1558 he was licensed to alienate the manor of Whaddon to the use of his son Giles. Cal. Pat., 1557–8, p. 441. In 1558 Mary restored all the property alienated by Ponet (including Bishops Waltham) to Bishop White of Winchester. Ibid, pp. 146–7.

Assessed wealth in land for the subsidy of 1559: £1200 NA E179/69/78.

On 20th January 1561 the Marquis of Winchester purchased the manor Shenfield, Berkshire, (*recte* Essex) from the Crown for £1805. Cal. Pat., 1560–63, p. 49.

In 1562 Francis Titchbourne sold the manor of Winslade to the marquis. Feet of Fines, Hants, East, 4 Eliz.

On 29th July 1563, the marquis received ‘during pleasure’ the grant of the manor of Hoddesdon and other lands in Hertfordshire. Cal. Pat., 1560–63, p. 497.

1563. Chapel of St Thomas, Frobury, granted to the Marquis of Winchester. VCH Hants., 2, p. 266.

Assessed wealth in lands for the subsidy of 1566: £800. PRP E179/69/83.

1570. Manor of Gosfield (parcel of the lands of Thomas Seymour) sold to Richard Knight (a servant of Winchester's) for £361 9s 2d. VCH Hants., 2, p. 189.

18th August 1571. License to alienate the manor of Worting. Cal. Pat., 1569–72, p. 321.

Assessed wealth in lands for the subsidy of 1571: £800. NA E179/69/85.

26th February 1572. License to alienate land to the value of £647 12s 10d, in order to settle debts to the Crown. Ibid, pp. 405–406.

[John, the second marquis: was assessed in land for the subsidy of 1571 (second payment), at 1000 marks (£666 13s 4d) NA E179/69/86.]

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## Offices, Promotions, Fees and Wardships

[5th November 1491; John Paulet 'the younger' sheriff of Hampshire. Cal. Fine, 1485–1509, no. 376.

November 1499; John Paulet, esquire, sheriff of Hampshire. Ibid, no. 668].

1506. William Paulet, gentleman, redemption of the Drapers Company of London 'gratis except the clerk's fee'. MS WA2, f. 82v.

[Before 1509, marries Elizabeth Capell, d. of Sir William.]

1511. William Paulet sheriff of Hampshire. L&P, I, 969.

1515. Executor of his father-in-law, Sir William Capell's will. Receives £40. NA NAB11/18, ff. 96–7.

7 November 1518. William Paulet sheriff of Hampshire. L&P, II, 4562.

1519. Receives Livery of the Drapers Company as William Paulet, esquire for a fee of 6s 8d. WA3, f. 1.

1522. Sheriff of Hampshire. L&P, III, 2667.

[Knighted, 1522/3.]

5th February 1526. Named as a King's Councillor for the Law. L&P, IV, App. 5.

November 1526. Appointed with Thomas Englefield joint Master of the King's Wards. Fee £100 a year, with £10 for a clerk. L&P, IV, 2673.

1527. Receives the wardships of Edward Underhill and Richard Waller. L&P, IV, 3087, 3471.

November 1529. Elected Knight of the Shire for Hampshire in the Reformation Parliament. Bindoff, *House of Commons*.

February 1530. Granted the wardship of Edward Bamfylde, with lands in Devon. L&P, IV, 6248.

January 1531. Sir William Paulet appointed to be surveyor in England, Wales and Calais of all possessions in the King's hands by minority of heirs and surveyor of the King's widows and governor of all idiots and naturals in the King's hands. L&P, V, 80 (11).

1st June 1532. The death of Sir Henry Guildford is reported and Paulet's appointment as Controller of the Household. L&P, V, 1069.

Before 30th April 1533. Joint Master of the King's Woods, with Thomas Cromwell. L&P, VI, 406.

1533. Sir William Paulet and Thomas Cromwell to be Surveyors of all woods in Duchy of Lancaster – during pleasure. L&P, VI, 1623.

December 1534. Grant to Sir William Paulet, Controller of the Household, of the office of Overseer of all Wardships, sale of heirs, marriages etc. On the recall of his joint appointment with Thomas Englefield. Fees as before. L&P, VII, 1601. The fee for this post was £133 6s 8d, plus £100 for 'diets'. BL Add.MS 34010.

February 1536. Sir William Paulet appointed to be Keeper and Governor of Pamber Forest, Hampshire. Because Hugh, Lord St John, whose heir he is, was seized of the same office of fee and of inheritance. L&P, X, 392.

[In 1537, Paulet became Treasurer of the Household, vice Sir William FitzWilliam, who had been created Earl of Southampton.]

The first reference to him as Treasurer comes on 1st January 1538. L&P, XIII, i, 5.

9th March 1539. Creation of Sir William Paulet as Lord St John of Basing. BL MS Add. 6113, f. 91.

July 1540. Lord St John appointed Master of the Court of Wards. L&P, XV, I, 942 (112).

November 1542. Lord St John appointed Master of the Court of Wards and Liveries, with a fee of 200 marks a year L&P, XVII, 1154 (72).

December 1545. Lord St John to be Warden and Chief Justice of all forests south of the Trent, vice Charles, Duke of Suffolk. L&P, XX, ii, 1068 (34).

[At about the same time St John was appointed to Suffolk's former post of Lord Great Master of the Household. The official fee was £100 a year 'and a table'. Northallerton RO MIC 2063/64.]

In 1545/6 he was appointed Chief Steward of the lands of Romsey Abbey. L&P, XXI, i, 1538.

[Early in 1546 he becomes Lord President of the Council, until 3rd February 1550.]

29th May 1546. Received a grant of £36 10s 0d towards the expenses of the fortress of Netley, Hampshire. L&P, XXI, i, 643 (f. 89).

December 1546. Executor of Henry VIII's will and receives a bequest of £500. L&P, XXI, ii, 634.

[15th February 1547. Proposal that Lord St John should be Earl of Winchester, with £200 in lands. Cal. Pat., Edward VI, p. 12.]

12th March 1547. Appointed Keeper of the Great Seal from 6th March, with fees totalling £961 a year. Cal. Pat., Edward VI, I, p. 137.

17th July 1547. Appointed Keeper and Captain of St Andrews Castle 'on the sea coast', with a fee of £19 3s 4d, 'for soldiers'. Cal. Pat., Edward VI, I, p. 177.

1547. Grant for life of the Keepership of the King's forests of Aisholt and Walmer, with fees (unspecified). Ibid, p. 326.

19th January 1550. Creation of Lord St John as Earl of Wiltshire. Cal. Pat., Edward VI, 3, p. 4.

[2nd February 1550 Wiltshire surrenders his patent as Warden of the Forests South of the Trent. The Marquis of Dorset is appointed.]

3rd February 1550. Appointed Lord Treasurer. *Ibid*, p. 177. The fee of the Lord Treasurer was £365 a year plus £15 7s 8d 'diets'. BL Add. MS 34010.

11th October 1551. Created Marquis of Winchester. CSPD, Edward VI, p. 557.

1551. Appointed Lord High Steward of Basingstoke, VCH Hants., 2, p. 132.

30th September 1553. Appointment as Lord Treasurer with effect from 6th July 1553. Cal. Pat., Philip and Mary, I, p. 175.

[On the 1st May 1554 he surrendered his patent as Master of the Court of Wards.]

15th September 1554. Granted the wardship of Joan Lyngan, with £60 a year. Cal. Pat., Philip and Mary, I, p. 88.

21st January 1559. Grant of the office of Lord Treasurer, with effect from 17th November – to hold as before. Cal. Pat., 1558–60, p. 59.

14th December 1560. Grant (for £100) of the wardship of William Courtenay. Cal. Pat. 1560–63, p. 65.

29th January 1561. Grant to William Paulet and his son John, in survivorship, of the Keepership of the forests of Aisholt and Walmer, Hampshire. *Ibid*, p. 186.

26th February 1561. Grant of the wardship and marriage of Alice Pace. *Ibid*, p. 180.

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