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THOMAS CHURCHYARD:
A STUDY OF HIS PROSE AND POETRY

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
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By

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CHAPTER I

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

From a very close reading of Thomas Churchyard's works, perhaps more can be learned about him than about most other literary figures of the English Renaissance. The most useful and valuable of his works are two poems: "A Tragicall Discourse of the Vnhappy Mans Life," from The Firste Parte of Churchyardes Chippes (1575),\(^1\) and "A Storie Translated out of Frenche," in Churchyardes Charge (1580).\(^2\) In addition to these poems, Churchyard's very personal dedications and epistles to his readers, as well as his first-hand reports of foreign military actions and important domestic events, provide a substantial body of information about the man. Yet putting the information together in an orderly fashion meets with certain difficulties.

For one thing, except on rare occasions Churchyard does not trouble himself with chronology. Indeed, he consciously avoids such a practice. Relating the deeds of brave soldiers in his Choise, he says: "Though I write

\(^1\)Sigs. H1-I5v.

not the iournies in right order, as one that writes a
Chronicle maie doe, yet the matter that I write shalbe
so true, that it shalbe needlesse to shewe what season,
the causes were put in practise, or make mention of due
order of the date and tyrne, of suche noble enterprises,
for your common Chronicles can sufficiently satisfie you
in those pointes.\(^3\)

Perhaps Churchyard can be forgiven for thinking that
the names and deeds of illustrious Elizabethan warriors
would be recorded in detail, but he certainly could not
have thought that the minutiae of his own career would be
treated likewise. Yet in both of his autobiographical
poems, he seems to "write not the iournies in right order"
or "to shewe what season, the causes were put in prac­
tise."

Actually, neither "A Tragicall Discourse" nor "A
StorieTranslated out of Frenche" is entirely autobiog­
graphical. The former aims chiefly to illustrate how man
is at the mercy of circumstance—usually in the form of
back-biting courtiers and fickle friends. Yet the first
half of "A Tragicall Discourse" is clearly autobiogra­
phical: Churchyard speaks in the first person; he names

\(^3\)A generall rehearsall of warres (1580), sig. K2.
This work is usually referred to as Churchyard's Choise.
commanders he served under and places where he fought; moreover, paralleling the text is a marginal gloss supplying names, dates, and places. The last half of the poem, however, is given over to generalized comments on life and are reflections of many of his own problems, such as the vicissitudes of time and the caprice of fortune. "A Storie Translated out of Frenche" refrains somewhat from the turgid moralizing of the last half of "A Tragicall Discourse," but its autobiographical element lacks particularity. Its setting is "Picardie"; no contemporary names, dates, or places are mentioned. But there can be no doubt that Churchyard is writing of himself. There is the unmistakable allusion to Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey,

An Erle of birth, a god of sprite, a Tullie for his tong,
Me thinke of right the world should shake when half his praise were rong.
Oh cursed are those crooked crafts, that his owne countrey wrought,
To chop of sutche a chosen hed, as our tyme nere forthe brought.4

These lines alone would be proof enough that the poem is autobiographical, for elsewhere Churchyard speaks of his

attendance upon Surrey. Furthermore, there is such close agreement in the details of the poem with "A Tragical Discourse" and other clearly autobiographical statements that "A Storie Translated out of Frenche" must be accepted as a thinly disguised story of Churchyard's own life.

Thus from Churchyard's own works, it is quite possible to sketch in the highlights of his career. In point of fact, almost everything that has been written on Churchyard, except for a handful of items in public records and private correspondence which I shall also cite, stems from the two poems just described. Hence rather than rely on secondary information, and misinformation, found in biographical notices on Churchyard, I shall stay as close as possible to the words of the poet himself, using the remarks of others only as they shed light on the historical background of the era.

The earliest account of Churchyard's life is a brief mention in Fuller's Worthies (1662), p. 9. Winstanley's Lives of the Poets (1687), pp. 61-63, paraphrases Fuller and adds a little more information taken from "A Tragical Discourse." The first extended treatment may be found in

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Dedicatory epistle of Charge, sig. *2v; dedicatory epistle to The Fortvnate Farewel to the ... Earle of Essex (1599), sig. A2v.
Anthony à Wood's *Athenae Oxonienses* (1691). Still the most complete biography is in George Chalmers' *Churchyard's Chips Concerning Scotland* (1817), pp. 1-66. Henry Adnitt's "Thomas Churchyard" purports to be an original study but in fact is a rewrite of Chalmers; Adnitt's only real additions are a few letters and a fuller bibliography of Churchyard's writings. A.H. Bullen's *Dictionary of National Biography* account of Churchyard makes no mention of Adnitt's work. Useful as all these works are, however, they suffer in common the disease of unsubstantiated assertions, of uncritical acceptance of earlier remarks. The only recent works which discuss Churchyard at any length are Charles A. Rahter's "Critical Edition of Churchyard's *Challenge* (1593)" and Merrill H. Goldwyn's "Thomas Churchyard's *Chippes Concerning Scotland*: A Critical, Annotated Edition." Rahter's biographical sketch (pp. xix-xxxix) follows previous studies closely, but does provide new information relating to the waning years of Churchyard's life. Goldwyn's edition of the *Chippes con-

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7*Transactions of the Shropshire Archaeological and Natural History Society*, III (1880), 1-68.
tains biographical material and sees Churchyard's spell-
ing idiosyncrasies as a device to spell phonetically.

In *The Worthines of Wales*, one of his most remembered
works, Thomas Churchyard identifies his birthplace:

> Can Wales be nam'de, and Shropshiere be forgote,
The marshes must, make muster with the rest:
Shall Sallop say, their countreyman doth dote,
To treat of things, and write what thinks him best.
No sure such fault, were dubble error plaine,
If in thy pen, be any Poets vase,
Or gifts of grace, from Skyes did drop on thee,
Than Shrewsebrie Towne, thereof first cause must bee.

Both borne and bred, in that same Seate thou wast,
(Of race right good, or els Records do lye)
From whence to schoole, where euer Churchyard past.
To native Soyle, he ought to have an eye,
Speake well of all, and write what world may proue,
Let nothing goe, beyond thy Countries loue:
Wales once it was, and yet to mend thy tale,
Make Wales the Parke, and plaine Shropshire the pale.10

Perhaps in response to the poet's citing of the records,
Hugh Owen, an early nineteenth-century historian of
Shrewsbury, has an account of the Churchyard family based
upon a study of the town's documents.11 The first mention
of the name in the public records is to one "Thomas

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10 *The Worthines of Wales* (1587), sig. Kl. The marginal note to this passage has: "The Author borne in Shrewseburie."

Churcheyord, a corvisor or shoemaker, who was dead in 1475. In that same year Thomas' son William, a draper, was "admitted burgess." The records note that William had four children: Thomas, Agnes, Elizabeth, and John. Thomas, son of William, is also referred to as Thomas Wardrop—"so denominated," Owen conjectures, "from his occupation." Owen is probably correct, since the son of a draper would likely enough be connected with the textile trade. The Shrewsbury records show that Thomas Churchyard-Wardrop was admitted burgess in 1500, and had two sons, William and Richard, and a daughter named Agnes. In the year 1505, according to Owen, Richard, "son of the late deceased Thomas," was made apprentice in the mercer's company.

Unfortunately, the records contain no more information about the Churchyords of that period; and since the poet Churchyard never mentions the given name of his father, the rest is speculation. If Owen's information is accurate, it would seem that either William or Richard, the sons of Churchyard-Wardrop, might be the poet's father.

12 Ibid., I, 385.
13 Ibid.
Richard, who became an apprentice mercer in 1505, would probably have been in his middle twenties or early thirties in 1520, the generally accepted year of the poet's birth, and at an age normally regarded as fruitful for fatherhood. It also seems reasonable that Richard or William would have named the child after his grandfather, just as the grandfather himself was the namesake of his grandfather, Thomas Churchyard the shoemaker.

Although the Shrewsbury records point to Richard or William as Thomas Churchyard's father, Owen notes an extract from the records of John Lyttelton, the bailiff of Arley in Staffordshire, for the year 1558. Lyttelton accounted for the receipt of £1-6s-8d, which represented "the value of a red cow, being the heriot of Thomas Churchyard, late holding an acre of land in Dolefeldes." In English feudal law, a heriot is a payment in chattels or money to the lord from the estate of a dead tenant. Lyttelton also recorded the receipt of eight pence "for the relief of Thomas, son of the said Thomas C." Owen says, "There can be no doubt that this last was

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14 Ibid., I, 386n.
15 Henry Cockeram's The English Dictionarie of 1623, ed. Chauncey B. Tinker (New York, 1930), p. 83, has the following: "Heriot. The best living beast which a tenant hath at his death, which in some Manors is due to the Lord of whom he holds it."
the poet himself, whose relief, i.e. the repayment due to the lord of the manor on his admission to his inheritance, some friend discharged for him during his absence abroad." Churchyard was certainly abroad in 1558, for after the fall of Guisnes in January of that year he was imprisoned in Paris until the spring of 1559. But whether he was the son of the Thomas Churchyard who left the red cow is not without some doubt. Of course, the county of Staffordshire is the eastern neighbor of Shropshire, and quite possibly Owen is correct in saying that the poet's father resided and died there.

Churchyard himself is of little help in establishing his paternity. In "A Storie Translated out of Frenche," he relates that in Picardy (the name he used for Shropshire) "dwelt an honest man/ Whose name the storie doeth not tell what he was called than." The poet says the honest man had a house and wife "So for to chere unweldie age, faire children God hym sent." Choice of the phrase "unweldie age" would suggest that at Churchyard's birth his father may have been approaching middle age, although the line could simply be a commonplace about filial and


17 Ibid.
paternal love and have no particular reference to the age of the father at his children's births.

Thus, although it is impossible to state with certainty the name of Thomas Churchyard's male parent, the recorded evidence suggests three possibilities: Richard, the apprentice mercer; his brother William; and Thomas, the Staffordshire landholder. If the last named was not the poet's father, a rather awkward circumstance arises. Since the bailiff records indicate that his estate was left to a son named Thomas, we are faced with the existence of three Thomas Churchyards in the year 1558—a rather unlikely possibility in light of the unusual nature of the surname.

But "when was he born?" asks Chalmers, "through what period of time, did he so long fight, and still longer scribble?" No date for Churchyard's birth other than 1520 has ever been put forth; yet I have reason to believe that the year is inaccurate. The year, followed by a question mark, is invariably cited in literary histories and period studies. As is often the case, the source of the date can be traced to Anthony a Wood. Before his time

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18 George Chalmers, Churchyard's Chips Concerning Scotland (London, 1817), p. 2.
no one offered a date; since his time the year has been
dutifully recorded by succeeding biographers. Wood appar­
ently based his judgment on Churchyard's remark in "A
Storie Translated out of Frenche." The speaker says that
after returning to court from imprisonment and finding no
succor, he vowed to leave, "And doune to Picardie he comes,
some saied at thirtie yere old."^9

Wood no doubt thought that the imprisonment referred
to was Churchyard's incarceration after the battle of St.
Monance in Scotland in 1548, the date and place cited by
Churchyard himself in a marginal note in "A Tragicall
Discourse." Churchyard escaped from the Scots to a fort
at Lawder held by the English under Sir Hugh Willoughby,
a place which was immediately besieged by the French.

tion of Athenae Oxonienses, says: "It may be remarked
that Wood's account of Churchyard is entirely derived from
his Charge, 1580, in which the Storie translated out of
the Frenche is a history of his own life, his native town
of Shrewsbury being disguised under the name of Picardy"
(I, 731). Bliss' remark, however, cannot be accurate.
Wood must certainly have known Fuller and Winstanley; and
since Winstanley drew his knowledge from "A Tragicall
Discourse," that poem must have been used by Wood, espe­
cially since it contains specific detail which "A Storie"
lacks. Besides, Wood must have had other sources since
he says Churchyard "woed a rich widow called Catherine
Browning" (I, 731). Nowhere in Churchyard is Catherine
Browning mentioned, and certainly not in "A Storie."

Peace came on March 29, 1550, at which time Churchyard returned to England as he tells:

From thens I cam, to Englande as I might
And after that, to Irlande did I sayll
Whear Sellenger, a wyes and noble knight
Gaue me such place, as was to myen aduayll.  

On September 10, 1550, Sir Anthony St. Leger was reconstituted Lord Deputy of Ireland, filling the vacancy caused by the death of Sir Edward Bellingham, who had replaced St. Leger in 1548. On May 25, 1551, St. Leger was recalled for alleged papistical practices and replaced this time by Sir James Croft. In "A Tragicall Discourse," Churchyard mentions only St. Leger by name, but in A Pleasant Discourse of Court and Wars Churchyard lists St. Leger and Croft as leaders under whom he had served in Ireland. Churchyard does not intimate in the passage cited from "A Tragical Discourse" that he tarried long between his return from Lawder in Scotland and his joining St. Leger in Ireland. Nor does he mention returning to "Picardie" at such time.

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21 Ibid., sig. H2v.

22 A Pleasant Discourse of Court and Wars (1596), sig. A2v.
In "A Storie Translated out of Frenche" Churchyard tells us he was "In prison thrise, in danger oft, both hurt and mangled sore." In "A Tragicall Discourse" he identifies three major jailings (along with minor overnight detentions). In addition to his escape to Lawder in 1548 or 1549, he says, "In Charles the fifths time, under Captain Matson. Got out of prison by helpe of the noble Madame Sell de Embry." This escape took place after the siege of Metz was raised (1553) and after Churchyard had served some time in Flanders. Following this escape he continued to serve on the continent:

Three yeer at least, I sawe the Empourrs warres
Then homeward drue, as was my wonted traed.\(^{25}\)

The time Churchyard drew homeward in this case must have been around 1555 or 1556. And since he did not return home directly after imprisonment, this jailing could not have been followed by the return to "Picardie" referred to in "A Storie Translated out of Frenche."

\(^{23}\)"A Storie," Charge, sig. A2\(^v\).

\(^{24}\)"A Tragicall Discourse," Chippes, sig. H2\(^v\), marginal note. This incident is treated in great detail in "A Storie," and I shall discuss it later in this section.

\(^{25}\)Ibid.
The third major imprisonment of Churchyard is presented in the greatest detail. In "A Tragicall Discourse" he says:

Well oens again, to warrs I drue me fast,
And with Lord Grey, at Giens I did remain...

At length the French, did Giens besiege ye wot
And littell help, or succour found we tho
By whiche fowll want, it was my heauy lot
To Parris streight, with good Lord Grey to go
As prisners boeth, the world to well doeth knee
By tract of tyme, and wonders charge indeed
He hoemward went, and took his leve with speed.

But poest aloen, I stoed, alack the whyell
And countrey clean, forgot me this is true...
Not one at hoem, did seek my greef to heall
Thus was I clean, cut of from common weale. 26

The fall of Guisnes, which Churchyard describes minutely in A Generall Rehearsall of Warres, occurred shortly after the capitulation of Calais on January 20, 1558, and helped lead to the Treaty of Cateau Cambresis in the spring of the following year.

Though Lord Grey de Wilton had been released, apparently to help arrange a peace, 27 Churchyard seems to have languished in prison until after the treaty, i.e., until May of 1559. Even then he was not unconditionally freed, for in a marginal note to "A Tragicall Discourse" he says,

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26 Ibid., sig. H3.
"Oens agayn ekaped out of pryson." The escape is presented in detail in the stanza opposite the note:  

Yet loe a shift, to scaep away I founde  
When to my fayth, my taker gaue no trust  
I did devies, in wryting to be bounde  
To come again, the time was set full just  
But to retorn, forsoeth I had no lust  
Sens faith could get, no credit at his hand  
I sent him word, to come and sue my band.  

He came him selfe, to court, as I did heer  
And told his taell, as fienly as he might  
At Ragland than, was I in Monmouth sheer  
Yet whan in court, this matter cam to light.  

"A Storie Translated out of Frenche" contains a long passage which explores fully the moral dilemma involved in violating one's parole. The speaker, recalling the hardships of his life, says:  

In prison thries, in danger oft, both hurt and mangled sore,  
And all in service of his prince, and all awaie he wore.  
In mean estate in office too, sometyme a single paie,  
Some tymé fewe had so mutche a weeke as he was loude a daie:  
When worlde waxt wise, and wealthe did faile and princes pride appald,  
And emptie purse, and priuie plag's, for perfite peace had cald.  
And kings and kingdoms quiet were, this man to court he came,  
Newe from the giues, with face and lookes as simple as a Lame:  
Freshe frō his enemies hands came he, where for his countries right,  

28 "A Tragicall Discourse," Chippes, sig. H3r,V.
He prisned was, and forste to grant, a randsome past his might.
Sent home upon a bande and seale, which is so strange a trade,
There to remaine till he for helpe, some honest shifte had made.\(^{29}\)

The "bande and seale" he refers to was the formal bond he signed so as to be free to raise his ransom. So if Churchyard returned to England "freshe from his enemies hands" and "upon a bande and seale" at a time when "kings and kingdoms quiet were," the time and circumstances would seem to agree with the return from his captivity in Paris after the fall of Guisnes, that is, sometime in 1559. The time this passage from "A Storie Translated out of Frenche" refers to is of crucial importance because the events described upon his return lead to the line, "And doune to Picardie he comes, some saied at thirtie yere old"—the line Wood used to establish the date of Churchyard's birth. Continuing, the speaker says: "This man had scarce a welcome home, which made him muse, I tro/ His country not as he it left, all changed was the state."\(^{30}\) Churchyard left for France after June 7, 1557, when English troops were dispatched to aid Philip of Spain.

\(^{29}\)"A Storie Translated out of Frenche," Charge, sigs.A2\(^{v}\)-A3.

\(^{30}\)Ibid., sig. A3.
He returned after Cateau Cambresis in 1559. Mary had been queen when he left; Elizabeth, crowned on November 17, 1558, was on the throne when he returned. Indeed, "all changed was the state."

A few lines later the speaker adds, "His freends decaied, his father dedde, and housholde broke vp cleane." If Churchyard learned of his father's death upon his return in 1559, Owen's notice of the bailiff's record of the death of a Thomas Churchyard in 1558 takes on great significance; for it strongly argues that the late deceased landholder of Staffordshire was the father of the soldier-poet.

Another suggestion that the time referred to was 1559 occurs in the lines wherein the speaker decides to ask his prince for help in paying his ransom:

Where should he sue where râ those springs, could cole his feuer hot,
Where durst he mone or plaine for shame, where might reliefe be got:
But at the fountain or well hedde, yea, at his Princes hand,
And in a fewe well couched lines, to make her understand:
His cace his scourge, loe so he did, and boldly did he tell,
The same hym self vnto the Prince.  

\[31\] Ibid.  
\[32\] Ibid.
Since the "fewe well couched lines" were "to make her understand," the prince had to be either Mary or Elizabeth. In any case, the time had to be later than 1553, the year of Mary's accession; but it is more likely, as the other events indicate, that the "her" referred to is Elizabeth.

The appeal to the prince, though, was unsuccessful, for "gracious words three tymes he gate, the fourth to tell you plain/ vnfruitful was." With no friends to aid him, with no help from the prince, the parolee decides that

Since I scapt my enmies hands, at hoem abide
I wull:
He should not me perswade to goe, where nought but death is found,
My countrey cares not for my life, then why should I be bound
To toies or any other bande, that I haue power to breake,
Whiche I was forced by my foe, in persone for to speakes.

The lines show that the unhappy man, Churchyard, breaks his bond; but to justify his own actions and to illustrate the folly of returning to his captors voluntarily, the tale of Regulus is recounted. Marcus Regulus, the model of soldierly virtue because he kept his word, was a Roman general captured by the Carthagians. He gave his oath

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33. Ibid.
34. Ibid, sig. A3v.
that he would return to Carthage if allowed to go to Rome. He did return, even though the Roman Senate tried strongly to dissuade him by promising to free all Carthaginian prisoners in exchange for him. Regulus, however, despite the help offered, kept his word and returned to Carthage. And, Churchyard points out, Regulus was executed. But the difference between Regulus and Churchyard was that the Romans cared for their soldier while the English deserted Churchyard. As "A Storie" puts it:

I finde no succour hope nor aide, then bounde
why should I be,
More to my countrey in this case, than countrey
is to me.\textsuperscript{35}

Immediately following the question of what he owed to his country are these lines:

These wordes this heauie man rehearst, so bade
the warrs adue,
And thought he would no raunsome paie, for any
thung he knewe.
Wherefore from court he tournd his face, and so
an othe he swore,
As long as he his fiue witts had, to come in
courte no more.
He kept that othe and cut his cote, as clothe
and measure wold,
And doune to Picardie he comes, some saied at
thirtie yere old.\textsuperscript{36}

\textsuperscript{35}\textit{Ibid.}
\textsuperscript{36}\textit{Ibid.}
It would seem, then, from a comparison of the previous passages from "A Tragicall Discourse" and "A Storie" that the same event—the breaking of parole—is being spoken of. And since it is certain that the imprisonment after Guisnes took place in 1558-1559, it must be equally certain that the return to "Picardie" happened after that imprisonment. Hence, if Churchyard went "doune to Picardie...at thirtie yere old," he must have been born in 1529 or 1530.37

The year 1520 has been regarded as the year of Churchyard's birth chiefly on the authority of Wood's assumption that the breaking of parole occurred after the imprisonment in Scotland. Chalmers, supporting Wood's deduction, argues the case thus: "If he were 30, when he returned to the place of his birth, in 1550, after his captivity in Scotland, then he was born in 1520.... This point being thus settled, on pretty sure grounds, the other dates of his devious life follow of course.... Happy! if biography would oftener call in the sure assistance of arithmetical criticism; we should not so

37 Perhaps it would not be prudent to take "thirtie yere" at face value; it would be safer to regard it as Churchyard's approximate age at the time. Moreover, in "A Tragicall Discourse" he does not say he went back to Shropshire after his breaking of parole. He does, of course, identify Monmouthshire, which is a west county, so after he left the court he may well have been traveling at least in the area of Shropshire, or Picardie.
frequently be deluded, from the paths of truth, into the deviations of error." Yet Chalmers does err; Churchyard's birthdate is closer to 1530 than to 1520. Churchyard's birth date being settled, then, on pretty tentative grounds, the other dates follow in due course.

From what has been said above, we may take it that Churchyard was born in Shrewsbury about the year 1529. His father, of whom he says, "a house he helde, as farmers use to doo," appears to have been a yeoman. Churchyard consistently claims gentle birth: "Of gentill race he might make boste... Of gentill blood and maners bothe, and wants but wealth alone." At any rate, the

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38 Chalmers, p.2. The appeal to arithmetical criticism stems from Chalmers' annoyance with literary historians who claimed that Churchyard died in 1570. Chalmers attributes the original error to Winstanley, although Winstanley himself picked it up from Fuller.


40 Ibid., sig. Bl.
father had some substance and provided the boy with a sound education in grammar:

This boye to glad his fathers harte, in bookes set his delite,
And learnd to make a Latine verse, to reade and eke to write.

Nor was music neglected:

To make his schoole the sweeter seem, with Musicke mixed was,
The studie that he followed then...

And Churchyard adds that his father went to "greate charge" for good books and instruments. But after "seuen yeres" of schooling the boy "still sought more to haue"; so he begged his father's permission to "let me goe seeke my happ/ And let no longer now your sonne, be lullde in mothers lapp." The father agreed with his son's desires,

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41 J. Basil Oldham, A History of Shrewsbury School 1552-1952 (Oxford, 1952), p. 19, notes that "In 1492 the Draper's Company at Shrewsbury maintained a school." Although Churchyard seems to refer to his father as a farmer, Owen's History of Shrewsbury, as we have seen, lists several Churchyards in the textile trade. So quite possibly the poet attended the school of the drapers' company.

42 "A Storie," Charge, sig. Al.

43 Ibid.

44 Ibid., sig. Alv.
gave him his blessing and advice, as well as his patrimony:

The ladd his leave and farewell tooke, well furnishings for the nonce,
And had about him as I trowe, his treasure all at once. 

When he left home for court, Churchyard was perhaps thirteen or fourteen years old. The usual age for a lad to begin school was six or seven, and he says he studied for seven years. Thus he would have arrived at court around 1542 or 1543. Once at court, however, his noble resolutions failed:

His bookes to blade and bucklar chang'd,
he gaue ore scholars trade,
Where reuell roysted all in ruffe, there he his residence made.

His roistering "soone his purse so pickt that princoks wanted pence." But fortunately for Churchyard, "A maister of no meane estate, a mirrour in those daies/ His

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45. Ibid. Churchyard alludes to the same event toward the end of "A Tragicall Discourse," Chippes, sig. I4v. So born I was, to house and land by right But in a bag, to courte I brought the same From Shrewsbrye towne, a seat of auncient fame.

46. For some reason Wood says that Churchyard left home for court at the age of seventeen, although nowhere does Churchyard state such a figure. According to Wood, Churchyard arrived at court in 1537.

The master, of course, was Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey.

Churchyard claims to have served "this maister twice twoo yere." Since Surrey was beheaded in 1547, the latest possible date for Churchyard's being taken into Surrey's service would have to be 1543, which year agrees well with his arrival at court, i.e., according to my computations. In 1543 Surrey took part in the battle of Landrecy, and Churchyard may have been with him. Churchyard's major biographers, Chalmers and Adnitt, go along with Wood in saying that he served Surrey between the ages of seventeen and twenty-one. But, as I have noted, absolutely no evidence for such statements exists. Only Nott's life of Surrey differs from the general notion. Nott maintains, although he cites no source, that Churchyard may have entered Surrey's service circa 1544. Nott conjectures that Churchyard may have been a page and says that Surrey "saw marks of a lively genius, and a fondness for learning" in Churchyard, who "could not then have been more than ten years old." It must be remembered that Nott used

48 Ibid., sig. A2.
50 Ibid.
Churchyard as a source for his life of Surrey. Indeed, Nott hoped for the recovery of an epitaph on Surrey, which Churchyard in his Chance says he had written but which was then out of his hands.\(^{51}\) "Could it be recovered," Nott says, "we might hope to find in it some details of Surrey's life."\(^{52}\) What Nott says about Churchyard seems entirely to be based on Churchyard's own remarks, but nowhere does Churchyard claim to have been a page or to have been ten years old at the time of his attachment to Surrey.

Other facts, however, seem to bear out Nott on the position of Churchyard in the Surrey retinue. In "A Tragicall Discourse," Churchyard describes the Scottish war of 1547 as his first military service.\(^{53}\) But in A Pleasant Discourse of Court and Wars, he says in the dedication that he is going to list the utterances on courts and wars that he has heard from commanders he has served under. He then says that at Landrecy among those he served with were Sir Thomas Wyatt the younger, Sir John Wallop, and Sir Edward Bellingham; at Boulogne with Sir James Croft, Lord Thomas Poynings, and Sir Rafe Elderkar.\(^{54}\) In

\(^{51}\) Churchyarde Chance (1580), sig. B4.

\(^{52}\) Nott, I, lxii, note b.


\(^{54}\) A Pleasant Discourse of Court and Wars, sig. A2.
1543 Wallop was captain-general of the English forces of Henry VIII at Landrecy. Surrey joined Wallop in that year, probably to be schooled in warfare by Wallop, who was one of the most accomplished field commanders of his day. All the men Churchyard named served in some capacity or other on the continent at the same time Surrey was there from 1543 to 1546. Moreover, Elderkar was killed during a skirmish near Calais in 1544, and Poynings died at Boulogne August 17, 1545. Therefore, if Churchyard was at Landrecy with Elderkar and Poynings, he must have been at the wars as early as 1543, that is, at the same time Surrey served.

In "A Tragicall Discourse" Churchyard says, "When drom did sound, a soldiour was I prest." Following this line is an account of his part in the Scottish campaigns of 1547-1550; nowhere in "A Tragicall Discourse" does he mention service prior to the Scottish fighting. But in "A Storie Translated out of Frenche" he tells of the diffi-

55 Nott, I, appendix X, Wallop's journal of the Landrecy campaign; appendix XI, letter from Wallop to Henry VIII regarding Surrey's arrival.


57 Nott, I, lxxvi and appendix XXV.

culties of his soldierly life, of his hunger, of his aching shoulders after a day in armor, of the winter cold:

    A wearie of these wastyng woes, a while he left the warre,
    And for desire to learn the tongs, he traueld very farre.
    And had of eury langage part, when homeward did he drawe,
    And could rehearsall make full well, of that abroad he sawe.
    To studie wholie was his bent, but countreis cause would not,
    But he shoulde haunt the warres againe, assignde thereto by lot. 59

According to "A Storie," then, he obviously was on the continent learning "the tongs" after his first exposure to war. On his return he was again in service "assignde there­to by lot"; no doubt this is another way of saying "a soldiour was I prest." In "A Tragicall Discourse" he says, "Some say I found in Scotland fauour then"; 60 in "A Storie" he remarks, "And better brookt the second warrs, then he did like the firste." 61

All this is very confusing: in A Pleasant Discourse of Court and Wars Churchyard says he served at Landrecy, which had to be in 1543; in "A Tragicall Discourse" he does not mention the continental engagements; in "A Storie"

he does. Even more confusing is that Churchyard does not mention Surrey at either Landrecy or Boulogne. Hyder Rollins has said: "Churchyard was an honest man, if a poor poet. His word cannot be doubted...."62 One may not wish to doubt; but when extracting information from Churchyard, one must never accept readily.

One conjecture, however, which could explain Churchyard's ambiguity on the point of his service on the continent is that he may have been unsure himself about his rôle while on the continent. If he was thirteen years old in 1542 or 1543 and if he was taken into Surrey's retinue at that time, he could easily have gone to the warfare at Landrecy as an attendant to the earl rather than as a soldier.63 He may not have considered his services as martial when he wrote "A Tragicall Discourse," that is, 1575 or earlier. True, he had been to war but was perhaps not actively engaged; thus he could have heard


63Nott, I, 202n, says that each man at arms had fifty to one hundred attendants. To illustrate, he says that the Earl of Kent in Henry VII's time (1492) "engaged to serve with sixteen men at arms, each man at arms having with him his custril and page, sixteen demi-lancers, sixteen archers on horse back, and sixty archers on foot." Since two body servants, a custril and a page, attended an ordinary man at arms, a nobleman would likely have a greater number. It would not be unreasonable to suppose that Churchyard may have served in some such capacity.
the comments of the soldiers mentioned in *A Pleasant Discourse of Court and Wars* while attending Surrey. Yet why does he not mention Surrey's utterances on court and wars? Surely Surrey must have had much to say about both. I fear that this question, like many others, must remain unanswered.

Whenever it was and however old he was at the time, Churchyard never speaks of his association with Surrey except in the most praiseworthy terms. In dedicating his *Charge* to Surrey's grandson, he speaks of "the Erle of Surrie, your Lordshipps graundfather, and my master (who was a noble warriour, an eloquent Oratour, and a second Petrarke)." The association no doubt influenced Churchyard's subsequent literary career. He says that with Surrey he was treated well,

> And leard therein sutche fruitful skill, as long he held full dere: And usd the penne as he was taught, and other gifts also.\(^65\)

Churchyard's connection with Surrey no doubt terminated when Surrey was imprisoned in October, 1546. On January 28, 1546/7, the noble earl was beheaded, the victim of the "cancred hearts" of his private enemies. Henry

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\(^64\) *Charge*, sig. *2v*.

VIII himself died shortly after Surrey's execution, and the accession of young Edward VI brought changes throughout the realm. Churchyard appears then to have been unwillingly caught up in the war with Scotland in that year. No longer under the protection of a nobleman, Churchyard was the victim of a press gang and thrust into the army for service in the Scottish campaign. He served, as he tells us in "A Tragical Discourse of the Unhappy Mans Life," at Wark Castle under Captain Lawson. He was present at the savage encounter at Pinkie on September 10, 1547, in the army of the Earl of Hertford, Edward Seymour, later Duke of Somerset and Lord Protector. In June of the following year he was with the fleet under Admiral Edward, Baron Clinton, later Lord High Admiral and Earl of Lincoln. During the attack on St. Monance in June, 1548,

66 The method by which Churchyard entered service seems to have bothered him. Had Surrey been alive, there is little doubt that he would have willingly been involved in the fighting, and Churchyard would gladly have followed him. But being dragooned by a press gang was, to Churchyard, insulting.


68 Churchyard mentions service at Pinkie in dedication to the Earl of Hertford of A True Discourse Historical of the Succeeding Gouernours in the Netherlands, and the Ciull Warres there Begun in the Yeere 1565 (London, 1602), p. 3.
Churchyard was captured and imprisoned. How long he remained confined is unknown, but it is apparent that he did not find being in jail annoying:

I taken was, as deastny had decreed.  
Well yet with words, I did my foes so feed  
That thear I lyud, in pleasuer many a daye  
And skaept so free, and did no ransome paye.  

The escape he refers to is his flight to Lawder Castle, then under the command of Sir Hugh Willoughby; but before he tells of joining Willoughby, he boasts further of his skill with words and of his sharp tactics:

On my band I sent hoem sondry men  
That els had pyned in prison, pyncht with cold.  
To French and Scots so fayr a taell I tolede  
That they beleue'd whyt chalk and chees was oen  
And it was pearll that proued but pybbull stoen.

If indeed Churchyard was able to persuade the French and Scots to free English prisoners, he must have had a gifted

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69 A General Rehearsal of Wars, sig. H2. "The Earle of Lincoln that now is, beeyng Lorde Admirall, landed a greate companie of soldiours at a Pile called Sainct Minins, where our Fortune was but forarde: and for that I was taken prisoner there, and our people had no great good happe: It shall remaine vntouched any further." Churchyard is inaccurate here since Clinton did not become Lord High Admiral until 1550, two years after St. Monance.

70 I.e., destiny.


72 Ibid.
tongue. We shall see later how this same practice almost cost him his life in France. Nonetheless, the escape to Lawder almost proved futile, for the French besieged the fort and almost overwhelmed it, much to Churchyard's chagrin. As he puts it: "Then was I like to light in fetters fast."\(^73\) Peace was declared on March 29, 1550, and the garrison marched to Berwick, where the men were discharged.\(^74\)

It must have been at this time that Churchyard first caused a stir in the London literary scene. In his Chance he includes a poem "written in the beginnyng of King Edwardes raigne, which verses are calld Dauie Dicars Dreame."\(^75\) In the preliminary matter of his Challenge, Churchyard lists "the booke that I can call to memorie alreadie printed."\(^76\) He says, "First in King Edwards daies a booke named Dauie Dicars Dreame, which one Camell wrote against, whome I openly confuted." Dauie Dicars Dreame was answered by Camell's To David Dicars, which elicited A Replication to Cames Obiection. The affair

\(^{73}\)Ibid.

\(^{74}\)A General Rehearsal of Wars, sigs. H3-H4.

\(^{75}\)Chance (London, 1580), sig. K4\(^{F, V}\).

\(^{76}\)Challenge (London, 1593), sig. *1\(^{V}\).
went on for another two rounds before it ceased. The date assigned by the *Short Title Catalogue* to these broadsides of Churchyard and Camell is 1552 or 1553, but it may have been earlier. In his dedication of *A Fortunate Farewell to the Earl of Essex* (1599) to Lord Henry Seymour, second son of the Lord Protector, Churchyard says: "I am bold because your most honourable father, the duke of Somerset, (vncle to the renowned imp of grace, noble King Edward VI.) fauoured me, when I was troubled, before the lords of the council, for writing some of my first verses. In requital whereof, euer since I haue honoured all his noble race." Churchyard may have been referring to *Dauie Dicars Dreame*, because the only other poems he recalls having written so early are *Jane Shore* and *The Mirror for Man*. The latter, however, could have offended someone, because it severely condemned the decay of society.

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77 Herbert Collman's *Ballads & Broadsides, Chiefly of the Elizabethan Period* (Oxford: Roxburgh Club, 1912) has the entire series, numbers 19-25.


At any rate, if *Dauie Dicars Dreame* was the verse that got Churchyard into trouble, it could not have been written in 1552 or 1553. For Somerset to have been of any use to Churchyard then, the Lord Protector would have had to return from the dead. The only period Somerset could have acted on Churchyard's behalf was from February 1550/1 to October, 1551. Somerset was Lord Protector from January, 1547, until he was forced to resign and committed to the Tower in October, 1549. He was released in February, 1550, served again on the Privy Council until his final arrest in October, 1551. He was tried in December, 1551, and executed on January 22, 1551/2. Churchyard was in Scotland from 1547 until the spring of 1550, when the peace enabled him to leave Lawder. After Scotland, Churchyard was in Ireland with Sir Anthony St. Leger, and that time had to be between September, 1550, when St. Leger took office, and May, 1551, when Sir James Croft replaced St. Leger as lord deputy. Therefore, the only time Somerset could have used his influence in the Privy Council was from the spring of 1550 to late 1550 or early 1551. All the rest of the time Churchyard was out of London or Somerset was out of power.

80 Conyers Read, *The Tudors* (New York, 1936), pp. 112-118, for highlights of Somerset's rise and fall.
Churchyard's remark that he "was troubled before the lords of the council, for writing some of my first verses" does not necessarily mean that he was ever formally accused. There is no mention of him in any of the acts or judgments of the Privy Council. We have only Churchyard's word that he had difficulties. But *Dauie Dicars Dreame* created a minor storm in the London literary world that could easily have gotten Churchyard into trouble.

*Dauie Dicars Dreame* is a broadside ballad consisting of fourteen heavily alliterative couplets. The first thirteen couplets are conditional clauses beginning with the adverb "when." For example:

When faith in frendes beare fruit, and folysh fancyes fade,
And crafty catchers cum to nought, and hate gret loue hath made... (ll. 1-2)

When wisdome walks a loft, and folly syts full low,
And vertue vanquish pampered vice, and grace begins to grow... (ll. 7-8)

When dette no sergeant dreeds, and courtiers credit keepe,
And might mels [mixes] not with merchandise, nor lords shal sell no sheepe... (ll. 21-22)

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81 *Dauie Dicars Dreame*, Collman, p. 58. All citations to Churchyard-Camell poems refer to pages in Collman's *Ballads & Broadsides*. 

When truth doth tread the streetes, and lyers lurke in den,
And Rex doth raigne and rule the rost, and weeds out wicked men. (ll. 25-26)

The last couplet is:

Then baelfull barnes be blythe, that here in England woone,
Your strife shal stynt I vndertake, your dredful days are done.

Thus the thirteen when-clauses are resolved by the final couplet. The entire poem is like a lengthy periodic sentence.

**Dauie Dicars Dreame**, as can be seen, is hardly inflammatory. Herbert Collman calls it "a short ballad and one so little provocative in matter as scarcely to justify the appearance of others so numerous and lengthy."\(^{82}\) It criticizes a number of abuses common to almost any society, but in itself the work is fairly innocuous. **Dauie Dicars Dreame**, however, drew a reply from one Thomas Camell, who is described by Collman as "an individual of whom little is known."\(^{83}\)

Camell's broadside reply is entitled **To Dauid Dicars When**.\(^{84}\) As the title indicates, Camell mocked the artifi-

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\(^{82}\)Ibid.

\(^{83}\)Ibid.

\(^{84}\)Ibid., pp. 59-60. A thorough study of available records has failed to turn up any information about Camell.
cial and cumbersome structure of *Dauie Dicars Dreame*, the piling up of the when-clauses. The opening line parodies Churchyard's verses: "From when vnto when, to come to this when." Camell then launches a very blistering personal attack on Churchyard.

When fooles of your folly, wyl work lyke wise men
And know theyr owne fautes, & leaue faulting other
And fyrst mend them selues, & then warn theyr brother. (ll. 2–4)

Camell continues by charging that people like Churchyard "wold haue mouthes to rore lyke the Lyon/ Beyng but Asses, brute of condicion" (ll. 9–10). And Camell concludes his attack with these lines:

Leaue drawyng dialles, on other men's dooyng
And learne for to looke to your owne woorkes and brewynges.
Then I say then, when you agayn when:
Wyll say well your selfe, and such other men,
And all folk wyll do well.85

Camell quite clearly was galled by Churchyard's moralistic tone and no doubt thought him impertinent and presumptuous for writing *Dauie Dicars Dreame*, and while telling Churchyard to stick to his own faults instead of attacking others, Camell also managed to make fun of Churchyard's versifying devices.

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But Camell's reply, instead of chastening Churchyard, precipitated a poetic feud. The versifying contest between the antagonists, during which broadsides were answered with counter-broadside, has been called the Churchyard-Camell flyting. Flyting, of course, is associated with Scotland. Churchyard served there and Camell is probably a Scottish name [i.e., Campbell]. That would suggest that both men were familiar with the practice. In Chapter II, where I will discuss Churchyard's satiric works, I will treat the flyting in more specific terms. Here it is sufficient to say that in the remaining poems of this Churchyard-Camell series, both men grew nastier toward one another. Camell progressed from calling Churchyard an ass to charging that he was a liar and a braggart of the miles gloriosus stripe, and that Churchyard was laden with venereal disease. In turn, Churchyard calls Camell a dunce, and suggests that he is a homosexual, and mentally dangerous as well. These highly insulting reciprocal personal attacks may have caused some offense to authorities because of the indelicacy of language. But it is more likely that the last two poems in the flyting got the poets

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86 Camelles Reioindre, to Churchyard, Collman, p. 65.
87 Ibid., p. 66.
88 A Replicacion to Camels Objection, Collman, pp. 61-2.
into trouble. In them, the combatants brought up political issues.

Camelles Conclusion\(^89\) makes much of a point in the first ballad of the series, Dauie Dicars Dreame. Camell attacks the lines "[When] Rex doth raigne and rule the rost.../Then baelfull barnes be blythe."

When Rex dothe reigne and rule the roste, lo thus you raunge at laste,
A meruailous when that such a when, should out in print be paste.
Doth not Rex raign sir dreamer now? what whennyng term is this?
If Rex reigne not? Who reigneth then?\(^90\)

Having neatly transformed a surely innocent verse into an attack by Churchyard on the young King Edward, Camell then accuses Churchyard of slandering the state.

Than balefull barnes be blithe you say, that here in England wonne:
Our stryfe shall stynt you vndertake, our dredful dayes are donne.
An assurance here you make, that baleful barnes we be,
And that in strife we are also, and dreadful daies do see.\(^91\)

\(^89\)Ibid., pp. 70-73.
\(^90\)Camelles Conclusion, Collman, p. 72.
\(^91\)Ibid.
Camell follows this with a protestation that such a charge is monstrous.

But God defend it should be true, whyce your ful frantycke hedde:
Hath publyshed to so open eyes, for to be seen and redde.\(^{92}\)

Camell, then, moved the controversy from the personal realm into the public. For one poet to call another poet an ass and a loud mouth may be insulting but not serious; to charge him with disloyalty and subversive activity is grave indeed, especially in a country ruled by a protectorate.

Churchyard's *A playn and fynall confutacion: of Cammells corlyke oblatracion*\(^{93}\) is in the main a defense against Camell's allegations. Churchyard complains that Camell deliberately warped the meaning of the lines from *Dauie Dicars Dreame*. And Churchyard was hard pressed to construe the grammar of the lines "When Rex doth raigne and rule the rost.../ Then baelfull barnes be blythe." He

\(^{92}\)Ibid.

\(^{93}\)A *playn and fynall confutacion: of Cammells corlyke oblatracion*, Collman, pp. 74-8. The OED defines oblatracion as "barking at a person, railing, scolding." It credits Churchyard as the earliest user of the word "c1560 Churchyard-A Playn and Fynall Confitution of Cammells corlyke Oblatracion." "Corlyke" is Churchyard's way of spelling cur-like; hence he is calling Camell a barking dog.
is obviously worried because he goes to great lengths to clarify those words from *Dauie Dicars Dreame*. He argues that evil can flourish even under a wise and good ruler, and he meant no slander on the king. Churchyard says that the existence of sinners in no way means that God does not rule. In fact, the continued existence of wicked people is a sign of God's mercy. Likewise, the wicked people in England are a tribute to the King's mercy.

Churchyard says to Camell:

You muste not harken halfe the tale, and leave the reste behynde:
For than in dede you do amysse, and fain would quareles fynde.
You redde in faythe much lyke the nunne, *omnia probate*:
And turned not the other syde *quod bonum est tenete*.94

So, Churchyard argues, the lines do not call into question the rule of the King. Rather the "when" refers to that time when not only the King rules but his subjects are all good. At that time, the "baelfull barnes" of England will be happy. Churchyard says that Davy Dicar dreamed of a time

When Rex doth raygne and rule the rost, and out the wicked weede,
Than you and many other lyke, would fyrst of all precede.95

94Ibid., p. 76.
95Ibid., p. 77.
That is, England would be happy when no scoundrels like Camell were around. To Camell, he also says:

If you haue done as much in Lynne, as you in London haue:
I thinke that all your neighbours woulde, sone wyshe you in your graue.
For we were here in quyet all, vntyll you came to towne:
Sence that we could not liue in reast, for suche a countrey clown.96

Churchyard's Playn and fynall confutacion is not so plain and clear as he claims. Camell, whose wit and argumentative skill, is evident in his verses, could easily have answered and re-confuted the logic of his confutor. But to do so would have meant challenging Churchyard's political explanations. Churchyard's defense of his lines from Dauie Dicars Dreame made him set forth some tortuous political theory. The lords of the Council might well have felt that the controversy was getting out of hand. When a private feud between two poets begins to be waged with political theory, remarks embarrassing to the real politicians are bound to occur. The open discussion about the ability of young King Edward to rule could easily give to the readers of the Churchyard-Camell broadsides ideas about the state of government that the councillors would not wish them to think about. What started out as a private argu-

96Ibid., p. 78.
ment between two writers could, once the attack shifted to political grounds, spark a potentially explosive situation.97

One can conjecture that the Churchyard-Camell affair could have been ended easily without formal action by the authorities. Churchyard, after all, at that time was a young man in his early twenties. A reprimand from a high official would have been sufficient to make him see the imprudence of continued wrangling. Thus his remark in A Fortunate Farewell (1599) about trouble "before the lords of the council, for writing some of my first verses" may well have been caused by the poems written by Churchyard and Camell.

After his London interlude and emergence as a published poet, Churchyard spent some time in Ireland under Sir Anthony St. Leger and Sir James Croft. He fared well

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97 The possibility that a reader of a broadside ballad might seriously misread is attested to by George Gascoigne's amusing charge about the stupidity of the reading public relating to these very poems. Gascoigne says: "The contentions betwene maister Churchyard and Camell, were (by a blockheaded reader) construed to be indeed a quarell betwene two neighbors. Of whom that one having a Camell in keping, and that the other having charge of the Churchyard, it was supposed they had grown to debate, because the Camell came into the Churchyarde." Gascoigne, The Complete Works, ed. J. W. Cunliffe (Cambridge, 1907-10), I, 11.
apparently, for the Irish venture was obviously much more profitable than most of his other military exploits.
Instead of bemoaning the poverty of soldiers, Churchyard says:

Than testers walkt, as thick as doth the haill
About the world, for loe from thence I boer
For servise doen, of money right good stoer. 98

After the Irish campaign Churchyard returned to England, where according to Anthony à Wood, "he wooed a rich widow called Catherine Browning, but she giving him no countenance, he became much passionate and troubled in mind." 99 Wood gives no indication of his source for the information regarding Mrs. Browning. Nowhere does Churchyard mention her name, and I am unable to identify her. There is, however, a lengthy passage in "A Storie" describing the wooing of a rich widow, from which Wood must have drawn. 100 Churchyard tells the sad tale of the widow rejecting him because she sought a mate with a great deal of money, far more than Churchyard realized from his


successful Irish expedition. The passage in "A Storie," which contains much shrewd and practical advice, presents also an insight into Churchyard's character. The widow points out that an ideal husband should have money, luck, and wit; an acceptable spouse should have at least two of these blessings, preferably the money and luck. Poor Churchyard had wit, but little money and abominable luck. He reports the widow's remarks:

Good syr quod she on riches sure, my minde is fully sette:
I can with riches vertues make, vertue with wante is bare,
I praye you come no more at me, thus answerd now ye are. 101

He, hearing this, "hangde doune the hedde, and smilde to cloke his woe." But after he left and returned to his quarters, he expressed his feelings by kicking in the door, tearing up his books and papers, and smashing his lute. Yet the poet amusingly comments:

Some authours saie that could not bee, his wisdome did asswage
The inward passions of his minde, and heate of all his rage.
But well I wotte, he did prepare to part from freendes and all
And staled but till the spring came on, for leafe was at the fall. 102

101 Ibid.
102 Ibid.
Whether or not the winter of 1551-1552 healed Churchyard's love-wounded heart, we shall never know.

In the spring of 1552 Francis I seized the bishoprics of Metz, Toul, and Verdun, precipitating another war with the Emperor's forces. During the unsuccessful siege of Metz, Churchyard spent all the money he had made in Ireland. The siege, during which the Emperor's forces suffered gravely from the effects of disease, was raised on January 1, 1553. After Metz, Churchyard reports:

Than down I past the pleasant floed of Ryen
And so I sarud in Flaunders, note the saem
Where loe at first my hap fell out of fraem.
For I was clapt in pryson without cause.103

This capture probably took place sometime in 1553. Churchyard in a marginal note says, "get out of prison by helpe of the noble Madame sell de Embry." Immediately following the note he says that he continued on the continent after his escape:

And still I hoept the warres wold me aduance
So trayld the piek, and world began a nue,
And loekt like hawk that lastly cam from mue.

Three yeer at least I sawe the Emprours warres
Than hoemward drue as was my wonted traed.

Since he got to the wars in the spring of 1552, three years of fighting would place his return to England in the year 1555. He was at the siege of Renty, which began in August of 1554. The imprisonment probably occurred sometime in 1553, after Metz and before Renty in the summer of 1554.

"A Storie" provides the details of the imprisonment Churchyard mentions in "A Tragicall Discourse." As he puts it, he "fell straightwaies in enmies hands, and was sore wounded too." Luckily for Churchyard, in the sixteenth century the affairs of prisoners were not closely governed by international conventions and repatriation commissions. A prisoner's welfare depended largely upon his wealth, or its semblance. Churchyard's previous experience as a captive in Scotland, during which he convinced his jailers that "white chalke and cheese was one," proved valuable after he was captured in Flanders. He again convinced his keepers that he was wealthy:

He promesd mutche, though little had to paie:  
(A subtell shift to saue the life, and scape a bloody fraie.)

104 Churchyard describes an incident at Renty to which he was an eyewitness in "The Honour of a Soldier," Generall Rehearsall of Wars, sig. Fl.

Churchyard's "subtell shift," that is, his ability to lie did indeed save him the pain and indignity of a dungeon cell. So effective was Churchyard's tongue that his captors were convinced that "his dissent and ofspryng came, of hie and noble bloode."

Instead, then, of close confinement, Churchyard was treated as a gentleman prisoner and given great privileges: he was welcomed into the social activity of the French; he gambled with them and lost heavily at dice and cards; he easily got clothes and delicate food on credit. Because he seemed to be a man of substance, he held the favor of "the greatest lords of all that soile." Not only were his gambling losses and personal luxuries carried on paper; his apparent wealth and position enabled him to give his bond for the ransom of many other Englishmen.

If we can believe Churchyard, his behavior also helped him in his dealings with women as well as men. According to him, "Mme. sell de Embry" fell in love with him.

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106 Ibid., sig. B1v.

107 I have been unable to identify this woman. But on the basis of Churchyard's often idiosyncratic orthography, it may be that her name was Mlle. d'Embry. She lived with her parents, and it seems reasonable to suppose that she was unmarried.
What with his captivity being spent in so civilized a manner, Churchyard seemed not to have made any strenuous efforts to effect his own release. He no doubt would have continued in such a pleasant state were it not for the untimely capture by the French of another English officer.

The second Englishman, whose name history fails to record, was asked whether he knew Churchyard. He did and related that while Churchyard was a good soldier and a gentleman, he could claim neither noble blood nor wealth. This intelligence upset the French considerably. In truth, Churchyard had duped them to an annoying extent. He was greatly in their debt and had lost them the ransom of several other prisoners. Furthermore, there was not a shred of hope that their losses could be recouped.

The French acted with understandable Gallic logic. Churchyard was immediately imprisoned and sentenced to death—if the French could not have his money, they would have his flesh. But Churchyard was not to be disposed of so precipitately. "Mme sel de Embry" came to his cell window, bearing files, clothing and a hatchet. When his guard heard the noise of the filing and came to investigate,

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108 Ibid.
Churchyard neutralized him with the hatchet. He then fled to a house in a nearby woods and hid there for two days. His mistress meanwhile had returned home safely before the alarm was sounded and escaped suspicion. Churchyard still had to travel sixty miles through enemy territory to freedom, but by traveling at night, he completed the escape with no more than ordinary difficulty. Churchyard then joined a force which assaulted Torwain and continued fighting until 1555, when this particular war between Charles V and Francis I ended.

Upon his return to England, he was welcomed heartily but soon forgotten. He laments:

So peoples loue is like nue besomes [brooms] oft,  
That sweeps all clean, whyels broem is green and soft.109

What Churchyard did after his return from Belgium in 1555 is unknown. He may have tried to write but nothing of his remains from the mid-1550's except the pieces in Tottel's Miscellany (1557). An epitaph on the death of King Edward did appear in 1558, although by that time Churchyard was once again "trayling the pike" on the continent. Since Edward died in 1553, it would seem that the epitaph was

written long before it appeared. It is also highly unlikely that Churchyard's timing was so bad that he would compose an elegy for Edward in the same year that Mary died. Of course, this looks forward to Queen Elizabeth.

In June of 1557, Queen Mary joined the Spanish in their war on France; one of the consequences of this declaration was the loss of Calais, the last of the English continental properties. Churchyard served in this war as a lieutenant under a Captain Born at Guisnes, a city located near Calais and one of its outlying forts. Born's force was part of a larger English group headed by William, Lord Grey of Wilton. In *A General Rehearsall of Wars*, Churchyard presents a detailed day-by-day account of the heavy fighting which occurred before the surrender of the English garrison in January, 1558. He could have kept a journal or diary, since *A General Rehearsall* was not published until almost twenty years after the siege, or he may have written the account while in prison. The sixteenth century has many examples of literary activity by prisoners. From Churchyard's accounts, he had a major role in the proceedings which enabled the English troops to withdraw. Churchyard himself, however, and Lord Grey were held captive by the Duke of Guise and taken to Paris. As I noted earlier, Lord Grey was released for the purpose
of securing peace, but Churchyard remained imprisoned in Paris until the Peace of Cateau Cambresis in April, 1559.

It was at this time that Churchyard was given temporary freedom to return to England in order to raise a ransom to be paid to his French captors. We have already seen that he chose to break his word and violate his parole, although he recognized the possible dishonor involved. Anticipating Falstaff, Churchyard asked himself—What did it profit a man to trade his life for his word? Especially what did it profit a man like Churchyard, a professional soldier not a knight-errant? The sixteenth century gave birth to a new—one might say realistic—approach to war. Churchyard's behavior mirrors it only on a small scale; the disciplined savagery of the Duke of Alva's armies represents it on a larger scope.

So instead of re-crossing the channel to France, Churchyard sojourned in Ragland, Monmouthshire, and his native Shrewsbury for the remainder of the year. It seems, however, that part of this period must have been spent at court; for in Churchyarde Charge (1580) there appears a poem called "Churchyarde Charge, the second yeere of the Queenes Maiesties raigne,"

i.e., 1560. Churchyard's leave-taking was not tempered with graciousness or charity; obviously the well-established courtiers made his stay unpleasant and, more to the point, unprofitable. As he left, the battle-tested soldier taunted the timeservers surrounding Elizabeth:

I leave you Courtiers in your ruffe
I will goe live, with plainer menne...

Where Cannon roard, and dromme did sounde,
I did not learne, to daunce a rounde...

I haue with many, a threedebare pursse
Been glad to serue, in Countries cause,
When you at home, were pickyng strawes.\textsuperscript{111}

Despite his claim of patriotic motive and disdain for wealth, the monetary advantages of the courtiers galled him terribly. Churchyard's envy and spite is a recurring motif in the poem. For example:

I am not greened at your ease
Although that you, with shiftyng braine,
Doe reape the profite of my paine.\textsuperscript{112}

This poem is really a microcosm of Churchyard's whole struggle with life. His life-long lament was that people with "shifting brains" were always getting the benefits of his hard labor. At any rate, in March, 1560, Churchyard

\textsuperscript{111}"Churchyardes farewell," Charge, sig. B3.

\textsuperscript{112}Ibid, sig. B3.
rejoined Lord Grey and went with him to Scotland to aid Scottish insurgents in expelling the French.

In "A Tragicall Discourse," Churchyard describes the Leith escapade in this fashion:

Well yet my minde could neuer rest at hoem
My shues wear maed of running leather suer
And boern I was about the world to roem
To see the warres and keep my hand in vre.
The Frenche ye knoe did Englishmen procuer
To come to Leeth at siedge whereof I was
Till Frenche did seeke in ships away to pas. 113

The siege was a rather elaborate affair. Lord Grey left Berwick on the Scottish border in April, 1560, and marched to Leith with a force of 6500 men. At Leith he was joined by a Scots army numbering 2000 troops. For three months the combined armies sought vainly to compel the French to yield.

Churchyard wrote a narrative poem of the encounter, "The Siege of Leeth, more aptlie called the schole of warre." 114 The poem lives up to its subtitle very well,


114 "The Siege of Leeth," Chippes, sigs. Al-B Lending further credence to Churchyard's judgment of the armies at Leith is J. W. Fortesque's A History of the British Army (London, 1910), I, 128. Fortesque characterizes the army at Leith as an island of order and efficiency in the generally tempestuous sea of sixteenth century English warfare. This poem will be discussed fully in Chapter III.
for in it Churchyard describes much of the strategic and tactical background and even the psychological state of the soldiers. Churchyard's understatement and matter of fact reporting certainly suggest that by 1560 he was a battle hardened veteran. For example, telling of the French firing on Lord Grey, who had ridden out for a parley, Churchyard says:

...they sang us such a songe
With curriar shotte, that had not hap bin good. 115
They had soone shed, some of our worthist blood. 115

In a similar vein he notes the results of cannonading directed from the fortified town into the English camp:

And oft by chaunce, it kild a horse or man,
But no man would, the Campe therefore forsake:
Such tennis balles, did keepe our men awake,
And quickned those, that wear dull sprited soules
And made some ladds, to digge them deepe in holes. 116

If Churchyard could dismiss a volley of bullets as a song and liken cannon shot to tennis balls, apparently he was used to war's hazards.

The Scottish campaign and the siege ended with the Treaty of Edinburgh on July 6 of that year. The treaty provided for the expulsion of French troops and the triumph

115 Ibid., sig. A2v.
116 Ibid., sig. A4v.
of the Lords of the Congregation, which in effect estab-
lished the Reformation in Scotland, even though Francis II
and Mary were unwilling to ratify the treaty.

   Sometime subsequent to the victory in Scotland, Church-
yard returned to London and the court he had so recently
forsaken. The exertions at Leith must have caused him to
think over his rash statements about courtiers, for he
says, "A littell breath I took than after this [Leith],
/And shaept my self about the court to be." 117 The lure of
the court always worked strongly on Churchyard, as is evi-
dent by his returns after each of his numerous farewells,
so it is little wonder that he turned toward London again
in late 1560. Yet there was really little else for him to
do, because for the first time in his life he was a victim
of what might be called technological unemployment; that
is, except for Shane O'Neill in Ireland, England was
relatively free from national or international broils.
Europe was temporarily quiet, and Scotland after the Treaty
of Edinburgh never again was engaged in wholesale warfare
with the English. Churchyard, then in his early thirties,
no doubt decided that the time was propitious for him to

seek advancement at court since it was obvious that all
the pains of battle had brought him little fame or secur-
ity. After a decade and a half of starving by the sword,
he seems to have tried to live by the pen.

The years 1561-1566 Churchyard probably spent in Lon-
don. Shore's Wife appeared in the 1563 edition of The
Mirror for Magistrates, although it had been written at
least ten years earlier. In 1559 when the Mirror first
appeared, Churchyard was in a French prison, so of course
could not have capitalized then on the novel anthology.
But he could well have been stimulated by the publishing
of his tragedy in 1563. The prose link following Shore's
Wife has high praise for the work. Baldwin, the editor
of the Mirror, says, "This was so well lyked, that all
together exhorted me instantly, to procure Maister Church-
yarde to vndertake and to penne as manye moe of the
remaynder as myght by any meanes be attaynted at his
hands." Spurred perhaps by long-awaited praise, Church-
yard may well have labored hard as Baldwin suggested. Yet
no more of Churchyard's poetry appeared in the ensuing
four editions of the Mirror. Not until the final edition,

118 Challenge, sig. *1v. Churchyard says, "in King
Edwardes daies...Shores Wife I persued."

119 The Mirror for Magistrates, ed. Lily Campbell
(Cambridge, 1938), p. 387
that of 1587, did Churchyard have another selection included, the tragedy of Cardinal Wolsey. The prose link praising Churchyard was omitted from editions subsequent to 1563, and the introductions to both Shore's Wife and Wolsey contain biting attacks on Baldwin, who no longer edited the Mirror and who was probably dead by that time. The first six stanzas of Churchyard's "Syr Symon Burleis Tragedie," first published in the Chippes (1575), berate Baldwin for his refusal to accept Churchyard's work. It would seem, then, that Baldwin may have been one of the people Churchyard refers to in "A Tragicall Discourse":

Some frends I found, as frends do go you se
That gaue me wordes as sweet as hony still
Yet let me lyue by hed and connyng skill. 120

The years could not have been happy ones, for in a passage even more bitter about failure than was habitual with him, Churchyard continues:

I crotch't, I kneeld, and many a cap could vayll,
And watched laet, and early roes as moern,
And with the throng I followd hard at tayll,
As braue as bull, or sheep but nuely shorn,
The gladdest man that euer yet was boern,
To wayt and staer among the staets full hye,
Who feeds the poer with many frendly eye.

But who can live with goodly looks alone,
Or mirthful words that sound like taberers piping.
Say what they will, they love to keep their own,
And part with nought that commeth in their grief.
You shall have nuts they say, when plums are ripe:
Thus all with shalls or shaelles ye shall be fed.
And gaep for gold, and want both gold and lead.

Chalmers maintains that Churchyard went to Ireland in 1564 and served there with Sir Henry Sidney until 1565, citing as his authority a passage in the Challenge. But the place referred to in the Challenge says nothing about Ireland; in fact, it is right in the middle of Simon Burley's tragedy. Moreover, nowhere else in the Challenge is any Irish service mentioned. In the Choice Churchyard speaks of Sidney and Humphrey Gilbert in Ireland, but the year he writes about is 1569. Adnitt, following Chalmers in customary obedience, also says Churchyard served in Ireland in 1564-1565, but offers no evidence to support the contention. Furthermore, Sidney himself was not transferred from the presidency of Wales to the lord lieutenantcy in Ireland until late 1565. If Churchyard was in Ireland, he must have left as Sir Henry was arriving. But the chances are that Churchyard was not in Ireland at all during those years. Closing the lament cited above

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121 Ibid., sigs. H3v-H4.
from "A Tragicall Discourse," Churchyard says that after trying the court,

The proof therof maed me to seke far hens:
To Anwerp than I trudged on the spleen,
And all in haest to get some spending pens,
To serve my torn in service of the Queen.  

The lines suggest that he went straight to Antwerp from England. The events he then describes put him in Antwerp in 1567, so we may conjecture that he spent five years, 1561-1566, in or around London.

I have already advanced the view that part of that time he spent working on tragedies for the Mirror for Magistrates. In addition, the Stationers' Register has four entries for the period July 22, 1565-July 22, 1566 relating to Churchyard. A Farewell called Churcheyardes Ronde from the Courte to the Country ground; another poem in a similar vein called simply Churcheyardes farewell; a third, probably to counter the first two, called A greater thanks, for Churcheyardes welcome home; and a fourth entitled Churcheyardes Lamentacion of Freyndship. All four of the works just mentioned are broadsides and unfortunately have no publication dates. From the information provided by the


Stationers' Register, all we can be sure of is that they were written by 1566. The Stationers' Register also lists a work called The Commendation of Musyke by Churchyard for the period July 22, 1562-July 22, 1563, but apparently no copy survives. So from 1561 to 1565/6 Churchyard left few remains for him, literary or martial. He must have sat out the French war of 1562, since he nowhere mentions it; and as I have noted, Chalmers seems wrong in placing Churchyard in Ireland in 1564-1565. It seems highly unlikely that a man as active as Churchyard could have been idle for such a length of time. To support himself he may have turned out penny ballads which have failed to stand the test of time.

The year 1567, however, bears many marks of Churchyard's progress. In August of the preceding year occurred the notorious icon-breaking outburst in Antwerp, a riot that was unfortunate in both political and aesthetic senses. Politically, it led to a rupture between Catholics and Protestants in the Netherlands at a time when unity might have thrust off the Spanish yoke. Aesthetically, it destroyed the famous Antwerp cathedral and priceless works
The cause of the violence is ultimately traceable to Philip II's insistency on the heresy question. He ordered Margaret of Parma, who was the regent and his half-sister, to step up the activity of the Holy Inquisition in Holland and Belgium. Despite the moderating influence of William of Orange, the Spaniards increased the pressure on the Protestants to such an extent that a delegation of three hundred nobles led by Count Brederode, himself a Catholic, presented a petition to Margaret in April, 1566. Margaret temporized, replying that the petition would have to be referred to Philip himself for consideration. Her chief minister, the Seigneur de Berlaymont, thought her to be too lenient and is reported to have said, "Is it possible that your Highness can entertain fears of these beggars?" The contemptuous term

125 Ironically, the mutiny of the Spanish troops in Antwerp a decade later, known as the "Spanish Fury" and during which 6000 people were slain and the town burned, solidified the Dutch Protestants and Belgian Catholics in their organized opposition to the Spaniards. Edwin Maslin Hulme, The Renaissance: the Protestant Revolution and the Catholic Reformation in Continental Europe (New York, 1914), p. 482.


became the motto of the enemies of the Spaniards and they adopted as their battle cry, "Vivent les gueux."

The general unrest under the severe Spanish rule extended from the nobles to the populace. Thus in August the pent-up feelings erupted in a wild orgy of destruction of Catholic churches, friaries, and convents. The mobs went from religious house to religious house smashing stained glass windows, pulling down statues, ripping altar cloths, and laying waste to all they touched. One historian says, "It was only the scum of the population that indulged in the wild debauch of pillage and destruction." Another claims that a crowd of Protestants followed a procession honoring the Virgin into the cathedral, where one of their number stood in the pulpit and delivered a caricature of a monkish sermon. Partisans of both faiths exchanged insults and blows. The next day, assessing as weakness the failure of the civil authorities to act, the mobs wrecked the cathedral and

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128 Later in the struggle for Dutch independence some of the most successful antagonists of the Spaniards called themselves the "sea beggars." From 1572 on the "sea beggars," small vessels with letters of marque from William of Orange, captured Brill, Flushing, Delfshaven, and other towns in the name of the Dutch republic. See Hulme, op. cit., p. 481.

129 Ibid., p. 479.

other religious houses. Violent and barbarous as the icon-breaking was, it and the resistance of the nobles extracted concessions from Margaret and for a time at least brought a measure of religious freedom to the Netherlands.

Unfortunately for Churchyard's reputation, Chalmers and later Adnitt and the DNB link him with the unruly mob which desecrated Antwerp in 1566. As a result, he has been granted the dubious distinction of being a barbarian, and the additional title of being a liar for claiming to have prevented pillaging and bloodshed. Yet even a cursory reading of his works proves conclusively that the Antwerp events he describes belong to the year 1567. And far from being a wanton plunderer, he played a very important role in an action that had tremendous significance in the Dutch struggle for independence. He may not be credited in history books for his deeds, but his account clearly demonstrates his veracity.

Churchyard's version of his Antwerp glory differs greatly from the general accounts of the iconoclasm. He refers to the affair in three different works: "A Tragicall Discourse," Chippes (1575) and Challenge (1593); A Lamentable and Pitifull Description of the Wofull Warres in Flaunders (1578); and A True Discourse Historicall of
the Succeeding Gouernours in the Netherlands, and the Ciuill Warres there Begun in the yeere 1565. In "A Tragicall Discourse," in consecutive marginal notes Churchyard identifies himself as "A capitaine of great charge vnder the Prince of Orange" and claims that "He saued religious houses and most of the towne from burning." His only reference to rioting in "A Tragicall Discourse" in five stanzas on Antwerp is a terse line and a half: "Yet some to rage and robtry ran full soer,/ Whom I reformd." The remainder of the Antwerp passage in "A Tragicall Discourse" consists of a generalized account of Churchyard's activities in maintaining peace and order, and one stanza describes his relationship with William of Orange:

A noble prince I sawe amid that broyll,
To whom I went and swaer his part to taek.
The commons caem, all set on raeg and spoyll,
And gaue me charge to keep my wyts a waek:
The prince for love of king and countreis sake,
Bad me do well, and shed no gyltles bloed,
And saue from spoyll poer people and there good.134

132 Ibid., sig. H4V.  
133 Ibid.  
134 Ibid., sig. H4.
Churchyard's Chippes appeared in 1575; three years later in A Lamentable and Pitifull Description the story is told in much greater detail. Significantly, Churchyard's description corresponds on most points with the accounts usually found in history books. The destruction of the churches had taken place in August, 1566. Margaret was at that time forced to yield some ground, but in March, 1567, she sent a force under the Seigneur de Beauvoir, the commander of her bodyguard at Brussels, to Antwerp in order to reimpose Spanish supremacy. De Beauvoir's men slew some two thousand outside the city. The specific reason for Margaret's decision to send her personal bodyguard to Antwerp is given in detail by Churchyard.

There was one called Monsieur Tolouse, that assembled a company of soldiers, to the number of two thousand, and fortified a place neare Antwerpe, called Austeruiel, in minde to excercise Religion there, and to draw as many vnto them, as were fauorers of that enterprize.

The Regent hearing thereof, with all expedition sente Monsieur Beauoys, with a sufficient band, both of horsmen & footemen, which set vpon Monsieur Tolouse his companye (when they were not well prouided to withstande such a chardge) and overthrewe the whole assembly, putting to

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135 Motley, op. cit., pp. 229-238.
136 Ibid., p. 228.
the sworde as many as they coulde lay hand vpon, with as great terror and grueltie, as coulde anye waye be imagined.\textsuperscript{137}

The people of Antwerp stood on the city's walls and witnessed the massacre. At first they merely "began to murmur at the matter," apparently inured to the violence of the times. But the murder of their countrymen stirred them to "burst out in open words of malice.\textsuperscript{138} The battle cry of "viue le guexe" was raised. Churchyard says that the entire population was enraged because of Margaret's slaying of Protestants, and relates that the citizens of Antwerp assembled an army of ten thousand to fight the Regent's forces.\textsuperscript{139} Churchyard further states that the Antwerp citizens ignored William of Orange's plea to disperse. Orange was still trying to find a peaceful compromise with Spain at that time and had not yet assumed the leadership of the rebellion against Philip. Angered at William's apparent weakness, the citizens "gaue the Prince euil wordes, and a greate number of them burst into my lodging. And bycause the Prince hadde made of mee before, (and that they knew I hadde serued in the

\textsuperscript{137}A Lamentable and Pitifull Description, sig. Dl.
\textsuperscript{138}Ibid., sig. Dl\textsuperscript{v}.
\textsuperscript{139}Ibid., sig. D2.
Emperoures dayes,) they called me forth, and saide I should be theyr leader, which thing I refused as far as I durst, alleadging, I was ignorant of suche affayres: wherevpon, they bent theyr pikes on me in a greate furie.\textsuperscript{140} It did not take Churchyard long to size up the situation. He continues: "I beholding the extremi-tie I was in, gaue them my faith, and so came into the streete among the reste of their companye, where I was so receiued, as fewe would haue bleeued the manner there­of, but suche as had seene it. Witnesse Sir Thomas Gressam."\textsuperscript{141} Churchyard's calling on the authority of Gresham for verification is a compelling argument for the truth of what he says. A Lamentable and Pitifull Descrip­tion appeared in 1578 while Gresham was still alive. Since the famous merchant was a man of great importance, it seems highly unlikely that Churchyard would have used his name lightly. Moreover, in the version of "A Tragicall Discourse," which appeared in the Challenge (1593), Churchyard cites Richard Candelere, Gresham's clerk, as a witness.\textsuperscript{142} Doubtless because Gresham had died in 1579, Churchyard wanted someone still living to verify his tale. Church-

\textsuperscript{140}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{141}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{142}"A Tragicall Discourse," Challenge, sig. I2.
yard's insistence upon naming of witnesses is persuasive. It is also interesting that Motley cites Gresham for verification of the tenseness of the times.\textsuperscript{143}

The passage certainly contradicts Churchyard's remark that he served under William in this instance. Indeed it argues that Churchyard led because William was unable to do so. Admittedly, however, Churchyard was one of those men who had "greatness thrust upon him." At best he was a reluctant leader. Yet he claims that he brought order to the rapidly swelling army— it grew to twenty-five thousand—and that William thanked him for taking charge and imposing military discipline on the bellicose citizens.\textsuperscript{144}

The temper of the motley assembly was, however, volatile. Detachments roamed the streets, crying, "Viue le geuxe," and spoiling for a fight.\textsuperscript{145} At one point, William and several aides on horseback met one of the groups and attempted to reason with them. He succeeded only in antagonizing them and very nearly was killed. Churchyard relates that the crowd surged, causing William's horse to

\textsuperscript{143}Motley, op. cit., p. 235.
\textsuperscript{144}A Lamentable and Pitifull Description, sig. D2\textsuperscript{v}.
\textsuperscript{145}Ibid., sig. D3.
slip to the cobblestones, and only by dextrous footwork did the future Dutch champion manage to save his life.146

Some of Churchyard's band suggested pillaging the town: "Diuers of the Souldioures in great companyes came vnto me, and desired to go and spoyle the Catholikes houses."147 To dissuade them, "I tolde them, that it was more meete to watche and be in readinesse for the enimie, for the Prince had tolde me, how they prepared to assaulte our Campe the same presente nyghte, whyche policie kepe oure people in quiet."148 After thus relating how he put the men off with a military reason, Churchyard continues with the real reason for his advice: "and further, I knewe, if we hadde spoyled one house, wee shoulde haue ransackt the whole Towne, and when I hadde gotten anye treasure, I beeyng a straunger, shoulde haue had my throte cutte for my goodes."149 Without doubt, Churchyard was in an unpleasantly paradoxical situation: under threat of death he was in command of an army whose propensity

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146Ibid., sig. D3r.
147Ibid.
148Ibid., sig. D4r.
149Ibid.
for looting would jeopardize his life. Without doubt Churchyard most assuredly was involved deeply in the midst of a crucial moment in Dutch history. That his activities should so long have been confused with the dishonorable actions of 1566 is an error that is barely forgivable.

The avoidance of a repetition of the 1566 outrage was the beginning of the unification of the hostile factions in Antwerp—Lutherans, Calvinists, and Catholics—against the Spaniards. After de Beauvoir's troops withdrew, the armed bands in Antwerp threatened to attack one another because a rumor started that the Calvinists were going to slay the Lutherans. The Catholic bands were themselves quite ready to defend themselves against both. Orange called a meeting of all factions in the city square, rode into their midst, and succeeded in calming everyone and bringing peace. From that moment on Orange increased in stature as leader of the Netherlands. For Churchyard, however, ill luck continued to dog him.

He fled Antwerp because for one reason or another many there wished to see him dead:

The town I kept from cruell sword and fier
Did seek my lief when peace and all was maed:
And such they wear that did my blud desier
As I had savde from bloes and bluddy blaed.
I crept away and hid me in the shaed,
But as the dayes and sun began to shien,
They followd fast with force and practiesfien.150

But once outside of Antwerp, he was at the mercy of the Regent's killers because he had a price on his head. "I scrambled hardly into Englande, being layde for, and yet so desguised, that I escaped the handes of my enimies, who hadde a commandement from the Regente, to put mee to death with Martiaall law (a bad recompence for so great good and diligence bestowed on hir people, and a naughtie reward for the frute of a good meaning mind)." Churchyard, it must be granted, had occasion for his note of perplexity. The Antwerpites had driven him from the city and Margaret wanted his life as well. Truly, his reward was a "naughtie" one.

The disguise he refers to was, if not novel, at least effective for a while. The escape was made, he says,

In priests atyer but not with shauen crown,
I skaept their hands that sought to haue my hed:
A forckid cap and pleytted corttall gowne,
Far from the church stoed me in right good sted.

151A Lamentable and Pitiful Description, sig. Elv.
In all this whyell ne masse for quick nor ded
I durst not sing: a poesting priest I was:152
That did in haest from post to pyller pas.

The priest's garb, however, almost proved to be his burial shroud, for

In Brigges than the parsons breetch did quake,
For there a clarke came tinging of a bell
(That in the towne did such a rombling make)
I could not walke in vickars garments well:
So there I wished my selfe in cockell shell,
Or sea mans slopps that smeld of pitch and tarre,
Which roebs I found ear I had traueld farre.153

Clad safely in seaman's clothes, Churchyard thus made good his escape to England, hindered only by a persistent marshal bent on his capture.154

The jaunty tone of the lines which describe the flight in "A Tragicall Discourse" disguise the fact that Churchyard harbored considerable ill-will toward the burghers of Antwerp and the Regent. After he reached England and rested at the court for a while, he thought about his recent trials and

...since I was so retainde,
I thought to make those roisters once afraide:

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153 Ibid., sig. II. Brigges is present day Bruges, fifty miles east of Antwerp toward the coast.

154 Ibid.
So hoiste vp saile when I had anckar waide,
And into Fraunce I slipte with much a do. 155

Once in France, Churchyard found himself soon in Paris. He tells of overhearing a conversation "within a merchants shoppe" and learning from it that William of Orange was on his way to Flanders. The news encouraged him to seek out William and to rejoin him. Leaving Paris, however, was not easy; and Churchyard got away only with the help of Sir John Norris, then the English ambassador to Paris. 156

After being exposed to some unspecified perils, Churchyard was welcomed heartily "with many a mad carouse" by William's supporters at the prince's house in Cologne.

Churchyard remained with William's forces and marched with them to Flanders. He then says, "and neare the Rine our camp a season laye." 157 It is difficult to tell how much time the army stayed encamped. The length of the "season" is not made any more precise by Churchyard's

155 Ibid. At this time Churchyard was probably in the service of Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford. In A True Discourse Historicall, p. 10, he says that in 1567 he entered the Earl's service. In the lines just cited, he notes that he was "retainde."

156 Ibid., marginal note, sig. Il.

157 Ibid., sig. Ilv.
further remark that "in Flaunders longe our campe re-
mayned."\textsuperscript{158} From the lines in "A Tragicall Discourse," it seems apparent that the period was one of inactivity, of a monotonous succession of similar days. Churchyard says:

\begin{verbatim}
And sweete with sowre we tasted sondry wayes.
Who goes to warrs must feele both good and ill: 
Some likes it not and some that life can 
prays.
Where nights are cold and many hungry dayes:
Some will not be, yet such as loue the drom
Takes in good parte the chaunces as they com.\textsuperscript{159}
\end{verbatim}

In addition to the ordinary privations of the soldier's life, Churchyard also appears to have gained no profit either. But he accepts the lack of reward with manly resignation:

\begin{verbatim}
Perhaps my share was not the sweetest thear,\textsuperscript{160}
I make no boest, nor finde no fault therein.
\end{verbatim}

In passing, it is interesting to note Churchyard's acceptance of his fate in military affairs. He often accepted whatever occurred to him in the field as part of the way of life; on the other hand, he never could accept gracefully the rebuffs he suffered from courtiers and from critics of his writings.

\textsuperscript{158}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{159}Ibid., sig. llv.
\textsuperscript{160}Ibid.
William of Orange's camp finally was broken when the army left Flanders for France. The year was probably 1568, for Churchyard says in *A True Discourse Historical* that he joined Orange in 1567. The long encampment perhaps carried over into the following year. At that time Churchyard asked William for permission to leave for England. William allowed him to go but warned him that he would have difficulty making his way through the countryside. The prince's warning proved correct, for Churchyard was led by his guide to a gang of peasants who wanted to kill him. There seemed to be nothing personal about their hatred; Churchyard simply represented the enemy and to them deserved death.161

One of the peasants, however, helped Churchyard escape while the others were asleep. Churchyard interpreted the unexpected aid as "a secret provision of God":

Thus God throw him did shoe his might and grace, Which joyde me more than all this worldly good.162

After the rescue, Churchyard made his way from France without any further serious hindrances, and without needing any more supernatural assistance.

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The soldier-poet did not return directly to London and the court. As he says, "...Fortune did me call/ To Garnesey thoe, to staye my troubled miend." In a marginal note, Churchyard has "Under captain Leighton after all these toiles." Sir Thomas Leighton was governor of Guernsey, and Churchyard received decent treatment from him. Elsewhere Churchyard lists him as a commander he served under, which seems to stretch a point somewhat: "In Garnsey, with sir Thomas Leighton in good credit and charge a good while."  

Except for a later reference to Churchyard's wedding, "A Tragicall Discourse" contains no further specific autobiographical information. It seems reasonable, then, to assume that the poem was written in about 1569; for in that year Leighton became governor of Guernsey. Up to that date the events in Churchyard's life are related with rather careful attention to chronology, but none of the events after Guernsey can be assigned to specific years. For the years after 1569, information relating to Churchyard's career is scattered and lacks the standard provided by the poet's own story in his autobiographical poetry;

163 Ibid.

164 A Pleasant Discourse of Court and Wars, sig. H2v.
nevertheless letters, public records, and prefaces and epistles to various works provide considerable data on the subsequent years of Churchyard's life.

In a letter written from Bath in May, 1569, to Secretary Cecil, Churchyard tells of recuperating from an illness, but more important he tells of Papist activity around Bath and warns Cecil of the intrigues. Rahter, however, suggests that Churchyard was at Bath because the town was near his wife's home, where Churchyard went in order to settle certain marital problems.

The questions surrounding Churchyard's marriage, or marriages, are difficult to answer. In "A Tragicall Discourse," he tells of choosing a "sober wife" from the country after years of following the wars. His poetry shows that he felt the marriage was not entirely successful:

...then ritchly home he drewe,
And left the warrs, and in great heate he for a wife did sewe.
But haste makes waste, an old prouerbe for he was wiud in deede:
God sende all soldiours in their age some better lucke at neede.

166 Rahter, op. cit., p. xxvii.
Rahter argues quite plausibly that Churchyard and his wife had serious problems. The strongest evidence is in a letter written by Churchyard to Edward Seymour, second Earl of Hertford, in which Churchyard speaks of "a crooked fa­ther in lawe." He says, "I plead playn troeth & Fayre dealyng & he haeth practysed ffowll matter & sottell handlying off theas cawsses." He tells of threats of vio­lence from his brothers-in-law, and on the back of the let­ter writes: "My good lord I do smell owtt myschevos practys off murther or vyall dealyngs whych I wold preuent & auoyd nott only for nown saeffty but also for my wyeues porcyon & benefytt." The postscript shows Churchyard to be a very practical, if unromantic, husband, showing great concern for his bodily health and his pocketbook. The let­ter clearly indicates that Churchyard was being cheated out of a marriage settlement by his father-in-law. When Church­yard demanded the dowry, he was threatened with violence. He then applied to Hertford for aid.

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168 Edward Seymour was Earl of Hertford from 1559, when the title was restored, until his death in 1621; so clearly he was Churchyard's correspondent. The letter was transcribed from a manuscript and printed by J. E. Jackson, Canon of Bristol, in "Thomas Churchyard," Notes and Queries, 5th series, VIII (October 27, 1877), 331.

169 This letter was written from Marlborough, which was perhaps the home of Churchyard's wife. Rahter (p. xxx) says that he has examined the Wiltshire records available but can find no further date.
Chalmers, and later Adnitt, states that a poem called "A pitefull complaint, in maner of a Tragédie, of Seignior Anthonio dell Donaldoes wife..." is autobiographical, dealing with Churchyard's unhappy marriage. The poem first appeared in A Generall Rehearsall of Warres (1579) but later was reprinted in the Challenge (1593) under the title of "A Tragicall Discourse of a Dolorous Gentlewoman." Rahter emphasizes that the later version contains two new stanzas in which the lady tells of her adultery with a man named Stoner, the result of which was two illegitimate sons. She also says that when her husband found this out, he left her at Bath. From Churchyard's letter to Hertford it is evident that his marriage had some problems, and from the letter to Cecil it is also evident that he was in Bath in 1569. Yet Stoner has not been identified and the evidence is too scanty for one to be certain about anything.

Why Churchyard would bother to change the details in the poem about "Signior Anthonio dell Donaldoes wife" in the Challenge, is quite unclear. Rahter claims that Churchyard married again by 1593 and suggests that in order to cover up his first marriage he deleted the reference to a "sober wife" from the version of "A Tragicall Discourse"

170 Rahter, op. cit., p. xxvii.
appearing in the **Challenge**. Yet if the details of adultery are added to another "autobiographical" poem in the same volume, it would seem that Churchyard was defeating his purpose. Rahter suggests that in 1593 Churchyard was not sure whether he was still legally married or not; hence the clumsy and contradictory attempts first to conceal, then to justify, the results of the first marriage. Of course, it may be that Chalmers and Adnitt are wrong in reading "Anthonio dell Donaldoes wife" as autobiographical; Churchyard is generally a very convincing storyteller and a gross error on such a delicate matter is most unlikely.

As evidence for Churchyard's marrying a second time, Rahter reproduces a will made by a Charity Howard, which alludes to "Thomas Churchyarde Esq," the second husband of Patience Howard. Rahter argues, mainly on the basis of the will, that Churchyard married into the fairly high social circles of the Howards. His wife was "the sister-in-law of the future Earl of Nottingham, son of the aristocratic Charles Howard, Lord High Admiral." Because of his wife's social position, therefore, Churchyard felt compelled to clear up the details of his first marriage;

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or at least, such is Rahier's view. Perhaps Rahier is correct, although it seems that if Churchyard had connections with important people he would have mentioned them in his works. Moreover, if his wife were wealthy, it should not have been necessary for Churchyard to complain constantly about poverty. It is unlikely that the actual story of Churchyard's marital experiences can ever be learned; but if the above is generally accurate, one can conclude only that the poet had both marital and martial bad luck.

In 1570, Churchyard published a short work called *A Discourse of Rebellion*. It appeared on May first and began with some rather idyllic lines for a piece on politics:

> Come bring in Maye with me,  
> (\(\text{My Maye is fresh and greene:}\)  
> A subjectes harte, an humble mind)  
> To serue a mayden Queene.

Almost immediately after the work appeared, Churchyard was engaged in an expedition in Scotland, which he describes fully in "The Rode of Sir W. Drury" in the *Chippes*. Drury was sent to Scotland May 11, 1570, to avenge the assassination of the Earl of Murray, regent of Scotland. Drury, the marshal of Berwick, had a force of four hundred horsemen and twelve hundred footsoldiers. The expedition was short and successful. The troops returned to England on June 3,
1570, the entire affair lasting only twenty-four days.\textsuperscript{173} Churchyard was quite impressed with the company and claimed that it was the best he had ever served with in its discipline, morale, and honesty. Also in the year 1570 appeared an epitaph written by Churchyard on the death of William Herbert, Earl of Pembroke, a member of the Privy Council.

In the Salisbury Papers containing correspondence relating to the year 1571 is a digest of Burghley's notes on the state of Lancashire and Cheshire. The passage lists people loyal to the Earl of Derby, and says "Churchyard had a patent granted to him by the Earl of Derby."\textsuperscript{174} Edward Stanley, the third Earl, who died in 1572, must have been the Earl of Derby referred to. Why Churchyard would have received a patent is difficult to understand because the Earl had a long career of opposition to Protestantism, which was no doubt the reason for Burghley's interest in him and his followers. Derby had declared for Mary on Edward VI's death and had found little favor with

\textsuperscript{173}Chalmers, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 117.

\textsuperscript{174}Historical Manuscripts Commission, \textit{Calendar of the Manuscripts of the Most Hon. the Marquis of Salisbury, K.G., etc., Preserved at Hatfield House} (London, 1897), part I, p. 576.
Elizabeth because of his religion. Yet Derby did not take part in the Northern rebellion of 1569. It is strange that Churchyard, who had written to Burghley from Bath on Catholic activities in 1569, should be classed by Burghley as a follower of Derby in 1571. There is, however, a possibility that Churchyard could have been acting as a double-agent, a role he took in Scotland in 1581. But the facts concerning Churchyard's connection with Derby are too scanty to make any positive statement.

In the year 1572, Churchyard was once again on the continent, this time at Zutphen. He does not report what his function was, but it may have been at this time that he was spared miraculously from death by the words of "a noble dame," an incident that he mentions but does not elaborate on. In 1572, Churchyard's translation of Ovid's De Tristibus was first published; the work went through five editions during his lifetime, and was Churchyard's most popular production.

In the Chippes, Churchyard included a narrative poem called "The Siege of Edenbrough Castell in the XV. yeer of the raigne of our soueraigne Lady Queen Elizabeth...."

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\(^{175}\text{A True Discourse Historical, p. 12.}\)
Throughout the poem Churchyard's description and attention to details give the impression that he was present, but he unfailingly reports from a "we" point of view. The "we" seems to refer to the English forces rather than to Churchyard as a personal participant in the action. He may have been at the battle in 1573, but nowhere else does he mention taking part in that particular engagement. Moreover, Churchyard characteristically reports from an "I" point of view when he tells of activities he himself took part in.

Churchyard in 1574 became engaged in the business of supplying verses for entertainment of Queen Elizabeth as she made her various tours of the kingdom. Elizabeth's visit to Bristol in 1574 provided Churchyard with his first employment of this type. Hugh Owen, in his A History of Shrewsbury, says: "[Elizabeth] was entertained at Bristol in August; our townsman Churchyard supplying his usual contingent of frigid conceits and bald rhymes; so much however to the taste of the court, that Sir Henry Sidney, one of his numinous patrons, recommended him for the same service, to this the place of his birth." But Elizabeth's

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visit to Shrewsbury did not take place. Owen continues, "Thus our MS. chronicle. 'This yeare, 1575, the Queenes Majestie went a progresse towards Shrouesbury; but because of death' (i.e., some pestilential disease) 'within a four myles of the same, she cam no further then Lychefilld; and from thence went to Worcester, the which city she lyckyd well.'"¹⁷⁷

Maddeningly enough, this relatively unimportant event in Churchyard's life is perhaps the best authenticated. In addition to being mentioned in the town chronicle, Churchyard's undelivered verses for Elizabeth are noted in two other public records. An item appearing in the municipal register of Shrewsbury, dated July 17, 1575, says: "five marks to be given to Mr. Churchyard for his pains taken in the setting for the show against the Queen's coming, being sent hither by the lord President."¹⁷⁸ An item appearing in the Shrewsbury bailiff accounts for 1574–

¹⁷⁷Ibid.

1575 says: "Geven Mr. Churchyerd (sic) in rewarde, being sente vnto us by my lord President with letters concerning the coming of the Queene's maiestie to this towne, by the assent of the aldermen and counsellors, iii\textsuperscript{li} v\textsuperscript{s} vii\textsuperscript{d}."\textsuperscript{179}

Churchyard's poetic efforts in his court pieces may have been "frigid" as Owen claims, but the handsome recompense received from the Shrewsbury town fathers must have warmed the poet financially. Thus by the year 1575 Churchyard must have decided to commit himself to the life of letters, perhaps because of the success he had in turning out verses for royal entertainment. For it was in the year 1575 that the first of Churchyard's anthologies appeared—\textit{The Firste parte of Churchyarde Chippes, containing twelue seuerall Labours}.\textsuperscript{180} The work was dedicated to Sir Christopher Hatton, which certainly suggests that by this time in his life Churchyard had made some important connections for an aspiring poet. Hatton and Sir Henry Sidney were but two of Churchyard's well-established patrons.

\textsuperscript{179}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 37.

\textsuperscript{180}Actually the first part of the Chippes was also the last. His subsequent books bore different titles. The \textit{Choise} (1579) was also called the second part of Chippes.
At its time of publication, the Chippes was Churchyard's most ambitious literary project. It actually contained thirteen pieces, not the "twelue seuerall Labours" claimed on the title-page. Almost two hundred and fifty pages long, the Chippes included eleven poems of various lengths, forms, and contents, a prose selection, and a mixed prose and verse piece on Elizabeth's visit to Bristol in 1574. The title-page bore the significant words: "Thomas Churchyard Gentleman." Prior to the year 1575, Churchyard never bothered to insist on gentle birth, but with the Chippes and later works, he unfailingly stressed that he was a gentleman. Indeed, his Choise (1579) devotes considerable space to arguing that soldiers are traditionally regarded as gentlemen, and the Charge (1580) carries what purports to be Churchyard's coat of arms.181

181 Whether Churchyard was entitled to bear arms is difficult to determine. None of the heraldic works consulted mention his family name. The Visitation of Shropshire taken in the year 1623, ed. George Grazebrook and John Paul Rylands (London, 1889) mentions a Richard Churchyard, who married into the Cole family and apparently was given permission to use its coat of arms. The edition includes the visitations of 1569, 1584, and 1623, but nowhere is Thomas Churchyard mentioned.

The arms claimed by Churchyard picture a lion standing on the face of the shield beneath three stars. The shield is surmounted by a helmet and an arm holding a spear. The inscription on the scroll beneath the shield is "En Dieu Эт Mon.Roy," which is strikingly similar to the motto of the royal family.
Churchyard must have realized, then, that the publication
of the Chippes was a definite sign of his turning from
wars to poetry for a livelihood. No doubt a combination
of advancing age and the ultimate realization that the
martial life would not yield profit to him helped Church­
yard move unequivocally toward a writing career.

Late in the year 1576 Churchyard was once again on
the continent, though not as a soldier. He speaks of be­
ing in Brussels then, and he also claims to have witnessed
in January, 1576/7, a treaty made between Don John of
Austria and the Netherlanders which aimed at the pacifica­
tion of the war-torn land. He does not say whether he
remained in the Low Countries long enough to see the treaty
broken in 1578.182

Churchyard appears to have been quite active in the
year 1578. Three fairly substantial volumes were issued
under his name. The first was a proto-journalistic account
of Frobisher's attempt to find the North-West Passage: A
Prayse, and Reporte of Maister Martyne Forboishers Voyage
to Meta Incognita...by Thomas Churchyarde Gentleman. The
work was dedicated to Sir Thomas Wilson, Elizabeth's Latin

Secretary. A Lamentable and pitiful Description, of the wofull warres in Flaunders...by Thomas Churchyarde Gentleman was a mixture of prose and poetry devoted to the strife in the Low Countries. Churchyard dedicated this work to Sir Francis Walsingham. The third publication of the year was A Discourse of the Queenes Maiesties entertainment in Suffolk and Norffolk...Devised by Thos. Churchyarde, Gent. Churchyard had a large part in the arrangements at Norfolk, and his efforts allegedly caused Elizabeth to exclaim, "This device is fine." Also, "she is recorded to have said, 'Farewell Norwich,' with water standing in her eyes."\(^{183}\) Obviously, Churchyard saw the chance to make a little extra money by committing the Norfolk pageantry to print. He probably had good reason for trying to earn some money; for after describing how Norfolk received Elizabeth sumptuously, he comments: "The money they bestowed on diuers of the trayne, and those that tooke paynes for them (albeit my selfe but slenderly considered) will be a witnesse of theyr well doyng and good will."\(^{184}\)

\(^{183}\) Adnitt, op. cit., p. 33. But it should be added that he cites no source for his quotations.

\(^{184}\) A Discourse of the Queenes Maiesties entertainment, sig. B4v.
The second of Churchyard's anthologies appeared in 1579. The title-page calls the work *A generall rehearsall of warres*; but the running-head identifies it as *Churchyardes Choise*—the name by which it is usually referred to, probably because the alliterative title makes it consistent with its companion volumes. To add slightly to the confusion, apparently Churchyard intended to call the collection the second part of the *Chippes*. Of the three titles, *A generall rehearsall of warres* is perhaps the best, since it characterizes well the contents of the work. The major pieces are prose accounts which deal with warfare, land and naval, in Ireland and Flanders. Also in 1579 appeared a book of verse with the alluring title: *The Miserie of Flaunders, Calamitie of Fraunce, Misfortune of Portugall, Vnquietnes of Irelande, Troubles of Scot­lande: And the blessed State of Englannde.* (These poems will be treated later in the chapter devoted to the social criticism of Churchyard.)

What may be regarded as the third volume of Churchyard's collections of his work, *A pleasaunte Laborinthe*

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185 Churchyard refers to the *Choise* as the second part of the *Chippes* in his dedication to Hatton, sig. *2*. The *Chippes* was also dedicated to Hatton.
called Churchyarde Chance, appeared in 1580. The Chance is indeed a labyrinth, containing seventy-one poems of diverse character. A hint of the contents is given in the long title, "...writte to giue solace to eury well disposed mynde: wherein not withstanding are many heauie Epitaphs, sad and sorrowfull discourses and sutch a multitude of other honest pastymes for the season (and passages of witte) that the reader therein maie thinke his tyme well bestowed." In the spring of 1580, Churchyard must have been extraordinarily busy. Two days after the great London earthquake of April 6, 1580, Churchyard rushed into print with A warning for the wise, a feare to the fond, a bridle to the lewde, and a glass to the good. The

186 Stationers' Register, II, 361, has for November 10, 1579, the following: "J. Kingston Lycensed vnto him Churchyarde Chaunce." Title-page, however, has 1580.

187 The dedication to Alexander Nowell, Dean of St. Paul's, is signed April 8, 1580. Miller's The Professional Writer in the Elizabethan Age, p. 125, says: "Churchyard received 10s. from Nowell, to whom he dedicated A Warning to the Wise (1580), but it is possible that Churchyard's personal plea of poverty rather than his account of the 1580 earthquake earned the fee, since in Nowell's notebook appears the following entry: "Too one Thoms Church yeard being in some distres the xiii of October 1580--X8."
work is a remarkable example of Churchyard's ability to capitalize on an unexpected event and turn out quickly a quasi-journalistic account. Not only does it contain prose accounts of the catastrophe, but Churchyard also includes a poem over a hundred lines long on the same subject. Probably shortly after *A warning for the wise* appeared another journalistic type work, *The Takynge of Macklin*, a very readable account of English fighting in Belgium. Late in 1580/81 appeared the fourth volume of Churchyard's collected writings. *A light Bondell of liuly discourses called Churchyarde Charge.*

The many publications in the years of 1579 and 1580 suggest that Churchyard may have found favor with the London book-buying public and may well have been on his way to at least a life of subsistence by virtue of his literary talents. But early in 1581 Churchyard had to flee England and seek refuge in Scotland. Chalmers surmised that Churchyard had to leave because of some verses in the *Choise* which he judged alluded to royal parsimony. But the evidence advanced by Eric St. John Brooks in his biography

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188 Late 1580 or early 1581 is assigned as the date for this work because the long title says "presented as a Newe yeres gifte."

189 Chalmers, *op. cit.*, p. 35.
of Sir Christopher Hatton explains the matter very convincingly. Brooks had access to the Hatton family Letter Book, which contains several pieces of correspondence sent to Sir Christopher by the poet. The letters state clearly that Churchyard had slain a man in an altercation of some sort. The widow pressed a claim of manslaughter, and the legal action caused Churchyard to leave England.

According to Brooks, Churchyard did intelligence work in Scotland for the French ambassador to London, Mauvissière de Castelnau, but Brooks adds: "[Churchyard] seems to have been really acting as Hatton's agent. We know that he was working for de Castelnau from a passage in a letter he wrote to Hatton, just after leaving Scotland, and more explicitly from a marginal note in the Letter Book. That he was acting with Hatton's approval appears from his reference to a promise he made Hatton: 'for a piece of service that I meant with hazard of my life to discover for the discharge of my duty to my Prince and Country.'"

Taken for an exile, which in fact he was, Churchyard at first was in general favor at the Scottish court and even received a sum of money from King James VI. But Thomas Randolph, English ambassador to James' court, was curious about Churchyard's presence, thinking him to be an agent for the French. In a letter to Walsingham, the ambassador inquired about Churchyard and asked the identity of the man Churchyard slew. Churchyard felt he could not tell Randolph of his role as double agent, saying to Hatton, "it had been present death to me and besides he disgraced me all he could." Life in Scotland became quite precarious for Churchyard; at one time he was nearly slain on successive days, once "with a strong bow and a leaden pellet" and the following day "with a harquebus and missed very narrowly." Suspecting Randolph, Churchyard complained in a letter to Hatton that he was "stuck fast in the stocks among many wild wolves and cruel tigers in the shape of men." In early June, he left Edinburgh,

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192 Chalmers, op. cit., p. 35n, quotes Scottish treasury accounts from February, 1580/1: "Thomas Churchyard, Inglisman, conform to the K. precept; as the same, and the said Thomas, acquittance bear, 200£." Scottish money was 8 to 1 of the English at the time.

193 Calendar of State Papers, Scotland, 1509-1589, p. 418.

194 Brooks, op. cit., p. 128.

195 Ibid.
after witnessing the beheading of the Earl of Morton, an incident he later turned into a tragedy which appeared in the *Challenge*.

He returned to London and almost immediately was put into prison for his old crime. Adnitt in his biographical sketch of Churchyard prints two letters written by the poet to Hatton in July, 1581, from the "Palace of Repentance," i.e., the Marshalsea Prison. The first letter, dated July 10, 1581, is worth quoting, if only to show Churchyard's frame of mind at the time.

The divers occasions of expense in my restraint have taken from me the best part of my purse, and only left me with the bare strings to play withal. I blush, being old, to beg; and yet not ashamed to crave, being a courtier. A soldier would rather snatch than stand at world's benevolence; but no man appoints his own portion, and men often fare the worse for snatching too boldly. Well, I want, and how to get requires a very cunning reach, and then is simplicity but a very blunt hook to take that which may supply a man's necessity. Why fear I my feebleness?--the fortunes of poets hath been ever poor and needy. Homer had but one eye, and knew not when to dine. Ovid had two eyes and yet could see but few that did him good. Virgill, Petrarch, Dante, Marshall, Marot, and many more were poor and rich, but not to continue; and may not I presume among them, as poor as the best, and a writer not always among the worst? Though not a poet, yet one that hath used both sword and pen with poet's fortune, as well as they, to mine own hindrance. Your honor seeth my defects, and may easily help them when you
please with some small remembrance of your bounty and goodness. I write this, not to crave, but only desire some means to enlarge me, the sooner to drive away this indigence. 196

This witty and rather confident request for assistance shows a Churchyard who was certainly not awed in his dealings with a powerful figure.

Yet ten days later much of the self-assurance was gone, and the rigors of prison apparently had caused Churchyard to adopt a more humble tone in a second letter to Hatton, dated July 20, 1581 and also sent from the prison:

Your Honor knoweth my calamity; long letters purchase small benefit, as the weight of my sorrow sheweth. God and good men must help, and in the number of the good, yourself is one, in my poor judgement, that may most deliver me. I beseech you then weigh my affliction, and so work as the world may behold your integrity and upright dealing to God's glory and your own immortal fame. I live in misery, stained in credit, cut off from the world, hated of some that loved me, holpen of none, and forsaken of all, for what just cause I know not. My distress is great, my calling simple, and not able to avail anything without the assistance of your goodness. For God's sake, bring me to my answer, and as you shall see it fall out, my accusers can prove nothing against me. Vouchsafe my speedy recovery, or, at the least, the justice of the law and the benefit of my country, and if I have failed of my duty willingly, let me feel the price of it; I crave no pardon, but humbly sue

196 Adnitt, op. cit., p. 36.
for favorable expedition, for the which I appeal to your honourable judgement, and pray for your good success in all your desires.197

Neither letter suggests that Churchyard killed anyone, although it seems clear that he was not merely being jailed for debt, poor as he obviously was. At any rate, no help seems to have been forthcoming from any source. Brooks says he remained in jail for two or three years,198 which may be the case, since Churchyard is mentioned nowhere and published nothing else until 1584, although he could have been writing in prison as so many did.

A short prose work dealing with Irish troubles appeared late in 1584, or early in 1585. A Scourge for Rebels, another of Churchyard's New Year's presentations, ended the period which saw none of Churchyard's work published, or at least if any was published no record exists. Churchyard's propensity for New Year's offerings has caused Haviland Miller to say: "It was probably Churchyard who decided to make New Year's Day into a business holiday for

197Ibid., p. 37.
198Brooks, op. cit., p. 128.
As early as 1580 in the Charge, he very explicitly discusses the practice:

Then thought I to beginne the yere:
On New yeres daie with some deuice,
And though that many men be nice.
And blushe to make an honest shrifte,
I sent eche Lorde a Newe yeres gifte:
Such treasure as I had that tyme,
A laughynge verse, a merrie rhyme.

Far from being ashamed at such commercialization of his art, Churchyard very bluntly and straightforwardly explains why he does such things.

Some thinke this is a crauyng guise,
Tushe holde your peace, world waxeth wise.
A dulled horse that will not sturre,
Must be remembred with a spurre;
And where there serues ne spurre nor wand,
A man must needs lead horse in hande.
So I was forste on causes greate,
To see in fire where laye the heate:
And warme their witts that cold did waxe,
But thrust the fire into the Flax.

Churchyard could not live on New Year's dedications alone, so he apparently augmented his income during 1584 by serving as a drill master in the training of English

199 Miller, op. cit., p. 223.
200 ibid.
201 ibid.
militiamen. He is mentioned as a muster-master in Kent during that year.\textsuperscript{202}

In 1585 Churchyard was with Leicester's expedition to the Low Countries. Financial distress rather than martial readiness must have forced the old soldier to return to the field from which he had retired a dozen years earlier. A letter to Hatton clearly explains Churchyard's circumstances at that stage of his life:

Now I have betaken myself to this cause of service, my desire is to leave my bones, the rather because I see my country hath no grave for a Churchyard. In furtherance of my intention therein, I must entreat boldly, as I am wont, the mediation of your goodness by writing a word or two to my Lord of Leicester, to prefer me to the battle, to the breach...I seek no farm, I sue for no pension, nor I love not to live as an almsman: I covet to die like a soldier and a true subject, as loth to live any longer in misery, when I see the world waxeth weary of my well-doing.\textsuperscript{203}

After his return from the Netherlands, Churchyard must have journeyed through Wales in 1586, collecting the materials for \textit{The Worthines of Wales}, which appeared the following year, 1587. Although Churchyard's creation cannot be compared to Drayton's \textit{Poly-Olbion} insofar as poetic


\textsuperscript{203}Brooks, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 129.
merit is concerned, The Worthines of Wales is similar to it in plan and an interesting example of one of the ear-
liest of chorographical works. Dedicated to Elizabeth, The Worthines of Wales is an unabashedly patriotic work. Unlike the many collections of his poetry, The Worthines of Wales is concerned with one subject only and is perhaps the longest sustained effort of Churchyard's career. In the same year in which The Worthines of Wales appeared, Churchyard also had published The Epitaph of Sir Philip Sidney, Knight, lately Lord Gouernour of Flosching. Churchyard must have had the chance to observe Sidney while both were in the Low Countries serving with Sidney's uncle, the Earl of Leicester. Whether Churchyard knew Sidney personally is unknown, but Churchyard was the type of man who admired what Sidney stood for. The Sidney who was so be-
loved by all ranks and degrees occupied a special place in the heart of the old soldier-poet.

Another eminent soldier and literary personage who figures in Churchyard's life around that time is Sir Walter Ralegh. In 1588, Churchyard dedicated to Ralegh A Sparke of Friendship and Warme Goodwill. The work is a prose discourse on friendship. Appended to it for some unex-
plained reason is a poem which discusses the value and benefit of paper and also describes a paper mill set up at
Dartford by a German named Spilman. That Churchyard would present in the same slim volume two works of such different character gives some inkling of the variety of his writings and his readiness to commit them to print.

In 1590. Churchyard was once again in difficulty with the law. On behalf of the Earl of Oxford, he signed a bond with a Mistress Julia Pen regarding the leasing of some rooms in her establishment to Oxford. When Oxford did not meet the debt of £25, Mistress Pen sought to make Churchyard pay. It is doubtful whether Churchyard had at that or any other time such an amount of ready money. To escape her wrath and an almost certain jailing, he sought sanctuary in Westminster, where he remained until the debt was paid. 204

As Churchyard entered his declining years, his ability to turn out verse showed no signs of diminishing. He remained close to the court for the remainder of his days, and most of the later poems concern the deaths or achievements of courtiers. Illustrative of the degree to which

204Chalmers, op. cit., p. 40 has an account of this episode. On pp. 72-77, Chalmers reprints the correspondence between Churchyard and Mrs. Pen concerning his security for Oxford's debt. The exchange occurred in December, 1590.
circumstances forced Churchyard to turn out poems, no doubt in order to survive, is a collection of epitaphs published in 1591: *A reuyuing of the deade by Verses that followeth...With a declaration of the names of all the most honourable Counsellers, that haue dyed since the beginning of the Queens Maiesties raigne.*

Apparently he followed Elizabeth on her progress to Woodstock in 1592, for in that year appeared *A Handeful of Gladsome Verses, giuen to the Queenes Maiesty at Woodstock this Prograce.* Churchyard was pretty clearly poverty stricken and tired of his life-long struggle by this time. The work called *A Feast Full of Sad Cheere,* made up mostly of conventionally dreary epitaphs, concluded with a touching personal plea entitled, "The vnhappye mans deere adewe, that findes nothing good cheape but sorrowe." The despair of the old poet is evident in the lines that follow:

Youth first beguilde, in Court with hope forlorn,
Than middle age, all wearied with sharp war:
And nowe olde eld, to liue in lack and scorne,
Whose wounded limbs, showes many a wofull skar:

And sundry waies, consum'd with travaile far.
These open plagues, and inward griefes of mind:
Cryes out and saith, my Country is vnkinde.
Churchyard was certainly entitled to some bitterness, as the ensuing brief survey of his career tries to indicate.

I seru'd in field, foure Princes of greate fame,
Borne vnder those, an humble subiect true:
Three other Kings, of great renowne and name,
In faithfull sort, I seru'd for wages due:
But heere liege Lords, I doe appeale from you,
That neuer did, aduaunce my loyall hart
For treble toile, for paines, nor just desart. 205

Churchyard's appeal must have brought him good fortune, for in his next work, a pleasant conceit penned in verse, he says:

The booke I calld, of late my deere adiew,
Is now become, my welcome home most kinde. 206

A pleasant conceit was a New Year's (1592/3) presentation to Elizabeth, who between its appearance and the poet's "deere adewe" must have made his lot easier. Also giving the lie to his "deere adewe" of the year before, in 1593 Churchyard brought forth the lengthiest collection of his poetry, Churchyards Challenge. In his dedication to Sir John Wolley, Elizabeth's Latin Secretary, Churchyard somewhat prematurely says that his life is ending and that he hopes his books live "to make them inheritors of such fame

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206 A Pleasant conceit penned in verse. Collourably sette out, and humblie presented on New-yeeres day last, to the Queense Maiestie at Hampton Courte, sig. B2v.
dispraise as their father (which begat them on sweet
inuention) heere injoyes or deserues."  

He says that he is bringing out the Challenge so that his works will not be orphans. The poems in the Challenge are introduced with a self-deprecating verse that tells of his futile attempts to imitate great poets. Rather humbly the poem ends by saying,

A little Lamp may not compare with Starre
A feeble head where no great gifts doo grow:
Yeelds vnto skill, whose Knowledge makes smal shew,
Then gentle world I sweetly thee beseech:
Call Spenser now the spirit of learned speech.

Churchyard's always explicit belief that his labors were poorly rewarded is a theme of his productions during his declining years. He also repeatedly comments on his age and impending death. In the dedication of The Mirror and Manners of Men to Sir Robert Cecil, he says:

To makemany bookes and pamphlets (as already is done) and purchace few friends, is but a cold kind desteny that fortune alots me, whereby I weary my muse, ouerlabor the spirits, and wast inuention: which is no maruell, when youth is declined, and age hath left emptie all the vitall powers, that with fresh matter were wont to

reuiue memorie: so that of necessitie old studies must be sought, and auncient writings of mine must be ransackt to peece vp new verses, because the flowing phrase of speech is waxed dull and dry by the continuall vs of pen, and weeryng of the wits, whose edge is taken away by ouermutch whetting.\textsuperscript{209}

The last part of the quotation is Churchyard's apology for re-issuing \textit{The Mirror and Manners of Men}, which around 1552 appeared as \textit{A Myrour for men}.

Churchyard's \textit{Charitie}, the only work published in 1595, also dwells on the twin themes of lack of reward and advancing age. In the dedication to Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex, Churchyard says: "And for that now (by reason of great age) my wits and inuentions are almost wearied with writing of booke\s (this being one of the last) I tooke this taske in hand, at large to dilate somewhat of Charitie, which would to God I had as great power to reuiue."\textsuperscript{210} Earlier in the dedication, he says that he "brings foorth a booke of the coldnes of charitie, bicause a great noble man, told me this last wet sommer, The weather was too colde for Poets."\textsuperscript{211} Half of the volume

\textsuperscript{209}\textit{The Mirror and Manners of Men}, sig. A2.
\textsuperscript{210}\textit{Charitie}, sig. A3\textsuperscript{T}, v.
\textsuperscript{211}\textit{Ibid.}, sig. A2\textsuperscript{v}.
bewailed the parsimony of patrons, and the other half consisted of a long poem called "A praise of Poetrie, some notes therof drawen out of the Apologie, the noble minded Knight, sir Phillip Sidney wrote." Actually, the title is highly misleading, since the work is not a versification of Sidney's *Defense*. The poem itself is a rough survey of poetry and unreserved laudation of poets, accompanied by a marginal commentary on the text providing specific details or vague comment. The following is an example:

Goore, Chauser, and the noble earle of Surrye
In England liued three great men Did poetrie aduance And all they with the gift of pen Gaue glorious world a glance...

They honor and make much of their rimers In Ireland to this present time Where learning is not mich With Poetrie in verse or rime Their language they inrich.  

There was considerable truth in Churchyard's repeated laments that his inventive powers were failing by this time. In 1596, he brought forth four works, but only one *Churchyards Cherrishing*, consisted of more than a single quarto gathering. In that year he published an epitaph on the death of Sir Francis Knollys; a poem called *The Honor of the Law*, which is ironic considering Churchyard's

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life-long troubles with the legal profession; and an ob-viously journalistic enterprise called *The Welcome home of the Earle of Essex*...Written by Tho. Church-yard, Esq., upon the Sodaine sight of ye Earle of Essex coming to ye Court. The *Cherrishing* (also called *A pleasant Discourse of Court and Wars*) is itself not a long work, made up only of three quarto gatherings. It was another of Churchyard's New Year's offerings, dated,"From my chamber in Richmond, this new yeeres day. 1596."\(^{213}\)

In 1597 Churchyard was finally given some measure of financial stability. In this year, Elizabeth granted to him a pension which amounted to £30 per year.\(^{214}\) One might speculate as to whether the queen would have granted the aged poet such a bounty had she known that despite his decrepitude he would live seven more years, long enough indeed to write an epitaph upon her.

*A Wished reformacion of wicked Rebellion* seems to have been the only publication of Churchyard's in 1598. It is a fierce outburst against the Irish rebels and Papistry. It is also perhaps the only work which preserves the poet's

\(^{213}\) *Cherrishing*, sig. A3.

\(^{214}\) A. G. Chester, "Thomas Churchyard's Pension," *PMLA*, L (1935), 902.
highly individualistic orthography, which is seen in some of his private letters. Churchyard's spelling was normally regularized by compositors apparently, but A Wished reformacion must have been set directly from his text:

[Tradators] Baerfoet lyek freers to wrangling Roem may roem:
In England long heer may no traytors liue.
O Jezwits, can you you selues eskues,
Whan Jhesus naem and docttrin you abues.  

Except for a short poem speeding Essex to Ireland, The Fortunate Farewel, in 1599, Churchyard was inactive until 1602, when he brought out an abridged English version of the Dutch historian Emanuel van Meteren's Historiae Belgicae. In the introduction, Churchyard complains of his own chronic ill-health and that of his collaborator, Richard Robinson. Robinson, it seems, did the translating, while Churchyard supplied remembrances of events in which English forces took part and reproduced documents in his possession written by other soldiers. The work was entitled A true discourse Historicall of the succeeding Gouernours in the Netherlands, and the Ciuill warres there begun in the yeere 1565. Also in 1602,

215 See Muriel St. Clair Byrne, "Thomas Churchyard's Spelling," The Library, Fourth series, V, no. 3 (December, 1924), 243-48.
Churchyard published a little volume called *The Wonders of the Ayre, the tremblings of the Earth, and the warnings of the world before the Judgement day*.

The outburst of activity in 1602 was the last significant labor of Churchyard's long and difficult life, although in each of the two years remaining to him he found the strength to commemorate the deaths of an important personage. Upon Elizabeth's death in 1603, he wrote a broadside called *Sorrowfull verses made on [the] death of our most Soueraigne Lady Queene Elizabeth, my Gracious Mistresse*. In 1604, a poem was published upon the death of Archbishop Whitgift, *Churchyards good will, Sad and heauy Verses, in the nature of an Epitaph, for the losse of the Archbishop of Canterbury*.

Whitgift died February 29, 1603/4, Churchyard sometime within the following month. So almost until his last day, Churchyard was busy composing verses. The day he died is unknown, but he was buried April 1, 1604 in St. Margaret's Church, Westminster. In Camden's *Remaines* is the following;

> For old Th. Churchyard the poore Court-Poet this is now commonly current. Come Alecto and lend me thy torch
To find a Church-yard in the Church-porch.
Poverty and Poetry this tombe doth enclose,
Therefore Gentlemen be mery in prose.\textsuperscript{217}

The squib, attributed to the wit John Hoskyns, is slightly inaccurate. Churchyard was entombed in the chancel of St. Margaret's, next to the great Skelton. But there can be no quarrel with the line saying that Churchyard's tomb enclosed "Poverty and Poetry." Indeed, the whole of Churchyard's life might well be summed up in those two words.

CHAPTER II
TRAGEDIES, SATIRES, & EPITAPHS

As might be expected, Churchyard's enormous poetic output covered a wide range of subject matter and utilized a variety of literary forms. At the same time, certain categories of the forms are considerably larger than others. The works called tragedies, epitaphs, and satires lend themselves to analysis as specific genres because they are of sufficient number and sufficient formal homogeneity. Churchyard's narratives and descriptions are relatively few; to treat them as specific genres would be misleading. In the two succeeding chapters—"Churchyard's Social Commentary" and "Churchyard's Style"—his other works can be handled without being bound by the artificiality of formal considerations. This chapter, then, will limit itself to a study of the tragedies, epitaphs, and satires only.

THE TRAGEDIES

Churchyard's tragedies comprise a significant body of his work. One of them, The Tragedie of Shores Wife, is perhaps Churchyard's most highly regarded composition and seems to have been the poet's favorite. In addition to Shores Wife, Churchyard wrote three other works in a
similar vein: Sir Symon Burleis Tragédie, The Earle of Murtons Tragédie, and The Tragedy of Cardinal Wolsey. These four works are tragedies after the manner of those in The Mirror for Magistrates; two of them, Shores Wife and Cardinal Wolsey, appeared in the Mirror, and Burleis Tragedie was written in the hope that it would appear.

Churchyard's first and most successful tragedy was The Tragedie of Shores Wife. It was written early in his career, sometime before 1553; as he tells us, "in King Edwardes daies...Shores Wife I penned." It first was published in the 1563 edition of The Mirror for Magistrates, and according to Lily Campbell helped make that edition "from a literary point of view...unmistakably superior" to the 1559 edition. In 1593 Shores Wife was reprinted in the Challenge, mainly, it appears, to satisfy Churchyard's claim to authorship. In the dedication Churchyard says that he wishes to reprint Shores Wife because "some doubting the shallowness of my heade (or of meere mallice disdaineth my doeings) denies me the fathering of such a worke, that hath won so much credit." The charge that he

\[\text{Footnotes:}\]

\[218\text{Challenge, sig. *1v.}\]

\[219\text{The Mirror for Magistrates, ed., Lily B. Campbell (Cambridge, 1938), p. 15.}\]
was not the author stung Churchyard so much that he almost offers to fight his detractor. He continues: "But as sure as god liues, they that so defames me or doth disable me in this cause, doth me such an open wrong as I would be glad to right with the best blood in my body, so he be mine equall that moued such a quarrel, but mine old years doth vttterly forbid me such a combat, and to contend with the malicious I thinke it a madnesse, yet I protest before God and the world the penning of Shores Wife was mine." 220

Jane Shore, the heroine of Churchyard's story, was the wife of a London goldsmith. She became mistress of King Edward IV around 1470 and enjoyed a high position until 1483, the year of Edward's death. According to More's History of Richard III, Jane was then taken up by Lord Hastings. Almost immediately Richard III, while serving as Protector, had Jane brought before an ecclesiastical

220 Challenge, sig. S4 7. Churchyard’s detractor may have been Thomas Nashe; for in Strange Newes, or Fowre Letters Confuted, Nashe blames Gabriel Harvey for creating ill-will by spreading a story that Nashe had made fun of Churchyard. Nashe denies it, praises Shores Wife, and to Churchyard says: "I loue you unfainedly and admire your aged Muse, that may well be grandmother to our grandeloquentest Poets of this Present" (Works, ed. R.B. McKerrow [London, 1910], I, 309). Of course, Nashe's temperament and audacity were such that Harvey's charge may well have been true. Nashe was the type of wit who might have made sport of the aged Churchyard, but his good nature would also have caused him to mollify the older poet with exaggerated praise.
court, which sentenced her to do penance by begging in the streets of London. Later she married again, and apparently she lived on comfortably until her death in 1526. Churchyard's tale, of course, treats only the fall of Jane and makes no mention of her rather successful return to the role of housewife.

In The Mirror for Magistrates, the tragedy is introduced thus: "Howe Shores wife, Edward the fowerthes concubine, was by king Richard despoyled of all her goodes, and forced to do open penance." In the Challenge, the

221The Mirror, p. 373. The version of Shores Wife in The Mirror has more flavor than that in the Challenge because of the prose links which introduce each piece in the collection of tragedies. In the case of Shores Wife, the prose links are of special interest in that they serve as an interesting example of literary warfare in the sixteenth century.

William Baldwin, the editor of the 1563 edition, wrote the links preceding and following Shores Wife. In both places Churchyard received praise for his efforts. By 1587, Baldwin was replaced as editor by John Higgins. The prose link introducing Shores Wife in 1587 was spoken by Jane herself.

She says "the open bruite of Princes falles" made her presume to tell her story. At first she intended to approach Baldwin to pen her tale because he was a minister and preacher. She reasons that his position would allow him to rebuke vice, but on second thought decides that a minister might be troubled by a lack of understanding and sympathy for a fallen woman.

Wherefore I haue better bethought mee, and so doe so­daynly appeale and appeare to some martiall man, who hath more experience both in defending of womens honour, and knows somewhat more of theyr conditions and qualityes: and the rather, because my tragedy was in
Among the rest, by fortune overthrown,
I am not least, that most may waile her fate:
My fame and brute, abroad the world is blowne,
Who can forget, a thing thus done so late.
My great mischance, my fall and heavy state,
Is such a marke, whereat each tongue doth shoot,
That my good name, is pluckt vp by the roote. 222

In the opening lines, then, are stated the two purposes of the work: the lesson that Fortune can and does desert mortals, and the restoration of Jane's reputation. The remainder of the poem devotes itself to achieving both of these ends.

Jane's ghost comments on the arbitrary power that governs the lives of mortals. With vehemence, she says,

A blast of pompe, is all the fruyt we get,
And vnder that, lyes hidde a sodaine clappe. 223

question among some that would not spare due commendation to the autor thereof. I nowe appeare to him that fyrst set mee forth...whose name is Churchyard.

The prose introduction in The Mirror serves the two-fold purpose of criticizing Baldwin and of defending Churchyard's literary reputation.

222 Challenge, sig. Tl.
223 Ibid.
Throughout the poem, the narrator reiterates the lack of warning and unexpected stroke of fickle fortune, which "threatens not, but sodainely doth smite." Yet for all the complaints about the unpredictable and savage workings of Fortune, the real villains of the piece seem to be Richard III and his henchmen, Jane's mortal rather than immortal enemies. The jealous, the wicked, the ungrateful courtiers are labelled as the culprits. Churchyard's hand can be seen in that charge; he seldom overlooked a chance to smite his chief enemies.

Jane does not deny that she became the king's mistress, but she is ready with several excuses. She succumbed to the king because

...the strong, did make the weake to bowe.  
The stately porte, the awefull cheere they showe,  
Doth make the meane, to shrinke and couch for feare,  
Like as the hounde, that doth his maister knowe.\[225\]

Even when Jane admits her weakness, she is quick to counter and place the blame on others.

There is no cloake, can serue to hyde my fault:  
For I agreede, the fort he should assault...

yet, she adds,

The wisest are, with Princes made but fooles.\[226\]

\[224\] Ibid., sig. V2.  
\[225\] Ibid., sig. T2v.  
\[226\] Ibid.
Not only does Jane blame the power of a ruler for her life as a concubine, but even Nature itself. She notes that if she had been born plain, she would have had no troubles, but "a pleasaut pray, entiseth many a thiefe."\textsuperscript{227}

Churchyard also finds environmental reasons for Jane's fate, and his attitude is exceptional for his time. With the readiness of a present-day sociologist, he has Jane criticize those who forced her into an early unwanted marriage and generalize on the evils inherent in such matches:

\begin{quote}
Before my time, my youth they did abuse:
In mariage yoke, a prettise was I bound...
Note wel what strife, this forced mariage makes...
What strange delightes, this braunch of vice doth breed
And marke what grain, springes out of such a seed.\textsuperscript{228}
\end{quote}

The theme of Jane's being molded by others is stressed. Even when she possessed the power of a royal mistress, Jane is moved to say:

\begin{quote}
I was intiste by traines, and trapt by trust:
Though in my force, remained yeas and nayes,
Vnto my friends, yet needes consent I must,
In euery thing, yea lawfull or vniust.
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{227}Ibid., sig. T5.

\textsuperscript{228}Ibid.
They brake the bowes, and shake the tree by sleight,
And bend the wand, that mought haue growne full straight. 229

But though Jane finds many to blame for deciding the course of her life, she has an honesty that compels her to say, "What nede I more, to cleere my selfe so much?/ A king me wan." 230 She tells of her great power and estate, boasts that "I bare the sword, though he did weare the crowne." Her power she claims to have used to aid the weak and the poor, but after Edward's death her enemies got their revenge.

Her chief enemy was the Protector, the Duke of Gloucester, soon to become Richard III. The people felt sorrow for her,

But what preuayled, the peoples pitie there?
This raging wolfe, would spare no guiltles blood. 231

229 Ibid., sig. T3v. Alvin Thaler, "Churchyard and Marlowe," MLN, XXXVIII (1923), 89-92, notes the similarity between these lines and the first two lines of Marlowe's Epilogue to Doctor Faustus:

Cut is the branch that might haue growne full straight,
And burned is Apolloes Laurel bough.

230 Ibid., sig. T4v.

Then follows a violent curse on Richard, his ancestors, and his posterity.

Oh wicked wombe, that such ill fruit did beare,  
Oh cursed earth, that yeeldeth forth such mud:  
The hell consume, all things that did thee good,  
The heauens shut, their gates against thy spreete,  
The world tread downe, thy glory vnder feete.  
I ask of God, a vengeance on thy bones,  
Thy stinking corps, corrupts the aire I know:  
Thy shamefull death, no earthly wight bemones...

Woe worth the day, the time the howre and all,  
When subiects clapt, the crowne on Richard's head,  
Woe worth the Lordes, that sat in sumptuous hall,  
To honour him, that Princes blood so shead:  
Would God he had bin, boyld in scalding lead.  
When he presumde, in brothers seat to sit,  
Whose wretched rage, ruld all with wicked wit.  

Like other Elizabethan writers, Churchyard is highly critical of Richard. Jane's curse, for example, is similar in bitterness to Queen Margaret's diatribes in Shakespeare's Richard III (I,iii and IV, iv). In Jane Shore's case, however, it would appear that Richard behaved quite charitably; her claim of "guiltles blood" is hardly accurate.

The tragedy ends in keeping with the overall theme of The Mirror, advice to governors. Rulers are expected to

learn from Jane's tale to judge fairly and without passion.

Ye Princes all, and Ruler euerechone,
In punishment, beware of hatreds yre...
You should not judge, till thinges be wel
discerned.\textsuperscript{233}

...strike not without a cause:
And when yee smite, do it for iustice sake,
Then in good part, ech man your scourge wil
take.\textsuperscript{234}

Implicit in all the advice is that Jane has been unfairly
punished; yet in the final stanza, which carries a moral
to be drawn by women, Jane admits her errors:

Example take, by me both maide and wife,
Beware, take heede, fall not to folly so.
A Mirrour make, by my great ouerthroe,
Defye this world, and all his wanton wayes,
Beware by me, that spent so ill her dayes.\textsuperscript{235}

With these lines, with their stress on the de contemptu
mundi and overthrow by fortune themes, \textit{The Tragedie of}
Shores Wife ends.

As we have seen from the dedication of \textit{Shores Wife} in
the \textit{Challenge} (1593), Churchyard was eager to prove his
authorship. It is likely that Samuel Daniel's publication

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item \textit{Ibid.}, sig. \textit{V}v. \textsuperscript{233}
\item \textit{Ibid.}, sig. \textit{X}l. \textsuperscript{234}
\item \textit{Ibid.}, sig. \textit{X}Lv. \textsuperscript{235}
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
of *The Complaint of Rosamund* in 1592 brought about speculation concerning the author of *Shores Wife*. Daniel's poem is a tragedy in the manner of the *Mirror*. It tells of the life and fall of Rosamund, mistress of King Henry II. Rosamund opens with her lament that she has been long dead (since the twelfth century) but that no poet has come forth with any work to rehabilitate her name. Such an oversight is most unfortunate and unfair, claims Rosamund,

> Whilst others are preferred, though far more base; Shore's wife is graced, and passes for a saint; Her legend justifies her foul attain't.236

Daniel, it is clear, knew Churchyard's tragedy and used it as an inspiration for his poem on a similar subject. And Daniel must have thought *Shores Wife* a worthwhile effort, for he has Rosamund say:

> Her well-told tale did such compassion find That she is passed, and I am left behind.

Churchyard probably had a double purpose in re-issuing *Shores Wife* in 1593: to prove that he wrote it and to capitalize on the interest *Rosamund* created.

That Churchyard did not condemn his heroine for her sins has bothered some scholars. Jane's sole claim to greatness, after all, came from her being a king's mistress. That point naturally did not bother Rosamund in her lament, but Willard Farnham's complaint is that "Churchyard makes almost nothing of the sin which might be credited to his heroine."\textsuperscript{237} Henry Hitch Adams says that \textit{Shores Wife} "strangely enough is an example of the turn of fortune's wheel, and not, as might have been expected, of God's retributive justice."\textsuperscript{238} Both critics no doubt are bothered because \textit{Shores Wife} would not fit neatly into the development of English "domestic tragedy" from the medieval exemplum. Neither, it seems, is willing to regard Churchyard's work as something different, a tragedy in which the leading figure is a commoner and in which the author is an artist and something more than a petty moralist. The prose link to the 1587 version in \textit{The Mirror} has Jane specifically point out that a soldier who understands women is a far more suitable author for

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{237}Willard Farnham, \textit{The Medieval Heritage of Elizabethan Tragedy} (New York, 1956), p. 293.
\item \textsuperscript{238}Henry Hitch Adams, \textit{English Domestic or, Homiletic Tragedy 1575 to 1642} (New York, 1943), p. 31.
\end{itemize}
her than a clergyman. Churchyard's treatment of her argues for the wisdom of her choice, as well as for her experience in judging men.

The second of Churchyard's tragedies, that of Sir Simon Burley, appeared in the Chippes in 1575. There is every reason to think that it was written to appear in The Mirror, but for some reason it never did. The prose link following Shores Wife in the 1563 edition carries high praise of Churchyard. The speaker says: "This was so well lyked, that all together exhorted me instantly, to procure Maister Churchyarde to vn verteke and to penne as manye of the remaynder as myght by any means be attaynted at his hands."239 Yet not until Higgins succeeded Baldwin did any more of Churchyard's works appear. It may be that Churchyard and Baldwin quarreled, or that Baldwin rejected Churchyard's subsequent efforts.

The opening stanzas of Sir Simon Burleis Tragedie certainly show that in 1575 Churchyard was quite annoyed with the editor of The Mirror. The poem begins with Burley's ghost berating Baldwin for keeping the tragic

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239 The Mirror, p. 386.
tale unpublished. The attack is often personal:

Am I of blood, or yet of birth so base,
O Baldwin now, that thou forgetst my name:
Or doth thy penne, want cunning for that case.
Or is thy skill, or senses fallen lame,
Or dost thou feare, to blase abroade my fame:
O, shew some cause, wherefore I sit in shade,
And why is thus, my Tragedy vnmade.240

Churchyard shows clearly his awareness of the tradition
he is following, as he puts into Burley's mouth the words:

Did Bocace liue, or Lidgate write againe,
Some hope were left, my lanterne should haue light...
But gaping graue, and gnawing worms below,
Snapt Bocace vp, and Lidgate long agoe.

Continuing the attack on Baldwin, Burley says:

O Baldwin yet, what blot was in my brow...
That I maie not, for Baldwins fauour call...
Well Baldwin well, if headlesse man my chide,
I know what check, and blame should Baldwin bide.241

Concluding the scourging of the hapless editor, the ghost­ly speaker complains:

Thou dost me wrong, wherefore the wound to heale
(That sloth hath made,) to Churchyard I appeale.

In a marginal note, Churchyard has "Sir Simon Burley com­plaines to him that knows what sorrow meanes." And not

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240 Challenge, sig. El. All citations to Sir Simon Burleis Tragedie are to the version which appeared in the Challenge.
only was Burley a perceptive judge of Churchyard's capacity for writing:

Yea vnto him, I tell my sorrows nowe,
Whose resteles hande, is writing euery howre.\(^{242}\)

The opening lines of *Sir Simon Burleis Tragedie* are used by Farnham to illustrate the influence of *The Mirror* on later writings. But he seems to miss the point when he says, "Thomas Churchyard...both knew Baldwin well and was glad to acknowledge inspiration from the *Mirror* when he published, in 1575, a tragical poem independently."\(^{243}\) Churchyard no doubt knew Baldwin well, but he certainly does not appear to be "glad to acknowledge inspiration." Rather, Churchyard used *Sir Simon Burleis Tragedie* to help settle a grudge.

The subject of this tragedy, Sir Simon Burley (1336-1388), belonged to an old Herefordshire family, and was related to Walter Burley, the fourteenth-century scholar.\(^{244}\) His family connections were high enough for him to have been a schoolmate of the Black Prince, who


\(^{243}\) Farnham, *op. cit.*, pp. 310-11.

\(^{244}\) See *DNB* article on Burley by John Horace Rounds.
later named him tutor to the future King Richard II. Under Richard, he was vice-chamberlain and was used frequently for diplomatic missions. When the Knights Appellant, the powerful nobles led by the king's uncle, Thomas, Duke of Gloucester, took over control of England in 1388, Burley was beheaded by command of the "Merciless Parliament." Though not a figure of great importance in English history, Burley was a natural subject for Churchyard's pen. From all accounts, Burley was a man loyal to his king and an honest, industrious person. His life and violent death neatly suited Churchyard's tragic muse.

After deciding that Baldwin was unfit to hear his tragedy, Burley tells his tale to Churchyard. But before the ghost gets into the story proper, he complains to Churchyard that speech is difficult when one's head is off. He asks Churchyard to

Heare him whose voice, doth giue a hollow sound:
Heare him that long, lay rotten in the ground:
Heare him whose plainte, may pierce the lofty skies,
And for thy ayde, and English verses cryes.\(^\text{245}\)

In all of Churchyard's tragedies, there is this direct and intimate relationship between ghost and poet.

\(^{245}\)Challenge, sig. E2.
The ghostly narrator then prefaces his autobiographical account with a string of remarks about life and death and mutability. In this section occurs one of the few mythological allusions in Churchyard's poetry. Burley makes a classical reference to pride and self-conceit:

The life that some, most sweetely do embrace, 
To troubled teares, doth turne or wee bee ware. 
We are in loue, with fond Narcissus face, 
And drounde our selues, in that whereon wee stare.

This uncharacteristic excursion into classical myth, however, is immediately balanced with robust and homely diction:

And feede the flesh, so long with daintie fare, 
That belly swelles, or stomacke belcheth vp, 246 
The liquor sweete, that came from spiced cup.

Following the catalogue of Burley's successes is the account of his fall. Although Fortune is periodically named as the overthrower, the immediate cause of his woes is the malicious horde of detractors about him. The difference in tone between the passages discussing Fortune's wheel and mankind's evil is striking. Fortune is spoken of resignedly, without rancor or bitterness. But flesh and blood adversaries feel the whip of words. Spiteful

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246 Ibid., sig. E2v.
people are attacked with vivid language:

O hatefull flies, ye hatcht of wretched broode,
On every dish, in hast ye blow and humme:
O cankred men, of vile and noughty moode,
Ye do infect, all places where you cumme. 247

Yet even though he has been victimized by the envious and the deceitful, Burley accepts it philosophically, seeing strife as part of a larger plan.

Just as men contend against men, "strife there is in mettals, stones, flowers, and Planets," so says Churchyard in a marginal note. The idea of anarchy in nature is not, however, a statement of how things should be, but rather a gloomy comment on how they are. For Churchyard has Burley describe at length the rebellion led against Richard II by Gloucester. Because of the actions of the nobles

Bigge biles brast out, where fleshe was sound before,
And though some time, the Surgeon salue did finde
To heale the wound, (the skarre remaynde behind). 248

So rather cleverly Churchyard moves from Burley's personal woes to a larger context: the evil of rebellion. Rebels

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are called vipers, butchers, hellhounds, and wild tigers. They are reminded that order rules the universe, that in each class only one can be supreme:

Among brute beasts, that saucy are and wilde,  
The Lion reignes, and rules with regall power.  
And so great birds, stoupes downe like little  
child, 
(To fathers beck), if eagle doth but lowre,  
Than on a king, dare people looke so sowre... 
No member dare, presume to rule the head:  
None reignes & rules, but kings when all is sed. 249

Unfortunately for Burley, this theory of politics was sometimes forgotten. His king was powerless to save him.

Churchyard's concern with order is to be expected in a Tudor writer. Ever since the insurrection of 1536, known as the Pilgrimage of Grace, arguments against civil disobedience were plentiful. The Lincolnshire "Pilgrims" were attacked in the Lamentation in which is Shewed What Ruyne and Destruction Cometh of Seditious Rebellion (1536). A decade later in the aftermath of the Kett Rebellion and the Western Rebellion, Sir John Cheke produced his better known The Hurt of Sedicion Howe Grevous it is to a Commonwealth (1549). "An Exhortation, concerning good order and obedience, to Rulers and Magistrates" was issued officially in Certayne Sermons, or Homilies (1547) and was

249 Ibid., sig. F4.
required to be read to all congregations in England.\textsuperscript{250}

After the Northern Rebellion of 1569 appeared \textit{An Homilie Agaynst Disobedience and Wylful Rebellion}. This was printed in 1571, 1573, and 1574, and has been called "the epitome of all the literature on submission."\textsuperscript{251} The above works might be called the official attacks on civil rebellion. Churchyard's \textit{Burleis Tragedie} can be regarded as one of the many literary attacks on dissension.

It cannot be denied that Churchyard shows certain dramatic skill in his tragedies. As one reads \textit{Burleis Tragedie}, it is easy to forget that the person doing the talking is a headless ghost. The hero becomes at times a lifelike and believable character. Describing the chicanery of his trial, Burley says:

\begin{quote}
A packe was made, and one had got the ace,
And trimly robd, the trumps before my face.
\end{quote}

But knowing that he was doomed, he did not complain.

\begin{quote}
No boote to bid, the Players deale againe,
The game was won, and I had lost the stake.
\end{quote}


\textsuperscript{251}Ibid., p. 10.

\textsuperscript{252}\textit{Challenge}, sig. Gl.
The use of gambling imagery and the reaction of the loser is a realistic and refreshing touch.

Most of the remainder of the poem is occupied with conceits relating to the vanity of earthly hopes and to the vicissitudes of chance. The moral is plainly drawn for all to see. The usual plea is made for the poet to let the world know of the hero's fate so that men may profit by the tale. But there is a significant variation in this tragedy. Not content with having his story told, Burley gives Churchyard detailed instructions on how to tell it. The final three stanzas are full of advice to the poet:

Loe, Churchyard, nowe my mirthlesse tale is tolde,
A mourning verse, prepare thou straight for mee.253

Be conscious of decorum, the poet is ordered:

And in thy rime, some stately order holde,
For that I sprong, not out of base degree.

But do not be tiresome, the ghost warns:

Let euery line, a liuely sentence bee,
To wake the wits, of such as world would knoe,
And liste to marke, how worldly matters goe.

253Ibid., sig. G2v.
Keep the verse under control, but lighten things up occasionally:

Beare euen hande, and holde the bridle right,
Yet whiske the wande, sometimes for pleasures sake:
Yea, spice thy speach, and termes with trifles light.

And finally,

Speake englishe playne, and roue about the but [target],
And shoot at will.

Perhaps Churchyard did not follow the injunctions to the letter, but the advice from the otherworldly literary critic was sound and in accord with contemporary rhetorical theory.

The 1587 edition of The Mirror for Magistrates contains Churchyard's tragedy on Cardinal Wolsey. The full title is actually a plot summary: How Thomas Wolsey did arise into great authority and gouerment, his maner of life, pompe, and dignity, and how hee fell downe into great disgrace, and was arrested of high treason. By this time, Baldwin had been succeeded by John Higgins, who had also been responsible for the 1578 edition. The prose link which introduces Wolsey's tragedy contains barbs for Baldwin, just as the opening lines of Sir Simon Burleis Tragedie in the Chippes (1575) attacked the hapless former
editor for failing to keep his promises to Churchyard. In the prose link, Wolsey also says:

I step from the graue, where long I lay in forgetfulnes, and declare in the voyce of a Cardinall, a curious discourse; yet sadly and sorrowfully tolde, as well vnto Churchyard (the noter thereof) as to the rest that pleaseth to heare any peece of my misfortune.254

This is yet another instance of Churchyard's trait of involving himself in his writings.

Of the central figures of Churchyard's four narrative tragedies, the hero of this one is best known to the present day because of his historical importance. The career of Thomas, Cardinal Wolsey (1475?-1530) was indeed a suitable one to be treated as a tragedy in the Mirror fashion. Wolsey's rise from the low rank of the son of an Ipswich butcher to the supreme height of lord chancellorship and archbishopric of York was perfect material for Churchyard's type of tragedy. After years at the summit of English power, Wolsey's fall from grace and ignominious end provide an illustration of the full turn of Fortune's wheel.

254 The Mirror, p. 495. All citations to Wolsey's Tragedy refer to The Mirror, the only place it was published.
Wolsey's life was truly an eventful one. At fifteen, he received his B.A. at Oxford, stayed on and gained rapid advancement. In 1507, he became chaplain to King Henry VII and was used as an envoy on important diplomatic assignments. With the accession of King Henry VIII to the throne in 1509, Wolsey's importance grew in both domestic and foreign affairs. In 1514 he became Archbishop of York and was made a cardinal the next year. In December, 1515, he became Lord Chancellor. For the next decade and a half, his power was enormous. In England, he stood next to the king; on the continent, he was considered as a potential pope. But his failure to secure an annulment of the marriage between Henry and Catherine of Aragon led to his downfall in 1529. He was shortly thereafter deprived of the lord chancellorship and was succeeded by Sir Thomas More. Wolsey was then banished from the court and ordered to York, largely through the influence of Anne Boleyn. A year later, in

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1530, he was accused of high treason, allegedly for asking Pope Clement VII to excommunicate Henry VIII, and he was summoned to London for trial. In extremely delicate health, Wolsey got to Leicester, where he died on November 29, 1530.

Wolsey's Tragedy begins with the cardinal's ghost reminding the reader that there are people still alive who remember his days of power; indeed some yet lived who were recipients of his bounty. The first half of the tragedy is a recounting of Wolsey's rise to importance. The tone of this section is illustrative of Churchyard's sympathy with his subject. One would think that with such a symbol of papist wickedness, Churchyard would use the occasion to paint a character of archvillainy and serpentlike malignity. Instead Wolsey's rise is recounted with approval, even with relish. Wolsey's ability to soar from a humble state and to outwit the highborn courtiers strikes a responsive chord in Churchyard. Wolsey's ghost is almost smug in his tale of success:

He haunts no Court, that hath a doltish head.  
For as in golde, the pretious stone is set.  
So finest wits, in Court the credit get.\(^\text{256}\)

These lines might easily be read as Churchyard congratulating himself for managing to survive for so long in com-

\(^{256}\) The Mirror, p. 497.
petition at court. By 1587 Churchyard was a fixture at court, being employed regularly for entertainment during royal progresses.

Wolsey's ghost tells approvingly of his great works of charity and his building of a college at Oxford (the present day Christ Church). To show how great Wolsey's power was with Henry VIII, the ghost compares himself favorably with another power behind the throne, Jane Shore:

And as for sutes, about the King was none
So apt as I, to speak and purchase grace.
Though long before, some say Shores wife was one,
That oft kneelde downe, before the Princes face
For poore mens sutes, and holpe their woefull case.257

Naturally, any reader of Churchyard's earlier work would know how effective and powerful she was. Yet it is amusing to see Churchyard having one of his subjects compare himself with an earlier one, especially since Mistress Shore is hardly a suitable basis of comparison with Wolsey. Wolsey's ghost points out, however, that "She had not such credite as I gate," because

My wordes were graue, and bore an equall poyse,
In ballaunce just, for many a weighty cause:

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257Ibid, p. 503.
Shee pleasde a Prince, with pretty merry toyes,
And had no sight, in state, nor course of lawes. 258

Wolsey, on the other hand, had far greater power.

I could perswade, and make a Prince to pawes,
And take a breath, before hee drew the sword,
And spy the time, to rule him with a worde. 259

The ghost acknowledges that "wanton gyrls" might have some influence over a ruler, but certainly his wisdom was more readily heeded.

One sute of mine, was surely worth a score
Of hers indeede, for shee her time must watch,
And at all howres, I durst draw the latch.
My voyce but heard, the dore was open streyght,
Shee might not come, till shee were calde or brought:
I rulde the King, by custom, arte, and sleight,
And knew full well, the secrets of his thought.
Without my minde, all that was done was nought. 260

Churchyard has the ghost of Wolsey deliver a furious diatribe against the Roman church. Its intensity is greater than the anti-Catholic remarks in any of Churchyard's other works. From a historical point of view, Wolsey's outburst is ironic because ultimately the actual cause of

258 Ibid.
259 Ibid, p. 504.
260 Ibid.
the cardinal's death was that he chose to obey his church rather than his king.

O let mee curse, the popish Cardnall hat,
Those myters big, beset with pearle and stones,
And all the rest, of trash I know not what,
The saints in shrines, theyr flesh and rotten bones,
The maske of Monkes, deuised for the nones,
And all the flocke, of Freers, what ere they are,
That brought mee vp, and left mee there so bare.

O cursed priestes, that prate for profits sake...
O fie on wolues, that march in masking cloes...
O Freers and Monkes, your harbour is in hell.\(^{261}\)

But after delivering such a damning indictment, Wolsey's calmness returns. He relents considerably and places most of the blame for his fall on himself: "Your fault not halfe, so great as was my pride,/ For which offence, fell Lucifer from skyes."\(^{262}\) Wolsey's act of contrition continues with an account of his love of pomp, his grasping of wealth, and his cruelty to innocent people. But after several verses of self-abasement, Wolsey's confession suddenly turns into a cynical commentary on friendship. "With hope of friends, our selues we do deceaue." Friends may speak fair words, but are quick to flee in time of need.

\(^{261}\)Ibid., p. 507.
\(^{262}\)Ibid., p. 508.
There is little to choose between friends and foes, "and best of both, not worth a cracked crowne." The motto that Wolsey proved "true by tryall twenty times" is "Talke not of friends, the name thereof is nought."\(^{263}\)

The tragedy ends on an even more bitter note. Wolsey says that no one will profit by his tale. Men think that what they have at any moment is theirs by right and can be depended upon. The final words are these:

Well, let them say, and thinke what thing they please,
This welletring world, both flows and ebs like seas.\(^{264}\)

In the Challenge (1593) appeared the fourth and last of Churchyard's narrative tragedies, The Earle of Murtons Tragedie. James Douglas, the subject of this work, was born in 1520 and became the fourth Earl of Morton in 1553.\(^{265}\) He was the friend and collaborator of the Earl of Moray, the bastard brother of Mary Stuart, Queen of

\(^{263}\)Ibid., p. 510.

\(^{264}\)Ibid., p. 511.

\(^{265}\)DNB has article on Morton. George Chalmers' edition of Churchyard's Chips Concerning Scotland has a lengthy account of Morton's character.
Scots. Morton became a privy councillor in 1561 and Lord Chancellor of Scotland in 1563. In 1566 he was exiled for his part in the slaying of David Riccio, Mary's Italian minister and adviser, but was restored in December of that year through the efforts of Queen Elizabeth and Moray. He was immediately told by James Hepburn, Earl of Bothwell, of the plot to murder Henry Stuart, Lord Darnley, Mary's husband. Morton, however, was prudent enough to avoid close involvement, being careful to be away from Edinburgh when Darnley was slain. Even so, it was the charge of being connected with the murder of Darnley which brought Morton to the scaffold some fifteen years later.

After the marriage of Bothwell to Mary in 1567, Morton was a leader in the civil strife against them, finally forcing her to give up the throne. Moray became regent of Scotland for the infant King James VI, son of Darnley and Mary and later King James I of England. Morton ultimately became regent in 1572 and ruled with marked success until 1580, when he was accused by Esmé Stuart, leader of the opposition nobles, of complicity in the murder of Darnley. On June 1, 1581, Morton was convicted and was beheaded on the following day. Upon hearing the news of his death, Mary Stuart is reported to have said to give "to the lairds
that are most neere my sonne most hartie thanks for their
dutie employed against the Erle Morton, who was my greatest
enemie."266

Mortons Tragedie did not appear in The Mirror for
Magistrates and, so, it lacks the interesting prose links
which that publication contains. And by 1593, Churchyard
had also finally concluded his long argument with Baldwin,
the first Mirror editor; hence that quarrel does not con­
tinue in the work. But Mortons Tragedie has an even more
arresting dramatic device than any of those used in the
earlier works. The basic technique of all the tragedies,
that of a ghost narrating his earthly activities, is at
best rather macabre. It is used effectively by Sackville
in The Complaint of Henry Duke of Buckingham and to some
extent in Hamlet and The Spanish Tragedy. The performance
of Morton's ghost, however, is even more extraordinary.
After recounting his career, his trial, and his condemna­
tion, Morton describes his beheading. The reader of
these tragedies is always prepared for a few stanzas of
moralizing about the fickleness of fortune and the vanity
of life, but one is hardly prepared for the actions of
Churchyard's Morton.

266 DNB.
Immediately after Morton's head is severed from the trunk, even before the eyes wink shut, the head has a vision:

The gasping head, as in the Lorde I slept,
A vision had, ye may the same suppose:
I dreamde it saw, how friendes and favrers wept,
In heade that time, a straunger fancie rose,
The eyes behelde, before the eyes did close,
A writer there, and Churchyard loe he hight,
Whose pen paints out mens tragedies aright.  

Upon seeing Churchyard, the head begins to address the poet, although Morton's ghost realizes that such an action is difficult for the reader to believe.

In deadly dreame, my tongue callde on that man,
(As headlesse folke may fumble out a word)
You must beleeue, the tongue a tale began,
Of earnest thinges, and not a trifling borde.  

This touch does make the seemingly incredible at least slightly believable. At any rate, after begging the reader to believe that the head can talk, Morton's ghost reports what was said:

Churchyard (quoth he) if now thou canst afforde
Mee one good verse, take here thy penne in hande,
And send my death, to thine owne natiue land...  

Thou man (I saie,) that didst Shores wife so touch,
With louing phrase, and friendlie English rime;

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267 Challenge, sigs. D2⁰-D3. All citations to Mortons Tragedie refer to signatures in the Challenge.  
When pen and muse were in chiefe pride and prime,
Bestow some painses, on him that was thy friende;
Whose life thou knewst, and seist mee make mine ende. 269

The device of having the subject of the tragedy speak to
the author is, of course, a common one with Churchyard.
But the reference to what was perhaps Churchyard's favor­
ite, Shores Wife, is quite warm. There is nostalgia in
the comment that calls to mind the days when the poet was
in his prime.

Certainly, after the ghost describes the vision of its
head seeing Churchyard and asking him to memorialize Mor­
ton's life, one would think that Churchyard had exhausted
the personal possibilities in the poem. Yet the ghost
continues and relates another vision, this one experienced
by Churchyard himself.

These wordes pronounst, the head gan bleed anew,
My bodie laie, along like lumpe of leade...

Thus Churchyard now, in wandring vp and downe,
(About affaires, perhaps that toucht him nere:)
Saw on Tolbothe, in Edenborough towne,
My senceless head, before his face appeare.
Why Morton then, (quoth he) and art thou heere,
That long didst raigne, and rule the realm of late;
Then ruine and wracke oerreacheth each estate. 270

269 Ibid.
270 Ibid., sig. D3r,v.
What makes this statement most interesting is that in June, 1581, Churchyard was in Edinburgh, where he had gone either to escape jail in London or to perform a mission for Sir Christopher Hatton. At the very moment Morton was executed, Churchyard may well have been wandering the streets, "about affaires, perhaps that toucht him nere." He may not have had a vision, as the poem claims, but he characteristically had to put into Mortons Tragedie the fact that he was in Edinburgh at the time of the execution. The poem ends with a long description (fifteen stanzas) of Churchyard's reaction to seeing Morton's head, and these stanzas contain the usual moralistic lines about the fate of man and the folly of human hopes.

Churchyard's point of view in Mortons Tragedie is similar to that of his other works of this type: his sympathy is with his subject. He obviously does not see Morton as a killer or a Machiavell; Morton is more sinned against than sinning. There is never any intimation on the part of Morton that he did anything wrong. The envy and malice of his peers were the causes of his downfall: "For priuy hate, and malice matcht with might,/ Tooke out oyle, that gaue my lampe the light."²⁷¹ Perhaps in this

work Churchyard was trying to defend a Scot who acted according to English wishes, but more likely the sympathetic treatment of Morton stems from Churchyard's penchant for identifying himself with his characters and rendering a more than fair account of their lives.

Mortons Tragedie, although written toward the end of the poet's long career, has some quite good lines. Early in the poem, as Morton tells of his life, Churchyard has him say:

Our gentle ioyes, are in our tender yeares,  
For as the childe, to wit and reason growes, pop  
So judgement comes, and seedes of sorrow sowes.  

The first line especially of that quotation has a genuine lyric movement. The lines are also very un-Elizabethan and seem to anticipate Wordsworth. Later in the work, after Morton learns that he is to die, he utters a line reminiscent of Chaucer, "A fig for death, his force not worth a strawe." And Morton's description of the moment before execution is well-expressed:

Then downe I lay, and balefull block embraste,  
And there receiued, the blow as axe did fall,  
That cut me cleane, from cares and cumbers all.  

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272 Ibid., sig. Bl.  
273 Ibid., sig. Dl.  
274 Ibid., sig. D2v.
There is one passage in Mortons Tragedie which in sound and substance seems really to have belonged in the tragedy written on Wolsey. Addressing the crowd gathered in front of his scaffold, Morton says:

Had I servd God, as well in euery sort,
As I did serve my king and maister still:
My scope had not, this season beene so short. 275

These lines are strongly suggestive of those spoken by Cardinal Wolsey in Shakespeare's Henry VIII:

Had I but serv'd my God with half the zeal
I serv'd my king, he would not in mine age
Have left me naked to mine enemies (III, ii,455-7).

Of course, Cavendish's Life of Wolsey has the following: "But if I had served God so diligently as I have done the king, he would not have given me over in my grey hairs." 276 Cavendish's work was not published until 1641, though it apparently circulated in manuscripts and is generally regarded as the source of Shakespeare's lines. 277 Churchyard does not mention it as a source, while he specifically indicates that he got some information from Stow's Chroni-

275 Ibid., sig. D2.
276 Cavendish, op. cit., p. 250.
circle. In a marginal note relating the manner of Wolsey's death, Churchyard writes: "He died of a continuall flyxe in the Abbey of Leycester as Stowe writeth." Wolsey's entire speech to Cromwell in *Henry VIII* (III,ii,428-57) is very much in the Mirror tragedy vein, but it also roughly follows Cavendish. So while it is unlikely that Churchyard's verses are Shakespeare's source, the lines cited above are curiously coincidental. It is tempting to think of Shakespeare reading Churchyard's little known tragedy on Morton, then altering the lines and putting them in the mouth of Wolsey in *Henry VIII*. Ironically, there is no trace of Churchyard's Wolsey in Shakespeare's play.

Besides the *Mirror* tragedies, a number of other works by Churchyard fall into the tragic category as he envisaged it. Churchyard's autobiographical poem "A Tragicall Dis­course of the vnhappye mans life," which we have seen much of in Chapter I, represents a variety of the form. In the titles of two other poems, Churchyard also shows his awareness of the tragedy as a particular form: "A Piteful com­plaint, in the maner of a Tragedie, of Seignior Anthonio dell Donaldoes wife," and "A heauie matter of a Englishe gentleman and a gentlewoman, in maner of a Tragedie." The

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278 *The Mirror*, p. 510.
qualifying phrases, "tragicall discourse" and "in the maner of a tragedie," show that Churchyard wishes to make a distinction between them and the tragedies of the Mirror variety. The differences between the Mirror works and the poems mentioned above are several. The subjects of the Mirror tragedies are important, or famous at any rate; the subjects of the tragical discourses are of lesser fame, the poet himself or fictional men and women. The Mirror figures suffer great overthrow and, in the cases of Morton and Burley, spectacular deaths; the other figures are greatly inconvenienced by ill-fortune, such as the bad luck which plagued Churchyard throughout his life, but their sufferings are rather ordinary. The style of the Mirror tragedies is akin to the later day dramatic monologue; the works "in the maner of a tragedie" are more strongly narrative, with the poet telling of the vicissitudes of the characters.

Churchyard's difficulties over the classification of tragedy are understandable. In presenting the background for Shakespearean tragedy, J.V. Cunningham traces the critical beliefs from Aristotle through later classical grammarians to Lydgate and the Elizabethans. Despite the vast differences between Aristotle and Lydgate, Cunningham finds essential accord on the concept of tragedy: it be-
gins happily, ends adversely; characters are noble and
heroic; style is elevated; subject matter is historical;
the catastrophe is piteous and sudden; it is accompanied
by violence. He argues that "these notions entered into
the texture of medieval thought, and came to the Renais-
sance as commonplaces."\(^\text{279}\) While Cunningham is no doubt
correct in his general discussion of the history of
tragedy and the persistence of the tradition, tragedy as
a critical term is loose.

Elizabethan critical writing tried to preserve the
distinctions between tragedy and other forms. In his **Discourse of English Poetrie**, Webbe says that the writers of
tragedy express "onely sorrowful and lamentable Hys-
tories, bringing in the persons of Gods and Goddesses,
Kynges and Queenes, and great states, whose partes were
cheefely to expresse most miserable calamities and dread-
ful chaunces, which increased worse and worse, tyll they
came to the most wofull plight that might be devised."\(^\text{280}\) Sidney's **Defense** says that tragedy "openeth the greatest
wounds and showeth forth the ulcers that are covered with

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\(^\text{279}\) J.V. Cunningham, *Woe or Wonder, the Emotional Effect of Shakespearean Tragedy* (Denver, 1951), p. 44.

tissue; that maketh kings fear to be tyrants, and tyrants manifest their tyrannical humours; that with stirring the effects of admiration and commisseration teacheth the uncertainty of this world, and upon how weak foundations gilden roofs are bileded."\textsuperscript{281}

Of course, Webbe and Sidney were both writing of the drama, not of narrative poetry. Nonetheless, in addition to the popular acclaim received by the \textit{Mirror for Magistrates}, attested to by frequent editions, this collection of narrative tragedies also received critical acclaim. From Sidney, the most illustrious of Elizabethan critics, it earned this testimonial: "I account the \textit{Mirror of Magistrates} meetly furnished of beautiful parts."\textsuperscript{282} In the sixteenth century, it seems that tragedy was an elusive enough term to permit wide latitude in its use; the view of tragedy in the \textit{Mirror} is not that of \textit{Hamlet} or \textit{Macbeth}.

The tragedies of the \textit{Mirror} variety seem quite clearly to be descendants of the narrative poetry of the medieval period. Louis R. Zocca's \textit{Elizabethan Narrative Poetry}

\begin{footnotes}
\item[S282]Ibid., p. 287.
\end{footnotes}
argues that the *Mirror* began as a devotional or religious work but by the sixteenth century "became the vehicle for all sorts of literary purposes."\(^{283}\) Zocca says also that "perhaps the most significant use of the *Mirror* in England was its employment to spread historical knowledge and political doctrines".\(^{284}\) Zocca's views may fairly be applied to Churchyard's works. Churchyard can hardly be called a devotional writer, and he was quick to draw a political lesson. Yet in the main Churchyard stuck close to the medieval ideas of tragedy. Medieval tragedy is concerned with heroic figures who have lost their station, but largely as a result of Fortune's whim, not because of tragic flaws. Moreover, medieval tragedy stresses the *de contemptu mundi* theme by explicit moralizing on the folly of man's hopes. And of course because of Fortune's blindness, tragedy could strike the innocent and the guilty, the good man and the villain.\(^{285}\) Boccaccio's *De Casibus Virorum Illustrium* shows that Fortune's ways are fickle and that man may suddenly be thrust from prosperity


\(^{284}\) Ibid.

\(^{285}\) Farnham, *op. cit.*, p. 158.
into calamity, and De Casibus is at the head of the medieval stream of literary tragedy. The themes of contempt of the world and falling at the caprice of Fortune appear as well in Chaucer's Monk's Tale and Troilus and Criseyde, both of which Chaucer himself considered tragedies. Lydgate's Fall of Princes, a translation of De Casibus, is perhaps a more narrowly didactic example of medieval tragedy. 

It is clear that Churchyard's poems are not tragic in the classical sense. Some of the characters were not illustrious men, nor were their falls the result of errors or flaws of character. His works also lack the sublime diction and style held to be necessary. In general, Churchyard's poems are the descendants of medieval tragedy, which was patterned after the de contemptu mundi scheme. But for Churchyard, the term tragedy was broad enough to be applied to the fall of a cardinal or, in the tradition of the complaint, to the poet's own hard luck. 

\[^{286}\text{For a discussion of the differences between De Casibus and the Fall of Princes, see Farnham, pp. 152-70.}\]
SATIRES

While it is one thing to call Churchyard a writer of tragedies, it is another to call him a satirist. Churchyard labelled his works as tragedies and, as we have seen, made distinctions between the variants of the form. But nowhere does Churchyard use the word satire for any of his works, which suggests that he does not have a clearly defined idea of satire as an established literary form. He does, however, use Wyatt's court satires as models for his own verses. And Wyatt did introduce formal satire into England through his works based on Horace and the Italians. Surrey, who was Churchyard's master, also wrote satire. And there were among Churchyard's contemporaries many satirists of note, Spenser, Gascoigne, and Heywood among them. Certainly, Churchyard's humorous moral tales, his diatribes against the courtier's life, his attacks on political rebels and amorous poets show a well-defined satiric streak in him. Thus, even though Churchyard does not express a theoretical basis for his satire, his verses show that he understood the practice.

Two of Churchyard's poems, "A Fayned Fancye betweene the Spider and the Gowte" and "A Tael of a Freer and a shoemakers wyef," may justly be called satiric in their treatment of provincial life. Although both works have
an explicit message, they are noteworthy in that they are quite light-hearted and humorous. More than any other works that he penned, these show the lighter side of Churchyard.

"A Payned Fancye betweene the Spider and the Gowte" is a humorous tale with a moral lesson tacked on. Churchyard begins with this modest statement:

Although a fable tell I shall,  
It is to make you merrie all.  
You may some pleasure finde therein  

Churchyard says that "Tenne thousand yeare agoe at least," when "eurye thing that we can name/ Could talke and reason," it happened that a spider argued with the gout over which had the happiest lot in life. To settle the dispute, they exchange places for a year and agree to meet after­wards to discuss their experiences. The gout creeps into a hardworking farmer's joints, and the spider takes up residence in a gentleman's great house. During his year
in the mansion, the spider is under constant torment from a very efficient housemaid.

The Spyder thought the year full long,
And wisht that hit wear all ron out.
That he might reason with the Gowt. 288

The gout fares no better than the spider. In pain or not, the farmer, driven partly by industry and need and partly by the lash of his wife's tongue, daily toils in the fields and works hard in all kinds of foul weather. The unceasing activity of the farmer ("seldom sure in quiet stood") and the plain food that his host eats does not suit the gout at all. At year's end, both the gout and the spider are overjoyed to return to their former situations. The gout exclaims:

With yoman will I dwell no moer,
Qd. he, for fear of handling soer. 289

Equally satisfied is the spider, "who found no mayd his rest to let,/ They wear to other labour set." 290

289 Ibid., sig. D1v.
290 Ibid.
The moral of the tale at first seems to be that one should be content with what he has and not seek better surroundings: in this the spider and the gout would be like Horace's town mouse and country mouse. But Churchyard does not regard that as the lesson to be learned. He does say:

Thus gowt and spyder were full glad
That they their maisters changed had;
And so I leave them for this tyme,
And here knit vp this croked ryme.\(^{291}\)

The knitting up is:

This taell is written for your wealth,\(^ {292}\)
To show wherein consists your health...\(^ {292}\)

The gowt is sooner with a king
Than with a weary labring wyght.\(^ {293}\)

The gout resides with the rich because the wealthy man is idle, can afford delicacies, and too often overeats. The poor man's fare is plain and his work gives him exercise. The poem ends with a sober discourse on the proper diet.

The poem is at once a fable and a serious piece of advice, but its main worth lies elsewhere. "The Spider and the Gowte" contains keen, but good-natured, comments on

\(^{291}\)Ibid.

\(^{292}\)Ibid.

\(^{293}\)Ibid., sig. D2.
the zealous housemaid, the gout-ridden farmer, and the farmer's domineering wife. The gentle satiric description of the maid is quite amusing:

Her cheeks were thin,  
God knowes, she had a tender skin.  
The worst mischape this minion had,  
Her leggs were swollen very bad;  
Some heauy humour downe did fall;  
Her foot was narrow, short and small;  
Her body sklender as a snigg,  
But sure her buttocks were full bigg:  
That came, I thincke, by sitting mittch.  

The farmer's appearance is no better.

This grunting grobbe was short & thick,  
His face was red as any brick;  
Whear in thear stoed a bottell noes.  
A couple of corns vpon his toes  
He had, which maed him cut his shue.  
He neuer put on garment nue...  

But when this yoman went to chortch,  
A sleveles jacket than he waer,  
A veluet nightcap half threed baer...  

But herein must be vnderstoed,  
His wief was come of gentyll bloed,  
Which would not haue him clad in clouts,  
But whan he moyld with other louts.  

And when the unlucky man is first attacked by the gout, he gets no sympathy from his sturdy spouse. She rails at him unsparingly:

I washe, I wryng, I watch vp laet,
I fast, I spaer, I skrat, I skraep...

Let ries a blister or a blayn
Vpon your littell fingers end,
Straight for a surgion must you send.296

Her nagging drives him from his bed, "and haeld him out of doer in haest."

Churchyard's characterizations of these humble people are mirthful and perceptive. While he might feel that such folk were worthy and good, he was not blind to their foibles. In this poem, Churchyard approaches the smiling tone of Shakespeare's "greasy Joan doth keel the pot."

But in the vigorous realism, Churchyard also is reminiscent of Chaucer and Skelton in his treatment of the lower orders.297

"A Tael of a Freer and a shoemakers wyef"298 is very close in spirit to the medieval fabliau. It tells the story of a merry and lustful friar who seduces the wife of

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296Ibid., sig. D7. Skrat: to scratch or to struggle.
297Zocca, op. cit., pp. 166-67, uses both "The Spider and the Gowte" and "A Tael of a Freer" as illustrations of Elizabethan narrative poetry that follow the Chaucerian tradition.
298Chippes, sigs. L4-M4v.
an honest and devout shoemaker. Not altogether unwillingly, she lets him lure her to his chambers before early mass. The bell calls him to services in the midst of their love making. He has her wait in bed for his return. But during mass, the friar notices her husband in the congregation and conceives a ribald jest. He tells the honest shoemaker that he has a wench in his bed whom he would like to present a pair of shoes. The friar leads the shoemaker to the bedroom and bids the woman cover her face with the bed clothes and to put her foot out to be measured. The poor woman can do nothing but obey, and she is naturally terrified. The husband measures her foot but does not realize that it is his wife's. After the husband leaves, the friar roars with laughter. The wife is furious at this callous treatment and vows revenge. She rebuffs the friar for several months, but at length encourages him to visit her at home. The friar, confident that he has control of her again, walks into the trap she has set. Telling the friar that she is sending out for wine, she sends a boy to rush to her husband with news that she is desperately ill. Seeing the husband approach, the friar is terrified as there is no way out. The wife locks him in an ironbound chest and hides the keys. The worried husband enters and finds his wife moaning on the bed. She
asks for medicine which is in the chest. Being unable to find the keys, the good man begins to chop at the chest with a hatchet. Within the chest, the friar is as frightened as the woman was when her foot was measured. The wife allows her husband to hack away until just before the lock is ready to burst. She makes him stop by telling him that the noise is too painful to bear. She then recovers rapidly and the husband returns to his shop.

She roes and went to ease the freer, that lay half dead for fear:
Which resurrection who had seen
must needs have laughed at least;
First how he lay, than how he loekt,
and trembled like a beast.
Nowe am I quit, q. she, sir freer,
and yet you are not shame,
And throw a woman who you scorgd,
your folly now is tamd.299

Had the tale ended at that point, we should have an almost perfect example of a fabliau. But Churchyard is instructing as well as delighting and so takes over the narrative to comment:

This tale so ends, and by the same
you see what freers have ben;
And howe theyr outward holly lies
was but a cloak for sin.300

299Ibid., sig. M4r,v.
300Ibid., sig. M4v.
After a few more lines attacking the wickedness of the old clergy, Churchyard explains why he wrote the tale:

Heer vnder clowd of matter light,
som words of weight may pas,
To make the leawd abhoer fowl lief,
and se themselues in glas. 301

He is even careful to apologize for the somewhat indelicate scenes he describes.

Heer is no terms to stoer yp vice;
the writer ment not so. 302

It is unfortunate that Churchyard did not write more tales of this type. "A Tael of a Freer" is lively and most enjoyable.

Although Churchyard satirizes the clergy in "A Tael of a Freer and a shoemakers wyef," the content of the piece shows that the poem was not actually a comment on abuses that were likely to occur in Elizabethan England. The religious orders had been long suppressed at the time of the poem, and friars no longer had liberty to transgress. But the adherents of Roman Catholicism did present a real danger, and Churchyard attacks them in satiric verse. In 1570, the year following the Northern uprising of the

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301 Ibid.
302 Ibid.
recusant Catholics, Churchyard published an attack from a narrow religious point of view. He saw clearly the political nature and consequences of the uprising.

The full title of the work gives an idea of its tone: *A discourse of Rebellion, drawne forth for to warne the wanton wittes how to kepe their heads on their shoulders.* The poem concentrates on the wickedness of internal disorder in a nation. Churchyard begins by saying, "A cyuill warre, doth God and man abhorre," and then continues with numerous metaphors likening rebellion to loathsome serpents, monsters, and beasts. The poem closes with the remark:

> Let this suffise I say,  
> To make you hate. Rebellion euery way.  
> For if you do, in fury fyle [defile] your neast,  
> You are much worse, than senseless bird or beast.\(^{304}\)

The harshness of the metaphors, as illustrated above, contributes to the slashing satiric criticism in the poem.

Curiously, the most impressive part of the work is not part of the poem proper. The title-page says that the date of publication is May 1, 1570. The May Day spirit seems to

\(^{303}\) *A Discourse of Rebellion* (1570), sig. A2.  
have been in Churchyard, for the title-page of the pamphlet contains a charming verse.

    Come bring in Maye with me,
    My Maye is fresh and greene:
    (A subjectes harte, an humble mind)
    To serue a mayden Queene.

This delightful and modest tribute to Elizabeth shows that Churchyard was a loyal Englishman, unlike the rebels he writes about. But the tone of the quatrain stands in sharp contrast to the poem that follows; it is something of a shock to move from the above lines into descriptions of lawless animals and of wanton birds defiling their nests.

Churchyard's *A Discourse of Rebellion* is but one of the many works inspired by the Northern Rebellion of the previous year. Cheke's *Hurt of Sedition* was republished in 1569. Numerous pamphlets appeared excoriating the rebels and the disorder they caused.\(^\text{305}\) Certainly, Queen Elizabeth needed loyal support in 1570, for in addition to the uprising in the North, led by Catholics who wished to depose her and put Mary Stuart on the throne, Pope Pius V issued against Queen Elizabeth the bull of excommunication, "Regnans in Excelsis".

The bull was promulgated on February 25, 1570 (though not published in England until May 25) and described her as "that servant of all iniquity" and "pretended Queen of England." 306

It is little wonder that Churchyard was provoked to attack the rebels. Like any good Tudor, he had no sympathy for rebellion. As J. W. Allen puts it:

In England, all through the Tudor period, thinking people are unwilling to admit that there is any real question about it [rebellion].... Perhaps the most striking peculiarity of England in the sixteenth century was the general refusal to admit that any case can be made for a right of rebellion. 307

In A discourse of Rebellion, Churchyard argues that a civil war is worse than any other kind of strife. He points out that civil dissension is an even greater danger to the kingdom than foreign attack. And, ever conscious of the glory of warfare, Churchyard reminds the rebels of the fame that would come to them defending England against foreign foes. He strikes the note of national pride when he urges all subjects to remember:

If that you sticke, together as you ought, This little yle, may set the world at nought. 308

306 Ibid., p. 29.
The *Challenge* (1593) contains a fairly long poem that is full of invective for rebels. "A Warning to the Wanderers abroad, that seekes to sow dissention at home"\(^{309}\) is aimed directly at English Catholics who were living on the continent and engaging in conspiracies against the throne itself. Churchyard urges them to return:

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Come home wilde heades, then gad no more abroad,
To breede debate, that workes your Countries wrack...

Runne not to Rhemes, to learne a cumbrous knacke,
That smels of smoake, and sauors of discord.\(^{310}\)
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He tells them that to "Make Pope your head, the Prince yee do forsake."\(^{311}\) But the burden of the poem is not an attack on papistry; rather it is a castigation of rebellion against the state. Churchyard says this explicitly as he chides the English expatriates:

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Religion Lord, perhaps shall bee your shield,
Nay there a straw, you meane an other thing:
You are so great, you would faine march in fielde...
That sounds not right, of no Religion sure
Rebellion is, the string you play vppon.\(^{312}\)
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\(^{309}\) *Challenge*, sigs. K3\(^{V}\)-L4\(^{V}\).
\(^{310}\) Ibid., sig. L1.
\(^{311}\) Ibid., sig. L2.
\(^{312}\) Ibid.
The poem is slightly over three hundred lines in length, and these are the only specific references to Catholicism; the remaining lines are devoted exclusively to the problem of civil rebellion in general.

"A Warning to the Wanderers abroad" serves as a good illustration of Churchyard's attitude toward a religious question of his times. While he certainly did not sympathize with the beliefs of the Catholics, Churchyard's anti-Catholicism stems from political rather than doctrinal objections. To be a Catholic entailed owing allegiance to a foreign state; hence militant Catholicism was tantamount to treason. The present-day English historian E. I. Watkin, himself a Catholic, says that when "the Papacy entered the political and military arena politics could no longer be separated from religion. The missionary who reconciled Englishmen to the Holy See reconciled them to the Queen's political enemy." E. I. Watkin blames the bull of deposition of 1570 for the execution of Catholics under Elizabeth and concludes that "As regards the Government, when it inflicted capital punishment, we must reply 'political not [313] E. I. Watkin, Roman Catholicism in England from the Reformation to 1950 (London: Oxford University Press, 1957), p. 41."
Churchyard's anti-Catholic sentiment seems to follow the logic of Watkin's argument. Churchyard's positive feeling for his country outweighs his religious antagonisms. For Churchyard, as for all, the unpardonable sin is to plot or to take arms against England and the Queen. "A Warning to the Wanderers abroad" provides him with the opportunity to scorch disloyal Englishmen.

The poem begins with Churchyard's lamenting that often it is difficult to rout out rebels because they are artful in disguising their plots. The language he uses to say this is somewhat more direct: "A plaister faire, may hide a filthy soare." Churchyard then is carried away in a bitter denunciation of rebellion. Theorizing on the origin of rebellion, Churchyard expresses his view in a rather confused image. Hate long harbored in the heart acts with will to agitate the mind; the rest of the body then joins the fray:

Stout stomake first, with snakish stinging tongue
Stirres vp the strife, and blowes the blast abroad:
Then malice comes, and lookes like swelling toad,
And venom casts, where mischiefe may be wrought,316
From mother spite, so monster foorth is brought.316

316 Ibid.
Churchyard, perhaps realizing that his metaphor is getting out of control, immediately follows those lines with: "Rebellion is, the monster that I meane,/ A serpent vile, that liues in stinking denne."^^^ Seventy lines later, Churchyard returns to the body-state image with the lines:

If legges and feete, beginne the head to hate,  
Sicke are the lims, that should the head defend.  

The extended comparison of the body to the state calls to mind Menenius' fable of the body and its members found in Plutarch and used by Shakespeare in Coriolanus. And Shakespeare's English history plays have as their main focal point the dangers of civil disturbance and rebellion.

Churchyard's prescription for the cure of rebellion is expressed in quite plain language. "Among good Ewes," he says, "beware of scabbed sheepe." But "a blinde rebellious minde" is more corrupt than anything else, hence,

Then either heale, the member that doth smell,  
Or cut him of, before he further swell.  

"A Warning to the Wanderers abroad" and A Discourse of Rebellion do not stand alone in Churchyard's work as illus-

^^^Ibid.  
318 Ibid., sig. L1v.  
319 Ibid., sig. L4.
trations of his patriotic emotions. His national loyalty is found throughout his writings. These two poems on rebellion, however, best display his sternly corrective satiric tone. His unrelenting hatred of rebellion and his unforgiving attitude toward those who would endanger his beloved queen bring forth his most biting verse.

In many of Churchyard's prefaces and epistles to readers, he attacks those courtiers who either failed to reward him for his work or who made his life unpleasant. And in many of his works, he digresses to aim a line or two at his enemies. It is natural, then, to find that Churchyard writes a number of poems on the specific theme of courtly intolerance, parsimony, and neglect. Several of these poems are sober moralistic pieces, but eight or nine of them have a clearly satiric tone.

Much of Churchyard's satiric poetry about life at court found its way into a series of valedictions that he published over the years. He wrote no fewer than four "farewell addresses," as it were. The earliest appears in the Charge (1580), but its title shows that it was written twenty years earlier: "Churchyarde Farewell from the Courte, the Second Yere of the Queenes Maiesties Raigne."320

320 Charge, sigs. B3-C3v.
The poem was occasioned by Churchyard's ill-luck at gaining any bounty while plying his trade among the wealthy courtiers. He says that he was well received at first, even though he made no money:

I hapt in courte (as newe brome maie, That sweepeth trimely for a daie) To be desierd to plaie and syng, And was full glad in euery thyng To please the lordes, and lordely sorte... Although my doyngs were not fine. 321

Having "spent the small I brought," Churchyard sent verses to all the lords as New Year's gifts (a practice he continued for the rest of his life), for, as he puts it,

A dulled horse that will not sturre Must be remembered with a spurre... 322

But nothyng did retourne to me, That I could either feele or se. 323

Churchyard convincingly pictures the courtiers as tight-fisted beings, full of golden words but barren deeds. And although most of this work is not bitter in tone, Churchyard does make some sniping comments about the differences between the courtiers and himself:

Where cannon roard and dromme did sounde, I did not learne to daunce a rounde...

321 Ibid, sig. C1v.  
I haue with many a threed bare pursse,
Been glad to serue in countries cause; 324
When you at home were pickyng strawes. 324

Nowhere does Churchyard blame Elizabeth for the baseness
and guile of the court. In fact, he specifically warns
the courtly set that Elizabeth will right the wrongs.

You maie the horse and saddle lose,
When that her hedde, whose vertue flowes,
Shall see the deepnesse of your sleight,
And sette your crooked dealyngs streight. 325

Even so, Churchyard was unable to wait until the queen
could rout the wicked from the court, and he ends his
first farewell with "Thus, for a while, now Courte a-
due." 326 Clearly, he knew that he would return, and he
was quite right, although he would also bid farewell
again in the future.

Although we do not know how soon Churchyard returned
after bidding the court farewell early in Elizabeth's
reign, by 1565 or 1566 he again said farewell. The Sta-
tioners' Register for those years lists two broadsides of
farewell by Churchyard: A Farewell cauld, Churcheysards
rounde. From the Courte to the Cuntry grownd and Church-

324 Ibid., sig. B3.
325 Ibid., sig. B3v.
326 Ibid., sig. C3v.
The satiric sting in these two works is sharper than in the earlier farewell. Churchyard's experience with the unpleasant side of courtly life sharpened both his feelings and his pen.

He begins **Churcheyeards round** by saying,

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In Court yf Largies [largesse] be
Why parte I thens so bare. 328
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The courtly birds, he claims, can spare none of their feathers. Try as he might for reward,

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Yet lo I dyd but grope
For gnats within the darke. 329
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Caustically, he supplies possible reasons for the lack of benevolence.

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Parhappes the froste hathe nypt
Each Noble lyberall hand
Or ellse a waye is skypte
Into sume other launde.
God send a thawe a gayne
And shyppes drawe home as fast. 330
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328 Collman, *op. cit.*, p. 79.
329 Ibid.
330 Ibid.
But Churchyard has no great hopes for a change in the weather or a return of generous lords, so he mounts his horse to go from "Courte to carte," that is, to the country. He ends the poem on a dejected note by declaring that he does not know whether he or the horse is better off:

The one must beare his charge
The other where he goes
Must pourely lyue at large.331

Churchyarde's farewell, written no doubt on the same occasion, contains further attacks on the courtiers in general, although it is addressed to a specific former patron. The poem opens with a few lines saying that friendship is nought, is nothing but words and flattering. Churchyard then says,

And if I thinke my worthiest freende
may be abusde by this,
I ought in plaine flat termes
to shew him what I thinke,
And blaze the meaninge of my minde
by paper, pen, & inke.332

Churchyard says he is forced to write what he feels

Because the doores be barde,
where my good will should pas:
And buzzinge Bees do creepe in place,
where Churcheyards credite was.333

331 Ibid., p. 80.
332 Ibid., p. 89.
333 Ibid.
Unfortunately, because Churchyarde's farewell is a broadside, there is no dedication to give a clue to the name of "the worthiest freende." And as mentioned in Chapter I, this period of Churchyard's life is the darkest, so there is also no other source to yield such information. But whoever the personage was, Churchyard did not speak to him in humble tones. He asks his friend to consider whether "the flyes doe flocke/ aboute the fleashe in vaine?" He tells the friend,

Your affections blinde,
hath you bewitched so,
You haue no power to finde your freendes,
nor to discerne your fo.
Ye fill the fleesinge fistes,
and let the needie lacke.\textsuperscript{334}

Churchyard continues with a series of questions and statements, all imputing viciousness, cowardice, and hypocrisy to those that are favored over him. The patron is told to dress like a servant and listen to the flatterers when they are off guard. Churchyard asks,

And who is now so bolde,
that dare flat warninge geue,
To suche as in toppe of pompe
or princely plaisures lyue?\textsuperscript{335}

\textsuperscript{334}Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{335}Ibid., p. 91.
Bitterly, he continues:

I muse what new founde chaunce,
    hath so disguisde the state
That men oft times for speakyng plaine,
    doo purchace endlesse hate.\textsuperscript{336}

At this point, Churchyard seems to realize that he is indeed speaking plainly and he wonders if he is striking too close for his own good, wonders if his "penne hath drunke to muche." He dismisses such a thought with

Nay, nay, some one must speake,
    although the vice it bee.\textsuperscript{337}

The "vice" he refers to is the court jester, the name coming from the buffoon of the morality plays. Churchyard says that had been his role since he had first come to court

To make the Ladies laugh,
    that leades the retchles liues.\textsuperscript{338}

No one, it appears, escapes his criticism, not even the ladies.

Churchyard then says that even if "the foole had gotte" a motley coat or a few pence when he left, "It had been

\textsuperscript{336} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{337} Ibid., p. 92.
\textsuperscript{338} Ibid.
well enough." But he spent all that he had brought and got not a penny in return. He ends this farewell by swearing "on Souldiers faith" never to return again to courts or cities. If he is ever so foolish to return, he says he hopes his nose is slit and his ears cut off. If he returns, he deserves

A hood, a hood, for such a foole,
a bable and a bell,
A coxcombe is to good
for such a calfe I trow. 339

As outspoken as Churchyarde's farewell was, it produced results. The Stationers' Register for the same year (1565-1566) lists "a ballet intitled a greater thankes for Churchyarde Well come home." 340 In it Churchyard says that he left the court and went to live in the country to make "a Vertue of a need."

But my cheeff freend came there...

Which freend drew me by loue
to see the Courte agayne. 341

The healing of the breach, however, is but a minor part of A greater thanks. The main burden of the ballad is a reply

339 Ibid., p. 93.
340 Stationers' Register, I, 309.
341 Collman, op. cit., p. 83.
to an unknown antagonist who mocked Churchyard's sudden change of mind.

The farewells and welcomes involved Churchyard in a controversy reminiscent of the Dauie Dicars Dreame incident of the 1550's. Sadly, the work of the antagonist has not survived, but the outlines of the strife can be pieced together. The Stationers' Register for 1565-1566 records a license for a ballad written by one "Master Smarte," entitled Great thankes to the welcome, in Churchyards behalfe. The ballad, reprinted in Ballad and Broadsides, is signed "Ra. Sm." Facts about Smart and his other productions, if any, are unknown. This work, however, is an attack on someone who welcomed Churchyard back to court with what must have been a rollicking ballad. Smart's attack is directed to one

who hath of late take payne:
By penned verce on high Churchyard
to welcome home agayne.343

Judging from the angry words of Smart, the "penned verce" sarcastically reminded Churchyard of the oath he swore

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342 Stationers' Register, I, 309.
343 Collman, op. cit., p. 81.
"on Souldiers faith" that should he return to court he would wear a fool's costume.

Churchyard's A greater thanks, for Churchyardes welcome home obviously takes its title from that of Smart's, his energetic defender. He begins by saying,

I had not Court farewell for such hot welcome home. 344

And after explaining that his "cheeff freend" talked him into returning, Churchyard picks up the attack on his detractor where Smart left off. Highly indignant, Churchyard says:

Yet know I cut tayld Curres can neuer byght in frame:
Tyll courage claps them on the backs and thrusts them on the game.
Come on you snarryng whelpes I feare your force no whit. 345

But after excoriating the writer or writers of the ballad which mocked his return and after daring them to attack again, Churchyard ends by saying:

No other aunswer sure, I make: now skan this well:
Write not to this agayne, in silence shall ye sit:
As voyde of aunswer euery way, as you are voyd of wyt. 346

344 Ibid., p. 83
345 Ibid., p. 84.
346 Ibid.
This broadside is signed "playne Churchyarde," no doubt to make sure his foes knew that he himself was indeed back at his old stand. It is too bad that the strife did not continue, for it is in response to personal attacks that Churchyard's invective is at its best. His language stings, his tone is sharp, and his verse moves easily.

In addition to the several farewells criticizing life at the court, Churchyard wrote several verse epistles that laid bare the courtier's life. One of these poems is entitled: "Written from the Countrey twentie yere agoe, to one that poorely remaines at the Courte yet." This work appeared in the Chance (1580), and if the "twentie yere agoe" of the title is accurate, it must have been written just after the farewell of "the Second Yere" of Elizabeth's reign. "Written from the Countrey" is not as spirited in language as the farewells. For the most part, it is a succession of couplets on the order of

The Court is like, a Mearmaids song,
That flattereth many people long. \(^{347}\)

There are, however, some lines that have a sting to them; one says that the most favored in the court are "The whis-

\(^{347}\text{Chance, sig. E}^{3}v\).
And while urging the person remaining at court to come to the country, Churchyard says,

It is as vain in Court to hope,\textsuperscript{349}
As seek a blessing of the Pope.\textsuperscript{348}

The poem ends with the advice: "myne owne good Iphon,/
From Court dispatch thee if thou maie."\textsuperscript{350}

The Chance also has an anti-court poem called "A letter to maister Cressie." It too was written from the country and praises the rural life at the expense of the court. Saying that he has paid dearly for the knowledge, Churchyard remarks:

I judge what difference was, betweene the mountaines hye,
And carpetts fine where flatterers flocke,
And deep disdain doeth lye.\textsuperscript{351}

The subject matter and epistolary form of "Written from the Countrey" and "A letter to maister Cressie" are reminiscent of Wyatt's satires of court life. The "good Iphon" of Churchyard's "Written from the Countrey" certainly calls to mind "Myne owne John Poynz" of Wyatt's

\textsuperscript{348} Ibid., sig. E4\textsuperscript{v}.
\textsuperscript{349} Ibid., sig. E4\textsuperscript{v}.
\textsuperscript{350} Ibid., sig. F1.
\textsuperscript{351} Ibid., sig. G2.
"Of the Courtiers Life," yet there is no evidence of a direct borrowing by Churchyard. Churchyard, of course, would have known Wyatt's poetry in Tottel's Miscellany. Wyatt, although he is imitating Horace, is more truly personal in tone, as though he were indeed writing a letter. Churchyard's verses begin with direct address but quickly turn general in tone and return again to the personal note in the last few lines.

"A warnyng from Courte" and "Of a Courtiers life, and how the worst sorte findes beste Furtune" are two more anti-court satires that appear in the Chance. Both are four-stanza poems meditating upon the hypocrisy and dishonesty that flourishes about the court. "A warnyng" advises all who read to

Creepe from colde Court...

Seeke rather Death, than liue in daiely doubt.
Where Enuie liu's, and Loue is tournde to lustei^rp
Good minds doe dye, and worlde is not to truste.\(^352\)

The poem ends with Churchyard bidding "the wise beware:/ Of gallant Court, that wares vaine glorie bare." "Of a Courtiers life" covers much the same ground. It likens courtiers to foxes and wolves, and tells how the honest are always tricked or bitten. One of the couplets has an

\(^{352}\text{Ibid., sig. C2v.}\)
arresting phrase: "badd are good, and good haue but baddlucke:/ In happie thyngs, or gaine of worldly mucke."^^^353

A final example of Churchyard's anti-court poetry which contains a clearly satiric tone is "A touche stone to trie an error from a trothe."^^^354 The title is quite misleading, for Churchyard provides no method for distinguishing between error and truth. The poem is largely a series of musings on the question of why people are attracted to the court. Many go for the spectacle presented, but waste what they have while they watch. Those who have wealth stay too long, and when they return home find their "lands are sold, and rents are shronk, in seams of garments vaine."^^^355 It is such a wonder to Churchyard that he asks:

But my demaund is why doest thou,
that maiest fro court liue well,
Desire to chaunge thy heauens blis,
to feele the paines of hell.356

Only those "that holds with Hare, and hunts with hound" ever gain wealth at court. It is a pleasure ground for the

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353Ibid., sig. C3.
355Ibid., sig. Hl.
356Ibid., sig. Hl^.
rich and high born; for the rest, "thei maie grossly pike vp crommes, or feede on grass their fill." At the end of the poem, Churchyard says that all his years of haunting the court have brought him nothing and at last "my bells are of[f]" but nobody is likely to profit from his experiences because "gallants to the Court will come, and did in eury age."

But I mutche muse, why people swarme, where suretie is vnfound, And few are helpt, & thousands have, mucho sharpe misfortune found.358

At first glance it would seem that Churchyard's anti-court poetry sprang from his anger at being ill-paid for his efforts. In each of the poems is a complaint that he was never rewarded fairly for his labor. But there seems to be more to it than unhappiness with material benefits. Often in his writings about war and his military life, Churchyard laments his lack of wealth and bad luck in gaining fortune; yet never does he satirize military life or impugn the honor of soldiers. Churchyard was a proud man and happy to identify himself completely with the glory of warfare and its demands of courage and strength. His

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357 Ibid., sig. H2v.
358 Ibid.
position at the court was that of a lackey; to act the buffoon for the court loungers must have been galling to a man who had proved himself in the field. Military life may have brought him no reward, but there was honor in the activity itself. To rhyme and to sing for scraps of favor at the court had to be demeaning to a man of Churchyard's pride. His satiric thrusts may well have provided him solace and assuaged his dignity. Of course, if Churchyard had prospered at court, his shrewd practical sense might have outweighed any repugnance he had for the way he earned his living. As it was, the lack of profit made it natural that he would seek some kind of revenge. It must also be considered that in the sixteenth century court satire had begun to achieve the status of a genre because the court was a powerful, central institution. To some extent, court satire replaces church satire as an outlet. Wyatt and Spenser, Ralegh and Sidney, as well as lesser figures like Gascoigne criticize the court. So it may well have been that Churchyard follows the fashion at the same time that he airs his personal grievances.

In addition to the satires on rebels and courtiers, Churchyard has a number of poems which satirize love. In "A rebuke to vaine Louers,"\(^{359}\) Churchyard mocks those who

\(^{359}\)Ibid., sigs. H4-H4v.
waste their time and energy on love and its delusions. For him, love is a thief that steals a man's treasure and a tyrant that robs a free man of his liberty. For those who involve themselves, "in the ende, thou shalt dispraise, Thy life so spent, for sutche small gaine." Love is equated with lust and "with hotte desire...bryngs free harts, to endlesse bonde." This versified rebuke is a bitterly anti-romantic piece of work. Of a like tone is "True wedlocke is, true bondage treble fold." Marriage itself is sourly described in this short poem, and is seen as unremitting grief, endless labor, and constant pain. Even the happiest of marriages is worth little, for

...who beste by marrage winns,
In wearie Lome, a webbe of woe he spinns.

If the best is "a webbe of woe," what sorrows there must be in an unhappy union.

There is a personal tone in Churchyard's "A farewell to a fondlyng." Rather than a generalized complaint

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360 Ibid., sig. H4.
361 Ibid., sig. H4v.
362 Ibid., sig. Elv.
363 Ibid.
364 Charge, sigs. D3-D3v.
against the follies of love and marriage, this short poem seems to spring from an amorous mishap the poet suffered. He speaks of a love that had turned first to coldness, then to hate.

The heate is past that did me fret,
The fire is out that nature wrought...

The sodaine stormes and thunder clappe
Hath tourned loue to mortall hate. 365

He gives thanks that he can now see clearly and wonders how he could have been so deluded.

Her sweete, disceiuyng, flattryng face
Did make me thinke the crowe was white:
I muse how she had sutche a grace
To seeme a hauke, and be a kite. 366

The sharpness of the attack, the likening of the lady to a scavenger, may not have been chivalrous on Churchyard's part, but the metaphor is clever and biting.

Churchyard's "Made against Idell and vain Rimes" is directed at love poetry.

What shame is this to here how men,
hath lost their sence for loue,
And daiely dye in leude desiers, 367
that doeth much mischeef moue.

365 Ibid., sig. D3.
366 Ibid., sig. D3v.
367 Chance, sig. F3.
Churchyard claims that it is a blasphemy to invoke a god of love. The love poets should "For shame leaue of your Venus songs, that keepeth vice awake." He concludes:

Wherefore awaie with wanton trashe,
sutch ware is waxen stale,
Shut vp your shoppes you Printers all,
that setts vain Rimes to sale:
And looke vp on the booke of life,
and there your cunning showe,
For all the rest but shadowes are,
as worthie heads doe knowe.

The poem shows little sympathy for the Elizabethan imitators of Petrarch. Its tone is flinty and impatient. It may be no accident that this sternly censuring anti-love poem is followed immediately by one that balances it somewhat.

Churchyard, though quick to see the faults of others, was also aware of his own youthful folly. On the same

368 Ibid., sig. F3v.
369 Ibid.
370 Churchyard's impatience with love poetry derived from Petrarch seems to carry over to a decided lack of sympathy with Petrarch in general. In the Chance (sigs. J4-J4v) is a poem called "Of a fantasticall dreame taken out of Petrarke," in which Petrarch argues that the dream world is better than the real world. Churchyard ridicules that view and suggests that it is the product of a disordered mind. For Churchyard himself, "it is the quicke and wakyng muse, that most my sence doeth ease."

Churchyard's critical attitude toward love poets is shared by Gascoigne, who makes uncomplimentary remarks about marriage in his Weeds. And Spenser criticizes idle ballad makers of love poems in Colin Clout's Come Home Again.
page as "Idell and vain Rimes" is the poem "On the vanitie of youth," which wryly comments on the poet's own condition. He says:

When I a wanton beardless boye,
   became first Venus thrall,
   My cheeks were smoth, my browes full plain,
   and rounde as tennis ball.\(^{371}\)

Age takes its toll, steals his hair and shrinks his limbs. Although he still has visions of delights, he finds himself unable to pursue them:

And I vnfit for Venus sports,
   by daie or candell light,
   With eye delits I feede my luste,
   and coueting desire,
   But when I should maintaine the flame,
   I giue but smoke for fier.\(^{372}\)

After the mirror confirms his decrepitude, Churchyard puts on a brave air and welcomes the inevitable gray hairs that "Hath ouercome my youthfull yeres, and quenched my delite."

"On the vanitie of youth" contains no heavy moralizing.\(^{373}\) Rather it is a wistful looking-back, and a delightfully playful bit of self-mockery. It shows that the poet understood why youth sometimes is guilty of making "Idell and

\(^{371}\)Ibid., sig. F3\(^v\).

\(^{372}\)Ibid., sig. F4.

\(^{373}\)Ibid.
vain Rimes." It also suggests that perhaps his critical verses mocking love may be the product of a man beyond the romantic age.
EPITAPHS

The vogue for epitaphs was begun by Surrey and Gри-
mald, and the Elizabethans wrote many of them. Sir
Philip Sidney at the end of The Defence of Poesie
cautions all those who would be unkind to poets:

...if you have so earthcreeping a mind
that it cannot lift itself up to look to the sky
of poetry...yet this much curse I must send you
in behalf of all poets: that while you live, you
live in love, and never get favor for lacking
skill of a sonnet; and when you die, your memory
die from the earth for want of an epitaph.374

The witty Sir Philip seems clearly to have written with­
out any thought of Churchyard in mind, for Churchyard was
ever ready to produce a suitable verse in memory of almost
anyone of importance who died in the sixteenth century.
In fact, he wrote an epitaph on Sir Philip himself. Even
to the end of Churchyard's life, he could be counted on
to provide a solemn tribute. In 1603 Churchyard was one
of the many to memorialize Elizabeth in his Sorrowfull
Verses made on [the] death of our most Soueraigne Lady
Queene Elizabeth, my Gracious Mistresse. And in 1604,
between the death of Archbishop Whitgift in March and his
own demise on April 4, Churchyard published his last work,
Churchyars good will. Sad and heauy Verses, in the nature

374 The Defence of Poesie, in Hebel, p. 304.
of an Epitaph, for the losse of the Archbishop of Canterbury, lately deceased, Primate and Metropolitane of all England. Churchyard wrote so many epitaphs that he did not remember all of them. In the Chance (1580) alone, there are thirteen epitaphs and a list of eighteen additional ones that he wrote but of which he did not have copies. A Feast Full of Sad Cheere (1592) is exactly that, an anthology of epitaphs.

Churchyard's career shows that he was well-practiced in the writing of occasional poetry. His livelihood depended to a large degree on turning into verse whatever happened to be the news of the moment: whether it was a military encounter, a calamity like an earthquake, or a quick response to an antagonist. It was natural, therefore, that he should be one of the first writers to produce literary epitaphs. The augmenting of the simple hic jacet announcements began in the sixteenth century, and Churchyard contributed his share. The task, however, made certain demands on the versifier, and Churchyard expresses the difficulties in an early work, The Epitaph of the honorable Earl of Penbroke (1570).

\[\text{375 Chance, sig. B4.}\]
William Herbert, Earl of Pembroke, died on March 17, 1570. The colophon of Churchyard's broadside epitaph bears the date "1570, March. 27." Thus within ten days, Churchyard had composed his tribute and had it published. In the epitaph itself, Churchyard apologizes to Pembroke for any defects in the verse, laying the blame on the haste involved in composition.

Had I been warnd I had perfuemd, thy Tombe with frankinsence.  
But cald so swiftly to my pen, the sweet insence I want.\textsuperscript{376}

The epitaph contains a number of commonplaces about death and praises in general terms Pembroke's piety and charity, but it also has a number of lines that show Churchyard had his eye fixed on his particular subject. Churchyard says that Pembroke was generous "To such as fau'red learnings lore, (though he no schole poynt knew)."\textsuperscript{377} Pembroke, according to Aubrey's \textit{Lives}, could not read or write.\textsuperscript{378} Churchyard did not gloss over this in the epitaph. And in

\textsuperscript{376}Collman, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 94.  
\textsuperscript{377}\textit{Ibid.}  
\textsuperscript{378}\textit{DNB}, IX, 674.
a perhaps unintentionally amusing couplet, Churchyard pictures Pembroke as a strong, silent type of man:

His lookes dyd speake when silent lipps, lockt vp great thinges in head,
Yea eu'ry word past Penbrokes mouth, peysd [balanced] a pound of lead.379

The head-lead rhyme and the comparison of Pembroke's words with the dull metal may not have been exactly what Churchyard intended, but they certainly conjure up a clear picture of the formidable earl.

Churchyard began composing epitaphs as early as 1553, when he wrote on the death of Edward VI.380 Aside from the title, which refers to Edward as the "Impe of grace," this early poem is not very interesting and is not typical

379 Collman, op. cit., p. 94.

380 Edward's epitaph was included in the Choise (1579). The title-page of the Choise is actually a table of contents: A generall rehearsall of warres, wherein is... sieges, battailles...A praise and true honour of Soldiours... And ioyned to the same some Tragedies and Epitaphs, as many as was necesarie for this firste booke. The Choise apparently was another of Churchyard's ambitious publishing ventures that never materialized. No second book appeared, just as The firste part of Churchyards Chippes (1575) was never followed by a second. The admission that Edward VI's epitaph was to help fill the pages of the Choise provides a good illustration of Churchyard's bluntly honest way of doing business.
of Churchyard's later epitaphs. Nothing in it suggests that Churchyard had even a remote connection with the court. It lacks the personal commentary which is found in many other epitaphs. For example, the verses written upon the death of the Earl of Worcester devote one of the five stanzas entirely to Worcester's love of horses and hunting. Churchyard describes the earl as "right spare of speech" but "a man in ryding as well skild, / As any man, that myght in saddle sit." Of Sir Nicholas Bacon, Churchyard says, "A flood of sence and sugred sappe, came flowyng from his braine" and "his voice was smothe as Organe pipe." When Bacon spoke,

He spent no speeche nor words in waste,
and where his promes past:
Performance hasted out of hande,
and followd on as faste.

381 A Feast Full of Sad Cheere (1592), sig. Bl IV. William Somerset, third Earl of Worcester (1526-1589), had strong West Country ties and was at various times councillor of Wales and J. P. of Shropshire, Churchyard's home county. Worcester was also a great patron of the drama, and it is curious that Churchyard did not note the earl's liberality in the epitaph.

382 Ibid, sig. Bl V.

383 Chance, sig. Al V. Sir Nicholas Bacon (1509-1579), father of Francis Bacon, was certainly famed for his ability as an orator. Churchyard's emphasis of Bacon's gifts was seconded by Nashe, who compared Bacon's oratorical skills with those of Sidney and More.
Churchyard characterizes Sir William Winter as "A sparke of Mars by speech & lookes, wherein the world might spy/ A warlike mind."\(^{384}\)

Of course, the epitaphs just cited contain a large share of conventional laments over death and destiny, but Churchyard also captures the personalities of the subjects he eulogizes. Worcester's epitaph presents him as a hearty outdoorsman; Bacon's efficiency comes through; and Winter's fiery nature is made evident. These epitaphs suggest that Churchyard had first-hand knowledge of the men themselves.

One of the more interesting of Churchyard's epitaphs is that on John Underhill, Bishop of Oxford, who died in 1592.\(^{385}\) The first fourteen lines of the epitaph have Underhill speaking. He makes the usual comment about fate and destiny that one associates with the speaker in a Mir-

\(^{384}\)Feast, sig. B^3^V. Sir William Winter (c. 1525-1589) was of an old Brecknockshire family and Churchyard apparently felt a regional loyalty to him. Winter was also a famous seaman and fought in many of the same engagements Churchyard participated in. Both served at Leith, Edinburgh, and other Scottish campaigns in the 1540's. Both also served with the fleet under Admiral, Lord Clinton in 1558.

\(^{385}\)Ibid., sigs. B^4^V-C1.
ror tragedy. After the opening lament by the bishop, Churchyard takes over the speaker's role for the remainder of the epitaph. In addition to the curious device of the subject of the epitaph speaking about his own death, the poem has another unique aspect. Although the epitaph is full of praise for Underhill's scholarship, piety, and generosity, it contains a couple of puns on the bishop's surname. Speaking of the suddenness of his death, Underhill says:

Sate I not safely Vnderhill, (in calme vale below,)  
From bitter blasts and tempests still, how ere the winde did blow.

Ten lines later, with Churchyard the speaker, is the phrase "Now Vnderhill lyes vnder ground." The lines certainly seem out of character for Churchyard and hardly add to the dignity of the epitaph. They do, however, provide a good example of the Elizabethan love of playing with words.

A Feast Full of Sad Cheere contains, after its last epitaph, a short verse by Churchyard which seems to sum up his reasons for composing tributes to the dead.

The quick I fawne not on, the dead may none dispise,  
Speake well of those are gone, is likt among the wise.  
The quick must die or droope, as fairest flowre in field,  
Vnto the strongest troope, the weakest force doth yield.
So to the vertuous sort, that leaues good name behinde,
I yeeld but true report, to call the dead to minde.386

Almost all of Churchyard's epitaphs were written as memorials to personages of great power, fame, or wealth. But the epitaph most easily available to modern readers is on an unknown person. The Variorum edition of Love's Labour's Lost contains the entire text of Churchyard's "The Phantasticall Monarks Epitaphe." Churchyard's poem is used to help establish the meaning of the following passage in Love's Labour's Lost:

This Armado is a Spaniard that keeps here in court
A Phantisme, a Monarcho, and one that makes sport
To the Prince and his Booke-mates. (IV,i,108-110)

The term "Monarcho" was applied in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries to eccentrics or to demented people.388

The note to line 109 in the Variorum says: "One of the epitaphs written by Thomas Churchyard, and printed in a collection called his Chance, 1580, will afford the most ample account of this extraordinary character."389

386 Ibid, sig. Cl.


388 A note in Furness, p. 125n, puts it bluntly: "the 'Monarcho' of Love's Lab. Lost appears from this to have been a madman."

389 Furness, op. cit., p. 123.
Churchyard's epitaph does indeed describe a person with well-defined mental ills and odd behavior, no doubt a person who was the butt of jokes throughout his life. Yet this epitaph of an unknown is, to my mind, the most moving and sympathetic that Churchyard wrote. In the first half dozen lines, Churchyard comments that although poets like Dante and Petrarch are dead there still remain alive poets like him to "paint out people plaine,/ That els a sleepe in silence should remaine." After that preface, Churchyard says:

Come poore old man that boare the Monarks name,
Thyne Epitaphe shall here set forthe thy fame.

The tone established by these lines is sympathetic. Churchyard very charitably says that the Monark's "climyng mynde aspierd beyond the starrs," and "thy loftie stile no yearthly titell bore." These phrases are more than tolerant of the poor old man's obviously incoherent utterances, for a few lines further on, Churchyard says that the old man's "tauntyng tong was pleasant sharp and sore," and

When Straungers came in presence any wheare,
Straunge was the talke the Monarke vttered then:
He had a voice could thonder through the eare.
Churchyard also reports the Monark's delusions of grandeur, his claim that

When sword bore swaie, the Monarke should haue all.
The man of might at length shall Monarke bee,
And greatest strength shall make the feeble flee.

Even though the epitaph demonstrates clearly that the Monark was mad, Churchyard shows great understanding and tolerance for the demented old fellow. He points out that

...though thy pride and pomp was somewhat vaine,
The Monarcke had a deepe discoursyng braine:
Alone with freend he could of wonders treate,
In publicke place pronounce a sentence greate.

The old man was "graue of looks and fatherlike of face."
He was also "moste bent to words on hye and solempne daies." And Churchyard shows admiration for the old fellow's dogged courage and high principles:

Garments bare could neuer daunt his minde:
He feard no state, nor caerd for worldly good,
Held eche thyng light as fethers in the winde.

Churchyard sums up the character of his subject by saying that the old man "did shewe some witte, though follie fedde his will." The last line of the poem seems to be an oblique reminder to those who might have missed the
point of the epitaph on the old eccentric: "The man is dedde, yet Monarks liueth still."\textsuperscript{390}

All in all, this epitaph gives a fuller picture of its subject than any of the others. The gentle treatment of a misfit in society also gives a side of Churchyard that is lacking in the epitaphs of the great and powerful.

\textsuperscript{390} This epitaph is another example of Churchyard's idiosyncratic spelling. He calls his subject Monark, Monarke, and Monarcke.
CHAPTER III

CHURCHYARD'S SOCIAL COMMENTARY

Of Churchyard's great output, much falls into the category of social commentary in one form or another. This is not to say that he set out to analyze his times in any strict sociological sense. Rather it was his natural bent to comment on the experiences he had and the things that he saw. Since his military service carried him far and wide over a long period of time, he experienced a great deal, not always happily, it is true, but certainly deeply felt. Likewise, his lifelong flirtation with the aristocratic class led him to see much of both the goodness and wickedness of courtiers. Thus Churchyard's background and his enormously busy life make him a commentator on Elizabethan times who has impressive credentials. A brief glance at the works he composed shows how readily he reported on events of his day. It is fair to liken his work in its quasi-journalistic character to that of a present-day newspaper feature writer. Like his contemporary descendants, Churchyard was quick to rush into print to point out the social or moral implications of a newsworthy event.
A good illustration of Churchyard's readiness to comment on a news item is a work called *A warning for the wise, a fear to the fond, a bridle to the lewde and a glass to the good* (1580). This imposing title describes the contents of, or the lessons to be drawn from, a quarto of four signatures, written on the occasion of the London earthquake of April 6, 1580. The work is complete with a dedication and an "admonition to the reader," three prose items and two poems on the quake, and a verse prayer. The dedication to Alexander Nowell, Dean of St. Paul's, is dated April 8, 1580, only two days after the earthquake. It is testimony to Churchyard's energy and inventiveness that he was able to produce so rapidly such an amount of work.

The "admonition to the reader" is quite interesting. In it Churchyard wonders at the marvels brought on by the quake and concludes that "Gods might [is] made manifest"

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*H.S.V. Jones, *A Spenser Handbook* (London, 1930), p. 19, describes Nowell as "a learned man and charitable to the poor, especially if they had anything of the scholar in them." In the fall of 1580, Nowell dispensed some charity to Churchyard. Nowell's notebook has the following: "Too one Thomas Church yead being in some distres the xiii of October 1580--X" (*Spenser Handbook*, p. 19). Perhaps Churchyard's pamphlet on the earthquake convinced Nowell of the poet's scholarship.
by them. He warns, however, that some people may try to deny such an obvious interpretation:

*But perhaps some fine headed fellowes will wrest (by naturall argumentes) Gods doing and workes, to a wordly or earthly operation, proceeding from a hidden cause in the body and bowels of ye earth.*

Churchyard continues in such a vein, chastizing those who seek out reasons for earthquakes. God must be the cause, argues Churchyard, because most quakes occur in cities and do great damage so as to warn men. Few upheavals happen in remote areas because no one is there for God to impress. The scholars of Churchyard's day may not have been very impressed with the force of his logic, but they ought to have been appreciative of the ingenuity of his argument. Churchyard's attack on the "fine headed fellowes" is in itself a comment on the rising tide of scientific thought in his day.

Following the "admonition" is "the reporte of the saide Earthquake, howe it beganne." This section of the work is full of very specific detail and is a good piece of journalism. The time of the earthquake is given as the

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392 *A warning for the wise*, sig. A2v.
Wednesday of Easter Week, April 6, 1580, between 5:00 and 6:00 P.M. Churchyard reports that the houses on London Bridge shook and the Abbey Church at Westminster lost part of a pinnacle. He says that while Thomas Cobbed was preaching at Christchurch in Newgate, stones fell from the roof and "a boy named Thomas Gray, apprentice to John Spurling Shoomaker, was brayned, and Mabel Euerett his fellowe seruaunt, was stricken on the head with a stone." The less godly were assailed as well as the churchgoers; Churchyard relates that the people at Holywell "beholding the playes...were not a little dismayed." The wealth of detail, the naming of people and places, make Churchyard's report very immediate and convincing.

After the journalistic account is a poem consisting of a hundred fourteeners. It recounts the terrors of the quake and warns wantons to pay attention to the obvious signs of God's displeasure with their frivolous lives. One of the lines states the matter clearly: "The whisking rodde is neare their backes, that out of order go."
The next item is "A true Report vpo the great Earthquake." Yet it is not really a report at all but a sermon with the earthquake as the theme. It opens with a well-constructed periodic sentence on the benefits of the quake. Churchyard takes the view that although much damage was done and injury sustained, Londoners might gain spiritual benefits because the calamity should cause them to re-examine their lives. In a heavily allegorical passage, Churchyard exhorts his readers to mend their ways. Because of the awesome message of the earthquake,

it behooves vs. to put on the helmet of Saluation, the sword of the Spirite, ye Armour of life, & keep the Castle of a clear Conscience to withstand the greevous assaults of those three Rebels the world, the flesh and the deuill.\textsuperscript{397}

Immediately after this quasi-sermon comes an item with almost the identical heading: "A true Reporte of the Earthquake in London.\textsuperscript{398} This section, however, is straightforward news. It consists of a series of accounts about the effects of the quake. One paragraph tells of two men who were tumbled off a cannon at the Tower.

\textsuperscript{397}Ibid., sig. Cl\textsuperscript{v}. Churchyard's passage is a paraphrase of Ephesians 6:11-17. Cf. also the armor of the Red Cross Knight in \textit{Faerie Queene} I.

\textsuperscript{398}Ibid., sig., C3\textsuperscript{r,v}. 
Another tells of beasts roaring marvelously in the fields. Some of the accounts were reported earlier in the work, and they are updated in this section. For example, Thomas Gray, the shoemaker's apprentice, who was reported as "brayed" earlier, is listed in this section as being killed at Christchurch. Churchyard must have been writing in haste and inserting late developments as last minute bulletins.

The earthquake of April, 1580 inspired a number of writers besides Churchyard. Ballad mongers and pamphleteers capitalized on the event. But the quake was also written about by more scholarly and serious men. The work best known to modern readers is that of Gabriel Harvey, and it is known largely because of Harvey's friendship with Spenser. The Spenser-Harvey correspondence was published in 1580, appearing in a volume consisting of five letters and miscellaneous poetry. Spenser wrote letters I and III, Harvey the remainder.

399 Arber, Stationers' Register, II, 367ff. lists a dozen works on the quakes in the period April–June, 1580.


The 1580 volume of letters had two title-pages: Three Proper, and witty, familiar Letters: lately passed be-
Letter IV, dated April 7, 1580, "A Pleasant and pitthy familiar discourse, of the Earthquake in Aprill last. To my loouing frends, M. Immerito," is Harvey's discussion of the recent earthquake and a commentary on the nature and causes of earthquakes in general. Ostensibly, Harvey writes about the quake in reply to Spenser's letter (III). Spenser wrote:

I thinke the Earthquake was also there wyth you (whiche I would gladly learne) as it was here with vs: ouerthrowing diuers old buildings, and pieces of Churches. Sure verye straunge to be hearde of in these Countries, and yet I heare some saye (I knowe not howe truely) that they haue knowne the like before in their dayes. Sed quid vobis videtur magnis Philosophis?

Spenser's letter is from Westminster and dated April 2, 1580, but that date cannot be correct since the earthquake had not yet occurred. Harvey's letter is dated April 7
and purports to be written from a gentleman's house in Essex. But it is hardly likely that Spenser could have written from Westminster after the earthquake which occurred late in the afternoon of April 6 and that the letter could be delivered and replied to on the following day. Moreover, Harvey's letter of April 7 alludes to pamphlets on the earthquake that were not published until the end of April. One theory about the contradiction in dates is that "Spenser and Harvey concocted the letters together in Westminster, without sending them through the mails." 403 On the other hand, Harvey claims that the letters between himself and Spenser were published against his will by "malicious enemies, or vndiscreete friends." 404 It is always difficult to arrive at the truth when dealing with Harvey.

But whatever the circumstances behind the publication of Harvey's observations on the earthquake, there is little question that his discussion is the most intelligent and scientific of the contemporary accounts. Harvey repudiates the religious significance of the quake and explains it as a natural phenomenon. He points out that

403 Ibid., IX, 262.

the divine will is behind all natural events, but that it is futile and presumptuous to attempt to interpret divine motive. He mocks those "of the simpler, and vnskilfuller sort" who regard the quake as an omen of God's wrath. Harvey makes much of his learned background and says that university-trained people are the only ones equipped to discourse on the true causes of the earthquake and other such phenomena. His tone is often condescending, similar to that of a present-day astronomer patiently explaining away flying saucers as sun spots or ice crystals.

Harvey does not refer to Churchyard by name in his letter, but he clearly lumped him with the other pamphleteers. That Harvey thought little of Churchyard is evident from a letter that he wrote the previous year. In Harvey's letter-book for 1579, there is one to Spenser that contains a slighting reference to Churchyard. The letter is full of banter, and Harvey playfully accuses Spenser of libelling him by spreading the word of his comic gift. He says that in no time Spenser will have him preparing comedies for the stage or humorous ballads for sale at fairs:

And then perhaps not long after upon new occasion (an God will) I must be M. Churchyards and M. Eldertons successors too, and finally
cronycled for on of the most notorious ballat makers and Christmas carollers in the tyme of Her Maiestyes reigne. Extra iocum.\textsuperscript{405}

Harvey's comments notwithstanding, \textit{A warning for the wise} is a pleasure to read for its newsy quality and for the light it throws on Churchyard's character and the business practices of sixteenth century publishers. It is a hodgepodge to be sure, but a delightful one. \textit{A warning for the wise}, however, is not representative of Churchyard's major concerns, but it does show how ready he was to reflect on the significance of an event.

As we saw in Churchyard's satires on rebellion, he concerns himself passionately with political disruption within the state. He regards rebels as a venomous breed and fears the social upheaval they cause. But as great a patriot as Churchyard is and as much as he cares for his queen, he is too keen an observer and too aware of the painfulness of existence to be unmoved by the sufferings of his fellow men. Churchyard's reaction to the terrible destruction wrought in Ireland was a burst of sympathy for the victims of rebellion. In the \textit{Choise} (1579) is a lengthy verse epistle from Churchyard to Sir Henry Sidney:

"A Letter sent from the noble Erle of Ormondes house at

Kilkennie, to the honourable sir Henry Sidney, then Lorde Deputie, and lying at Korke, in Ireland.  

The letter is remarkable in that Churchyard moves from his usual out-of-hand condemnation of rebellion to an appreciation of the causes that spurred the Irish rebels and a genuine pity for the innocent victims of the harsh warfare. After telling Sidney what had happened during the latter's absence and relating some curious experiences (like seeing Irish magicians at work), Churchyard says that he will "let trifles pass" and "write of

406 Choise, sigs. Dd2-Ee2. The letter was probably composed near the start of Sidney's third tour of duty as Lord Deputy of Ireland, from September, 1575 to September, 1578. Churchyard could hardly have been in Ireland during Sidney's two earlier tours, 1566-67 and 1568-71, since he was in the Low Countries and Scotland most of the time. He may have accompanied Sidney to Ireland in 1575 and stayed in the north while Sidney went on to Cork. Sidney visited Ormonde in the fall of 1575, then spent the time from Christmas to Candlemas (February 2) in Cork (DNB, XVIII, 214). Churchyard probably sent the poem to Sidney during that time, perhaps even as a New Year's gift.

The Choise contains other pieces on the troubles in Ireland which occurred during Sidney's stay there in the late 1570's. One of them, "A Mirrhor for rebelles," relates the death of Sidney's troublesome antagonist Rory Oge O'More in 1578.

Churchyard had been known to Sidney for some time. In 1559, Sidney became Lord President of Wales and resided at Ludlow Castle in Shropshire. In August, 1574, Sidney recommended that Churchyard be hired to supply the entertainment for Elizabeth's projected visit to Shrewsbury (see Chapter I, p. 85).
state." What he says, considering that Sidney was Lord Deputy, is interesting:

Thei saie this lande, hath many sores and greues,
That fewe or none, doe seeks to salue a right;
And is so spoield, by Rebells, Knaues, and Theues,
(And barelegged Kerne, which sets all goodnesse light)
That worse and worse, the common wealth doeth waxe. 407

Churchyard observes that although many, presumably both Irish and English, fight only to line their pockets, there is hope that "some doeth liue, to mende the mischiues all."
The hope does not seem great, for Churchyard continues:

But to be plaine, I heare a wofull crie,
The noyes whereof, resounds through starrie Skie.
The poore that liues, by toyle of sweate and browes,
(And nere good tounes, where eche man knowes his own:) Can not be free, nor well enioye their plowes,
Thei are in deede, with sesse [taxes] so ouerthrown. 408

The heavy demands of the taxgatherers did indeed make the lot of the Irish hard, especially, as Churchyard tells the Lord Deputy, since the Irish are people

Suche as be borne, as free as we our selues,
And tilles the ground, and dearly paies therefore:
(And for their babes, full truely diggs and delues)
In their moste neede, we plague and scourge full sore.
Beyond the course, of reason, lawe and right.

407 Ibid., sig. Eel.
408 Ibid.
Nowhere else in his writings does Churchyard, almost fanatically English, so criticize the actions of his country. The horror in Ireland had to be on a shocking scale to have so prompted an outburst from a man used to barbarous and unjust warfare.

Churchyard goes far in his criticism of the English occupational forces; indeed since he is addressing the English field commander, Churchyard's outspoken language is astonishing. He obviously realizes this, for immediately following the reflections on the treatment of the Irish, Churchyard makes a strategic retreat and tries to minimize his remarks:

Why striue I thus, to thunder in the aire,
That neuer knewe, how raine in season fell...

I gage my life, that all thyng shalbe well,
And world will saie, we liue in happie daies...

To enter thus, in matters of greate weight,
Would vexe the witts, of riper hedds then myne:
Tis better vse, the penne with simple sleight,
Then in graue things, to make the frase too fine.\(^9\)

The poem continues in such a vein for the remaining thirty or forty lines with Churchyard repeating that the work is a light, trivial thing, not meant for serious consideration. He asks only that Sidney not lose the manuscript

\(^9\) Ibid., sig. Eel\(^v\).
or mislay it in some "windoe nooke." It is easy to feel that Churchyard does protest too much, that his denial of the value of his words adds to their truth. He could, after all, have removed them from the poem if he thought they were worthless. The fact that Churchyard feels free enough to say what he does to Sidney is evidence of Sidney's magnanimous nature. Only a great leader could be trusted to accept the criticism Churchyard offers.

In addition to the lines in the letter to Sidney, the Choise contains other items which show Churchyard's sympathy for the Irish rebels. One section deals with the activities of Sir Humphrey Gilbert, who was Raleigh's half-brother, and the methods of pacification that he employed. Churchyard's tone is quite unsympathetic. Gilbert's rashness and ruthlessness are contrasted with the patience and wisdom of Sidney and other commanders. There is no mistaking Churchyard's feelings as he describes Gilbert's field procedures. Sir Humphrey's standard practice was to offer the Queen's mercy to the inhabitants of a village on the condition that they surrender. If refused once, he would not offer it again but slay everyone, man, woman, and child. Those who surrendered received mercy only in the sense that they were not slain, for according to Churchyard, Gilbert forced them to give exorbitant bonds.
Although it is clear that he highly disapproved of the blackmail and wholesale slaughter inflicted by Gilbert, Churchyard does present the knight's reasons for such brutality. Gilbert defended his tactics on the grounds that 1) without churls the Irish men of war would starve and 2) with the knowledge that their wives and children would be slain, the men would surrender. While Gilbert's arguments might be persuasive to modern military thinkers and in fact were accepted by most contemporaries, such practices must have been abhorrent to Churchyard. It may have been Gilbert's cold-blooded despoilation that prompted Churchyard's letter to Sidney and a poem in the Choise called "The Vnquietnes of Ireland," one stanza of which says,

To heare the people crie,
and see their bare estate,
Would sure moue tears in any eye
that doeth the country hate.

Gilbert's excessive cruelty was recognized by other soldiers besides Churchyard. A. L. Rowse cites Sir Roger Williams' remarks about Gilbert's conduct in the Low Countries. Gilbert threatened to slay all the inhabitants of Sluys if they did not surrender. Gilbert, according to Williams, "was in great choler, swearing divers oaths that he would put all to the sword unless they would yield. But this was not Ireland, where he had terrorized the natives." In Rowse, The Expansion of Elizabethan England (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1955), p. 342.

Ibid, Sig. D1v.
Churchyard's observations on the Irish may be compared interestingly with those of Spenser in his prose treatise *A View of the Present State of Ireland*. Spenser's survey of the Irish problem was written after the destruction of his estate at Kilcolman in Munster, although not published until 1633. In terms of learning, scope, and profundity, Spenser's *View* is perhaps the most thorough sixteenth-century work on Ireland. Churchyard's comments cannot be looked upon as in any way comparable from those standpoints. But in the matter of personal attitudes toward the Irish, Churchyard and Spenser offer sharp contrasts. Both agree on the poverty and misery of the Irish, but for Churchyard the condition is painful to behold and is seen almost as a reproach to the English nation. Spenser finds conditions equally terrifying (see *View*, p. 244, for horrifying description of famine), but he is able to justify devastation on a grand scale if it leads to pacification of the Irish. Unfortunately, nowhere does Churchyard comment on the massacre of the Spanish garrison at Smerwick on November 9, 1580. Ralegh was a


captain there under Arthur Lord Grey of Wilton, and Spenser apparently was present as Lord Grey's secretary. The evidence is conflicting, but there exists a possibility that Grey ordered the torture and hanging of six hundred persons, some of them women. Spenser's defense of Grey (who is the model of Artegaill in The Faerie Queene) is legalistic in any case. One is tempted to believe that a professional soldier like Churchyard would hardly have been sympathetic to the slaughter of the Smerwick garrison, no matter how legal or expedient it was.

When Churchyard's observations on Ireland are contrasted with Spenser's, they provide us with glimpses of these two Elizabethans that seem at variance with what we might expect. The tough old campaigner Churchyard is really soft-hearted and something of a sentimentalist. Spenser, on the other hand, famed as the creator of a world of faerie and the writer of some of the most sensitive poetry in the English language, is a most practical political analyst and extraordinarily realistic interpreter.

Churchyard's pity for the people is in no way an apology for rebellion. The sufferings of the innocent were one thing, disruption of the state another. To the end of
his days, Churchyard inveighed against rebellion. His constancy on this point is shown in *The Fortunate Farewell to the most forward and noble Earle of Essex* (1599). The work eulogizes Essex and appeared just prior to "his departure for Ireland to put down the rebellion of Tyrone." It is ironic that two years afterward, Essex himself would raise perhaps the most remembered rebellion of the age. But in 1599, Essex was on the side of the right as far as Churchyard was concerned.\(^{414}\)

The poem opens on something of an idyllic note:

Now when green trees, begins to bud and bloem,
On Irish seas, Elizas ship shall ried.\(^{415}\)

But it soon turns into a violently anti-rebel attack.

The sword is drawn. Tyroens dispatch draws ny.
A traitor must be taught to know his king.

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\(^{414}\) Compare Shakespeare's lines on Essex in *Henry V*:

Go forth, and fetch their conquering Caesar in:
As, by a lower but by loving likelihood,
Were now the general of our gracious Empress,—
As in good time he may, — from Ireland coming,
Bringing rebellion broached on his sword,
How many would the peaceful city quit
To welcome him! (V, Prologue, 28-34)

\(^{415}\) *The Fortunate Farewell*, sig. A2.
The language becomes harsh and the images vivid; the rebels, living in the wilderness, are regarded as animals:

Proud treacherous trash, is curb'd & knockt with bloes...

Lying liek dogs, in litter, dung and strawe,
Rued as brute beasts, that knoes ne ruel nor lawe...

Murtherers viel, of wemen great with childe.

Churchyard maintains as always his firm belief in order as the underlying principle of all government and in divine providence as the initiator of law:

For he that first formd kings and all degrees,
The ruel of states, and kingdoms oversees.

For Churchyard, the links in the chain of being must never be unforged.

As has been pointed out in Chapter II, Churchyard's grave concern over the problem of rebellion is typical of an Elizabethan. We need only consider Shakespeare, whose histories constantly stress the theme of rebellion and the evils of civil dissension. The tetralogy of Henry VI-Richard III is built around the national weakness caused by an ineffectual ruler and the subsequent strife between the Yorkists and Lancastrians. The Richard II-Henry V series begins with the overthrow of an unfit ruler and continues with the struggles in the land during the
reign of Henry IV. The instability of England after the
death of Henry VIII and during the reigns of Edward VI
and Mary naturally kept an Englishman's mind on the terri­
ble dangers involved when the crown and succession were
not fixed. When we consider the large number of Shake­
speare's works which are commentaries on the social and
political upheaval resulting from civil disorder, it
should be no surprise that Churchyard would devote much
of his writing to the same problem. Artistic considera­
tions aside, the writing of Churchyard is even more
pointed than Shakespeare's, for Churchyard's comments are
not set in historical situations but are direct state­
ments about contemporary events.

Much of Churchyard's commentary about life in his day
relates to military affairs. He writes of battles he him­
self participated in and he recounts other famous engage­
ments of his times. Sometimes his descriptions and obser­
vations are in verse, sometimes in prose. But in whatever
form Churchyard presents his material, he invariably writes
with a sense of immediacy and personal involvement. What
sixteenth century warfare was like to a combatant is shown
graphically in Churchyard's writing.

The Chippes (1575) contains a lengthy narrative poem,
the full title of which gives some idea of the kind of
semidocumentary verse Churchyard writes: "The Siege of Leeth, more aptlie called the schole of warre, (the Lord Gray of Wilton generall thereof) in the second yeare of the raigne of oure soueraigne Lady Queene Elizabeth. Anno 1560." The siege of Leith was no ordinary affair. It ended with the Treaty of Edinburgh, which the Scottish historian Hume Brown regards as of paramount importance. Brown says:

Thus had Elizabeth and the Congregation gained every point for which they had striven; and their victory may be said to have determined the future, not only of Britain, but of Protestantism. So far as Scotland is concerned, the Treaty of Edinburgh marks the central point of her history.416

Although most of Churchyard's poem deals with the actual fighting, he too was well aware of the political importance of the event. Six of the final stanzas of the poem's eighty-five discuss the value of the treaty that ended the siege. Churchyard, although writing fifteen years after the event, finds it necessary to reaffirm the significance of the pact,

Because the brute and betill headed braines
Can not conceiue the depenes of this peace,
And that some thinke we haue loste our paines...

416 P. Hume Brown, History of Scotland (Cambridge, 1911), II, 55.
Here shall I showe the sum of all the same, 417
As nere as I can put suche thinges in frame.

For Churchyard, the Siege of Leith and the subsequent Treaty of Edinburgh brought the following benefits:

By this we haue, that many kinges did seek,
A perfite peace with Scotland suer for aye;
By this the Frenche, that nestled nere our cheek
Full many yeares, are now dispatcht away;
By this small broyle did seace a greater fray,
By this our realme was rid from further care,
Our foes sent home, and we in quiet are. 418

In exasperation, he adds:

By this our Queene hath all her owen requestes,
Unfit for you to know therof the weight.
By this great things as yet in question restes,
Till for our wealth they shalbe framed streight.

What Churchyard means by the "great things" that remain in question can only be guessed. He may have been alluding to the clauses in the Treaty which involved Mary Stuart's giving up her claim to the English throne.

Churchyard's poem is full of details of the fighting and observations on the skill and the ability of the contending forces. The opening stanzas plunge the reader immediately into the events. The English forces leave Ber-

418 Ibid.
wick, the fortified frontier town on the Tweed on the extreme northeastern coast of England. Their march along the coastal plain is then described. Their mission was to subdue Leith, the seaport of Edinburgh, which had recently been heavily fortified and garrisoned with French troops under the command of Mary of Lorraine, who was the Regent of Scotland and the mother of Mary Stuart. To Churchyard, the size of the English force was very small and the soldiers unready for combat.

And, as I know, the number was so small,
Sixe thousande and fiue hundreth men were all.

And most of those not trayned for the field,
More rawe then rype, vnready, out of vse.\textsuperscript{419}

The English were joined at the siege by a number of the Scottish Protestant lords, "who brought with them two thousand men at least."\textsuperscript{420} Although Churchyard does not elaborate on the alliance of the Scots and the English and seems to take it as a matter of course, Hume Brown says:

The spectacle was one suggestive of many reflections: English and Scots, immemorial foes, were fighting side by side against the ancient friend of the one,

\textsuperscript{419}Ibid., sig. A1.
\textsuperscript{420}Ibid., sig. A2.
the ancient enemy of the other; there could not be a more memorable illustration of the saying that 'events sometimes mount the saddle and ride men.' 421

No doubt Churchyard's prior military experience during which he fought on one side and then the other enabled him to view the presence of the Scots as nothing out of the ordinary. Churchyard may have been able to accept a curious realignment of allies, but the opening of the encounter at Leith roused all his military instincts. After a minor skirmish, the Queen-Regent ordered her troops to withdraw and apparent peace settled over the scene. This made Churchyard quite suspicious:

This stage of warre made many men to muse:
How be it was devised of their queen,
Some say, by craft our captains to abuse,
And so it proued none other as I weene;
For here and there the Frenchmen lay unseen,
As though were meant no harme on either side;
As fire lyes hid untill the smoke be spide. 422

In the unnatural calm, the English moved forward and began to set up tents. Some of the French then came up close to watch, "whereat Lord Gray was discontented mitch" and told them to withdraw. The French replied that they had no intention of leaving ground which belonged to their master.

421 Brown, II, 54.
422 Chippes, loc. cit.
The legalistic bickering continued for a while; then without warning the French opened fire:

Full in our face they shotte as they were mad:
A tricke of Fraunce, a bluddy parte to bad.

The effect of this on the English was electric:

Our rage was great, our bloudes began to rise,
Our stomackes storde as we did this beholde:
Throw out the campe the noyes ran to the skies,
At brute whereof the coward waxed bold,
The valiaunte man had courage dubble fold. 423

Without waiting for their leaders, the English charged the French detachment and the encounter became so heated that "there could no sound of drumme be easly heard." In a short time, the French were forced to retire to the walls of the Leith fortress.

The details of the skirmish add greatly to the realism of the piece. Of the size of the French assault party, Churchyard says, "Fiue hundreth pykes they were, as we estemde." Of this number,

Twelue men of name were slaine, and prisners fiue
We toke that day, and brought awaye alioye.

In addition, of "common sort of souldeours, good and bad,/
Full seuen skore of them" were killed and a number of

423 Ibid., sig. A2v.
others wounded. He then relates that those in the fortress were dismayed at the terrible casualties inflicted on the defenders, and "The towne, seeing this, against them shut the portes." 424

Churchyard reports that after the French ranks broke and hastened to the fortress walls, the English did not pursue. Only later, "whan all this broile was donne," did the English realize that they had made a tactical error and could have destroyed the French entirely because the gates of Leith had been closed to the retreating troops. But instead of complaining over the lost opportunity, Churchyard comments, "But who could say he saw the same the while?" He then turns the incident into a commentary on armchair strategists who know all the answers after the fact:

Each man can talke whan that a thing is wonne,  
And with conceit his fansie oft beguile...

This should be done, our after witts can say,  
But few at first findes out the ready way. 425

Professional soldiers of any age would doubtless share Churchyard's impatience with the "after witts."

424_ Ibid., sig. A4.
425_ Ibid., sig. A4v.
After the initial encounter the actual siege began. The English camp, pitched within cannon range of the fortress, was regularly bombarded. Of the gunfire, Churchyard remarks that "oft by chaunce, it kild a horse or man," and he adds humorously that it also

Quickned those that wear dull sprited soules,
And made some ladds to digge them deepe in holes. 426

By describing the trench digging and other business of the camp, Churchyard gives attention to the routine of warfare and captures the tedium that is so much a part of war. Because he does this, his writing is credible and convincing. He does not present battles as a succession of heroic combats, nor does he glorify fighting for its own sake. In contrast to Ralegh's account of the battle of the Revenge, Churchyard's poems about war have none of the stuff of the epic, but they make up for that lack with their vivid realism.

A further example of Churchyard's use of realistic detail is his account of a treacherous incident which cost the English dearly. He tells how the "Scottishe vitlers" who supplied the camp conspired with the French. A woman stood on a rock within sight of the Leith observers and

426Ibid.
signalled when the besieging guard was loosely kept. The French, thus informed, burst upon the unready English. Churchyard says:

Our men start vp, amasde with sodaine fere,  
But what was beste to doe they could not tell.  
Some, louing fame, his life did dearly sell,  
Some, hating death, did sone from daunger shonne  
Some, past all shame, full fast away did runne.  

The confusion of the assault, the reactions of the troops, the bravery and the cowardice, all are there. As Churchyard puts it, "the chaunce of warre is such/ A man may at no time trust it muche."  

In a marginal note, Churchyard says the Scottish Mata Hari "was duckt in water," which seems a mild punishment for her actions. Another marginal note calls the day of the assault "The bloudy Monday." For the most part, Churchyard uses the notes to point out important incidents in the narrative, although in them he occasionally identifies the principal English soldiers at the siege. For example, he mentions by name men like Lord Grey and Sir James Croft. But in the verse he avoids citing individuals

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427 Ibid., sig. A5.  
428 Ibid., sig. A5v.
for their brave actions. One reason is based on stylistic considerations:

Let no man thincke their deedes are buryd quight,
All though not here the persons do I name;
I nill for that my worke put out of frame.
To them I leaue at large that to disclose,
That after shall this iourney wright in prose.

Another reason for not giving names is based on social distinctions. Referring to the events of "The bloudy Monday," Churchyard says:

But at this tide full many a one was there
Deserued praise that are vntoucht for me,
And moste of those that did them stoutly bere
Were mangled than, myne eies the same did see;
But for they are of meane and base degree
I leaue them out: it is sufficient here, 429
If in the booke of fame their names appere.

Churchyard's statement may sound undemocratic to a modern ear, but it reflects accurately the social sentiments of his day. And to say that the soldiers were of "meane and base degree" is in no way a criticism of them as men. He is merely stating the accepted view that the man of base degree does not equal the nobleman.

Although Churchyard is critical of the French for their strategems and foul play, he nonetheless gives them their

429 Ibid.
due for bravery and courage. At one point, he says:

An hundreth tymes they issued out, I gesse,  
And sought for death their honor for to win.  
What ere they loste they braud no whit the lesse:  
If here I should all skirmishes expresse,  
What they haue done, what we haue wrought like wise,  
Of paper sure a quere would not suffice.430

In another place he speaks of the French who boldly ventured out onto the tidal flats for shellfish, even though the English guns were trained on them. As a result, "some derely bought their muskels eury weeke." "Sometimes for chaunce of sporte," the French attacked English horsemen. The elan and courage of the French defenders so impressed Churchyard that he confesses to the readers that he has "to praise them thus...and let them haue their owne deserued fame."431

Churchyard graphically describes the physical hardships of the besiegers and the restlessness that infected them. He tells how the men grew weary of the endless rounds of guard and became careless on watch, not caring what would happen to them:

The nightes were fowle, the days not very fear [fair],  
The countrie could, their garments thinne and smal.432

430 Ibid., sig. A8v.  
431 Ibid., sig. A7v.  
432 Ibid.
The discomfort, the misery led the soldiers to demand action of their leaders. Churchyard says that

\[\text{upon their captains gan they call,} \]
\[\text{A saute, a saute! we lye ore long in trenche;} \]
\[\text{Let vs go spende our liues vpon the Frenche.}\]

Churchyard then describes the preparations and battle plan for the operation, noting that "it seemed good the towne for to assaile" because the men were so charged with spirit. The assault, however, proved disastrous. The English and Scots fashioned scaling ladders to enable them to swarm over the walls, but the ladders were too short and the attackers were cut down mercilessly, leaving eight hundred dead and wounded on the field.\(^4\) Churchyard says that to see

\[\text{The mangled heapes that creped from the towne,} \]
\[\text{The slaughter foule, and here the wofull sowne} \]
\[\text{That soldiours cries there made, I thinke in dede,} \]
\[\text{Would sure compell a stony harte to blede.}\]

The defeat thoroughly disheartened the allies, causing large numbers to desert and others to avoid further contact with the French. Churchyard captures well the attitude of the besiegers as he comments on a nighttime foray

\(^4\)\[\text{Ibid.}\]
\(^4\)\[\text{Brown, II, 55.}\]
\(^4\)\[\text{Chippes, sig. Blv.}\]
by the French, who dashed into the English camp, slew a corporal, then returned to the Leith fortress:

Eache man is glad to see his enmye flee;
A bridge of gold giue him that runs from thee. 436

Those are the words of a practical soldier.

The Siege of Leith ended on July 6, 1560, but not by military might of the English and Scottish troops. On June 10, Mary of Lorraine, Regent of Scotland, died. Shortly thereafter, truce negotiations began after the arrival of ambassadors from France and England. Hume Brown says that the English, Scots, and French "were sick of the contest." The French wanted their troops at home. Elizabeth detested the idea of supporting rebels, even if the rebels were fighting her enemies. And the Congregation was in no position to support a long, drawn-out conflict. 437

Churchyard's account of the Siege of Leith is noteworthy in a number of ways. The details of the fighting are convincing and factual. But Churchyard does more than relate the facts. He goes into the motives of the soldiers

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437 Brown, II, 54.
and presents the unheroic reasons for their actions. He also tells of the blunders and failures of the English, thus keeping the work from falling into an uncritical paean of English might.

Another piece by Churchyard but in a perhaps more purely journalistic vein is "The Roed made by Sir William Druery, Knight, into Scotland." This prose account of Drury's raid appears in the Chippes (1575), although it may well have appeared independently shortly after the event in 1570. It is an on the scene account of a spectacular military feat. Churchyard himself was a member of the expedition and his writing is the kind that a newshungry public would readily receive.

The leader of the expedition, Sir William Drury (1527-1579), was a famous soldier and at one time Lord Chief Justice of Ireland. Churchyard says that Drury, at that time in command at Berwick, was sent into Scotland "for the reformation of such causes as the Queens Majestie and her Council thought conuenient." 438 George Chalmers in his edition of the Chippes says that the force was sent to avenge the assassination of the Earl of Moray, Regent of

438 Chippes, sig. E6v.
Scotland. The DNB's life of Drury and Brown's History of Scotland say that the raid was in retaliation for depredations made by the Earls of Northumberland and Westmorland, who had fled to the Scottish borders after the failure of the Northern Uprising in 1569. In 1570, with Scottish allies they assaulted loyalists of the 1569 rebellion and so incurred the further wrath of Elizabeth. Either cause was sufficient for sending Drury into the field.

Churchyard's account names several of the towns and castles made to submit during Drury's march. He does not, however, touch very much on the damage done and the revenge Drury's men inflicted. J. E. Neale says: "They slew and captured, burnt hundreds of villages, and destroyed the castles." Churchyard barely mentions such wholesale violence; instead much of his narrative consists of examples of Drury's charity, for example, sparing the town of Lithco after being importuned by the townspeople and the Earl of Morton. Churchyard reports also

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439 George Chalmers, Churchyard's Chips Concerning Scotland (London, 1817), p. 117.
440 Brown, II, 114ff.
442 Chippes, sig. F3v.
that Drury spared one castle because the mistress was "great with child"; another he left standing because the mistress of the castle turned over the keys with humble submission. The lords of the castles had apparently fled—wisely, it turned out, considering Drury's chivalry.

A long section of the narrative deals with an encounter between Drury and John Fleming, Scottish lord and military leader. Under a flag of truce for a parley, the leaders met at a distance from the main bodies of soldiers. Fleming, "against the law of armes...at the very instant of meeting," ordered his two attendants to fire upon Drury. Even though the "two seueral shot wear sodainly discharged ful in the face of syr William Druery," somehow they missed and Drury got back to his lines safely. Churchyard describes pungently the English reaction:

A marvelous mormour and furious talke arose in our campe among the whole multitude, and euery honest heart hated this haerbrayne and hasty disorder, harbored and hatched in the bowels of a crokadyll. And surely this powder made such a smodder and smoek, that sundry stowt stomachs were sturred to anger.

\(^{443}\) Ibid., sig. F3.

\(^{444}\) Ibid., sig. E8\(^{v}\).
Sir George Carey, then one of Drury's captains, was so incensed at the breach of military etiquette that he "deuised a letter," challenging Fleming to a duel. Churchyard gives the letter "word by word as the writtar himself drue it out," and also gives the text of Fleming's reply and Carey's rejoinder. The letters are models of insult. The opening of Carey's first letter, "Lord Fleming, if eyther your byrth or bringing vp had wrought in you a noble mynd," sets the tone clearly. Fleming's reply begins even more bluntly: "George Cary. I haue receiued your brainlesse letter...." Carey improves on that with: "Lord Fleming. Often the Flem­nings after noon answers smellèth more of wine than wit." No duel was ever fought, although Churchyard reports that

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445 Sir George Carey (1547-1603), second Lord Hunsdon, was the son of Sir Henry Carey, first Lord Hunsdon (1524-1596). Both Careys served as Lord Chamberlain to Queen Elizabeth, and as patrons of the Chamberlain's Men are remembered for their connection with Shakespeare.

George Carey was knighted by the Earl of Sussex, Lord General of the Northern Army, on May 18, 1570, during Drury's campaign. In 1596, Churchyard dedicated to Carey A Pleasant Discourse of Court and Wars.

446 Chippes, sig. Fl.


"Many wayes were wrought, by message and threatenings, to moue the Lord Flemming to defend with battayl the faute and folly committed." Had Churchyard printed copies of all the messages and threats, they would have added greater flavor to his narrative. But considering that the full texts of three were published, perhaps that is asking too much. That Churchyard includes what he has is testimony to his skill as a journalist. The Carey-Fleming incident, after all, was only a part of the story Churchyard was telling.

The account of Drury's raid serves as a good illustration of Churchyard in his role as an observer of events and as an interpreter of them for his readers far removed from the scene. Some of his motives for writing may be seen in his remarks at the close of his work. After praising the company as being the best he had ever served with in its discipline, morale, and honesty, Churchyard says:

Here may you beholde what a wyllynge and valiant companie may do in a little tyme, and what over­throwes and plagues are sent by Gods prouision, to such as breaketh the boundes of blessed orders, and forgettes the duetie to common wealthes and christianitie.  

^449^ Ibid., sig. F2v.
^450^ Ibid., sig. F5v.
Thus Churchyard states clearly that the events he describes point out the punishment invariably inflicted on those who sow disorder in the state. It is the familiar theme he often stresses and may be called the didactic reason behind the work.

Churchyard's final sentence, however, sets forth another purpose for writing, one that is the antithesis of didacticism:

This is written only to set foorth, truely and playnley, the actes and affayres of our tyme, that such as list to argue and reason thereof shall be the better instructed of euery doubt or certaintie belonging to such a disputation.\footnote{\textit{Ibid.}, sig. F6.}

This latter reason is informing. It shows Churchyard's awareness that the subjects he treats possess significance beyond their didactic purpose or their ephemeral news value. He sees the works as documents of contemporary history. He knows that his accounts of sieges, battles, and raids provide the raw material needed to arrive at conclusions of a social and political nature.

In 1580 Churchyard published \textit{The Takyng of Macklin}. He did this, he tells us, for two reasons: (1) he wished to dedicate a work to his former benefactor, John Norris, whom he had neglected to praise in his \textit{Choise} of the pre-
vious year; (2) he wished to "cause the worlde to imagine I was borne vnder a Marcial planet and signs: and neither spareth pen, studie, nor paines to preferre Marciall people, and honour the worthiest sort of men."\textsuperscript{452}

The work is an undisguised attempt to portray the English as the world's best fighting men. Churchyard insists that what he is doing is necessary because often foreign soldiers are not fairly lauded by those for whom they fight (a defect he himself was careful to avoid in "The Siege of Leeth"). He defensively claims, furthermore, that foreign soldiers fight chiefly for fame and not "for a small peece of money."\textsuperscript{453} One is free, I suppose, to believe this if he wishes; nonetheless Churchyard feels that he must stress this lack of mercenary interest in Englishmen and

in the defence and service of the Englishe Nation, whose labour, charge, courage, readinesse, and warlike mindes, is not inferiour to the greatest neighbors (or furthest of you can name) nere vs, in any Marciall order, maner, discipline of warre, or hazard of life.\textsuperscript{454}

\textsuperscript{452}A Plaine or moste true report of a daungerous seruice, stoutely attempted, and manfully brought to passe by English men, Scottes men, Wallons & other worthy soldiours, for the takyng of Macklin on the sodaine, a strong Citee in Flauanders (London, 1580), sig. A4v.

\textsuperscript{453}Ibid, sig. Bl.

\textsuperscript{454}Ibid, sig. Blv.
That the English were the best soldiers in the sixteenth century is a view not generally held by historians, who pretty well agree that the Spanish troops were best.\footnote{All historians agree on the strength of the English seamen, but they are less impressed with the value of English troops. After praising the superiority of the English navy over the Spanish fleet, A. I. Rowse says: "Where soldiers were concerned Spanish discipline was much superior, far harder and more rigid" (The Expansion of Elizabeth England, p. 252).}

Churchyard's exaggerated claims are a good index of his fierce nationalism.

Churchyard was not present at the taking of Mechlin, having retired from the wars in 1566; but he had the

\footnote{J. E. Neale, writing specifically about the Siege of Leith, says: "The army was going ahead but not with the quiet efficiency of the navy" (Queen Elizabeth I, p. 97). Describing the Queen's reaction to the slaughter of so many English and Scottish soldiers, Neale adds: "Outwardly Elizabeth did not quail...but in private all her old misgivings burst forth again, swollen by stories of military corruption, indiscipline, and inefficiency, and even of action little short of treason" (Ibid, p. 99). Neale also lists charges of corruption and inefficiency later in the reign in regard to the Cadiz Expedition of 1589 (Ibid, p. 334).}

fortune to see a letter written by a witness of the battle, and he proposed to relate the contents of the letter and also other reports that he had heard. Mechlin, fifteen miles south of Antwerp and eighteen miles north of Brussels, was the seat of the Central Court of the States-General and had suffered terribly during the long and exhausting fighting in the Netherlands. In 1573 it had been devastat-
ingly handled by the Spanish troops of the Duke of Alva; for three days the soldiers rioted, plundered, and murdered.\(^456\) Alva made Mechlin a symbol of what to expect for those who did not stay loyal to Philip II of Spain. But late in 1576, after the savage mutiny of the Spanish garrison in Antwerp (known as the "Spanish Fury" and in which six thousand citizens were slain), the Protestant northern and Catholic southern provinces signed a treaty, "The Pacification of Ghent," to drive the invaders out of the Netherlands.\(^457\) In 1578, however, Alexander of Parma restored the Spanish power and made a separate treaty with the southern provinces. At that time Mechlin was delivered from the Union by Peter Lupus, a Carme-
lite.\(^458\) Thus in 1579, when the events Churchyard relates

\(^{456}\)Hulme, op. cit., p. 481; Motley, op. cit., p. 358.  
\(^{457}\)Hulme, op. cit., p. 482.  
\(^{458}\)Motley, op. cit., p. 606.
occurred, the city was in the hands of royalist supporters of Philip.

As Churchyard tells it, John Norris in the service of William of Orange approached Mechlin on the morning of April 6, 1579. Under his command were eight hundred English and four hundred Scots and Walloons. The soldiers, contrary to Churchyard's denial of pecuniary motive, were promised five months pay as incentive. Some of the troops took to boats; others waded in deep water to the walls carrying scaling ladders. Those bearing the ladders, however, made so much noise that the watch was alerted. Norris thereupon created a diversion, drawing five hundred of the defenders to his point so that his other troops could steal into the city. Three hundred English slipped one at a time up a ladder at one of the gates. They quickly forced the defenders to leave the ramparts and the rest of Norris' men entered. After a vigorous struggle, the fight was carried to the market place. There Norris and Brother Peter, the Mechlin leader, had at it. Norris slew him and, as Churchyard says, "this gallaunte freer thus slain, ended all the strief and bloodie braule."459

459 The Takyng of Macklin, sig. C2.
The battle resulted in the deaths of two hundred defenders of the city. The English lost fifteen "gentilmen soldiours" and upwards of one hundred common soldiers. Churchyard gives us the statistics for a reason that becomes clear when he goes on to say that of the Scots and Walloons only two men were slain. Hence the English should get credit for the victory, but as Churchyard says, "Nowe yet I praine you, heare what an other man of good crédite wrote of this matter." The victory was claimed for the troops of M. de Eammai, Norris' superior, who came to Mechlin after the fighting ended. The town was immediately sacked by de Eammai's troops. Only then could Norris finally no longer control his men, who began to break into cloisters and churches,

saiyng thei were Inquisitors for to seeke out Copes, Surpleses and Vestments, and to take so good an order by their Commission, that no Masse should bee songe nor saied in Macklin many a long yere after, for wante of gilted Challices, and golden Copes.

Churchyard also says that his informant told him that the English soldiers played at dice with their spoils. The

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460 Ibid., sig. C3.
old soldier, Churchyard, begs tolerance on this point:

Men that haue by their forwardnes found suche good Fortune, are to bee excused though thei merrile pass a little money awaie at Dice: Declaryng by that pastime which standeth on good happe to winne, or euill lucke to lose.462

The account closes with the information that Norris forbade his soldiers from destroying one nunnery because English women were among the nuns. This act causes Churchyard to moralize on the gentleness of the noble conqueror, comparing Norris' magnanimity to that of Alexander's treatment of Darius.463 But more to the point perhaps as

462 Ibid., sig. C4v.
463 John Norris (1547?-1597) was no ordinary soldier of fortune. He had a long and distinguished career, serving in responsible posts in countless engagements. The DNB account of his life is almost a listing of the principal battles of the last half of the sixteenth century. The Mechlin affair was really only a minor skirmish in his career in the Netherlands. In 1581, he successfully relieved the garrison of Steenwyk even though it was besieged by a force of over seven thousand. (Motley, p. 621.) Four months later he destroyed the besieging army. In 1586 Norris served under the Earl of Leicester at Zutphen. He was ordered by Leicester to ambush a Spanish train heading for the city. With five hundred men Norris attacked the train comprised of wagons guarded by three thousand Spanish cavalry and infantry (what Motley describes as "a superb body of the best disciplined soldiers in Europe," p. 708). The train got through and among the English wounded was Sir Philip Sidney, who died two weeks later—October 17, 1586.
far as greater understanding of sixteenth-century England is concerned is the implication of Norris' decision. The nuns were spared because of their nationality, and in spite of their religion. English pride and feeling for nation spared the nuns. Three centuries later Gilbert & Sullivan might caricature such an action, singing that for the nuns it was greatly to their credit that they were born as Englishmen. But it was no humorous matter in Norris' day; Churchyard's report of the matter underscores the sense of Englishness.

The Takyng of Macklin illustrates many of Churchyard's habits. The work is certainly an attempt to find favor with Norris and is a stirringly patriotic tract. No doubt it was also written to capitalize on an event likely to interest readers in 1580 and in consequence provide the author with a little remuneration. Most interesting, though, is that it is a work which seeks to promote the fame and good report of English fighters in particular and soldiers in general. Next to Norris, the most brave and courageous participant in the affair was Peter Lupus. Certainly Churchyard thought of him not as a friar but as a soldier—"the worthiest sort of men." One would think that with Churchyard's long and painful connection with war (on the one hand his service under Emperor Charles V
in the 1540's, on the other his siding with the republicans in the 1560's) he would have been at the very least mildly cynical. Instead, throughout his life he maintained and propagated the values he found in martial glory and valor.

Stylistically, *The Takyn of Macklin* is worthy of comment. The narrative runs smoothly and lucidly. The make-up of Norris' force is presented; the details of the assault and victory are clearly set forth. There is no suspicion of fiction about it. Churchyard explicitly identifies his sources and always separates conjectures from evidence.\(^{464}\) All in all, the piece has about it the air of an intelligent wire service compilation of any military engagement, including the observations on dice play.

It is natural to find that Churchyard's long military career leads him to comment extensively on the life of a soldier and the relationship of a soldier to the state, quite apart from the soldier's role as a fighting man. In the *Generall Rehearsall of Warres* (alternate title of *Choise*), Churchyard at some length discusses the social position of military men and the lack of appreciation dis-

\(^{464}\) *The Takyn of Macklin*, sig. C2. Churchyard says that some reports state that the governor of Mechlin fled to Louvain, others that he was taken prisoner. Churchyard himself has no certain knowledge and so cautions the reader.
played for their efforts. He has sharp criticism for the way ex-soldiers are neglected and, in his mind, unjustly injured. Although Churchyard pretends to adopt an historical point of view, it is clear that he is talking about himself and the pains he has suffered. He says,

I mynde to expresse and set forthe at large, how Soldiours were made of and honoured in tymes paste, and what prerogaties thei had aboue other people.\textsuperscript{465}

This leads ultimately to the justification of a soldier to bear arms and to be called a gentleman, a point of great personal significance to Churchyard, as we have seen in Chapter I.

Churchyard's concern with the question, of course, may not simply have been the opportunity it gave him to air his personal complaints. The problem was of interest and importance to all who were concerned with the origin of honor and nobility. Traditionally, knights were always soldiers, and courtesy books like Castiglione's \textit{Courtier} treated the subject in detail. Hoby's translation of Castiglione made the work available in England in 1561, and the work had great influence on Elizabethan writers and on the courtiers with whom Churchyard associated.

\textsuperscript{465}\textit{Choise}, sig. Ml.
Book I of *The Courtier* has a long and interesting dis-
cussion on the most important attribute of a courtier. 
Count Lewis says that "the principall and true profession
of a Courtier ought to be in feates of armes."\(^{466}\) Then
in his anecdotal manner he wanders from that point to
the importance of learning, until Bembo interrupts to
say that letters "are in dignitie so much above armes, as
the mind is above the bodie."\(^{467}\) Count Lewis tries to
sidestep Bembo's objection by claiming that the great
scholar is too biased in favor of letters, but under Bem-
bo's added arguments Count Lewis concedes that "I holde
opinion that it is not so necessary for any man to be
learned, as it is for a man of war."\(^{468}\) To avoid further
discussion on the relative merits of arms and letters,
Count Lewis quickly changes subjects, to the amusement of
the gathering. Churchyard was proud of his achievements
in both arms and letters; Gascoigne's motto *Tam Marti Quam
Mercurio* might have been Churchyard's as well.

\(^{466}\) Baldassare Castiglione, *The Book of the Courtier*,


There was no doubt in Churchyard's mind that he merited some social distinction, and beginning with the Chippes (1575), the title-pages of Churchyard's works identify him as "gentleman." There exists, however, no clear record of his right to bear arms. And it is likely that some criticism of Churchyard's use of the term gentleman occurred and that he felt it necessary to defend his action. In the Choishe he candidly admits that the accounts he gives of heroism and valor are but "a foile to sette forthe the matter, I presently mynde to publishe out."\(^6\) The matter he then sets forth is a praise of soldiery, and the rightful social position of soldiers.

He surveys the treatment of soldiers in ancient times and in countries other than England. The worth of soldiers, Churchyard argues, is shown in the scriptures: "Christe hym self...saied, he had not founde such faiithe in Israel, as he sawe in a Senturion."\(^7\) Not only Christ, but the pagans and the Turks esteemed their warriors. Great leaders like Alexander, Caesar, and Charle-

\(^6\)Ibid.

\(^7\)Ibid., sig. Ml\(^5\). Churchyard is referring to Matthew 8:5-13, which tells of the centurion's asking Christ to heal a servant. It seems slightly forced, however, for Churchyard to use that incident to prove that Christ gave blanket approbation to all soldiers.
magne all ordered that old soldiers be treated as noblemen. Churchyard says that in the present day the French, Spanish, Italians all honor their soldiers. Even the Scots, he adds somewhat feelingly, are more generous to their fighting men than the English are to their worthy troops. Churchyard asks his readers whether it would not be madness to think that men fought and suffered only to return from the wars to be treated like commoners. A soldier is "no companion for punies, nor meete to be matched with Milksoppes." Churchyard was certainly not alone in his view that active military service brought with it the right to be regarded as a member of the gentry. Sir William Segar's The Booke of Honor and Armes (1590) maintains that "In respect that the profession of Armes is honorable, a Soldier that hath long serued without reproach, ought to be accompted a gentleman." In his book Segar, then Somerset herald-at-arms, exhaustively treats the questions

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471Ibid., sig. N4v.
472Ibid., sig. M2.
473Sir William Segar, The Booke of Honor and Armes (London, 1590), sig. F2v. Segar was clearly a man to be listened to. He was named to the College of Arms in 1585 as Portcullis Pursuivant, became Somerset Herald in 1589, Norroy King-at-arms in 1593 and Garter King-at-arms in 1602.
of nobility and honor. He is meticulous in distinguishing between classes and ranks and between the various rights of the several categories. Segar seems to overlook no possible situation, pointing out, for example, that an uncrowned king may lawfully challenge a crowned king, "vnsesse the King vncrowned be vnlawfullie aspiered, or a Tyrant." At the other end of the social scale, any ordinary soldier may fight with any other soldier "or other officer, the Captaine excepted" in defense of his honor. And even a soldier "baselie borne, hauing liued in continual exercise of Armes by the space of tenne yeares... ought to be admitted to fight with any Gentleman borne," i.e., one descended from three degrees of gentry on both paternal and maternal sides. Thus Churchyard's arguments had contemporary as well as historical support.

Men become soldiers, says Churchyard, because of their hope for fame, glory, and honor. The courageous soldier is one who delights to "folowe the Cannon wheele" and "be-

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474 Ibid., sig. H4v.

475 Ibid., sig. Il. Segar goes into such extraordinary detail about the code of dueling that his work may have been in Shakespeare's mind when As You Like It was written. Cf. the exchange between Touchstone and Jaques, V, iv, 45-108.
ginnes to smile and rejoyce when the Dromme soundeth."\(^476\) As for the mercenary side of warfare, Churchyard claims that the money to be gained is not paramount, although he shrewdly adds, it "is a thyng stoutly and wisely to be looked to."\(^477\) But while it might be practical not to overlook rewards, Churchyard flatly states that the man who fights for money alone will "feight like an Oxe, and dye like an Asse." On the contrary side, the man who fights for honor "doeth combate like a Lyon."\(^478\)

Churchyard calls the low estate of soldiers in Elizabethan England a disgrace. That old soldiers are cast off like broken-down hackney horses is the result of the enmity of those who never leave home but fawn and flatter for preferment. And certainly in the sixteenth century, and for a long time thereafter, ex-soldiers were shabbily treated. The maimed soldier, reduced to beggary and thievery, is a common figure in English literature. More in the Utopia, Book I, has Raphael talk of the soldiers "who often come home crippled from foreign or civil wars... They lose their limbs in the service of the commonwealth or of the king, and their disability prevents them from

\(^476\) Choise, sig. M3.
\(^477\) Ibid., sig. M2v.
\(^478\) Ibid.
exercising their own crafts." But if Raphael shows some sympathy for wounded veterans, he regards soldiers in peacetime as an intolerable burden. Raphael says that as long as there are soldiers, "you will certainly never be without thieves. Nay, robbers do not make the least active soldiers, nor do soldiers make the most listless robbers, so well do these two pursuits agree." Churchyard, of course, would never share More's views on the subject. He would, however, approve of Castiglione's praise of soldierly qualities in the Courtier.

To see that soldiers get deserved recognition, Churchyard proposes a revamping of the social order. He lists "Power sortes of true Nobilitie, or Gentlemenne." In

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480 Ibid., p. 63. More's views on the use of mercenary troops in the section on warfare in Book II of Utopia, pp. 207-209, would hardly have pleased Churchyard. More has contempt for the Zapoletan mercenaries and says that the Utopians do not care how many are killed, "thinking that they would be the greatest benefactors to the human race if they could relieve the world of all the dregs of this abominable and impious people."

481 Choise, sig. M4v. Sir William Segar's Honor, Military and Civil (1602) does not go as far as Churchyard in stressing the ennobling quality of wealth and power. Segar says that "Aristotle...maketh foure kindes of Nobility, viz. Diuitiarum, Generis, Virtutis, & Disciplina: that is, noble by riches, noble by ancestors, noble for virtue, and noble for learning." Segar, however, ranks nobility in a different order: 1) ancestry, 2) wisdom, 3) learning, 4) office or occupation. And for Segar, the best kind of
rank, they are governors, soldiers, honest lawyers, and "merchants that sailes forrain countrieys, and brynges home commodities." The governors are ordained by God, but the others are men who have made their own way in the world and have no hereditary right to nobility. In a sense, what Churchyard advocates is a practice similar to life peerage and an aristocracy of talent. Churchyard's list of "true nobilitie" is an enlightening piece of commentary on the changing structure of English life. Apart from the hereditary monarchy (the governors that head the list), Churchyard assigns places not on ancestral precedent but to the commercial and merchantile elements in the state. The business entrepreneurs and lawyers under British military protection led ultimately to England's becoming a great imperial power. In 1579, Churchyard was perceptive enough to sense this, even if he may not have realized completely its later development.

It would be misleading, though, to claim that in the Choice Churchyard is explaining the nature of the English power structure. His aim is to elevate the status of the military in general, and by doing that to improve his own wealth was old wealth: "of riches (chiefly if they be auncient) men be called nobles; for commonly no man is accompted worthy much honour, or of great trust or credit, unlesse he be rich" (Honor Military and Civill, contained in foure Bookes...4. Precedence of great Estates, and others, sig.N2.)
position. He does nothing to argue the gentlemanly qualifications of lawyers and merchants, but he does expend great energy and argument to prove the essential dignity of the soldier. In addition to the historical justifications already mentioned, Churchyard has an account of the history of heraldry and the function of heralds. Heralds were soldiers who watched battles so as to give a true report of bravery and honor. Thus the heralds gained the power to grant arms. Churchyard warmly supports the idea that the battlefield is the place where men should rise to gentility, for "euery mannes bloud in a bason lookes of one colour." He complains, however, that the heralds in his day are feeble men who have seen no wars.

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\[482\] Ibid, sig. N2.

\[483\] The heralds may not have been feeble, but they need not have been soldiers. Sir William Segar, for example, was a professional genealogist. He was bred a scrivener and saw no military service. And Segar, certainly an illustrious member of the College of Arms, was involved in one piece of business that lends substance to Churchyard's antagonisms toward heralds. In December, 1616, Segar was imprisoned along with the York Herald-at-arms after the latter had gotten Segar to attest and confirm the grant of an armorial bearing to the common hangman of London. An abuse as rank as this suggests that Churchyard has right on his side when he attacks the heralds of his day.
Following the account of heraldry, Churchyard reiterates the liberality of the ancients in rewarding soldiers, citing specifically Augustus Caesar's granting of rights and maintenance to veterans of his legions. Churchyard concedes that Elizabeth has rewarded many soldiers, but many others are forgotten while unworthy people are preferred. Comparing his age to the past, Churchyard says:

Now here is to be noted, that Soldiours in old tyme of tenne yeres continuance, beyng fourtie yeres of age, was suffered to live quiet, and bore the title of honour. Then reason will graunt, that who hath serued thirtie yeres, without reproch or shame (and in a dangerous worlde and mischeef) maie claime by right a pention of the Prince, and stipende of the common treasure.\textsuperscript{484}

Since precedent and reason argue the wisdom of providing for veterans, Churchyard concludes that those who have served more than thirty years and have nothing, "Suche Soldiours maie saie, thei were borne in an unhappie season."\textsuperscript{485} There is no doubt that Churchyard numbers himself among those who were born in the wrong century.

But even more important than mere monetary rewards is Churchyard's insistence on the right of old soldiers to bear arms. Indeed, this particular point is the real basis for his excursions into history and scripture to

\textsuperscript{484}Ibid., sig. 01\textsuperscript{V}.
\textsuperscript{485}Ibid., sig. 02.
justify the status of the soldier. Churchyard maintains that a proven soldier

maie without presumption pleade for armes, albeit he neuer gaue none before, and can bryng no greate proofe of his house, gentrie, or dissent.

Churchyard goes even further and argues that

though he be the first of that house, stocke, and name that gaue Armes: his beginning is allowed of all our aunciente writers and Princes, and shall put his aduersaries to silence, when in that point thei seek to deface hym.486

There is no mistaking the tone of personal involvement in Churchyard's remarks. The qualifications he sets up fit what we know or can deduce about his own particular case.

Churchyard concludes his observations about the proper regard for ex-soldiers with a number of illustrations attempting to show that in practice soldiers are more highly esteemed than mere gentlemen anyhow. He cites an incident that occurred during his service in the Netherlands. An old Italian soldier refused to duel with a young fellow because the latter, although a gentleman, had little military service. The Prince of Orange and the Duke of Saxony upheld the old soldier and gave him a reward

486Tbid, sig. O4v.
after hearing the case.\textsuperscript{487} The discourse ends with Churchyard saying that he is not inquiring into the origin "of all gentlement." He knows well that people will attack him for what he has said in any case. The disclaimer that other roads may lead to "gentlement" does not alter Churchyard's severe criticism of the existing social order. And despite Churchyard's obvious personal interest, what he says is important for the light it throws on the changing nature of Elizabethan England.\textsuperscript{488}

In addition to his experience as a soldier, we have seen that Churchyard spent much of his life at the court. Yet however much Churchyard frequented the court and however long he resided in London, his heart remained in the country. In his verse he regularly contrasts rural life with its peace and goodness to the corruption of the court and the cruelty of the city. Churchyard's comments provide an enlightening body of information on the character of Elizabethan life. Often this detail is found in sections of his work not intended to be the major point under discussion. An example is \textit{A Discourse of The Queenes Maiesties entertainment in Suffolk and Norffolk} (1579).

\textsuperscript{487}Ibid., sig. 04\textsuperscript{v}.

\textsuperscript{488}What Churchyard says about granting soldiers the right to bear arms anticipates the time, as in the present United States Army, when by Act of Congress a commission makes a man an officer and a gentleman.
The title-page says that the entertainments were "Deuised by Thos. Churchyarde, Gent." The shows, pageants, and devices that were arranged to amuse Elizabeth are described, but more interesting are Churchyard's remarks about the residents of Norfolk. The good manners and decency of the people in the provinces receive Churchyard's praise. The citizens of Norfolk received Elizabeth sumptuously. Their generosity Churchyard lauds with only slight reservation:

The money they bestowed on divers of the trayne, and those that tooke paynes for them (albeit my selfe but slenderly considered) will be a witness of theyr well doying and good will. 489

That Churchyard could be recompensed in a somewhat niggardly fashion and still find cause to celebrate the generous nature of the people reinforces the worth of the Norfolk citizenry. Nowhere else does he overlook lack of liberality. Churchyard is fulsome as he relates that "the gentlemen of Norfolk haue taughte and learned all the Townes and Cities in England a lesson, howe to behaue themselves in such like services and actions." 490 That he was "but slenderly considered" must have been an oversight.

489 A Discourse, sig. B4v.
490 Ibid.
Nor was it only the open-handedness of people in the provinces that made Churchyard regard them more highly than those who dwelled in London and the home counties. For Churchyard the people of all degrees in Norwich responded so admirably to the Queen's visit that it seemed another world to behold: which new kind of reverence, and comely custom of the Countrey (as it may be properly applyed) makes the old haughtiness, and stiff-necked behauiour of some places, to blushe, and become odious, yea in soyles, that the Prince generally keepeth residence, & most abode in.\textsuperscript{491}

Churchyard urges that the haughty and stiff-necked should look upon the examples of shires far from court so that "they might soon bee learned to clappe on more comely-nesse, and vse less obstinacie." Elizabeth's subjects in Norfolkshire, Lancashire, and Shropshire show true and proper regard for their sovereign. Londoners, "fostered on the long familiaritie," lack humility and respect.

Not always, however, does Churchyard find perfect behavior the rule in the provinces. Item twelve in the Chippes is an account of Elizabeth's reception in Bristol in 1574. The pageantry of the event is described and the poetic contributions printed. The theme of the entertainment was the evil of disruption within a state. Poetic

\textsuperscript{491}Ibid., sig. Bl\textsuperscript{v}. 
speeches were spoken by allegorical figures representing Fame, Persuasion, Dissention, and the like. There is nothing very interesting or meritorious in the various poems, but on the last page of the work is a comment by Churchyard showing the difficulties of presenting entertainment in the shires.

Some of these Speeches could not be spoken by means of a Scholemaster, who envied that any stranger should set forth these shoes.\(^{492}\)

It is testimony to the exuberance and regional pride of Englishmen in Churchyard's day that they would heckle and interrupt a performance given for Elizabeth. The disturbance created by the Bristol schoolmaster must have been considerable if some of the speeches could not be given and if Churchyard finds it necessary to refer to the incident in the *Chippes*. Nevertheless, Churchyard does not criticize the schoolmaster, perhaps because the poet recognizes the rough justice of the latter's position. Usually Churchyard is the one who finds outsiders rewarded in his place. He no doubt could sympathize with the schoolmaster, who probably had pieces of work ready for the event but lost out to the court poets.

\(^{492}\) *Chippes*, sig. D6v.
There is little doubt that Churchyard was more fond of the country and its inhabitants than he was of the city. Nowhere in his writings does he praise town life. His poem "Of the quietnesse that plaine Countrey bryng-eth" in the Chance shows his love for the simplicity and goodness of country life. The court satires discussed in Chapter II also display his deep feeling for the countryside. But the work which contains the most sustained praise of rural life and values is Churchyard's The Wor-thines of Wales (1587).

In the Worthines of Wales, Churchyard straightforwardly explains why he chose to write as he does. In his dedication to Elizabeth, he says:

Thus Gracious Lady, vnder your Princely fauour I haue vndertaken to set foorth a worke in the honour of Wales, where your maiestie is as much loued and feared, as in any place of your highnesse dominion. And the loue and obedience of which people so exceedes, and surpasseth the common goodwill of the worlde, that it seemeth a wonder in our age (wherein are so many writers) that no one man doth not worthely according to the countries goodnes set forth that noble Soyle and Nation.493

One aim, then, is to promote the worthy qualities of Wales, a land that has been ignored unjustly. After enlarging

493 The Worthines of Wales, sig. *2v.
on the virtues of Wales and its people, Churchyard repeats that he writes

to cause your Highnesse to knowe, what puysance and strength such a Princesse is of, that may command such a people: and what obedience loue and loyaltie is in such a Countrey, as hereunto hath bin but little spoken of, and yet deserueth most greatest lawdation. And in deede the more honourable it is, for that your Highnesse princely Auncestors sprong forth of the noble braunches of that Nation.494

Thus in addition to Wales being written about because it is a model state, Churchyard says Wales deserves further recognition because it is the home of the Tudor line. He considers the latter point important enough to restate it in the epistle to the reader.

The world will confesse (or els it shall do wrong) that some of our greatest Kings (that haue conquered much) were borne & bred in that Countrey: which Kings in their times, to the glory of England, haue wrought wonders, & brought great benefites to our weale publicke. Among the same Princes, I pray you giue me leaue to place our good Queene Elizabeth.495

The above lines are clear expressions of the patriotic motive behind the work. More important than intent, however, is that Churchyard does in fact execute a patriotic piece.

494 Ibid., sig. *4v.
495 Ibid., sig. Al.
Churchyard's description of Wales as it was in the 1580's stresses the qualities of loyalty and goodness in the Welsh people. He tells of Elizabeth's popularity with the Welsh: the Queen "is no soonder named among them, but such a general rejoyseing doth arise, as maketh glad any good mans hart to behold or heare it." Churchyard lists many reasons for the Queen's popularity. He points out that after she came to the throne "Religion was reformed (a matter of great moment) peace planted, and warres utterly extinguished." She also aided the afflicted in France, drove the French out of Scotland, helped Flanders, and dealt honorably with all. On the economic level, Churchyard bids the reader to "consider how bace our money was, & in what short tyme (with little losse to our Countrey) the bad coyne was converted to good siluer." One can easily understand Elizabeth's popularity and accept Churchyard's judgment that she was

at this day no whit inferiour to the greatest Monarke of the world...a peerles Queene then, a comfort to Wales, a glorie to England, and a great rejoyseing to all her good neighbours.  

496 Ibid., sig. *3.  
The Welsh approval and love for Elizabeth was but one of their attributes. That they were law abiding comes in for special notice. Crime in Wales is rare and criminals thoroughly detested, "especially a Traytor is so hated, that his whole race is rated at and abhord as I haue heard there, report of Parrie and others, who the common people would haue torne in peeces if the lawe had not proceeded."\(^{498}\) The beauty of the country receives praise throughout; so too does the natural bounty of the soil and climate. The industry of the Welsh is ascribed in part to their "fear of shame" for idleness. In proof of Welsh diligence, Churchyard graphically describes how farmers labor to improve their soil by removing stones and stumps. The gentleness and good manners of the Welsh also come in for the author's blessing. And their Christian piety coupled with material contentedness seem to Churchyard to be their most enviable trait. So fulsome is Churchyard in his commendations that one senses he is laboring to overcome popular beliefs that Wales is a

\(^{498}\) Ibid., sig. *3v*. William Parry was a Welshman and at one time an agent of Lord Burghley. Parry later converted to Catholicism and in 1584 concocted a plot to murder Queen Elizabeth and organize an invasion from Scotland to free Mary Stuart and put her on the English throne. Parry was convicted of high treason and executed on March 2, 1585. The Worthines of Wales was published in 1587, so Parry's crime was quite recent while Churchyard was writing.
country peopled with leek-eating Fluellens or barbaric magicians. He says that his journey to Wales is like coming "to heauen out of hell," for the continent is full of wickedness and evil, and

The Scots seeke bloud, and beare a cruell mynd,
Ireland growes nought, the people were vnkynd:
England God wot, hath learnde such leawdnesse late,
That Wales methinks, is now the soundest state.499

Churchyard's highly complimentary remarks on sixteenth-century Wales are fortified throughout by jibes hurled at those who speak ill of the Welsh or ignore the history of the land. Sometimes he hints broadly at a conspiracy of silence, as in the dedication: "it seemeth a wonder in our age (wherein are so many writers) that no one man doth not worthely to the countries goodnes set forth that noble Scyle and Nation,"500 and, "There is some more nobler na-
ture in that Nation, then is generally reported."501 Polydore Virgil he singles out for special scorn.

This Pollidore, sawe neuer much of Wales,
Though he haue told, of Britons many tales:
Caesar himself, a Victor many a way,
Went not so far, as Pollidore doth say...

So Pollidore, oft tymes might ouerweene,
And speake of Scyles, yet he came neuer there.502

499 Ibid., sig. Blv.
500 Ibid., sig. *2v.
501 Ibid., sig. *4v.
502 Ibid., sig. B4v.
Earlier in a marginal note, Churchyard repeats approvingly David Powell's attack on Virgil, which charges the latter with lying, envy, slander, ignorance, and irreverence. The vehemence of Churchyard's censure is an index of his British pride.

Polydore Virgil is attacked chiefly because his Historia Angliae (1534) dismisses King Arthur as a myth. In the Worthines of Wales, Churchyard attempts to uphold the historical truth of Arthur's reign. Throughout there are many references to Arthur and to the scenes of his triumphs. The Arthurian heritage was very much alive in the sixteenth century because of the Welsh origin of the Tudors. For example, the famous mathematician Dr. John Dee believed completely in Geoffrey of Monmouth's Historia Regum Brittaniae, and as an outcome of his studies even tried to persuade Elizabeth that she had sovereignty over Norway, Sweden, and Greenland.\textsuperscript{503} And Spenser's use of Arthurian material in The Faerie Queene is certainly the most impressive evidence of the interest in, and the importance of, the Arthurian legend. Of course, Churchyard's treatment of Arthur has none of the beauty or com-

\textsuperscript{503} Thomas Kendrick, \textit{British Antiquity} (London, 1950), p. 43.
plexity of Spenser's. Yet in their vastly different ways, each uses the Arthurian past to comment on the Elizabethan present.

The structure of the *Worthines of Wales* is worthy of comment. Though usually categorized as a descriptive poem, the *Worthines of Wales* is better called a miscellany. There is much verse, but lengthy prose passages and occasional catalogues of sights witnessed by Churchyard frequently interpose. By almost any standard, the work is ordered haphazardly. The title-page gives some idea of the diversity:

The *Worthines of Wales*: Wherein are more than a thousand severall things rehearsed: some set out in prose to the pleasure of the reader, and with such varietie of verse for the beautifying of the Book, as no doubt shall delight thousands to understand. Which worke is enterlarded with many wonders and right strange matter to consider of.

Churchyard's choice of the word "enterlarded" certainly suggests that he is aware of a problem in organization. The problem arises because he treats so many subjects. In addition to commenting on the inhabitants of the places he visits, he describes rivers, castles, notable families, historical spots, mingling Arthurian material in whenever the occasion arises. Describing a church, for example, he may digress with the pedigree of an illustrious family buried there.
In the *Worthines of Wales* Churchyard describes only four counties, five if we count a one-stanza reference to Flintshire at the very end of the work. Actually only Brecknock and Denbigh are in Wales proper. Monmouth and Shropshire are now, as they were even in Churchyard's day, in the Welsh marches. Ill-health forced him to cut short his labors, although he had hopes that if what he had written was well received

> the rest of the Shieres (that now are not written of) shalbe orderly put in print, likewise all ye auncient Armes of Gentlemen there in general shalbe plainly described and set out, to the open vewe of the world, if God permit me life and health, towards the finishing of so great a labor.

Churchyard never did get around to treating the rest of the shires. He was, after all, close to sixty years at the time the *Worthines of Wales* appeared. For a man half his age with good health, a journey through all of Wales would have been exhausting in the sixteenth century. Little wonder he never completed the work. Yet for the sake of social and historical information alone, it is unfortunate that the work was never completed. Churchyard's efforts in describing the statues, arms, and shields in the counties he covered have earned him the praise of

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Sir Thomas Kendrick, Keeper of British Antiquities in the British Museum.\textsuperscript{505} A fuller survey of Welsh antiquities would have added to the tribute.

The \textit{Worthines of Wales} bears a clear resemblance to the more famous chorographical work, Drayton's \textit{Poly-Olbion}. Both are intensely patriotic and both follow a similar pattern, the description of counties. The Warwickshire born Drayton's poetry is superior to the Shropshire born Churchyard's, and there is little doubt that the former's treatment of England is more polished than the latter's description of Wales. Curiously, however, in Bernard Newdigate's study of Drayton, Churchyard is not mentioned at all. In fact, Newdigate says:

\begin{quote}
It [\textit{Poly-Olbion}] owes nothing in its general conception or its treatment to any other writer. Unique in all literature, it is a monument both of Drayton's stubborn industry and of his passionate love for his country as well in her history, legends and traditions as for the natural beauty of her hills and vales, her forests and her rivers.\textsuperscript{506}
\end{quote}

The words Newdigate uses might almost be written of Churchyard. And indeed, it is highly probable that Drayton might have used Churchyard's work as an inspiration.

\textsuperscript{505} Kendrick, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 158.

In summary, the works discussed in this chapter do not exhaust Churchyard's writings which comment on the conditions of his day. In point of fact, almost everything he writes touches in some fashion on Elizabethan life. Even his tragedies and epitaphs reflect his concern with the serious events of his times. For Churchyard, there was never any question that his function was to instruct and to inform. He is a journalist as well as a poet and prose writer.
CHAPTER IV
CHURCHYARD'S STYLE

From what we have seen of Churchyard's life and work, one point at least is clear: he knows himself. He never deludes himself with exaggerated notions of his worth, never pretends to be something that he is not. Characteristically, he openly admits his limitations to his readers. With an honesty rare among writers, he chooses a style that fits his powers. Typical of the man and typical of his work is a statement made in the dedication to A Praye, and Reporte of Maister Martyne Forboishers Voyage to Meta Incognita (1578). The dedication to Sir Thomas Wilson, Secretary to the Privy Council, has the following:

My learning is not so great as to treate of hye matters, wherefore I haue chosen familier things too write vpon. And so presenting to the people that wiche they are best acquainted withall, I shall not weery them with a straunge and statlie style, nor ouercharge their judgements with farre fetched words or weightie deuises. Yet blushe I to blot my booke with fancies and fabulls (which the folly of youth in former dayes ledde me to).  

That is a statement of a plain man, well aware of the range of his skills, the reach of his powers. Of course, the use of such language in the dedication to Wilson is especially appropriate. Wilson was the author of *The Arte of Rhétorique* (1553) and a great exponent of plain English. He inveighed against "outlandishe Englishe" and inkhorn terms. As Wilson put it: "Doeth wit reste in straunge wordes, or els standeth it in wholsome matter, and apt declaryng of a mannes mynd? Do we not speake, because we would haue other to vnderstande vs, or is not the tongue geue for this ende, that one might know what another meaneth?" Clearly, the implication in Churchyard's words is that Wilson had much to do with leading the poet from "the folly of youth."

In the dedication to Sir Francis Walsingham of *A Lamentable, and pitifull Description, of the wofull Warres in Flanders* (1578), Churchyard says that he knows the contents are inferior to Walsingham's wisdom, but they are not gathered out of other mes gardens...but collected and take ñ fro the copasse of mine owne

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knowledge & experience of our time, in the view of mine eye, & reach of my reason.509

He goes on to say that he could have followed a common practice and "beautified my Boke" and "filled the empty places...with borowed tearmes and fine trāslatiōs." But to follow such a course, Churchyard says, would only temporarily conceal his ignorance. Any perceptive reader would sooner or later discover the weaknesses. At the end of the same work, after some prose and verse pieces about the wars in Flanders, Churchyard inserts a poem called "To the Worlde." It is an envoi in which Churchyard tells his book to go to the world at large, to soldiers, to lawyers, and to merchants, but

Among Diuines and Scholeman oft,
    come not, but for a change.
For at thy lewde and rubbish phrase,
    the learned will looke strange.510

Churchyard, it is quite clear, is conscious that his diction, structure, and argument do not require mind stretching exercise. The audience he writes for is the middle class, the practical men of affairs. He is not writing to please the learned, and he is well aware of it. Indeed

509 A Lamentable, and pitifull Description, of the wo­full warres in Flaunders (1578), sig. A3.
510 Ibid., sig. K1.
it is true that Churchyard dedicates his works to men like Wilson and Walsingham, perhaps largely to obtain their patronage. But he also seems aware that his work is not likely to impress them with its merit, which may be why he is almost overly defensive about the quality of his verse, and so exaggerates it ordinariness by hyperbolically referring to it as "lewde and rubbish phrase."

Churchyard's stress on unaffected language is closely tied to his belief in the moral purpose of poetry. His commitment to letters as a force for good is unflagging. Throughout his writings he comments on the utility of poetry, and nowhere is that view made clearer than in a work inspired by Sidney's *Defence of Poesie*. Churchyard calls his poem *A praise of Poetrie, some notes therof drawn out of the Apologie, the noble minded Knight, sir Philip Sidney writre*. Churchyard's homely verse is a

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*A praise of Poetrie* appeared in 1595, the same year that Sidney's *Defence* was first published. Churchyard's poem forms the second part of his *Charitie*, a curiously arranged volume whose first part is a work called *A Mysical consort of heauenly harmonie*, which occupies signatures A-A3, 2A-B3. Sig. E4 is the title-page of *A praise of Poetrie*, which occupies sigs. E4-G4.

*A praise of Poetrie* is actually a drastically truncated versification of Sidney's learned arguments, plus Churchyard's comments and praise of Sidney himself. Omitted entirely is Sidney's discussion of drama and the various types of poetry. The poem has numerous marginal glosses, giving the names of some of the celebrated poets Sidney refers to in the *Defence*.
far cry from Sidney's eloquent prose, but the purpose of both men is the same. Sidney says that the poet

beginneth not with obscure definitions...but he cometh with words set in delightful proportions... and, pretending no more, doth intend the winning of the mind from wickedness to virtue.\textsuperscript{512}

Churchyard paraphrases this:

So poets with plaine terms makes cleane
The foulest conshence liues
And by good words from vice doth weane
(Through councell that it giues.)\textsuperscript{513}

As far as sixteenth-century English poetry is concerned, Churchyard agrees with Sidney that the soil is barren.

Our age and former fathers daies
(Leaue Goore and Chauser out)
Hath brought foorth heere but few to praise
Search all our soyle out.\textsuperscript{514}

The only works that Sidney exempts by name are Surrey's lyrics, and Spenser's Shepheardes Calendar, and The Mirror for Magistrates. Writing more than ten years after Sidney


\textsuperscript{513}Charitie, sig. F4.

\textsuperscript{514}Ibid., sig. G1\textsuperscript{v}. Two years before \textit{A praise of Poetrie} in the dedication to \textit{A Pleasant Conceit} (1593), Churchyard did not think that English poets were so scarce. At that time, he said that he could not compare himself with "the rare Poets of our florishing age" (sig. A3).
composed, Churchyard says, "Let Sydney weare...the garland lawreate," and in addition to Sidney's work Churchyard sees virtue

In Spensers morall fairie Queene
And Daniels rosie mound
If they be throwly waid and seen
Much matter may be found.\textsuperscript{515}

For Churchyard to see Spenser as a moral poet is, of course, what one would expect. Spenser was the moral spokesman of his age, and later ages praised him for his wisdom and philosophical powers. Yet a modern reader would also expect Spenser to get Churchyard's acclaim for the esthetic quality of his poetry as well. But Churchyard does not mention the beauty of Spenser's verse, nor Sidney's either. The depth of the masters is more admired than their polish. Or it may simply be that Churchyard assumed that everyone in his day knew that sound and sense were wedded in great poetry; hence praise of the latter implied the presence of the former. It is true, however, that eminent critics like Sidney and Ben Jonson had reservations about Spenser's work. Jonson did not like his diction but would have Spenser read for his matter. Similarly, Sidney did not approve of Spenser's rustic diction. Church-

\textsuperscript{515}Ibid, sig. G3\textsuperscript{v}. 
yard has no criticism of Spenser of any kind and must have been quite satisfied with the suitability of Spenser's language with his matter. On a vastly less ambitious scale, Churchyard's use of plain language was governed surely by his awareness of the principle of decorum; his humble aims were couched in homely verse.

In *A Pleasant conceite penned in verse* (1593), a New Year's offering to Queen Elizabeth, Churchyard aims some lines at those who would distort his verses or read them with the wrong end in mind.

Reade with good will, and iudge it as ye ought,
And spare such speech, as fauour can bestow;
So shall you find, the meaning of his thought,
That did this work, in clowd and collours shwo.
Wrest things aright, but doe no further goe.  

On the relationship between writer and reader, Churchyard states the case for artistic integrity:

The Writer first will his owne fancie please,
Than to the rest, that will no word mistake,
He sends those scrowles, that studious man did make.  

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The writer suits himself and does not frame his lines with an eye on the critics. When the work gets into the hands of the reader,

The learned sort, scannes every labour well,  
But beetle-braines, cannot conceiue things right.  

The "beetle-braines," continues Churchyard, are those who look upon a work with malice and delight in finding fault for no reason at all. Nothing can escape their "scowling scorne" or niggling criticism:

No Writer now, dare say the Crowe is blacke,  
For cruell Kytes, will craue the cause and why.  

Churchyard says that he has no intention of pleasing everyone, that even though the poems he shoots from his bow are feeble shafts, "I wish but that, my shooting please the wise."

In the Charitie is a lengthy poem addressed "To the generall readers." In it Churchyard takes pains to defend himself from charges of plagiarism. If anything is wrong with the work, he says, it is the poet's own fault: "He

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518 Ibid.
519 Ibid., sig. B3v.
craud no helpe, nor stole from no mans song." It is all Churchyard can do to refrain from cursing his detractors, and he tries to cut off his tirade with the plaintive lines,

Tush though old head, and hand with paulsie shakes, 
Let no ill will, plaine writers pen appeach.520

But he cannot stop the flow of emotion. Indignantly, he demands fair play for himself and all writers. In this poem, as in numerous other places, Churchyard lays claim to his favorite composition.

Both beast and bird, their young ones do defend, 
So shall my Muse, maintaine that I have pend, 
Then bring Shores wife, in question now no more, 
I set her foorth, in colours as she goes.521

He adds that because he has now become old and his powers of invention have all but fled, he should not be robbed of his reputation. With a burst of passion and truculent honesty, Churchyard concludes his defense:

Though Syrens voice, the hearers doth deceaue, 
Mine hath no charme, but open plaine and bare, 
As I was borne, so speake I English still.522

For an old man, he still has plenty of spirit.

520Charitie, sig. A4.
521 Ibid., sig. A4v.
522 Ibid.
Churchyard's attitudes toward various segments of the reading public are made specific in several of his works. In "The Author to his booke" in the Charitie, Churchyard says,

At plow and cart, plaine speech is not disdain'd:
Sit down with those, that feeds on hungrie fare;
For they haue time, to note what thou dost saie.\textsuperscript{523}

This is yet another illustration of Churchyard's attachment to simple people and his unaffected love for country values. Never in his work does he adopt a superior attitude toward humble people. His feeling toward the sophisticated set, however, is just the reverse. To his book, Churchyard says,

Let gallants go, they will but giue a gibe:
Or take thee vp, and fling thee straight away.\textsuperscript{524}

The quickest way to success, according to Churchyard, is for the book to gain favor with the ladies of Elizabeth's court. If they like it, success is certain:

Among the Dames, of faire Dianas traine,
Where beautie shines, like siluer drops of raine,
In sunnie day: O booke thou happy art
If with those Nymphes, thou maist be entertaind.\textsuperscript{525}

\textsuperscript{523}Ibid., sig. Bl.
\textsuperscript{524}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{525}Ibid., sig. Bl\textsuperscript{V}.
Churchyard says that if a single lady likes a verse or a word, "thou hast a garland gaine." The ladies of the court have such power to weigh the worth of a writer that

Yea what they say, of Poets fond or wise,
Of prose or verse, that ripe inuenshon shoes:
As twere a lawe, the fame thereof shall rise. 526

Honestly enough, Churchyard points out that the literary criticism found among the ladies of the court does not rest on the merit of the work, but on the caprice of the readers. If of the book they find some "good account," even if they lay it in their laps, "and that in sport,"

Then at wel head, some water drawe I may:
For fountaine springs, may run cleare claret wine. 527

That the praise may be undeserved does not bother Churchyard, for he closes his poem by urging his book to make to "the nimble Nymphs, that with Diana dwell."

But if Churchyard approved of courtly readers who praised his work without reading it, he had less kindly thoughts for those people who read without paying. In the Mirrour of Man and Manners of Men (1594), Churchyard

526 Ibid.
speaks feelingly of those who browse in the London book stalls:

Some stops in hasting, and leanes on Stationers stall,
To aske what stuffe, hath passed the Printers Presse,
Some reades awhile, but nothing buyes at all,
For in two lines, they giue a pretty gesse:
What doth the booke, contayne such schoollers thinke,
To spend no pence, for paper, pen, and inke. 528

For such people as that, Churchyard has scorn:

A farme for those, is better than a book,
Since farmes profit bringses. 529

It is hard to say whether Churchyard despises more those who do not purchase his writings or those who carp and complain about the works after they read. He dismisses the latter by likening them to horses who fear the rider's whip,

So wrangling people eurie where
At verses vex their wits. 530

The truth of the matter is that Churchyard does write to please his public and he also expects to be fairly rewarded for his efforts. Such an attitude is reasonable

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528 The Mirrour of Man and Manners of Men (1594), sig. A2v.
529 Ibid.
530 Charitie, sig. G3.
enough. In the *Charge* he states his purposes plainly in the dedicatory letter:

He that sturreth vp the heauie myndes to lightsome consaites, is more welcome in euery place, then he that ouerthrows the weakest senses of the common people, with curious imaginations, and burthens both bodie and mynde, with wordes of greater weight, then common judgement can conceiue, and be able to beare. A tale or a toye mirrely delievered, pleaseth moste mennes eares: and an earneste sadde argument, either rockes a man a slepe, or maketh the hearers wearie.531

Churchyard's statement is a fair appraisal of the kind of writing that he does. There is very little reason for any reader to have his wits vexed over Churchyard's poetry. The poems might vex the patience of the learned or the sensibilities of the esthetes, but their meaning is usually plain to see. And the honesty of the man is compelling. There is no question about the truth of his remark in the *Charge*, "If I could gaine mountaines of golde, to flatter any one in Printyng an untrothe, I would rather wishe my handes were of, then take in hands sutche a matter."532 Independence of that kind no doubt helped keep him poor throughout his long life.

531 *Charge*, sig. *3F, V.*
Churchyard's writing is not that of a man with strong imaginative powers. He is primarily a writer who deals with facts, and he is essentially a narrator and chronicler of the events he observes. His invention occasionally produces bursts of lyric, sometimes in the least expected places, as on the title-page of *A discourse of Rebellion* (1570),

Come bring in Maye with me,
My Maye is fresh and greene.

The few lines of Churchyard's that C.S. Lewis sees fit to praise as having "a tinge of 'Gold'" are those quoted a few pages above from the *Charitie*:

Among the Dames, of faire Dianas traine,
Where beautie shines, like siluer drops of raine,
In sunnie day.

Yet these lines are from the versified address of "The Author to his booke," which we have seen is a very practical analysis of the reading public. Clear lyrical notes sound in other poems as well, but they, like the lines above, are incidental.

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Churchyard was a soldier and not a scholar, and probably for that reason classical allusions are not often found in his works. Similarly, his diction is not heavily freighted with Latinate terms, but is for the most part "plaine and bare." His poetry is studded with dialect words and country expressions. As Churchyard puts it, he writes "in plainest termes, because cunning phrases sauour of the schoole, where seldom I haue stolen any great learning, nor robbed good schollers of their booke."534

Churchyard's imagery reflects his background in the same fashion that his diction does. His imagery comes not from school or study but from the active life he led, from the experiences that he had. His military career and his long attachment to the court are no doubt responsible for the frequent appearance of game imagery in his verse. Metaphors drawn from archery, bowls, and tennis are found again and again in his works. Similarly, he often uses his knowledge of card playing, especially in images that make concrete the hazards of life. He talks of the unsuspected trump that captures the seemingly all-powerful ace or the constant struggle to see who wins the pack. It is no wonder, considering the length of time

534 A pleasant Discourse of Court and Wars, sig. A3.
Churchyard spent at court and war, that he became familiar with the diversions found there. And the concreteness of sports and games would clearly appeal to a literal man like Churchyard. There is little of the abstract in him, and it is natural that his imagery should display little of the reflective quality found in more imaginative and intellectual writers.

Many of the quotations used in the previous chapters show how regularly Churchyard drew analogies from battles, military exercises, and the like. In the works dealing with warfare, it is natural to find such language used. But given Churchyard's background, it is also natural to find his martial language spilling over into his non-military writings. A case in point is an acrostic poem appearing in the Charge entitled "Written to a vertuous gentlewoman, whose name is in the verses." The poem is twenty-two lines long, but another version containing only the first twelve lines appears in The Arundel Harington Manuscript of Tudor Poetry.\(^\text{535}\) No substantive differences exist in the parallel lines of the separate versions. The gentlewoman's name, according to the acrostic, is Dampport.

\(^{535}\)Ruth Hughey, ed., The Arundel Harington Manuscript of Tudor Poetry (Columbus, 1960), I, 279.
(Charge) or Dampporwt (AH); and in the poem Churchyard pleads his suit to her. He speaks of a battle between hope and fear raging in his head and hopes that with good luck peace will come. The added lines in the Charge consist for the most part of imagery drawn directly from warfare. Churchyard maintains that no man-made fort can withstand "poulders force and Connon blast," but that with the lady his ammunition is faith and "the ladder for to scale the walls, is trothe." Mistress Dampport is referred to as the captain of the fort, which can be won only by the "pelletts" of faith and the ladder of "trothe."

The final lines are these:

With Ensigne spred, and battrie set, I hope to make a breache,
And trust to winne by suite at length, that now is past my reache.536

The spread banner and ready battery do not seem to fit the diplomatic approach the last line speaks of, but it is perhaps a case of the imagery breaking down.

In addition to extensive use of images related to military actions, much of Churchyard's writing relies on imagery associated with country life. A false friendship

536Charge, sig. D3. Churchyard's imagery may have been inspired by Sir Thomas Wyatt's sonnet that begins: The long love that in my thought doth harbor, And in my heart doth keep his residence, Into my face presseth with bold pretense And there encampeth, spreading his banner.
may be likened to a barren tree or a dried-up well. For Churchyard, the best of men live in the stern mountain land, or as he says, "And neere the Skye, growes sweetest fruit in deede." Conversely,

On marrish meares and watrie mossie ground,
Are rotten weedes, and rubbish drosse vnsound.

Plants and flowers, birds and animals, rivers and hills, all appear regularly in Churchyard's work. Though he lived for a long time in the towns, his images reflect little of his experiences there. The sights and sounds of the country that he left as a boy but that he longed for throughout his life provide Churchyard with many of the specific referents of his poetry.

One would expect that the court would have given Churchyard rich material that would color his poetry, but the opposite seems to have happened. To be sure, like many others he refers to Queen Elizabeth as the Phoenix, and his language in praise of her strives for the flowery, but the best lines even in his verses about Queen Elizabeth are those that attack her enemies. Indeed, when

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537 *Worthines of Wales*, sig. M1v.
Churchyard writes about the court, it is likely to be a denunciation of the backbiters and flatterers who breed there. He brings the language of the army camp and the country to bear on the wastrels and timeservers. He chides those who praise their ladies when Queen Elizabeth is the only true model of womanhood. Scornfully, he says they raise their mistresses "as high as Soldiers pike." To those who would doubt Elizabeth's generosity and mercy, he says, "picke your fingers endes," or, "gnaw and bite your thombs." 

Seldom does Churchyard develop an extended image, and when he does the result is not always happy. He reaches his nadir in "A matter touching the Journey of Sir Humfrey Gilbert Knight," a work in poulter's measure written on the occasion of Gilbert's voyage of expedition in 1578. He describes the hardships of shipboard life, 

539 Challenge, sig. Dd4v.
540 Ibid, sig. Ee2v.
541 The Gilbert poem is appended to A Discourse of the Queenes Maiesties entertainment in Suffolk and Norffolk, and occupies sigs. H2-K4. Also in the same volume is "A welcome home to Master Martin Frohisher," which "was written since this Book was put to the Printing, and isyned to the same Booke, for a true testimony of Churchyardes good will, for the furtherance of Mayster Frobushers fame." Sig. Ll.
commenting on the tiresome diet of sailors:

They feede on Bisket hard,
and drincke but simple beere,
Salt beeefe, and Stockfish drie as kecke,
is now their greatest cheere.542

The description of shipboard fare is what one normally expects of Churchyard, an account of facts, and it has interest of a kind. But he extends his remarks on the diet with a rather unpleasant, although undeniably vivid passage on the combination of bad food and rough seas.

And when Seasicke (God wot) they are,
about the Shippe they reele.
And stomacke belcheth vp,
a dish that Hadocks seeks,
A bitter messe of sundry meates
a Sirrope greene as Leeks.543

The clinical details Churchyard adds to his description are mildly revolting, but the comparisons, however accurate, are surely most upsetting. The naturalism is quite unusual for the period.

He leaves the discussion of the marine nausea that is likely to bother Gilbert and his men by saying that they will have to beare "a greater brunt than this." The more trying times facing the sailors are the storms Churchyard

542 Ibid., sig. Kl. "Stockfish" is air-dried and unsalted cod, hake, or haddock. "Kecke" or kex is a hollow stalk of a plant.

543 Ibid.
imagines will plague them. And as soon as the storm is weathered, an enemy man-of-war might attack. When that occurs, a dreadful fight will follow with "shotte as thicke as hayle" and smoke so dense the sea and sky will be blotted out. The encounter will prove disastrous to many:

   Some grone and bidde goodnight,
     their day watch waxeth dimme,
   Some ca not speak their heads are off,
     and some haue lost a limme.
   Some lyes on hatches lame,
     they haue no legges to stand,
   And some haue lost the yse of arme
     or maymed of a hand.544

The first line of this passage has some merit; there is restraint, even a stoic dignity, in likening the sailors' deaths to the ending of their watch. But the remaining lines are grim. Churchyard strains hard for gruesome effect. It is the same kind of realistic description that turned the lines about seasickness into something approaching disgust.

While the poem on Gilbert's journey has examples of the most lurid of Churchyard's imagery, it also shows another aspect of his style that is most attractive: his remarkable ability to enter personally into his composi-

544Ibid., sig. K2.
tions. The verses on Gilbert, as the title-page informs us, were written after the other items in the volume had been sent to the printer. Why they were written so tardily Churchyard tells us in the opening of the poem. He says that he was taking a nap as a solace to the cares of life, when suddenly

Some cause calls up my Muse,
and bids my witts awake,
That downe is layde on quiet Coutch,
a little ease to take.545

The cause that called Churchyard's muse was the proposed journey of Gilbert and his men. Churchyard says that thoughts of the voyage had been going around in his head for some time, but he had been putting off writing. During this nap, however, he had a dream about Gilbert's ships setting out and the perils awaiting them:

But eare my dreame could ende,
a voyce gan call alowde,
Where is Churchyard? Doth he sleepe?
or is he crept in Clowde,
To shunne the vse of penne546
and matter worthy note.

The noise, says Churchyard, made him leap from bed,

And to my Studie dore
in hast therewith I went,

545 Ibid. sig. H2.
546 Ibid. sig. H2v-H3.
As one that fain wold write some thing
    that might the World content.547

The opening of the poem, with the picture of Churchyard's stealing a nap and feeling guilty about it, then rushing from his bed to get something on paper, is amusing. And it is intentionally amusing, moreover, for Churchyard continues to poke fun at himself by saying that before he wrote "one Englishe verse" he called his boyservant and told him to run outside and find some news,

    And learne the troth of every thing,
        that I might shape my Muse
    To please the peoples eares
        with frute of Poets penne.548

Surely this is a giving away the secrets of the trade that seldom is found in poets, but Churchyard's wish to get the facts is typical of the journalist if not the poet. And what begins as a not untypical form of dream poem becomes a humorous dramatic account and a broad self-satire. Sending a servant into the streets to fetch grist for the poetic mill may seem to be a parody of the genesis of an occasional poem, but it is very likely that that is what actually happened.

547Ibid.
548Ibid.
The most enjoyable part of the account is Churchyard's statement that,

*My Lackey had not walkt in Pawles not twentie pasis then,*

before he learned that several of Churchyard's companions at the court had taken leave "and were all Shipte away."

Thus the boy returned in no time at all with the news, causing Churchyard to address him sharply:

*This brute may thee deceyue
Thou foolish Boy (Quoth I).*

Not cowed in the slightest, the youngster faces up to his master and says,

*Nay Sir by sweete Sainct Iohn
(Quoth he) Sir Humfrey Gilbert sure,
and all his troupe is gone.
But whether no man knowes,
saue that they are in Barke.*

Presented with a confirmation of the dream he had been recently roused from, Churchyard knows that the lad's information is accurate, but he finds it necessary to reassert the master-servant relationship and so turns triumphantly on the hapless youngster:

*A ha Sir boy (quoth I)
I knewe this long agoe,
Shut study dore, packe hence a while.*

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After the boy withdraws, Churchyard ponders his dream and the account of it described earlier is given.

The rather detailed scene, complete with dialogue, between Churchyard and his little servant is warmly told and very realistic. Its highly personal quality helps make it much more attractive than the relating of the dream that follows. There is something more in the poem and Churchyard's involvement than the customary first person point-of-view in the usual dream poem. The dream in this poem goes further than the conventional dream device that was seen in *Dauie Dicers Dreame*, for instance, and for humor and self-deprecation is reminiscent of Chaucer's *House of Fame*. It may be that Churchyard learned the technique from Chaucer, for other works by Churchyard show a clear Chaucerian influence, such as the Chaucerian fabliau of "A Tael of a Freer" and the rhymed, octosyllabic couplets of "The Spider and the Gowlt."

In any case, the realistic personal elements found in "A matter touching the Journee of Sir Humfrey Gilbarte Knight" are a feature of Churchyard's style that is not usual for the sixteenth century. And the use of the first person point of view is common in other works by Churchyard. For example, in the same volume that contains the verses
on Gilbert, Churchyard opens "A welcome home to Master Martin Frobusher" with the lines:

Fine hundreth times, most welcome home
my friendes that farre haue bin,
When thousands thought, that all was loste
your fleete came safely in...

O giue me leaue, in English verse
a whyle on this to treat.550

The jubilant personal tone of these lines, as well as the first person parts of speech, puts Churchyard right into the poem. In poems such as the ones above, in the autobiographical "A Tragicall Discourse of the vnhappy mans life," in the war poems, there is no mistaking Churchyard's presence. This quality makes up for many of the defects of his verse. Of the poets in the earlier half of Queen Elizabeth's reign, only Gascoigne rivals Churchyard in use of the highly personal point of view. The similarity is best seen in Gascoigne's "The fruites of Warre," an autobiographical poem included in The Posies of George Gascoigne (1575).551 The running-title of the poem is Dulce Bellum Inexpertis, and its theme is one close to the hearts of soldiers like Churchyard and

550 Ibid., sig. II.

Gascoigne. Because they were not inexpert, they knew well that war was full of unpleasantness. As in "The Siege of Leeth," in which Churchyard did not gloss over the dreariness of combat or the cowardice of soldiers, in "The fruites of Warre" Gascoigne gives a realistic, highly personal account of his experiences in the Low Countries. His work is less sober and serious than Churchyard's. He is more inclined than Churchyard to poke fun at himself. Describing his service, Gascoigne says:

   For I haue seene full many a Flushing fraye,  
   And fleest in Flaunders eke among the rest. 552

And Gascoigne tells of a dangerous march he made from Ardenbrugh to Brussels, but adds winningly, "Yet madde were he that would haue made me knight." Gascoigne, like Churchyard, was often victimized by corrupt paymasters and suffered accordingly. Feelingly, he says, "I lived yet, by God and lacked too." 553 To be sure, both Gascoigne and Churchyard make sententious comments on war and the governing of soldiers that are indistinguishable from any moralist's, but both writers also make highly interesting and enjoyable remarks that tell us a great deal

552 Ibid., I, 160.
553 Ibid., I, 163.
about them as warm-blooded beings. This quality cannot be lightly dismissed. It is a tribute to Churchyard's good sense that he did not try to suppress the lively side of his nature. Yet perhaps he did attempt to and the robust personal note sounds only when Churchyard can no longer contain himself. If he did try to stifle the personal, it is a pity, for the strong personal tone is one of Churchyard's most endearing qualities.

Although the personal quality is most interesting in Churchyard's work, perhaps the most striking characteristic of his style is the great use of alliteration. Of course, in his day the carryover from medieval poetry was common enough. Yet even Churchyard's alliterative titles for his volumes are modest compared with the Grocery Gallery of Gallant Inventions and the Seven Sobs of a Sorrowful Soul for Sin. An extreme example of Churchyard's heavily alliterative verse is a poem called "Of a harde worlde," which appeared in the Chance (1580). In decasyllabic couplets tightly closed, Churchyard utters his perennial complaint:

Hardnesse is hedstrong, and will not be hampred,
Larges straite laced, and Pride to mutche pampred:
Spend all with sparyng, is so well acquainted,
That librall free harts, in shrine maie be saincted.  

\[554\]

\[554\] Chance, sig. F2v.
The dominating alliteration, the rhythm of the lines, and the personification show the influence of medieval verse on Churchyard.

The use of excessive alliteration by Churchyard and others prompted Puttenham to say in *The Arte of English Poesie* (1589):

> Ye haue another manner of composing your metre nothing commendable, specially if it be too much vsed, and is when our maker takes too much delight to fill his verse with wordes beginning all with a letter.555

Puttenham does, however, allow that alliteration used judiciously "doth not ill but pretily becomes the meetre."

Gascoigne has much the same view in his *Certayne Notes of Instruction* (1575). He warns of the overuse of any rhetorical device, especially against excessive alliteration:

> Remembre this old adage, *Ne quid nimis*, as many wryters which do not know the vse of any other figure than that which is expressed in repeticion of sundrie wordes beginning all with one letter, the whiche (beynge modestly vsed) lendeth good grace to a verse, but they do so hunte a letter to death that they make it Crambe, and Crambe bis positum mors est; thurfore *Ne quid Nimis*.556


Another element of Churchyard's style that is strikingly apparent is the regularity of his meter. In both accentuation and syllabification Churchyard is unusually strict. He adheres closely to the iambic measure in almost all of his work. Except for the most heavily accented alliterative poems, where the scansion is governed by the forced stresses on the words used in alliteration, Churchyard's lines display a preponderant pattern of iambic feet. While Churchyard occasionally substitutes a trochee or a pyrrhic foot in the middle of a line, the iambic base meter is steady. No doubt his great concern on this point leads him to begin almost all of his lines with unstressed articles, conjunctions, and adverbs so that the line will be stamped with the ascending rhythm of the iamb. It is this almost obsessive concern for regularity that is at once one of Churchyard's greatest triumphs and one of his most severe limitations.\footnote{Gascoigne's objection in Certayne Note of Instruction to the domination of the iambic line may have been written with Churchyard in mind. Gascoigne says:}

\footnotetext{Commonly now a dayes in English rimes (for I dare not cal them English verses) we vse none other order but a foote of two sillables, wherof the first is depressed or made short, and the second is elevate or made long; and that sound or scanning continueth throughout the verse.... And surely I can lament that wee are fallen into suche a playne and simple manner of wryting, that there is no other foote vsed but one, wherby our Poemes may}
on the one hand, Churchyard's practice brought order to his verse and by doing so provided an example to his contemporaries. He was not haphazard or irregular in his meter as were most poets in the earlier years of the Tudor period. Unfortunately for Churchyard, his powers were not great enough to allow him to experiment with meter. The result is that his verse has a sameness, a monotonous or metronomic quality. Churchyard sacrificed smoothness for consistency. The long lines of the fourteener and poulter's measure add to the tiring effect. His decasyllabic lines are much more pleasurable to read and, as I mentioned earlier, his octosyllabic-poems are often sprightly and enjoyable. But the very regularity of Churchyard's meter may have helped to establish the iambic line as a norm which led to the magnificent variations employed later by the great poets at the end of the century. Perhaps it was recognition of Churchyard's orderliness and solid craftsmanship that led Nashe to praise the older poet: "I loue you unfainedly and admire your aged Muse, that may well be grandmother to our grandeloquent-est Poets at this Present."558

Churchyard's verse is also characterized by the heavy emphasis on the caesura. The caesura falls usually between the second and third feet of a pentameter line and is indicated by a comma, even though the comma frequently interferes with the sense of the poem. When C. S. Lewis reprinted Churchyard's lines "Among the Dames, of faire Dianas traine," he edited out the commas and improved the flow of the verse. But Churchyard is consistent in his practice of sharply defining the break in the line. In one of his earliest poems, *A Myrrour for man* (ca. 1552), every line has a comma exactly in the middle of each pentameter. Churchyard abandons that extremely rigid form in his later work; but whenever the lines exceed octosyllables, the comma is present to announce the caesura. In poems written in poulter's measure, the comma is between the third and fourth feet of the alexandrine and the fourth and fifth feet of the fourteener that follows. Sometimes the break is made even more pronounced by separating the half-lines by additional spacing, as in *A pleasant Discourse of Court and Wars*:

> Wars wisely made, Brings triumph to the towne,  
> Sends victors out, to fetch great wealth from far,  
> Keepes kings in seat, giues honor to the crowne,  
> And no great fame, is found where is no war.\(^{559}\)

\(^{559}\) *A pleasant Discourse of Court and Wars*, sig. C3.
The same exaggerated division is found also in *The Fortunate Farewell to Essex* (1599). Perhaps Churchyard's overuse, one might say the abuse, of the sharp caesura is one reason why modern readers find Churchyard tiresome. The abrupt halt, often between subject and verb, leads frequently to disjointed and choppy reading.

But if Churchyard is rigid in meter, he is flexible in rhyme scheme. The most common rhyme is the couplet, which appears in octosyllable and decasyllable lines as well as in poulter's measure and fourteeners. Frequently, however, the poulter's measure and fourteeners are printed in ballad stanzas. A stanzaic form Churchyard often uses is the *rime royal*. It seems to have been his favorite, perhaps because of its use by Chaucer. Churchyard has a few poems in the *Venus and Adonis* stanza, a sestet with a rhyme scheme ababcc. He uses a nine-line stanza that rhymes like a Spenserian stanza but lacks the final alexandrine. Another stanzaic form is a linking of two ballad stanzas in an octave rhyming ababcdcd. He also uses a curious eleven-line stanza rhyming ababccded with a prevailing iambic pentameter except for the couplet in the ninth and tenth lines that is in dimeter. Some poems have no discoverable pattern of rhymes; that is to
say, the rhyme abounds but it appears in irregular mixtures of quatrains, sestets, septets, and octaves within the same poem. C. S. Lewis comments sourly that Churchyard "invents some rhyme schemes (bad ones) of his own." Curiously, Churchyard never uses the fourteen-line sonnet in any form, although one would expect that his admiration for Surrey and Sidney and his attraction to diverse forms would have led Churchyard to try his hand at it.

Churchyard's manipulation of rhyme schemes may be regarded as a serious attempt at experimentation with his poems. But he also indulged in what can be called toying with his verse. We have seen an example of an acrostic poem with the name of Mistress Damportt embedded in the beginning of the lines. He also addressed an acrostic poem to Archbishop Parker. But the most extravagant examples of Churchyard's poetic play are his trick poems. There is one in the Challenge having as its title only, "This is to be red fiue waies."561

560 Lewis, op. cit., p. 265.
561 Challenge, sigs. Ff1v-Ff2.
The poem is in praise of Queen Elizabeth, referring to her as the Phoenix, and is made up of eleven fourteener couplets. The first few lines will illustrate how the poem works:

In hat a fauour wore, a bird of gold in Britain land,
In loyall heart is borne, yet doth on head like Phenix stand:
To set my Phenix forth, whose vertues may the al surmount,
An orient pearle more worth, in value price &
good account,
The gold or precious stone, what tong or verse dare her distain.
A peerelesse paragon, in whom such gladsome gifts remaine.562

The poem can be read in at least five ways, as Churchyard says in the title, and it seems to read as well one way as another. First of all, the poem can be read in the normal fashion. Second, the half-lines before the caesura can be read as couplets. Third, the half-lines after the caesura can be read as couplets. Fourth, the couplets can be joined in this fashion:

In hat a fauour wore,
In loyall heart is borne,
A bird of gold in Britain land,
Yet doth on earth like Phenix stand.

562Ibid., sig. Ff1v.
Fifth, the whole poem can be read backwards as well. The last four lines, in reverse order, are as follows:

Loe this is all I write, of sacred Phenix ten times blest,
To shew mine own delite, as fancies humour thinketh best.
And shew what heauenly grace, and noble secret power diuine,
Is seene in Princely face, that kind hath formd & fram'd so fine. 563

Churchyard published another poem of the trick variety in A Handful of Gladsome Verses (1592). The occasion was Queen Elizabeth's progress to Woodstock in that year and the subject was the same as in the poem cited just above: "Verses of variety to all those that honors the onely Phoenix of the worlde, which verses are but xx. lines and hath in them ten waies, find out the same who pleaseth." 564 The "Verses of Variety" can indeed be read many ways with about the same poetic results as in the poem that could be read only five ways. Of course, one cannot expect to find much literary merit in what are essentially word puzzles. Certainly Churchyard's efforts compare favora-

563 Ibid., sig. Ff2.

564 A Handful of Gladsome Verses, giuen to the Queenes Maiesty at Woodstock this Prograce (1592), sig. C2v.
bly with other trick poems that were published in the late sixteenth century.565

But if in themselves the trick poems are not much, they do illustrate an important point about Churchyard. Even toward the end of his career, he was willing to try out every poetic fashion that is within his range.

565 Thomas Lodge's *A Margarite of America* contains an involved trick poem which shows how far the writers of the period would go to stay with the fashion. Lodge's poem can be read seven ways, as the directions indicate.

**Complaint.**

1 3 2 Teares, cares, wrongs, griefe feele I, 1 1 3 2
2 2 1 Wo, frownes, scorne, crafts nil l cease, 4 2 4 1
3 1 4 Yeares, months, daies, howers do cease, 3 3 1 4
4 4 3 Fro mee away flieth peace: 2 4 2 3
1 Opprest I liue (alas) vnhappily, 2
2 Rest is exilde, scornde, plagde, 1
thus am I.

**Answers.**

1 3 2 Mend her, or change fond thought, 1 1 3 2
2 2 1 Minde her, then and thy minde, 4 2 4 1
3 1 4 Ende thee will sorrow sought, 3 3 1 4
4 4 3 Kinde if thou art: too blinde, 2 4 2 3
1 Such loue flieth farre, lest thou perceiue and proue 2
2 Much sorow, grief, care, sighing, breeds 1
such loue.

And the survey of his style in this chapter shows how broad Churchyard's interests are, how diverse his techniques, and how conscious he is of his craft.

Sooner or later when anyone writes about Churchyard, something is said about his orthography. (I touched on it in Chapter I.) Quite obvious to any reader is the fact that sixteenth-century spelling followed no hard and fast rules. There were, however, some observers who felt there existed some limitations on spelling habits. Puttenham, for example, devotes a chapter to "vntrue orthographie," a fault he finds "vsuall with rude rimers who obserue not precisely the rules of prosodie." But despite Puttenham's remarks, it is true that Churchyard wrote at a time when almost everybody spelled in a somewhat singu-

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566 The Arte of Poesie, p. 94 (Book II, Chapter IX). Puttenham singled out the older English poets for their disregard of spelling. He says:

For a licentious maker is in truth but a bungler and not a poet. Such men were in effect the most part of all your old rimers and specially Gower, who to make vp his rime would for the most part write his termi­nant sillary with false orthographie, and many times not sticke to put in a plaine French word for an English, and so by your leaue do many of our common rimers at this day: as he that by all likelyhood, hauing no word at hand to rime to this word ioy he made his other verse ende in Roy saying very impudently thus, 

O mightie Lord of loue, dame Venus onely ioy  
Who art the highest God of any heauenly Roy.  
Which word was neuer yet receiued in our language for an English word. Such extreme licentiousnesse is ytterly to be banished from our schooles, and better
lar fashion. Even so, Churchyard has gained a reputation of being more singular than most. John Payne Collier in his edition of the *Chippes* has this to say:

We might have entertained a higher opinion of him, if he had not adopted, almost from the first, a peculiar spelling, often annoying to modern eyes, and rather indicating (like the wearing of a peculiar hat or coat in our own day) the absence of more important claims to notice.\(^{567}\)

Collier's view is harsh, but it would have been more harsh if he had seen Churchyard's spelling before it was modified by the printing houses. Muriel St. Clare Byrne in an article on Churchyard's spelling argues convincingly, based on a reading of his manuscript letters, that Churchyard's words were "normalized" before the works were published, although some spellings did manage to find their way into print.\(^{568}\) A letter to Edward Seymour, second Earl of Hertford, asking for help in solving a dowry dispute illustrates Churchyard's manuscript spelling. The letter is addressed "To the right honorable his syngular & especyall good lord the earll off Harttfford gyfe theas

\[\text{it might haue bene borne with in old riming writers, bycause they liued in a barbarous age, and were graue morall men but very homely Poets.} \quad \text{(p. 95)}\]


\(^{568}\) Muriel St. Clare Byrne, "Thomas Churchyard's Spelling," *The Library*, 4th series, V (June, 1924—March, 1925) 243-248.
with all possible speed."^\textsuperscript{569} One of the sentences in the letter shows the singularity even more graphically:

> My good lord I do smell out myicious practice of murder or yeel dealings which I would prevent & avoyd not only for my own safety but also for my wives porcyon & benefytt.^\textsuperscript{570}

Some of the poems in the Arundel Harington Manuscript of Tudor Poetry show a similar doubling of consonants and preference for "\textit{y}" instead of "\textit{i}," but Churchyard's spelling is at least as wayward as the most irregular of the time. Even to his contemporaries, Churchyard's spelling was cause for comment. In a marginal note to Churchyard's poem commending Barnaby Rich's \textit{Alarum to England} (1578), the printer states: "His orthographie and manner of writing observed." Churchyard probably insisted on it in this case. Interestingly enough, the easygoing orthography of the printer in the short note shows that there was leeway in sixteenth-century spelling habits, although perhaps not enough leeway to accommodate Churchyard.

Charles Rahter's edition of the \textit{Challenge} makes an interesting comparison in regard to the differences in spelling in the versions of "Sir Simon Burley's Tragedy"

\footnote{\textsuperscript{569} The letter is transcribed in J. E. Jackson, "Thomas Churchyard," \textit{Notes & Queries}, 5th series, VIII (October 27, 1877), 331.}
\footnote{\textsuperscript{570} \textit{Ibid.}}
appearing in the *Chippes* (1575) and the *Challenge* (1593). According to Rahter, the ten pieces in the *Challenge* that were reprinted from the *Chippes* show that "the spelling of the printing houses moved toward modern practices in the interval of some twenty years."

To illustrate this shift, he provides a list of spelling variants between the editions: suer-sure; blud-blood; sier-sire; baed-bad; appuls-apples; hiest-highest; goet-gote [got]; tewtor-tutor; fyen-fine. The list could easily be extended. But even in the very early published works of Churchyard it is difficult to find words spelled quite as freely as those in the letter to Edward Seymour.

Another striking feature of Churchyard's verse is its reliance on proverbial expressions. Often he strings several proverbs together to hammer home the point being made. In "Burley's Tragedy," for example, Churchyard has his central figure inveigh against the enormity of error that follows after a bond of loyalty is broken. One wicked act leads to another, or as Burley says:

> For faith once stainde, seekes straight for starting holes,  
> As prisers doe, that hath their promise broke;  
> The seames once ript, of shue farewell the soles;  
> The oxe set free, will seeke to shonne the yoke;

The chimney bruste, the house is full of smoke;
The sleuce drawen vppe, downe driues the dregs
and all;
The strongest tript, the weakest needs must
fall.\textsuperscript{572}

Just in case the reader fails to grasp the meaning of the
verses, Churchyard says in a marginal note to the stanza:
"Where faith is broken all abuses enters and falles to
fond attemptes." The use of a barrage of adages is common
in Churchyard's longer poems, especially in the tragedies
but also in other narratives. Sometimes Churchyard begins
his epitaphs with a series of proverbial sentences, as in
his epitaph to the Earl of Worcester:

No day so cleere, but brings at length darke night,
Faire flowers doe fade, as fast as they doe groe:
No torch nor lampe, but burnes away their light:\textsuperscript{573}
Sunne shines awhile, then vnder clowde doth goe.

The device was not unfashionable for the times and was a
favorite of Shakespeare and Spenser, although by the end
of the century it was seen for what it was. In Othello,
for instance, after Othello and Desdemona defend their
marriage to the Venetian Senate (II,ii), the Duke at-
ttempts to reconcile Brabantio to the fact. The Duke
speaks four consecutive couplets, each to the effect that

\textsuperscript{572}Chippes, sig. G4\textsuperscript{V}.
\textsuperscript{573}A Feast full of sad cheere, sig. Bl.
it is foolish to cry over spilt milk. Brabantio mocks the Duke's effort in answering couplets. Similarly, the sententious quality of Polonius' speech helps to define his character. For Churchyard, however, the repetition of proverbial expressions is a favorite technique and one that he uses throughout his career.

Earlier in this chapter I pointed out that Churchyard is at his most delightful when he is most personal. The tone of his writing then is lively and individual: the tone reflects his moods—humorous, bitter, gay, sad. But usually the personal element is submerged. The result is that the bulk of his work is presented in a tone that is properly moralistic, hortatory, admonitory. No doubt the reliance on proverbs tends to sober his style and block the natural expression that he quite clearly possesses. But there is also no question that for Churchyard the aim of poetry was not to give an outlet to the inner drives of the poet. Rather the end of poetry was that it should provide instruction and value to the reader; a lesson was to be taught and a moral to be drawn. Churchyard's topics are largely serious in nature—the rebuke of rebels, the hardships of war, the uncertainty of life, the glory of England. Thus it is natural that the tone of most of his
work should be grave and serious. Even so, the warmth and humor of "The Spider and the Gowt" and the "Freer and the Shoemakers wyef" show the other side of Churchyard. Those poems especially and portions of others that we have seen also argue that Churchyard was well aware of the importance of tone in his works. He was serious as the subject demanded and light-hearted on other occasions. In a word, he was conscious of the principle of decorum and in accord with the belief that poetry was to instruct as well as delight.
CHAPTER V
ASSESSMENT

After seeing the nature and scope of Churchyard's works, how is he to be judged? The easy way out is to dismiss him as yet another of the ballad-mongers spawned by the sixteenth-century demands for reading material of any kind. As far as Churchyard's contemporary reputation is concerned, we have seen that Gabriel Harvey had scorn for him. But Harvey's friend, the great Spenser, had more sympathy for Churchyard. His description of him in Colin Clouts Come Home Again implies that age and labor wore Churchyard out:

And there is old Palemon, free from spight,
Whose carefull pipe may make the hearer rew:
Yet he himself may rewed be more right,
That sung so long untill quite hoarse he grew. 574

Spenser's remark suggests, at least, that at one time Churchyard's verse had music and power. Nashe's admiration for Churchyard's "aged Muse, that may well be grandmother to our grandeloquentest Poets" is not light praise, although it might well have been an exaggeration on the

574 Colin Clouts Come Home Again, 11. 396-399. Churchyard admits he is Palemon by referring to himself as "one whose voice is hoarse they say." Cherrishing, sig. Bl. 317
young writer's part and more owing to Churchyard's years than to the merits of his poetry.

Churchyard as poet was also referred to by other contemporaries. William Webbe in his Discourse of English Poetrie (1586) includes Churchyard among English poets who possessed "severall gifts and aboundant skyll shewed forth by them in many pretty and learned workes." But perhaps too much should not be made of such a notice. In many of the Elizabethan essays on poetry, there appear long lists of names of writers of all kinds. Even Gabriel Harvey, who from his letters we know had little respect for Churchyard, includes Churchyard in his enumeration of English authors. Linking him with writers like Heywood, Tusser, Gascoigne, Whetstone, and Daniel, Harvey finds in their writings "many things are commendable, diuers things notable, somethings excellent." Furthermore, Webbe's inclusion of Churchyard in his numbering of poets is likely to have been based on Churchyard's contributions to The Paradise of Dainty Devices: no. 23, "He persuadeth his


friend, from the fond effectes of loue," and no. 101 (with the almost identical heading) "He perswadeth his friend, from the fond Affectes of loue." Hyder Rollins in his edition of *The Paradise* says that "in William Webbe's *Discourse of English Poetrie* (1586)...Webbe was obviously writing with his eye on the *Paradise*," and the writers Churchyard is grouped with all appear in the *Paradise*. Francis Meres in his *Palladis Tamia* (1598) may perhaps have been doing no more than following the *Paradise* in regard to Churchyard when he lists him with the august names of Surrey, Wyatt, Sidney, Ralegh, Spenser, and Shakespeare as "these are the most passionate among vs to bewaile and bemoane the perplexities of loue," since Churchyard did not actually write much poetry bewailing love. It is ironic that in his own day Churchyard should have been praised for works that are least characteristic of him and are of least interest to the modern reader. For if Churchyard is to be praised, it is not as a poet awake to the sensitivities of love.

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Churchyard does deserve our consideration, however, as an important figure in the growth of realism in English literature. Most of his poetry is grounded firmly in concrete events: autobiographical incidents, military exploits, royal progresses, deaths of important personages, and items from the historical chronicles. What Churchyard experienced formed the substance of his verse. Churchyard's prose is even more tightly tied to happenings of a factual nature. The writing of romances was alien to him. His prose is concerned largely with the occurrences of his day that commanded his interest or the interest of his readers. Just as much of his poetry recounts the hazards of war, so a great quantity of Churchyard's prose treats of fighting, battle tactics, and military history. It is not amiss to think of him as a bridge between the belles litteres attitude to literature exemplified by Lyly and Lodge and the quasi-journalistic attitude exemplified by such writers as Dekker, Deloney, Greene, and, later on, Defoe. In Churchyard there is the germ of the writer of experience who would later rival the writer of imagination. Churchyard's work, as we have seen, is based on his observations and reactions to the events of his life. He does not probe the innermost thoughts of his characters, nor does he create an imaginative setting in which to display their actions.
Wide reading of Churchyard makes one react less to his writing than to him as a man. Seldom is one struck with the force of Churchyard's imagery or the keen quality of his perception. But one is constantly aware of the human being responsible for the writing. Churchyard emerges as a man sorely beset by a variety of troubles, and his response to them shows clearly in his writing. His personal involvement is what distinguishes him from so many other writers. Thus it is perhaps just to conclude that present-day interest in Churchyard is likely to be more of moment to the student of the history of the times than to anyone seeking literary gratification. This is by no means a secondary or unimportant consideration, for a knowledge of Churchyard is of great value in putting the rest of his age in perspective. He functions actually like a mirror and reflects many of the concerns, aspirations, and changes that surrounded him and the others who lived and struggled and wrote during the years of Queen Elizabeth's reign. It would be absurd, and dishonest as well, to claim for Churchyard greater merit than is his due. As clearly as any, Churchyard knew his limitations, knew the modest share of glory that was his own. In a poem he composed for the Challenge, written at a time when he
expected his days soon to end, he assesses himself with characteristic truthfulness and modesty:

A little Lamp may not compare with Starre
A feeble head where no great gifts doo grow:
Yeelds vnto skill, whose Knowledge makes smal shew.
Then gentle world I sweetly thee beseech:
Call Spenser now the spirit of learned speech. 579

Churchyard wrote during a very significant period of English history and literature: during the transformation of England from a troubled monarchy to a stable nation, during the growth of English literature from post-medieval blight to Renaissance flowering. In a writing career of over half a century, Churchyard published forty-odd works, ranging in length from broadside ballads to three hundred page anthologies. His work also appeared in three of the earliest collections of English poetry: Tottel's Miscellany (1557), The Mirror for Magistrates (1563), and The Paradise of Dainty Devices (1576). His subject matter was similarly wide-reaching: satires, tragedies, descriptions of battles, voyages, and sieges, translations, epitaphs, fables. In his own age he was not without admirers.

I do not claim for Churchyard poetic greatness, nor that the majority of his work is even good poetry. In his

579 Challenge, sig. xxv.
declining years especially he wrote some downright bad verses. In Colin Clouts Come Home Again Spenser, with considerable truth, comments on Churchyard's decline. But good or bad, Churchyard left a large body of poetry and prose and was, I submit, an important figure in the growth of realism and professional letters in the sixteenth century.

When dealing with a minor figure, there is always the danger of special pleading to puff up the importance of the subject. There is also the reverse failing, akin to the breaking of a butterfly on a wheel. With Churchyard I have sought neither to magnify his virtues nor enlarge his defects. If he sometimes fails to please as a writer, he always satisfies as a man. That might well stand as his own epitaph.
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