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THE POLITICAL CAREER OF SIR HENRY NEVILLE:
AN ELIZABETHAN GENTLEMAN AT THE COURT OF JAMES I

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate
School of the Ohio State University

By

Owen Lowe Duncan, Jr., B.A., A.M.

* * * * *

The Ohio State University

1974

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In July of 1612 Sir Henry Neville, a Berkshire gentleman, rode out to Windsor Forest to join King James I on the hunt. Neville loved to hunt, and was in addition Keeper of the Forest, but he pursued the King neither for pleasure nor for mundane duty. He sought instead to become a maker of royal policy. There in the forest, Neville proposed to James that he had sufficient understanding of parliamentary matters and sufficient support among the parliamentary opposition to gain passage of the King's legislation and funding of his government from the House of Commons. For Neville to accomplish this, he required of James a few reforms in government policy, and his own appointment to the office of First Secretary vacated in May by the death of Robert Cecil, Earl of Salisbury. In this audacious proposal Neville suggested that James give up the King's traditional power to appoint men to office out of personal affection, and that instead he should accept men who could provide him parliamentary majorities. Neville sought to repudiate the means to power through royal favor used in the previous century by ministers from Wolsey to Burleigh, and in so doing he became the first man to anticipate the system of cabinet responsibility to the people through Parliament used in England today.

James rejected Neville's proposals for a variety of reasons, and in 1614 Neville's enemies, led by the Earl of Northampton, distorted his program into a plot to manage Parliament in the King's behalf.
Thus, his plan became the basis for the furor over the infamous "undertaking" incident which did much to cause the early dissolution of the Addled Parliament. Neville died shortly thereafter, on the 10th of July, 1615, still much respected by his contemporaries, but generally unnoticed or misunderstood by historians.

In this dissertation, I shall seek to explain in the life and career of Sir Henry Neville those factors that led him to Windsor Forest in 1612, and that provided him the ingenuity and the audacity to put forth his plan. In addition, I shall seek to correct certain misunderstandings of Neville's intentions caused by historians who have dealt with Neville as a sidelight to the development of other stories.

It is, of course, impossible to acknowledge everyone who has contributed to the completion of this dissertation. In general, I wish to thank the staffs of the libraries of the British Museum, the Public Record Office, the Berkshire Record Office, the Ohio State University, and Simpson College for their assistance.

But there are a few individuals without whose support this work literally could not have been done. The first of these is my friend and colleague at Simpson College, Dr. Bruce Haddox, who sacrificed many evenings eliminating wasted words and misdirected ideas from the text, and who provided assurance that the project could and should be done during the last long and trying months.

In addition, I wish to thank especially my adviser, Dr. Clayton Roberts, who introduced me to Sir Henry Neville, and who exemplifies for
me the best of the liberal arts tradition as a scholar, as a concerned individual, and as a personal friend.

My special thanks to my wife Karen, who typed the manuscripts, for her patience, love, and understanding, and to my daughters Amy and Lora for making it all worthwhile.

Finally, I wish to dedicate this dissertation to my father, who died on the 19th of August, 1973, and for whom it was always intended.
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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PREFACE</td>
<td></td>
<td>ii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VITA</td>
<td></td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I.</td>
<td>THE NEVILLE LEGACY</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II.</td>
<td>EDUCATION AND APPRENTICESHIP</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III.</td>
<td>AMBASSADOR TO FRANCE: YOUTHFUL HOPES</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV.</td>
<td>AMBASSADOR TO FRANCE: DISILLUSIONMENT</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V.</td>
<td>A VICTIM OF VAULTING AMBITION</td>
<td>151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI.</td>
<td>THE COURTIER IN OPPOSITION</td>
<td>182</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII.</td>
<td>THE ABORTIVE UNDERTAKING</td>
<td>226</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONCLUSION</td>
<td></td>
<td>271</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td></td>
<td>276</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter One

THE NEVILLE LEGACY

To be born a Neville in Tudor England was an invitation to greatness---and to tragedy. This was true in the sixteenth century as it had been for five hundred years before. The first Neville, Gilbert, had come to England in 1066, an admiral in the service of William the Conqueror. Gilbert proved prolific, as did his progeny, and the later middle ages provide one instance after another of the influence of the family of Neville. They served as advisers to English kings. They became great nobles of the realm and chief prelates in the church. Sir Henry's ancestor Ralph, sixth Baron Neville of Raby, for example, earned the title of Earl of Westmorland by helping Richard II avenge himself on the family of Gloucester. But within two years he had turned against Richard and become one of the first English lords to join Henry, Earl of Derby, in his successful campaign to gain the throne as Henry IV. He then helped that king put down the rebellion of Hotspur and the Percies and thus became the most powerful figure in the north of England.¹ Twice married, the first Earl of Westmorland produced twenty-three children, nine by his first wife and fourteen by his second. His second marriage, to Joan Beaufort, daughter of John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, brought royal blood into the family. Much of his patrimony was diverted to this younger line, from whence the Nevilles of Billingbear sprang. The youngest of all his children,

¹ *Dictionary of National Biography*, XIV, 277.
Cicely, married Richard Plantagenet, Duke of York, and became mother to two English kings (not to mention a king of Bohemia): Edward IV and Richard III. The sixth and youngest son of this second marriage, Edward, has generally been lost to the historian amidst the squabbling of this numerous brood in the fifteenth century, yet he became the first Lord Abergavenny and established a pedigree unparalleled among the English nobility. It continues to this day. The first Lord Abergavenny was Sir Henry Neville's great-great grandfather. The first Lord had a son and grandson, both named George, who became the second and third Barons Abergavenny respectively. Sir Henry's grandfather, Edward, who died in 1538, was the son of the elder George and brother to the younger. Thus, as late as the reign of Henry VIII the Nevilles, both as Earls of Westmorland and Lords Abergavenny were prominent, but in the reformation religious and political blunders nearly led to the destruction of both.

The Westmorlands remained conservative. Ralph, the fourth Earl, avoided involvement in the pilgrimage of grace and so survived Henry VIII's reign. His son, Henry, the fifth Earl, flouted his Catholicism when Mary came to the throne, participated in her coronation, and functioned during her reign in the differing roles of general and

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2Daniel Rowland of Frant, An Historical and genealogical account of the noble family of Nevill, particularly of the house of Abergavenny, and also a history of the old land barony of Abergavenny...(London, 1830), p. 4.

3DNB, XIV, 249.

4DNB, XIV, 257.
ecclesiastical commissioner. But his heir, Charles, the sixth Earl, proved less fortunate. He married into the Howard family and became involved, along with the Earl of Northumberland, in correspondence with the Spanish ambassador. The government's discovery of their activities in 1569 forced their hands, and they launched an unsuccessful effort to free Mary, Queen of Scots. Having failed, Westmorland fled first to Scotland and then to the Spanish Netherlands, where he spent the last thirty years of his life at Louvain, "a person utterly wasted by looseness of life and God's punishment." In 1571 he was formally attainted, his lands returned to the crown, and the title Westmorland slipped forever from the Neville family.

The Abergavenny branch of the Neville family took a different tack in religion, but very nearly met the same fate. The career of George, the third Baron Abergavenny (d. 1535) might have proven especially instructive to his great-nephew, Henry Neville of Billingbear. He had been a favorite of Henry VII, had joined him in fighting the Cornish rebels in 1497, and had served as chief larderer in the king's household, a duty he also performed at the coronation of Henry VIII. With much land in Sussex and Kent and with numerous retainers, he gained the favor of Henry VIII, whom he served as general in the expedition to France in 1513. He was Warden of the Cinque Ports and a Knight of the Garter. Ultimately, he rose to membership in the King's Privy Council. Then in 1521 he learned that his father-in-law, Buckingham, was plotting against the King. He apparently remained

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5 *DNB*, XIV, 278.  
6 *DNB*, XIV, 246.
loyal and opposed the rebels, but he was imprisoned from May of 1521 to March of 1522 for misprision of treason. Though pardoned on the 29th of March 1522, "he left his feathers behind him," and apparently never fully regained the trust of the King. 7

But if the third Baron Abergavenny lost the confidence of the King, he did avoid the fate of his brother, Sir Edward Neville, who was Sir Henry Neville's grandfather. This man was a proper knight to serve a young renaissance prince. Already important at Court in the reign of Henry VII, he became one of the boon companions of Henry VIII in the innumerable rounds of parties, dances, and hunts that attended the early years of Henry's reign. The military arts of a waning medieval era were Edward Neville's stock in trade; he was doubtless an enthusiastic participant in the numerous jousts and tournaments of the first ten years of Henry's reign, culminating in the famous confrontation on the field of the Cloth of Gold at the Court of Francis I. Both Edward and George were present on that auspicious occasion. But what pleased the palate of the renaissance court shocked the sensibilities of the more sober sort.

(T)hey were all French in eating, drinking, and apparel, yea, and in French vices and brags, so that all the estates of England were by them laughed at, the ladies and gentlewomen were dispraised; so that nothing of them was praised, but if it were after the French turn; which after turned them to displeasure as you shall hear. 8

Even Henry began to have second thoughts as the years passed and God's

7 DNB, XIV, 257.
judgment, expressed in the failure of Catherine of Aragon to produce a live male heir, became more apparent. Thus, in 1519 Henry decided to turn over a new leaf. He promised a general reform of the government and the adoption of a more serious attitude. He supported his promise by a purge of the more boisterous of his courtiers, including Sir Edward, who presumably went into brief exile in France. But within a few months he regained the court, only to become even more involved with Buckingham's rebellion than was his brother George. This indiscretion resulted in another brief exile from the court in 1521. Somehow he regained favor, holding a command in the army in France in 1524 and serving as the king's standard bearer in 1531. In 1532 he participated in the coronation of Anne Boleyn and in 1537 in the baptism of Prince Edward. This series of favors, combined with Neville's physical similarity to the King, led to patently false rumors that Sir Edward was Henry VIII's illegitimate son. Yet by his political...
incapacity Sir Edward squandered whatever personal affection the King might have had for him, and in 1538 he finally exhausted Henry's patience by entering into the Exeter conspiracy.

A group of western nobility, including Edward Neville and George Neville's son-in-law, Lord Montague, had gathered around Henry Courtenay, Earl of Exeter. Exeter, a grandson of Edward IV, was heir to the throne should the Tudor line be destroyed. The antagonism of these men to the rise of Thomas Cromwell to pre-eminence about the King had been encouraged by Chapuys, the Spanish ambassador, and by Cardinal Reginald Pole, leader of the English Catholics. The involvement of this group in the Pilgrimage of Grace of 1536 would have been a formidable threat to Henry VIII, and may have been avoided only by the premature death of George Neville in 1535. Lord Montague wrote in 1536, "I am sorry the Lord Abergavenny is dead, for if he were alive, he were able to make ten thousand men." In 1538 it was not really clear that there was a formal conspiracy at all, though there was much rash and threatening talk. Sir Edward Neville, for example, purportedly said that he "would

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his cap in his hand." The person to whom he offered the chair was Sir Edward Neville, a comelie Knight, that much more resembled the king's person in that mask than any other. The King perceiving the Cardinal so deceived, could not forbear laughing, and pulled down his visor and Master Neville's too." Notes and Queries (1st series), ii, 307; W. B. Boswell-Stone, Shakespeare's Holinshed, the Chronicles and the Historical Plays Compared (London, 1896; reprint, New York, 1966), p. 445.

have a day upon the knaves that were about the King," and "that the King was a beast, and worse than a beast." It was further reported that Sir Edward was "machinating and conspiring to extinguish the love and affection of the King's subjects."\(^\text{13}\)

A Tudor court of law needed none of the evidence that a modern court requires to show that the defendants had actually sought to carry out their threats against the King. After all, the Pilgrimage of Grace was still a vivid memory, and there was a real fear that Reginald Pole might be successful in his efforts to persuade Charles V to invade England. The Treasons Act of 1534 provided that

\[
\text{any person or persons (who) do maliciously wish, will or desire by words or writing, or by craft imagine, invent, practice or attempt any bodily harm to be done or committed to the King's most royal person, the Queen's or their heirs' apparent, or to deprive them or any of them of their dignity, title or name of their royal estates, or slanderously and maliciously publish and pronounced, by express writing or words, that the King our sovereign lord should be heretic, schismatic, tyrant, infidel or usurper of the crown...} \quad \text{14}
\]

Under this act the defendants were clearly guilty, and they suffered the ultimate penalty. Whether intentionally or not, Henry had, as he had once threatened, wiped out the remainder of the heirs of the White Rose, and in so doing he had devastated one branch of the Neville family. It is hardly surprising that the one survivor among the Exeter conspirators in England was Geoffrey Pole, probably the most guilty. He accepted the opportunity (offered to, and turned down by, his elder

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\(^{13}\)Froude, *History*, III, 334.

brother Montague) to save his own skin by confessing the sins of his fellows.  

What is one to make of these episodes in the Neville family history? One can draw from them instances of extreme loyalty to the monarch and instances of rebellion. One can deduce examples of conservative commitments and examples of radical sympathies. Yet only by the most arbitrary and tortured construction could one argue that this history influenced Sir Henry Neville of Billingbear. But one significant, if obvious, observation must be made. No Neville could consider himself a "mere gentleman." Whatever his political or religious convictions, a Neville had a sense of his family's social rank and past eminence. Proud of his heritage, he would prove loyal to those deserving loyalty; but he would be quick to take offense at any slight. He was likely to react to hostile authority with spirit rather than submission. Sir Henry of Billingbear was no exception. Audacity then, was a family characteristic, earned by generations of contact, friendly and unfriendly, with the high and the mighty, and instilled in younger sons from their birth. But, whereas Sir Henry's grandfather and great-uncle in Henry's reign and his cousins, the Westmorlands, in Elizabeth's reign, turned to the medieval expedient of armed rebellion, the young Sir Henry was raised into a new morality. He grew to manhood in Elizabeth's

England and learned to turn his frustrations into more constructive channels.

No doubt the young Henry Neville was conscious of his family heritage, which must have passed immediately to him from his father, the builder of Billingebear. Sir Francis Bacon's aphorism that "They that are the first raisers of their houses are most indulgent towards their children; beholding them as the continuance not only of their kind but of their work..." applied most appositely to the Nevilles of Billingebear.16

In addition to family pride, Sir Henry Neville inherited from his father of the same name a four-fold legacy: wealth, protestantism, the Cecil connection, and a tradition of public service. In an age in which the slightest mis-step might bring a disaster like that which had destroyed Sir Edward Neville, the elder Sir Henry Neville managed to acquire for his son substantial wealth, concentrated in his Berkshire holdings, but augmented by a fortunate marriage. He had committed himself, in order to protect this land, to the most advanced religious elements in the state and he had taught his son the necessity of maintaining that alliance. In doing all this he had associated himself with like minded men, with Sir Henry Sidney, Sir Nicholas Throckmorton, Sir Henry Killigrew and, most important of all, Sir William Cecil, who earned the closest confidence of the Queen and the title Lord Burghley. Indeed, Sir Henry Neville was not unknown to the Queen

herself. Finally, he pursued a career in local government that presented to his son a model of civic duty, a model that the son would emulate, at a higher level, to the end of his life.

Unfortunately, no shred of correspondence between the father and son has survived: no letters from an errant student asking his father for money, no Polonius-like admonitions from the father to the son traveling on the continent. The only direct evidence of their relationship is the existence of a mural monument, erected by the younger Sir Henry at the parish church of Waltham St. Lawrence, which depicts his father standing and himself, his mother, and his sister Elizabeth kneeling before the patriarch. The inscription reads

Here lieth buried Sir Henry Neville, kt., descended of the Nevilles at Abergavenny, who were a branch of the House of Westmorland, he was (beside martial services) of the privy chamber to King Henry 8 and Edward 6, he died 13 January 1593, issue, He had only by Dame Elizabeth, sole heir to Sir Henry Thwaites, kt. which Dame Elizabeth died, 6th November A., 1573, Dame Frances ( ). And are both here buried with Elizabeth Neville, the eldest daughter. 17

A space remained, apparently for an inscription to the younger Sir Henry to be added by his son. For some reason, none of his sons saw fit to do so.

The son's monument to his father illustrates his awareness of the continuing importance of the Neville family as servants to their prince. It also shows Sir Henry Neville's concern that the cadet branch of the Nevilles be connected with the Westmorland branch. As the epitaph re-

veals, he valued most his father's service as a courtier, a service which he apparently performed well. For Henry VIII, in his will, left 40 to each of his grooms, but "in token of special love and favour" he left to Neville and some other "selected councillors and servants" £100. Neville, as his last service to the King, witnessed his will. 

In the reign of King Edward VI, the elder Sir Henry served in much the same way that his father, Sir Edward, had served the young Henry VIII---as boon companion and entertainer. He became one of ten gentlemen of the privy chamber who acted as personal guard around the King, two of them sleeping in his bed chamber each night.

But the achievement of office during the reign of Edward VI required more than catching the eye of a twelve year old boy. In the Council established by Henry VIII to guide Edward there raged a struggle between Edward Seymour, Earl of Hertford and John Dudley, Earl of Warwick. Neville, along with Sir Henry Sidney, Nicholas Throckmorton, and William Cecil, chose the party of Dudley. Within this group he was one of the few personal friends of the King and thus, apparently, one of the "fanatic enthusiasts" who filled the innocent King's head with the praises of Dudley. In so doing he joined the powerful phalanx of able and dangerous men whose interest committed them to the Reformation---those who had shared, or hoped to share, in the spoils of the Church or the

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18 Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Henry VIII, Part II, p. 634.


20 Froude, History, VI, 375; Markham, Edward VI, pp. 168-9.
State—those who had divided among them the forfeited estates of the Percies, the Howards, the Courtenays, and the Poles, and would support any men or any measures which would prevent reaction.21

His joining those who had benefited from the destruction of the Exeter Conspiracy for which his father had died, might seem cold and strange, but there was little alternative. For Somerset, who as Lord Protector dominated the country for two years after the death of Henry VIII, had thwarted the efforts of large landowners to enclose the common lands and had shown dangerous sympathies toward the lower orders during the Kett Rebellion of 1549. Seeming by his tolerance to condone that rebellion and the social anarchy that it threatened, "he had lost the confidence and support of those who governed England, not only those at Court, but those of the governing gentry class in the country at large."22 In the ensuing two years, despite repeated warnings, Somerset had sought to regain power, and he seemed willing to compromise with Mary Tudor, heir to the throne, and her Catholic supporters. Neville may, with Cecil, have once supported Somerset but personal loyalty evidently faded away after his fall from power in 1549 because they were realists enough to perceive that he had alienated the support of the power possessing classes and that his ambition to avenge his wrongs and recover his position could only be achieved by making friends with the reactionaries. They strove

21 Froude, History V, 375.

22 Conyers Read, Mr. Secretary Cecil and Queen Elizabeth (London, 1962), p. 56.
hard to get Somerset to accept the inevitable and when they failed they transferred their allegiance to Warwick. 23

The soundness of Neville's judgment became apparent on the 11th of October 1551. On that day

there fell such a shower of titles and dignities as was never seen before or after in Tudor times. The number of Dukes was doubled by the creation of Warwick as Duke of Northumberland and Dorset as Duke of Suffolk. Wiltshire was made Marquis of Winchester and Herbert Earl of Pembroke; Knighthoods were bestowed on Warwick's son-in-law Henry Sidney, on his cousin Henry Dudley, on John Cheke, the King's tutor, on Henry Neville, and on Cecil, who had deserted Somerset for Warwick and been made secretary in succession to Wotton a year before; while Gates, Andrew Dudley, Sir Phillip Hoby, and others were appeased with the spoils of Ponet's bishopric. Warwick's was the only dukedom conferred in Tudor times on one not connected by blood or marriage with the royal family. No one could mistake; Warwick's faction had won and it only remained to deal with the vanquished. 24

While Somerset languished in the Tower awaiting his execution, Neville and his comrades about the King diverted the boy's mind by making him "Captain of the Games," callously celebrating the destruction of their enemy with fetes and tournaments. 25 Having performed their tasks, they shortly claimed their rewards. In June 1551 Neville had been granted the offices of keeper of Sonnyngwell Park in Windsor Forest and Forester of the ride within the circuit of Battels

23 Read, Cecil, p. 72.

24 A. F. Pollard, The Political History of England, 1547-1603 (London, 1910), VI, 60-1. Ponet's bishopric was Winchester, and Neville received his reward at Ponet's expense also, though later. CSPD, 1547-1600, p. 35; Read, Cecil, p. 74; Nares, Memoirs of Burghley, I, 311.

25 Markham, Edward VI, pp. 175-77. At this time Neville was receiving a fee for service with Lord Clinton in France. Whether he served there is not clear. Berks Record Office, Neville MSS, D/En/F2.
Walk. Now, in 1552, he obtained the heart of his patrimony, the manors of Wargrave, Waltham St. Lawrence, and Warfield in the county of Berkshire. It is no surprise to learn that these estates had once belonged to Ponet, Bishop of Winchester.²⁶

He had little more than a year to enjoy the spoils, for King Edward died in June of 1553. When Mary Tudor came to the throne, she revoked the grant to Neville of the Berkshire lands and returned them to the Bishop of Winchester. Unlike his friends Henry Sidney and William Cecil, he refused to compromise his religious beliefs to conform to the will of the crown. He fled the country in 1554 to appear a few months later among the English exiles at Padua. When in the summer of 1556 the English government commissioned one John Brett to carry letters admonishing Englishmen living illegally in Germany to come home, they included Sir Henry Neville as one of eleven fugitives. He seems to have been suspected of participating in the western rising against Mary, but he returned to England later in the year and no further harm came to him.²⁷

Mary died on the 17th of November 1558; and Elizabeth ascended the throne. She immediately reinstated William Cecil as chief secretary, and Cecil aided Neville in the recovery of his Berkshire lands.²⁸

²⁶ VCH Berks, III, 179-80, 192-93. The grant was to Neville and his fiancée Winifred Losse. I have not found any reference to a marriage between the two.


²⁸ VCH Berks, III, 192-93. "Neville recovered Wargrave Manor which was held by Sir Robert Cecil, to the use of Neville and his heirs."
In addition to the land itself he received the "rights of free warren and chase within the manor", including "parks, warrens, chaces, purlieus and wild beasts" that had since the thirteenth century been the rights of the Bishops of Winchester. It was a hunter's paradise. He controlled at least two of the more than sixty parks in the vicinity of Windsor Forest, all well stocked with game of various kinds, but most notably with the fabled English red deer. One responsibility that the elder Neville would pass on to his son was to assure the Queen and her guests plentiful game in the forest. In 1564 he purchased additional land and, at the highest point in the parish, he built Billingbear, a red brick Elizabethan manor house, easily seen from the surrounding countryside, where his children and his children's children might be raised. Sleeping on imported silk sheets and under bed clothes of purple and gold, eating venison on plates of silver and drinking fine wines from silver goblets, he passed on to his son the love of the good

29 VCH Berks, III, 193. The secretary of the visiting Duke of Wurtemburg described the quality of the hunting in 1592. "It had pleased her Majesty to depute an old distinguished lord to attend his highness and she had commissioned and directed him not only to show his highness the splendid royal castle at Windsor, but also to amuse him by the way with shooting and hunting red deer; for you must know that in the vicinity of this same place Windsor, there are upwards of sixty parks which are full of game of various kinds, and they are so contiguous, that in order to have a glorious and royal sport the animals can be driven out of one enclosure into another, and so on: all which enclosures are encompassed by fences..." The Duke shot three deer in one day. W. B. Rye (editor), England as Seen by Foreigners in the days of Elizabeth and James I (London, 1865), p. 14.

30 Close Rolls, 40 Elizabeth, pt. II.
life, lived in rustic splendor.\textsuperscript{31}

But living in Berkshire did not end the important friendships he had made. He continued contacts first made as a member of the King's household. In 1561 Neville wrote to Sir Nicholas Throgmorton, now ambassador to France, with an openness that bespeaks assurance of confidentiality, about the quality of the greatest part of the privy council. "I need not describe to you the nature of our fellows here. They can hold to the hare and hunt with the hounds. And yet there be some few that will stoop at no bait and not of the meanest."\textsuperscript{32}

Affection, if not correspondence, continued between Sir Henry Neville and Sir Henry Sidney. Sidney was the father of Sir Philip Sidney, who became the very epitome of the Elizabethan humanist scholar and valorous knight. In his own day he was as celebrated for his courageous death at Zutphen as for his epic poem Arcadia. To his second son Robert, Sir Henry Sidney wrote in 1578, "there can be no greater love than of long time hath been, and yet is, between Sir Harry Neville and me; and so will continue to our lives end."\textsuperscript{33}

He also, by his marriage to Elizabeth, allied himself with one of the wealthiest and most influential men in England, Sir Thomas Gresham. Elizabeth was Sir Thomas's favorite niece, heir to his Sussex estates which were to become a legacy for the younger Nevilles. Neville and

\textsuperscript{31} Berks RO, D/En/F43. Inventory of Neville's possessions in 1593.

\textsuperscript{32} Read, Cecil, p. 211.

\textsuperscript{33} HMC De L'Isle and Dudley, Penshurst, II, 96; Arthur Collins (Editor), Letters and Memorials of State Collected by Sir Henry Sidney... (London, 1746), I, 246.
Gresham apparently maintained cordial relations as in-laws, for Gresham wrote to William Cecil in 1561 that he would have delivered his letter personally "but that I have here my cousin Sir Harry Neville and diverse of my kinfolk..."34

The elder Neville appears also to have been on affectionate terms with Queen Elizabeth, who apparently knew the story of his father's questionable birth. Neville's ancestor Lord Braybrooke tells us

Queen Elizabeth, in her first progress at Maidenhithe Bridge, being met by all the Nobility, Knights, and Esquires of Berks, they kneeling on both sides of her, she alighted at the bridge foot, and walked on foot through the midst, and coming just against Sir Henry Neville of Billingbear, made a stay, and laid her glove on his head, saying "I am glad to see thee, Brother Henry." He, not pleased with the expression, swore she would make him seem a bastard, at which she laughed and passed on. 35

But more important than the Gresham alliance or the Queen's friendship was the continuing relationship between Sir Henry Neville and Sir William Cecil. First as Principal Secretary and then as Lord Treasurer Cecil (who became Lord Burleigh in 1572) dominated the Queen's administration. It was apparently Cecil's influence that restored Neville to his lands, and the two men remained close friends. The elder Neville brought his son, the young Henry, into Burleigh House to see the children of Cecil. The young Neville also met there Cecil's ward, Henry Wriothesley, who became the Earl of Southampton, common patron to Sir


35 *Notes and Queries* (1st series), ii, 307.
Henry Neville, the colony of Virginia, and William Shakespeare.\textsuperscript{36}

The younger Henry Neville and Robert Cecil, Burleigh's second son, married cousins, daughters of the Cooke family whose mothers were wives of Burleigh and Sir Henry Killigrew, the Elizabethan military veteran and diplomat. When they needed help, both Nevilles, father and son, did not hesitate to appeal to the Cecil connection.

By moving to Billingebear Neville did not retire from the public arena. Our twentieth century assumption that the most important offices are those at the center of government do not always apply to Elizabethan England. The secret of Elizabeth's success lay in the contacts that she and Cecil maintained in the countryside. The work done today by a bureaucracy centered at Whitehall was then performed by gentlemen such as Sir Henry Neville. By their influence with local people these knights and squires could most efficiently and cheaply implement royal decrees. It was no small thing to find competent, dependable men to carry out, at no pay, the duties of local government, whether in an official or an unofficial capacity. Both father and son served variously as Keepers of Windsor Forest, High-Stewards of boroughs, Justices of the Peace, Sheriffs, and Deputy-Lieutenants. The elder Neville even served as Lord-Lieutenant. In these offices they learned by experience the concerns of the gentlemen of the shire, gentlemen who should sit in the parliaments of James I as well as of Elizabeth. In the countryside the Nevilles also learned how to govern: how to adjudicate disputes, formulate

policies, and execute decisions.  

Ironically, the least important offices, those of Keeper of Windsor Forest and of High Steward, offered payments unavailable in the more significant ones. The Keeper of Windsor Forest licensed the cutting of timber, assured the presence of game, and occasionally led the Queen on the hunt. The Lord High Steward served essentially as a solicitor for the borough that chose him, furnishing advice to the mayor and aldermen, providing personal influence in their behalf at Court. The High Steward had one duty of political importance, for he could help return M. P. s, and both the offices of Steward and Keeper of the Forest had social significance, indicating on the one hand personal contact with the Queen and, on the other, social recognition in the locality. 

As Justices of the Peace, the Nevilles performed duties which were ubiquitous. They tried men accused of murder, assault, burglary, theft, horse-stealing, witchcraft, disorderly conduct, pocket picking, cheating, keeping nuisances, vilating industrial laws, failing to

37E. P. Cheyney, History of England from the Armada to the Death of Elizabeth (London, 1914; reprint edition, Gloucester, Mass., 1967), I, 69. "The affairs of the central and southern shires were left largely to the care of their local officials, except for quite unusual events."

38Ashmolean MSS, 1126.42; Historical MSS Reports, VIII, 282a; J. M. Guilford (Editor), Reading Records: Diary of the Corporation... 1431-1654 (London, 1892-6), I.; R. R. Tighe and J. E. Davis, Annals of Windsor (London, 1858), I, 648, 655. Neville was High Steward of Windsor from 1588 until his death in 1593, and was High Steward of Reading at the time of his death. Reading chose the Earl of Essex as his successor "so that such burgesses be not chargeable to this borough for his service or diet."
attend church, religious dissent, and vagrancy. They were also
responsible for maintaining bridges and roads and, more important, for
assessing of rates. And, to prevent the disruptions caused by labor-
management disputes or by drunkeness, they regulated wages and prices
and licensed taverns, which were coming to be known as "nurseries of
naughtiness."

In Tudor times the office of sheriff was in a state of decline and
may have been more a liability than an asset. The duties continued
heavy, and included the guarantee of the delivery of writs from the
privy council to any person in the county. The sheriff also had to
collect numerous petty and irritating local taxes remaining from the
middle ages. He presided monthly over the meetings of the county court,
and was responsible at quarter sessions for the presence of the accused,
the empaneling of juries, and the carrying out of punishments. In
addition to these onerous duties, the office of sheriff entailed great
expense, from the more than £100 required for entry fees to the ir-
regular costs of entertaining foreign dignitaries (or occasionally the
Queen herself). Little wonder then that the office went largely

39 Calendar of State Papers Domestic, 1581-1590, p. 386; Cheyney,

Cheyney says, "Yet, not withstanding the dignity of the office it was
apparently in most cases an unwelcome honor..." He cites a contemporary
who wrote to a friend, "The next news I heard was that your name was
the first of three which were presented to the King. When laboring to
get you off, I perceived that my lord keeper distasted you, having re-
solved that you should be sheriff." Another wrote, "The sheriff is at
much charge which is laid out and disbursed during his sheriffwick, as
experience will inform him."
unsought. That the elder Neville held it in 1572 indicates the acceptance of a social obligation rather than the fulfillment of a goal, although he did have the good fortune of being sheriff during a parliamentary election. At such a time the office took on a special significance, for the sheriff set the time of the election, appointed the place and conducted the poll, thus gaining vast opportunities to influence the outcome. There is, however, no evidence that Neville participated in any of the schemes so well described by Sir John Neale.  

Neville also held the more important position of deputy-lieutenant, a military office appointed by the privy council (in consultation with the lord-lieutenant) and responsible for the defense of the county. Doubtless, Cecil himself, mindful of the elder Neville's military experience chose him to administer the county of Berkshire. In this office his duties were first logistical, raising men and supplying them with the "furniture" of war. His next duty was educational, to train the militia for combat or control of local disturbances. Finally, he had to discipline his men, which meant preventing their depredations against the local countryside, or their desertions. Then there were his responsibilities for the raising of loans, the supervising of recusants, and the superintending of the distribution of grain during times of scarcity.  

The highest local officer was the lord-lieutenant, an official who was taking over much of the prominence and some of the responsibility of


42 Smith, Government, p. 86.
the medieval sheriff. During the period of Northumberland's power there seemed some inclination towards making the lord-lieutenant a permanent official, to be named by the central government. Had this development continued it might have provided England with a local official similar to the French intendant of the next century. But Mary, throughout her reign, and Elizabeth in her early years, made use of the lord-lieutenant only for immediate problems, such as internal unrest or the threat of foreign invasion. Typically, the men who held this office had responsibility for more than one county and were of such importance that they had little time to fulfill the duties of their local office. Thus one of their duties was to name deputy-lieutenants to raise the county militia in their behalf. One quarter of the English nobility held the office of lord-lieutenant in 1595; and of these seventeen lords-lieutenant, eight were privy councillors. Thus, it is all the more striking that, under the pressure of the approach of the Invincible Armada in 1588, Sir Henry Neville, although untitled, received the appointment of lord-lieutenant. Queen Elizabeth probably hoped that the additional authority would help him organize the defense of Berkshire. Apparently, he continued to hold this office until his death in 1593, and the fact of his holding it became a precedent for the appointment of untitled gentlemen to the post.

Unfortunately, the destruction of the records of the Berkshire County Sessions by fire prevents a detailed study of Neville's work as

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44 Berks RO, Neville MSS, D/En/04/2; HMC Reports (15th report) Saville MSS, pp. 26, 27.
deputy and lord lieutenant, but a few of his personal papers, combined with privy council and state papers, provide enough information to suggest that the elder Neville performed his duties conscientiously and efficiently. For the social prominence of the individuals who filled these local offices did not assure assiduous effort and competency.

The fact is that, as the Queen and privy council constantly complain, a great proportion of the gentry neglected the public duties they were sworn to perform, and almost all must have interspersed them liberally with hunting, looking after their estates, attention to family and social interests and occasional visits to London and abroad; while in these later Elizabethan days of military and exploring expeditions on sea and land many detached themselves from their country homes for long periods to take part in voyages, the wars or distant naval expeditions.

Thus it is no small matter, year after year, to find Sir Henry Neville patiently carrying out the duties of his offices, however mundane. In June of 1570 the privy council called upon him to examine Bishop, a condemned prisoner in the Tower, about suspicious contacts that he had made with other prisoners. In February of 1574 the council urged Neville to continue an investigation he had begun into counterfeiting in the borough, a persistent problem that required further action on Neville's part two months later. In June of 1578 they required him to search the house of one Trewchiled, Keeper of the Park of Windsor, who was suspected of harboring a thief. In 1579 the

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45 Felix Hull, Guide to the Berkshire Record Office (Reading, 1952), p. 1. The records were destroyed by fire in 1703.
48 Ibid., X, 270.
49 Ibid., XI, 165.
council had him move some ordnance stored at Windsor; in the same year he was asked to investigate illegal hunting in the Queen's park at Donnington in Berks.\(^{50}\) In April of 1582 he was functioning as Keeper of Windsor Forest, allotting timber in Braye Woods to Mr. Richard Stafferton.\(^{51}\) In 1586 Neville, along with Richard Lovelace, had to arbitrate a dispute in Reading between John Algrave and his sons, and John Cowper, a dispute which had brought great harm to Cowper, Hopefully, Neville was to settle the matter himself, but he had the authority to bring it to the council should the litigants be unwilling to accept his decision.\(^{52}\) In December of 1583 he was assisting the Earl of Shrewsbury and Sir Ralph Sadler "in furtherance of a special service of great importance," probably the incarceration of Mary Stuart.\(^{53}\)

These were all routine matters, handled competently enough, and providing a reputation for steadiness, but of no special significance. The duty of keeping the peace in Elizabethan England entailed more than the settling of private disputes and the apprehension and conviction of criminals; and Sir Henry Neville was more than steadfast. He was a man who could be depended upon in an emergency. He proved this by successfully dealing with the four most critical domestic problems facing Tudor officials: invasion, rebellion, religious dissent, and economic instability.

In 1560, as a young man, Neville passed his first test. The

\(^{50}\)Ibid., XI, 165.  
\(^{51}\)Ibid., p. 294.  
\(^{52}\)Ibid., XIV, 352.  
\(^{53}\)PRO/SP/12/164, f. 82.
Protestants in Scotland were in need of support in their efforts to oust French soldiers from their territory, a move most welcome to the English. Elizabeth, cautious as always, sent a fleet and an army to the north, actions which convinced the French to give up the struggle. But the months of May and June were ticklish; all felt the danger of impending war. On April 20 the Queen ordered the raising of the forces in the counties of Surrey, Sussex, and Berkshire. In Berkshire, where the levy seems never to have been raised before, the responsibility fell on Sir Thomas Parry, Treasurer of the Household, and young Sir Henry Neville. Parry's name gave weight to the order. It was Neville's job to raise the troops. He immediately sent orders to the justices of the peace to assemble the men, weapons, and horses necessary for military service. Next, he appointed Thomas Ward and William Barker captains to lead their contingents. Unfortunately, the Earl of Arundell, whose responsibility it was to raise Surrey and Sussex, had already laid claims to those men, giving Neville some doubt whether he could fulfill his duty. Sir Henry seems to have turned for assistance to Thomas Stucley, an adventurer, and another reputed bastard of Henry VIII. Stucley, who has left an account of Sir Henry's activities, marveled at the young neophyte's efficiency. On May 20 he reported to Parry that Neville had taken the muster that day at Windsor "without the help of

54 CSPD, 1547-80, p. 152; VCH Berks, III, 141.
any justice or gentleman of rank except the mayor."\textsuperscript{57} Four days later he confirmed Neville's own report that he had mustered 1,000 good men at Reading "besides other rascal", and 1,500 at Newbury.\textsuperscript{58} But Neville became concerned about the shortage of weapons. This, however, did not stop him from raising Abingdon and Wallingford; and soon he had appointed captains to replace Ward and Barker.\textsuperscript{59} By June 6 he was seeking the armor he had promised on his own authority to the people, and he observed with some indignation that profiteers at the Tower were charging 2s. for a sheaf of arrows, contrary to the Queen's regulated price.\textsuperscript{60}

Having performed his duty well, Neville began to criticize those who had failed to measure up. Alarm beacons had been set on the Isle of Wight and on Portsdown, and Neville urged Parry to send orders to the beacon keepers to prevent future false alarms.\textsuperscript{61} He also complained of a man who had "come down in the country to take up men by commission." And when given the additional responsibility for the musters to be raised in Oxfordshire, he observed that he could not act for lack of captains with sufficient ability.\textsuperscript{62} In the midst of preparations for war, the young gentleman missed no opportunity to feather his own nest. Seeing an abandoned house at East Hampstead, he requested that he be allowed to dismantle it in order to repair his stables at Sunninghill.\textsuperscript{63}

\textsuperscript{57} ibid., p. 153.  
\textsuperscript{58} ibid., p. 153.  
\textsuperscript{59} ibid., p. 153.  
\textsuperscript{60} ibid., p. 153.  
\textsuperscript{61} ibid., p. 154.  
\textsuperscript{62} ibid., p. 155.  
\textsuperscript{63} ibid., p. 155.
Finally, on June 27 he received the welcome news that the alarm was over; the men could go home. Wistfully, he longed for "a quiet day to go a wooing in."64

Thus it comes as no surprise that when crisis loomed again in 1569, Cecil turned to Neville. Elizabeth had learned, to her chagrin, that secret negotiations were underway to arrange a marriage between Thomas Howard, Duke of Norfolk, and Mary, Queen of Scots. Most of the Court were privy to the marriage, and believed it would be beneficial to England. It would tie Mary to an English husband, would assure a peaceful accession to the throne (should Mary and Norfolk have children and Elizabeth remain unmarried), and would relieve pressures from Catholic France and Spain. Only Cecil, sensing rightly that the design included his overthrow and the abandonment of his strongly Protestant anti-Spanish policies, doubted its wisdom. Having learned of the proceedings, Elizabeth gave Norfolk every opportunity to reveal his intentions, but instead he fled the Court in the fall of 1569. Many Englishmen expected him to raise the banner of rebellion, but fortunately for Elizabeth the man proved a coward. After some hesitation, he meekly obeyed her summons to return to London. Neville and Sir Francis Knollys, under orders from Cecil, intercepted Norfolk and imprisoned him at Burnham on the 3rd of October. On the 8th they moved him to the Tower, where he was housed in the same chamber that his grandfather had occupied during the reign of Henry VIII. 65 But Neville grew increasingly

64 Ibid., p. 155.

65 Ibid., p. 344; HMC Salisbury MSS, I, 429-30.
unhappy as a gaoler, especially when the Duke, who thrived (as did Neville) on the life out-of-doors, began to grow ill. Matters were made worse when Neville, in order to get personal instructions from the Queen as to the proper questioning of the Duke, went to Court. He listened to the Queen, but failed to get her instructions in writing. As he later wrote to Cecil:

Having so far overshot myself, as I find no help but to crave pardon at her Majesty's hands, I am bold to crave your friendship to help me to her Highness, for that I was so fond to take upon me so sundry and great causes to carry from her Majesty's mouth only, knowing beforehand the dullness of my memory, and not craving of her to have the same in writing, whereby a direct answer might be made by my lord to her satisfaction. I have now but robbed at her Majesty's messages, and I fear rather misrepresented them; her Majesty told them apace to a sloven receiver and a worse carrier. I pray you, sir, entreat her to bear with my first fault, and if there be any further service herein to be done, let me receive it in writing. 66

Elizabeth was always sympathetic to those she liked, so long as they offended only lightly, and Neville quickly received the Queen's pardon, and the necessary written instructions. 67 He continued to plead for his prisoner, urging upon Cecil the Duke's illness and placing the blame for his troubles on Mary Stuart. Norfolk, he wrote, "should be sent to serve her Majesty in the north this summer and...the Queen of Scots should be put here in his place." 68

Clearly Neville trusted Norfolk more than he did his own relative, the Earl of Westmorland, who had repudiated the Duke's submisive

66 HMC Salisbury MSS, I, 452. 67 Ibid., I, 452. 68 Ibid., I, 463.
course and raised the banner of rebellion in the north. Neville wrote to Cecil, "The rebels have but a slender opinion of their dutiful proceedings." 69

Elizabeth was not about to free Norfolk while the rebellion still flared, and so Neville received the additional task, delicate and distasteful, of acquiring information from the Duke's subordinates. The Earl of Leicester, the Queen's favorite and Cecil's rival, had been deeply involved in the original marriage plans, and he still hoped through Norfolk to gain favor at Court at Cecil's expense. Neville suddenly realized that he was becoming involved in an unwanted court intrigue. To Cecil he wrote that he feared to rack a suspect without the presence of the Lieutenant of the Tower. He especially feared to do so because a friend had informed him that Leicester had written to the Lieutenant requiring a report of all Neville's doings. Leicester threatened to "sit upon his skirts" if Neville "dealt not well with him and his." Sir Henry found that he had entered into a piece of service which, if he knew her Majesty did not approve of in him, he could quickly leave where it is, and as for any further dealing, seeing her Majesty doth so much depend upon him who defends all those they should deal against, for his part he can be content to keep his finger out of the fire, nor to enter any more. 70

He was concerned for his master as well as for himself. He concluded a letter in July of 1570 to Cecil, "Thus I leave you to God

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69 Ibid., 1, 464.  
70 Ibid., 1, 473.
to defend you from your enemies." His letters to Cecil continued to show more sympathy for Norfolk than for Leicester. On the 30th of June he wrote:

I assure you sir I pity my Lord, for I see these spiteful dealings with him will be some means to throw him into some evil sickness; he cannot hold, but must needs utter unto my lord his color as well tempered as may be by bowels. Surely sir I think by him as my self I should digest the better a sennight after my meat. God send her Majesty to see and discern traitors from good subjects; here is liberty looked for by diverse whose promises pay well for it, for it is thought to come by our friends to help us.  

In his next, on July 11, he added, "My Lord of Leicester sings his old song unto his friends, that is, that he had the Queen in very good tune, till you took her aside, and dealt with her secretly, and then she was very strange suddenly." Clearly Neville was totally Cecil's man. And Cecil pursued a policy at Court very similar to that advocated by Neville, arguing that the Duke should be forgiven, freed, and safely married to someone other than Mary Stuart. Ultimately, they achieved his removal to his own house, and then his freedom.

71 Ibid., p. 474.  
72 Ibid., I, 473.  
73 Ibid., I, 474.  
74 Read, Cecil, p. 452. Cecil wrote to Elizabeth, after discussing Mary Stuart, "Now for the duke, whilst unmarried his hope to match with her will continue; if he marry elsewhere (most necessary) all pernicious intents depending on him shall cease. If charged but not convicted of treason, his credit shall increase. I cannot see how his acts are within the compass of treason. Whereupon I am bold to wish your Majesty would show your intent only to inquire into the fact, and not speak of it as treason."
Both were wrong about Norfolk, who almost immediately became involved in the Ridolfi plot against the Queen, but they were not completely taken in. For Neville acted as Cecil's spy as well as Norfolk's gaoler, and in that capacity reported contacts between Ridolfi and the Bishop of Ross, John Dudley, and the Spanish ambassador, all central figures in the developing conspiracy.  

Having become suspicious of the Duke's treason, Cecil again called upon Neville. Sir Henry, having misjudged his man once, took care not to fail again. He descended on Howard House in the middle of the night of September 3, 1571, committed Norfolk to his chamber, and drove his servants out of the house. When Sir Ralph Sadler arrived early the next morning he found that "Neville guards so wisely and well that the writer's presence is not needful."  

Neville's shortcomings as guard to Norfolk must not have been considered serious by the government, for they called upon him for similar duty in 1585. They asked him to relieve temporarily the Earl of Shrewsbury as guard to Mary Stuart. And under the pressure of the threat of the Armada in 1588, Neville volunteered to raise 1,000 men from Berkshire. It was on this occasion that Elizabeth named him lord lieutenant for his home county. Elizabeth and Cecil apparently had supreme confidence both in his capacity to fulfill his duties and in

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75 HMC Salisbury MSS, I, 474-5.
77 Conyers Read, Mr. Secretary Walsingham and Queen Elizabeth (Oxford, 1925), II, 396.
his loyalty to the Queen and her chief minister.\(^7^8\)

An additional area of pressing concern to Elizabethan officials was the economic well being of the subject. They were aware of the danger to public order caused by hunger. Thus in 1564 the privy council became concerned that the clothiers of Reading were dismissing their workers because of a shortage of cloth. Everyone knew the potential danger of unemployed vagabonds in the countryside. The council's letter to Neville and to Robert Keyllwey reveals much of their fears and their expectation that local men would be able to handle the problem.

...we think it is convenient that you in whom we have special trust for government of the county should have good regard therein, and with discretion and secrecy from time to time inquire of the said clothiers, as well as in other places...and if you shall find that they which were accustomed to keep men occupied in draping and other work herewith belonging too give over the trade thereof, and so occasion any notices of people to live idly, whereof disorder may arise, then... you should first as of yourselves send for the principal clothiers that so do give over trade and use all the good reason you can to move them to recover their trade and not thus suddenly in this time of the year to use such hard dealings with their neighbors...if any shall allege the lack of want of their cloths, you may then put them in comfort...although now of late there hath been such occasion given them so to think or to doubt of sale, yet that matter is now so well considered and foreseen by the Queen that they shall not have like commodity to sell their cloths as heretofore they were in want....and if they shall not seem to yield to your persuasions, but that they will continue in their dispositions to set such at liberty for lack of work as otherwise you see cannot be occupied in harvest, but depend to live idly, then shall you deal roundly with them...\(^7^9\)

As a last resort they could threaten the uncooperative with an appearance before the council.

\(^7^8\) CSPD, 1581-90, p. 563. \(^7^9\) PRO/SP/12/43.
In 1574 Neville seized grain on his own initiative, and the council concurred in his action. The council then had him divert some of the grain from its intended destination to the relief of Windsor "and other places". A similar situation arose in 1587 when Neville, with other officials, again certified their "proceedings in execution of the orders for the relief and stay of the dearth of grain." In 1589 he intervened in a dispute in behalf of the dyers of Reading, whose trade had been diminished by the practice of the clothiers' dyeing their own cloths. He carried out the council's orders that the clothiers "should not dye cloths ready made into any color, for that the dyeing of such cloths appertained to the faculty of the dyers..." Finally, we find Neville mercifully relieving one Mr. Shinfeild, because of his past service and present poverty, of the duty of paying a forced loan. Certainly, the citizens of Berkshire saw in Sir Henry Neville the heavy hand and the helping hand of the Queen's government in London.

The privy council was also concerned to prevent any religious innovations that might threaten Elizabeth's moderate, but essentially Protestant, religious settlement. Neville, whose wealth as well as convictions depended upon that settlement, wholeheartedly supported the government in such action. In December of 1564 the council called upon Neville to exhibit in the pillory three prisoners "for vain abusing the people with fond prophesies..." though he was to free them if they

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80 APC, VII, 216.  
81 CSPD, 1581-90, p. 386.  
82 APC, XVIII, 260-1.  
83 Ibid., XV, 452.
showed repentance. However, he should imprison them once again if they remained obdurate. In October of 1577 the council required Neville and the Bishop of Rochester to submit a certificate of the names and landholdings of all those in Berkshire who failed to attend church. In 1578 Neville learned, during the interrogation of suspected witches at Windsor, of the existence of a picture designed to be used to secure the death of the Queen. He reported this to the council, which took his report seriously. They urged him to find the offending picture, to arrest any associated with it, "and finally what otherwise they think meet to be inquired of for the discovery of the said devilish device." In the same year, Neville and the Dean of Windsor were required to examine a Scottish preacher suspected of making "lewd and disorderly speeches to her Majesty's discontentacion" and to question his listeners to find further evidence of his activities.

In 1581 Sir Henry became indirectly involved in a manhunt of major proportions. During their inquisition of the Jesuit priest, Edmund Campion, the council had learned of an illicit Catholic printing press in Lady Stonar's house in Berkshire. Acting under their orders, Neville launches a successful search that turned up the press, hidden in some nearby woods. He also found Catholic books and "massing stuff" in the Lady's house. Shortly thereafter, he received the council's

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84 APC, VII, 176-7; VCH Berks, II, 35.
85 CSPD, 1547-80, p. 561. 86 APC, XI, 22.
87 Ibid., XI, 289. 88 Ibid., XIII, 154.
thanks "for his care and pains taken in the apprehension of the printers" and orders to destroy the "massing stuff" and return the books to London. He then placed Lady Stonar under house arrest, in order to prevent her being contacted by her Catholic friends. He was also to send out the parson of Henley to try to win her away from popery. He had the same responsibility for a Mrs. Buckley who, being of a lesser social station, was actually imprisoned in Reading until her declining health led the council to have Neville take bonds and release her. In 1585 Sir Henry and William Knollys apprehended and examined a priest named Gregory Gunnes, alias Stone, and sent up to London the popish relics found on him.

This concern for Catholic recusancy reached a crescendo in 1588 with the news of the coming of the Spanish Armada. The council's zeal for ferreting out Catholics was exceeded only by Neville's efforts to anticipate and facilitate their orders. In January of that year, having received from the council orders to send a Commission for recusants to London, Neville replied that no such Commission existed, and that no list of recusants could be forthcoming before the next assizes, unless extraordinary action were taken. His letter to Sir Francis Knollys, Treasurer of the Household, reveals clearly the way Tudor local government worked; it also reveals the sense of responsibility that Neville felt toward making the "system" work. The solution for the problem, Neville argued, was for Knollys to convince Burghley to

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89 Ibid., XIII, 186. 90 Ibid., XIII, 396. 91 Ibid., XIII, 322. 92 CSPD, 1581-90, p. 244.
write a letter to the justices of the peace that they in
t heir several divisions do send straight orders to the
churchwardens of any parish, within their several divisions
commanding them to bring in upon their oaths the names of
all persons that are recusant and do not come to church
according to the statute, and also if it please my lord
to write another letter to the justices of assize that upon
this presentment they shall execute according to their lord-
ship's direction either to bind the meaner sort to their
good behavior, or to commit the better sort according to
their lordship's direction, thus am I bold in presuming to
set down my opinion herein, but that I thought it my duty
to forward the service, as much as in me lieth I would not
have presumed so far...93

On three occasions in 1588 Neville was required to apprehend
papists and destroy their relics and books. In August, with the Armada
off Gravelines and the English army drawn up at Tilbury, the council
took time to thank Sir Henry once more for his "care and pains" in
arresting two Catholics at Reading.94 Obviously, Neville fully realized
what would happen to him and his lands should Catholicism return to
England, and he did all in his power to clear Berkshire of suspicious
persons.

None of this is to suggest that the gentlemen who governed the
shires were saints. They spent much time and energy in the government's
behalf with no reimbursement, so it is hardly surprising that they took
advantage of any opportunity that presented itself to further personal
and family interests. Neville's record seems better than most in such
endeavors, but even he committed his misdemeanors. Thus, when in March
of 1578, the privy council ordered Neville to adjudicate a dispute over
the inheritance of a farm in Oxfordshire called Cottismore between the

93 PRO/SP/12/208/34. 94 APC, XVI, 214, 218, 219, 240.
decendant's wife, Lady Doyly, and his son-in-law, John Marmion, Sir Henry acted immediately. As his first wife Elizabeth had died in 1573, he married the lady in question and furthered her quest for the farm that he would later pass on to his son. In 1585 Neville learned that his neighbor William Knollys was trying to purchase Cranborne Chase. Sir Henry claimed that he had a patent granted by Edward VI to that property, and he pleaded with Sir Francis Walsingham, one of the Queen's secretaries, to prevent Knollys' cheating him. And the disputed estate of his first wife's uncle, Sir Thomas Gresham, led him into a series of litigations with Sir Thomas's wife, one of which he took to the star chamber.

The ability to gain advantage from the "system" also gave Neville opportunities to blunt the impact of some governmental decrees on his constituents. Many justices of the peace, for example, simply failed to enforce the decree issued in 1594 prohibiting the building of new houses. Neville winked at infraction of this decree. Local officials had also to deal with difficult problems such as purveyance, a practice which allowed the government suppliers to make forced purchases of commodities such as food at regulated and arbitrarily low prices. The tendency was for the

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95 Ibid., XI, 71, 325, 397. 96 PRO/SP/12/183/6.
97 APC, XIV, 164, 360, XVI, 46, 56, 379; CSPD, 1547-80, p. 643; Cheyney, History of England, 11, 387. Cheyney believes that in general local officials just managed to balance their losses. "The gentry, and indeed the nobility also, were the unremunerated agents of this absolute government...The average well-to-do landholder of Elizabeth's time was expected, indeed compelled, to give a very large part of his time, his labor and his income to military, civil, and administrative work for which he received no remuneration...One of the most constant, as it must have been one of the most ungracious duties of all the duties of justices, sheriffs, lords lieutenant and deputy lieutenants and of the lower offic-
justice to arrive at a compromise price, rather than enforce the arbitrary one set by the purveyors. Such a contract exists for purveyance by the seven "hundreds" under Neville's administration in 1593. The privy council came to ignore such activity, realizing that local good will and better participation in supplying the needed goods would be the result. Local justices were quite as ready to respect their neighbors as to serve the central government. Thus, when the citizens of Theale and Reading objected to unfair tax assessments in 1590, Neville appealed their case. If the art of politics is the art of compromise, then there was no better school of politics in Tudor England than in service as a local official of the government.

The elder Sir Henry Neville filled every significant office in local government. For more than forty years he had seen to the preparedness of the militia, the punishment of crime, the promotion of trade, and the stifling of religious dissent. Two generations of service as justices of the peace, sheriff, deputy-lieutenant, and lord lieutenant lay behind the younger Neville's later political career. Dealing day by day with the practical problems began Neville's education in the "inwardest thoughts" of the English gentry in parliament. Fellow citizens for payments insisted upon by the crown. It is striking how frequently the estates of Elizabethan officials became involved. The great wealth that was certainly sometimes amassed during this period was generally the result either of a very exceptional amount of royal favor, especially good fortune, trade or the general advance in the wealth of society. Certainly the nobility and gentry, whatever may have been true of city men, obtained no more than a moderate share of new wealth, and the deductions in the form of money or service from their uncontrolled use of it were so great as to make not an unfavorable balance between their privileges and their duties."

98 Ibid., XIII, 133. 99 Berks RO, Neville MSS, D/En/07/1-5, 12.
At a banquet held early in the reign of Henry VIII, the conversation turned, as it has in all ages, to the raising of children. One old gentleman, who revealed his view of the good life by wearing his hunting horn to the dinner table, grew impatient when another guest argued for a "progressive" literary education. "All learned men are beggars;" he objected, "even Erasmus, that most learned man, is poor, I am told." He swore that he would rather his son be hanged than study letters. "Gentlemen's sons ought to be able to blow their horn skillfully, to hunt well, and to carry and train a hawk elegantly; but the study of letters is to be left to the sons of peasants." Richard Pace, Henry's Secretary of State and a man of the world, could not resist a rejoinder. If someone were called upon to answer the emissary of a foreign power at the King's court, "your son would but blow into his horn, if he were educated according to your wishes, and the learned sons of peasants would be called upon to reply. And they would be placed far ahead of your hunting or hawking son..."¹

Thus early in the reign of the Tudors did the English landed aristocracy perceive that education, by offering a ladder up which the poor could climb, threatened their privileged position in society. They resolved to foil such developments by assuring their

own sons access to that ladder, ahead of all others. They quickly accepted the teachings of Erasmus, More, Elyot, and Starkey, that those who governed best were those who had been educated best. By 1559 a member of Elizabeth's first parliament had become so convinced that humanist education and leadership went together that he moved that

an ordinance be made to bind the nobility to bring up their children in learning at some university in England or beyond the sea from the age of twelve to eighteen at least...The wanton bringing up and ignorance of the nobility forces the Prince to advance new men that can serve, which for the most part neither affecting true honour, because the glory thereof descended not to them, nor yet the commonwealth (through coveting to be hastily in wealth and honour) forget their duty and old estate and subvert the noble houses to have their rooms themselves.

Both A. L. Rowse and J. H. Hexter believe that the proposal was drawn up by William Cecil, the patron of the Nevilles. Though it failed to become law, Cecil's suggestion represented aptly the point of view of the English landed aristocracy who demanded not only seats for their sons in parliament, but an education for them in the Colleges and Halls of the Universities.

But though the nobility and gentry of England followed the advice of the humanists as to the kind of education to give their children, they rejected the recommendations of men like Elyot who in his Book of the Governor, urged the creation of new institutions designed especially for the training of a governing elite. Elyot

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saw the universities as outmoded sanctuaries, which were prepared to
withdraw from society into the church, and as institutions that continu­
ed to place too much emphasis on obstruse knowledge, theological dis­
putes, and professional degrees. But the humanists' suggestion that the
universities be raided, their properties confiscated as those of the
monasteries had been, and their income diverted to these new institu­
tions, seemed, even to so advanced a thinker as the Protector Somerset,
a dangerous innovation threatening the rights of property. Thus, in­
stead of destroying the fortresses of education, the English gentry
sought to occupy them, and to adapt them to new uses. Ironically,
this surge of gentlemen to the universities caused contemporaries to
complain that the gentry were destroying, by their presence, the
quality of education at the universities. Thus William Harrison wrote
that the colleges

were erected by their founders at the first, only
for poor men's sons, whose parents were not able
to bring them up into learning; but now they have
the least benefit of them, by reason the rich do
so incroach upon them. And so far hath this in­
convenience spread itself, that it is in my time
a hard matter for a poor man's child to come by
a fellowship (though he be never so good a scholar
and worthy of that room.) Such packing also is used
at elections, that not he which best deserveth, but
he that hath most friends, though he be the worst
scholar, is always surest to speed; which will turn
in the end to the overthrow of learning.

The young gentry not only disrupted the process of education,

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3 Holinshed's Chronicles, England, Scotland, and Ireland, (New

4 Ibid., 1, 252.
they also undermined university morality.

Beside this, being for the most part either gentlemen, or rich men's sons, they oft bring the universities into much slander. For stand-upon their reputation and liberty, they ruffle and roist it out, exceeding in apparel, and banting riotous company (which draweth them from their books unto another trade.) And for excuse when they are charged with breach of all good order, think it sufficient to say, that they be gentlemen, which greeveth many not a little..."5

Sir Francis Beacon, in his Advancement of Learning, continued the attack on the universities, misunderstanding their significance in 1605 as badly as he was to misunderstand the political situation in England in 1612. He argued with some justice against the low salaries paid lecturers and complained of the failure to enforce regulations and carry out visitations. He also criticized the excessive concern for professional studies, the lack of financial support for scientific experiments, and the failure of English universities to communicate with those in Europe. With less insight, he criticized the early teaching of logic and rhetoric and the superficiality of such studies.6 Hobbes and Milton, who disagreed on many things, nevertheless agreed that the universities were no longer scholarly enough. The universities were caught in a cross fire, with Puritans concerned at their failure to produce a sufficient cadre of Godly ministers, and more moderate men, such as Anthony Wood, distressed at their excessive

5 Ibid., 1, 252.

Puritanism. So great was the contemporary outcry against the universities that one nineteenth century historian, reading it, concluded that jobbery, want of academic freedom, a depressed intellectual life, a lack of contact with contemporary literature, and frivolity on the part of students characterized the Elizabethan universities. Another historian seriously argued that between 1582 and 1584 Oxford reached "its lowest ebb."8

Such facts are not in dispute. But more recent historians, such as J. H. Hexter, Fritz Caspari, and Mark Curtis, have fashioned from them a new and more positive interpretation of the functioning of the Elizabethan universities. Professor Hexter, for example, points out that in France, the Universities maintained a higher standard of scholarship, which drove the nobility from their halls. "According to Montaigne, the sixteenth-century French nobleman acquired his contempt for learning not outside school but in it."9

Saulx Tavannes, who tried to convince the French nobles to further their education, observed an increasing division between the nobility of the robe and the sword, to the inconvenience of the old ruling class. "The ignoble did not take the judicial offices from us; ignorance deprived us of them. The door is open to all

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9 Hexter, Reappraisals in History, p. 58.
who make their children study, who then cannot be barred from office."^{10} Francois La Noue pointed out that the French withdrew their sons from learning because of the two careers open to them, the clergy went by favor rather than ability, and judicial office to the highest bidder. Besides, "the most splendid honors are won by the sword", the use of which must be learned early.^{11}

That the English nobility took education more seriously was due ultimately to the conscious policy of Elizabeth and her councillors. They made clear by word and deed their belief that a humanist education was the basis of successful service to the prince. To this end, Elizabeth turned over the chancellorships of the great universities to her two favorites. Leicester became Chancellor at Oxford, Burghley at Cambridge. Though both used their positions for personal, economic, and social gain, they also contributed to the universities' intellectual growth. Scholars with new ideas concerning predestination, such as Caro and Drusins at Merton, were favored. The study of Hebrew and Greek, was encouraged.^{12} Reactionary elements were purged and partisan religious bickering discouraged. By hook or by crook, the chancellors forced the universities, which were not altogether reluctant, to change their curriculum. The emphasis now fell upon undergraduate programs. During Elizabeth's reign, the

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^{10} cited in Hexter, Reappraisals in History, p. 59.

^{11} Hexter, Reappraisals in History, p. 58.

^{12} Curtis, Oxford and Cambridge, p. 48, 141-2, 212-3.
ratio of gentle to plebeian students shifted from five to three in favor of plebeians to six to five in favor of gentry. Elizabeth showed her pleasure at these developments by surrounding herself with university men at Court.

Thus Henry Neville's matriculation at Merton College, Oxford, on the 20th of December of 1577 represented not so much a desire for education as a commitment to government service. Nor was it a commitment easily made, for plague raged at Oxford during the summer of 1577. Some 510 persons in and around Oxford died in little more than a month. Driven mad by the pain of the disease, victims turned on those who sought to aid them, broke from their homes to race through streets and marketplaces, and even sought to drown themselves to escape their suffering. This plague was especially frightening because it struck the well-born rather than the poor. Sir Robert Doily, High Sheriff of Oxford, whose widow would marry the elder Neville in 1579, died in this plague, as did his Under-sheriff, five knights of the county, two justices of the peace, and several members of the jury which had participated in the summer assize. The deaths of the jury members, along with the deaths of Sir Robert Bell, Baron of the Exchequer, and Sir Nicholas Barham, Serjeant at Law, both of whom were notorious persecutors of Catholic recusants, led to a general suspicion that divine will, or at least religious malevolence, had caused the disaster.

The plague had begun on July 6, the same day that the jury of the assize convicted one Rowland Jencks, an Oxford bookbinder who had

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shocked the community by the virulence of his attacks on the government and the newly established church, and by the strength of his defense of Catholicism. "Jencks was arraigned and condemned in the presence of a great number of people to lose his ears. Judgments being passed and the prisoner taken away there arose such an infectious damp or breath among the people, that many there present, to the apprehension of most men, were then smothered, and others so deeply infected that they lived no many hours after." Catholics were certain that God's just judgment had been visited upon those who persecuted his loyal followers, while Protestants suspected the Pope's vengeance behind the outbreak.

Saner heads attributed the plague to the release of prisoners carrying the disease from their cells. Whatever the cause, physicians, doctors, and heads of colleges fled the city, but to little avail, for no college or hall escaped sacrificing some of its members to the ravaging illness. In a "doleful ditty" published at the time, Death warned prospective scholars:

Think you on the solemn Simes past
How suddenly in Oxfordshire,
I came and made the judges all aghast
and Justices that did appear:
And tooke both Bell and Baram away,
and many a worthy man that day
And all their bodies brought to clay.
Think you that I dare not come to Schools,
where all the cunning Clerks be most;
Take not I away both Clerks and fools:
And am I not in every coast:
Assure yourselves no creature can
Make death afraid of any man,
Or know my coming where or when. 14

This was the Oxford to which Sir Henry Neville came in the winter of 1577. He has left no account of his year at Merton, but we can assume that the experience was not unpleasant, for his two brothers later attended Merton, as did two of his sons. And a grand son became assistant warden of Merton in the middle of the 17th century. When, in 1604, he accepted responsibility for the education of the sons of Sir Jonathon Trelawney, a deceased friend from Cornwall, he sent or sought to send them to Merton.15

At Merton his tutor was apparently Henry Saville, who later became warden of the college. As warden Saville addressed himself to improving the quality of lecturers. He appointed able men as lecturers and increased their pay. In 1619, he established the first English chair in geometry at Oxford. His brother Thomas was in contact with Johannes Kepler at a time when that noted astronomer was making his famous discoveries. With such a man as tutor, it is likely that Neville eschewed the rowdy and listless life condemned by William Harrison. Indeed, Neville and Saville remained close friends to the end of Neville's life, and Neville continued to turn to his former tutor for advice as late as 1613.16 That Neville gained much from his education can be deduced not only from his successful ambassadorial service, but from the circle of acquaintances that he later made for himself, a circle which included

15 Neville MSS. D/En/F7.
16 Neville MSS, D/En/F6/1.
Shakespeare's patron, the Earl of South Hampton, the architect Inigo Jones, and the poet Ben Jonson, who in 1615 dedicated an epigram to him.  

That he was sent to a college rather than a hall, and that the particular college was Merton, also indicated the seriousness of his endeavors. For even Harrison, who condemned the licentious living in the traditional medieval halls, noted with pride the contrast between life in the English colleges, and the housing of students abroad.

But in these our colleges we live in such exact order, and under so precise rules of government, as that the famous learned man Erasmus of Rotterdam being here among us 50 years past, did not let to compare the trades in living of students in these two places, even with the very rules and orders of the ancient monks: affirming moreover in flat words, our orders to be such as not only came near unto, but rather far exceeded all the monastical institutions that ever were devised.  

And Merton was unique among English colleges, founded in 1276 by Walter de Merton who had sought to establish a non-monastic institution to train religious scholars who were forbidden to take orders. He ordered the fellows there to maintain their corporate independence against all foreign encroachments, and that all should apply themselves to the study of the liberal arts before entering a


18 Holinshed, Chronicles, I, 251.
course leading to a degree in theology. He provided special chaplains to relieve the scholars of their usual ritual and ceremonial duties, and urged them to prepare themselves to serve the state. Thus G. C. Brodrick writes of Merton College:

As an institution for the promotion of academical education under collegiate discipline but secular guidance, it was the expression of a conception entirely new in England, which deserves special consideration, inasmuch as it became the model of all other collegiate foundations, and determined the future constitution of both English universities. In this Merton College is entitled to something more than precedence, for its founder was the real founder of the English college system.¹⁹

Thus Neville attended Merton in hopes of becoming a statesman rather than a man of the cloth, but his year there undoubtedly reinforced the strong protestant commitment taught him by his father.²⁰ In spite of a tendency for historians to depict Cambridge as the more radical of the two schools in religion, the fact is that Puritanism had a greater foothold at Oxford in 1577. It is true that we associate the Cambridge platonists with advanced ideas in religion, and that we can point to Campion and Parsons, who fled Oxford for the Catholic College at Douar. Indeed, during the reign of Mary, Catholic scholarship dominated Oxford University, and Merton College. But Elizabeth had purged Merton early in her reign. The leading Catholic


²⁰Garrett, *The Marian Exiles*, p. 235. Garrett says of the elder Neville, "In 1576 he was placed upon an ecclesiastical commission with Sir Anthony Cooke, which would rather indicate a puritan bias to his protestantism."
scholars, Tresham and Raynolds, were quickly dismissed in spite of their efforts to accommodate themselves to the new regime, Raynolds dying "in retirement, if not in prison, near Exeter." The issue came to a head in 1562 when a crown visitation rejected all the college's nominees for warden and, under the direction of Archbishop Parker, imposed the strong protestant, John Mann as warden. When a subwarden named Hall aroused the Catholic scholars against this infringement of Merton's traditional rights, he and his followers were driven out. "The example made at Merton was not lost upon other colleges and reactionary tendencies among the other fellows were successfully checked throughout the University." When Mann died in 1569, Archbishop Parker chose his own chaplain, Bickley, a Marian exile, as his successor. This stout protestant raised money in 1575 and again in 1579 so that the college could send aid to French Huguenots and "anti-Romanists." He also improved the financial management of the College and, with Elizabeth's encouragement, supported a literary revival at Merton. Indeed, Neville attended

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21 _Ibid._

22 _Ibid._, p 54.

23 _Ibid._, p. 56-59. "But Leicester had no intention of allowing Oxford to become a closed community, however hard he worked to free the University from excessive traditionalism. Thus in 1576, the year before Neville's matriculation, one Antonio de Coro arrived at Oxford with letters of recommendation from Leicester urging that Coro be permitted to incept D.D. without the expense of compounding for the lower degrees. Unfortunately, Coro had a reputation for unsoundness on the doctrine of predestination, and questions were raised about the legitimacy of his ordination and the Pelagian nature of some of his works. Such opposition deprived him from taking his degree, but it did not
Merton as it approached its zenith, and his tutor, Saville, made no small contribution to its rise.

The supreme position achieved by Christ Church towards the end of the eighteenth century and by Balliol in the middle of the nineteenth century, was won by Merton in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, under the Wardenship of Sir Henry Saville, and at the time when the founder of the Bodleian Library was a Fellow of the College.

Neville may have been as lax as other students in attending University lectures, but the loss was little, for the colleges had taken over many functions previously carried on by the University, providing better lectures than the University could. In addition, the printing press had made lectures unnecessary in many cases, and Mark Curtis argues that one should look to the libraries of the fellows and the treatises for tutors to get a true idea of educational life at Elizabethan Oxford.

Thus rather than attend the traditional university lectures which centered on Aristotelian logic, Neville doubtless spent his time attacking the books assigned him by his tutor, Saville. And Saville, having been influenced by the humanist approach emanating from Italy, probably assigned his student practical rather than theoretical readings. Unfortunately, we cannot be sure what Neville read, but Gabriel Harvey, writing in 1577, observed that Cambridge undergraduates read Castiglione's *The Courtier*, Philbert's *Philosopher* drive him from the University, for by 1578 he had become a lecturer in divinity at Merton College." Curtis, *Oxford and Cambridge*, pp. 212-13, Wood-Gutch, ii, 180,195.

of the Court, Guazzo’s C ivile Conversation, and Guicciardini’s La Historia d’Italia. In addition to these, he recommended to his protege, young Arthur Capel, who was to take over his father’s local duties in Hertfordshire, the reading of Sir John Cheke’s The Hurt of Sedition, (1549), Thomas Marshe’s Mirror for Magistrates (1559), Ascham’s Scholemaster, a pamphlet on Mary Queen of Scots, and any work by Ramus, Sturm, and Osorius. In general, reading for those not seeking degrees was concentrated on natural philosophy, classical history and literature (usually in translation), post-classical Latin literature, and modern history. But it was also directed to modern languages, travel, geography, practical morality, divinity, manners and courtesy, heraldry. Three characteristics distinguished these subjects from the regular curriculum. They were all practical, either immediately, or in terms of the student’s ultimate career; they were modern and presented aspects of contemporary thought; and they could be studied in the original English or in English translation. The intention was clear, and would have benefited Neville as much as Capel to whom his tutor Harvey wrote in 1577

"...In good sooth, my purpose is nothing else but this: I would have gentlemen to be conversant and occupied in those books especially, whereof they may have most use and practice, either for writing or speaking, eloquently or wittily, how or hereafter."

25 Ibid., p. 135.
26 Ibid., p. 132.
27 Ibid., p. 134, cited by Curtis from the undated letter from Harvey to Capel in Letterbook of Harvey, p. 167.
As a result of the plague, we have evidence that Oxford students studied such books during Neville's residence there. Professor Curtis has studied the inventories of libraries belonging to seventeen scholars, all of whom died while in residence at Oxford previous to 1614. He found histories: among them Bodin's *Methodus ad facilern historiarum cognitionem*, Guicciardini's *History of Italy*, Camden's *Britannia*, Comines' *Memoirs*, Buchanan's *Rerum Scoticarum Historia* and older chronicles. Humanist tracts appeared in more than one library. Among these tracts were Castiglione's *Courtier*, Elyot's *Governour*, Ascham's *Scholemaster*, and Guazzo's *Civile Conversation*. Even more practical were *The Mirror for Magistrates*, two books of the statutes of England, one handbook for justices of the peace, and Fortescue's *De Laudibus legum Angliae*. Finally, an interest in political theory was reflected by two copies of Sir Thomas Smith's *De republica Anglorum*, one of the *Vindicae contra tyrannos*, three copies of Bodin's *De republica*, four of Machiavelli's *The Prince*, and numerous copies of More's *Utopia*. 28

Finally, there was Peter Ramus, a most frequent figure in the libraries of scholars at Elizabethan Oxford. "From the year 1576 at the latest, Ramus's logic and many of his other works almost invariably appear among the books owned by Oxford men at their death..." 29

Ramus, a Parisian Master of Arts, had defended the thesis

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that everything Aristotle had said was false. Puritan scholars in the 16th and 17th century seized upon Ramus to do battle with the Aristotelian Church of England men. More important to undergraduates was the fact that Ramus had simplified and clarified logic and rhetoric, changing logic from a philosopher's tool to a means of studying poetry and guiding discourse. Logic became the way reason, exemplified in all forms of verbal communication.

Oxford provided practical tests of the scholar's ability to argue logically in its disputations. Attendance at these disputations, carried on by third and fourth year men, was required for two hours every Monday, Wednesday and Friday. At these disputations a respondent offered an answer, or interpretation, to a question. Opponents offered alternative answers and struck at the logic of the respondent. Finally a moderator summed up the arguments, pointed up fallacies of reasoning on both sides, called attention to interpretations overlooked or insufficiently dealt with, and sought to reconcile differences. He then bestowed praise or blame and decided who was the victor. These were not idle exercises. They performed the function now performed by debating societies in the English universities. They were often performed for visiting dignitaries. Indeed, such a public

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32 Ibid., p. 88-9.
disputation before Queen Elizabeth in 1592, provided, as we shall see, theoretical foreboding to the Essex rebellion of 1601.

It is more than likely that Neville did not remain at Oxford long enough to participate in disputations, but he certainly attended them and probably, as his later career shows, profited from them. That Neville left Oxford before taking a B.A. degree is no proof he was not a serious student. William Harrison argued that "long continuance in those places is either a sign of lack of friends, or of learning, or of good and upright life, as bishop Fox sometime noted, who thought it sacrilege for a man to tarry any longer at Oxford than he had a desire to profit."33

The year at Oxford had a profound influence on Neville. In the first place he gained a similarity of outlook with his fellows, which transcended geography and social class. Of the thirteen young men who matriculated at Oxford on December 20, 1577, only Neville identified himself 'equites', or knight. He was the only one from Berkshire. Eight of his fellows identified themselves as 'plebians', commoners.34

Merton apparently continued its traditional policy of providing twenty scholarships each year to students lacking the necessary money. As Curtis has put it

The universities, not being 'class schools, brought the sons of the gentry and nobility who attended them into contact with young men

33 Holinshed, Chronicle, I, 253.
from other social groups. Yeomen's sons and earls' sons, merchants' sons and the heirs of the landed gentry were all bred together in learning...All received something of the same slant on things. Nor did this community of feeling spring solely from the precarious memories of youthful association. The men who had been at the universities were bound together by an outlook and attitude which the common features of their education engendered. Although some of them might not complete the course for the B.A. and others might deviate from the usual course of studies to pursue particular personal interest, the basic training was founded on the classics of Greek and Roman literature, history and philosophy. From these they received many elements of a common code of conduct and morality. Into whatever calling or career they might then go, whether it be the Church, law, government, service, trade, finance, or the management of their estates, they carried with them at least these essential rudiments of a common culture...

In addition, the rigorous training in logic and rhetoric provided a sense of self-confidence and an eloquence in speech that J. E. Neale finds characteristic of the Elizabethan House of Commons.  

This self-confidence and eloquence was often denoted to the service of the Queen, to the promotion of royal policy in the two Houses of Parliament. But it could also be used to oppose royal policy. As Mark Curtis observes:

Because gentlemen opposed to the policy of the Crown could formulate their thoughts and feelings in well reasoned and cogent arguments, speeches, and protestations, their influence in the affairs of the realm mounted. Because they could draw on the distilled wisdom of more than one generation

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and on more than one tradition, they regarded
the arcana of statecraft with less awe and
gained a measure of the confidence needed to
stand their ground before an angry monarch..."37

In the eighteenth century, no Englishman of means considered his
education complete until he had completed the "Grand Tour" of the con-
tinent. This attitude had its origin in the age of Elizabeth, though
it was not then accepted without qualification. There were good
reasons not to make the Tour. In the first place, the expense of a
continental trip limited it to the very well to do. Robert Dallington
estimated that a proper tour, including a tutor and servants would
cost 150L a month.

There were those, like Harrison, who saw greater danger to the
character of a youth, than to his purse, in foreign travel, especially
if that travel was to Italy.

This nevertheless is generally to be reprehended
in all estates of gentility, and which in short
time will turn to the great ruin of our country,
and that is the usual sending of noblemen's and
mean gentlemen's sons into Italy, from whence
they bring home nothing, but mere atheism, in-
fidelity, vicious conversation, and ambitious
and proud behaviour, whereby it cometh to pass
that they return far worse men than they went
out.38

Harrison said he knew of three men, good protestants when they
left England, whose religious faith had been destroyed by their travels
in Italy. One had come to believe that religious precepts were to be

37 Curtis, Oxford and Cambridge, p. 269-270.
38 Holinshed, Chronicle, I 273.
observed only if they hindered no further purpose; the golden rule for example, was to be maintained only "when full revenge is made." The second called any man a fool who was willing to risk his fortune for his religious faith. But worst was the third man who returned to avow the arguments of Machiavelli. "I care not what you talk to me of God, so as I may have the prince and the laws of the realm on my side." 39

Robert Dallington expressed the same fear that travel might threaten religious belief. "Not to alter his first faith. Wherefore if my traveller will keep this bird safe in his bosom, he must neither be inquisitive after other men's religions, no prompt to discover his own." 40 Nevertheless, Dallington favored travel. "Base and vulgar spirits hover still about home; those are more noble and divine that imitate the heavens and joy in motion." For by the time that he wrote in 1598, it had become clear that such travel was the duty of a man who intended to serve his country. The traveller must "determine that the end of his travel is his ripening in knowledge, and the end of his knowledge is the service of his country, which of right challengeth the better part of us." 41 The matter was no longer in dispute, for the Queen had spoken in favor of travel abroad. Indeed, the government even subsidized the tour of selected gentlemen for

39 Holinshed, Chronicle, 1, 274. (Harrison)
41 Ibid.
whom it had great hopes. Bacon, writing in the reign of James to Villiers, claimed that

"There were always sent forth into several parts beyond the seas some young men of whom good hopes were conceived of their towardliness, to be trained up, and made fit for such public employments, and to learn the languages. This was at the charge of the queen, which was not much; for they travelled but as private gentlemen, and as by their industry their deserts did appear, so were they further employed or rewarded."  

Travel was for education, especially in the young, and not for pleasure. The traveller should know in advance the language of the country, should keep company with a competent tutor, should carry a good guidebook, and should keep a diary of his itinerary.

The things to be seen and observed are, the courts of princes, specially when they give audience to ambassadors; the courts of justice, while they sit and hear causes; and so of consistories ecclesiastic; the churches and monasteries, with the monuments which are therein extant; the walls and fortifications of cities and towns, and so the havens and harbours; antiquities and ruins; libraries; colleges, disputations, and lectures, where any are; shipping and navies; houses and gardens of state and pleasure, near great cities; armories; arsenals; magazines; exchanges; burses; warehouses; exercises of horsemanship, fencing, training of soldiers, and the like; comedies, such whereunto the better sort of persons do resort; treasuries of jewels and robes; cabinets and rarities; and, to conclude, whatsoever is memorable in the places where they go. After all which the tutors or servants ought to make diligent inquiry.


43 Francis Bacon, Works, 11, 138.
Henry Neville embarked on the Grand Tour in the year 1578. If he kept a diary of his journey, it has not survived. The evidence about his tour is meagre and indirect. It consists of three letters in the Sidney Papers to Robert Sidney, who happened to make the tour at approximately the same time that Neville did, two of them from his father Sir Henry Sidney, and one from his brother, Sir Philip Sidney. In addition, Dr. Rowse has recently discovered an unpublished diary kept by Arthur Throckmorton, son of Sir Nicholas Throckmorton, who also came into contact with Neville on various occasions. From these sources one can glean enough information to learn something of the duration and itinerary of Neville's tour. More important, one gains from them a sense that contemporaries saw Neville as a young man of much promise, likely to do well in government service. He left for the continent sometime in 1578. On October 28 of that year Sir Henry Sidney wrote to his younger son Robert

"...I hear well of you and the Company you keep, which is of great comfort to me. To be of noble parentage, usually raises an Emulation to follow their great Examples, there can be no greater Love than of Long time hath been, and yet is, between Sir Harry Neville and me; and so will continue till our lives end. Love you those we have done and do. One thing I warn you of: arrogate no Precedency neither of your Countrymen nor of Strangers; but take your place promiscues, with others, according to your Degree and Birthright, with Aliens. Follow your discreet and virtuous Brother's Rule, who with great Discreton to his great Commendation won Love, and could variously ply Ceremony with Ceremony...""
It is not clear where Sidney and Neville were at this juncture, but it seems likely that they were in France or the Low Countries, the usual beginning for a Grand Tour. Robert's "discreet and virtuous" brother Philip later echoed his father's recommendation of Neville. Apparently, by 1580 Robert had gotten into financial difficulties, and neither father nor brother was entirely pleased with the results of his tour; both advised that he emulate his compatriots, Saville and Neville, who apparently traveled together. Thus in October of 1580 Philip wrote "...I have written to Mr. Savell, I wish you kept still together, he is an excellent man: and there may if you list pass good exercises betwixt you and Mr. Nevell, there is great expectation of you both." In concluding the letter Sir Philip urged his brother to commend him to Saville and Neville, apparently expecting them to meet soon. This meeting was confirmed by another letter from Sidney, who wrote to his younger son in late 1580 or early 1581 to admonish him for his excessive expenditures and to threaten him with an abrupt end to his journey should he fail to "frame his charges." He also expressed fears that Robert was neglecting his studies and regreted that he had not remained at Oxford longer. He again urged that he emulate his brother. The one note of pleasure was, again, that he had been in contact with Saville and Neville. "...I here you are fallen into Consort and Fellowship with Sir Harry Neville's son and heir and one Mr. Saville. I here singular virtues of them both.

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I am glad of you familiaritie with them...\textsuperscript{46} Apparently, at this time Robert was in Prague, contemplating trips to Vienna and to Strasbourg, both of which his father approved. And Throckmorton's diary indicates also that Neville was then travelling in eastern Europe.

On the 7th of September Throckmorton noted his arrival at Nuremberg, where he met with another group of Englishmen that included Robert Sidney, Henry Neville, Henry Saville, a Pelham, a Carew and a Smyth.\textsuperscript{47} By early November the whole group had journeyed to Prague, governed at that time by the homosexual Rudolph II. In Prague they boarded for 20 dollars a month with a Signor Scipioni of Ferrara. Sidney, Neville, and Throckmorton had some sort of falling out with their host toward the end of their stay, in March of 1580-1.\textsuperscript{48}

The group broke up and left Prague in April. They headed for the forbidden land, Italy, where they apparently spent the summer. Throckmorton went to Venice. Neville's exact movements are not clear, but he met Throckmorton again at Padua in August.\textsuperscript{49} They did not, however, stay together. Throckmorton remained in Venice where he continued to correspond with Neville, who was apparently not far distant.\textsuperscript{50} By December Throckmorton was on his way home alone, and

\textsuperscript{46} Ibid., 1, 246.

\textsuperscript{47} A. L. Rowse, Ralegh and the Throckmortons (London, 1962), p. 84.

\textsuperscript{48} Ibid., p. 86.

\textsuperscript{49} Ibid., p. 90.

\textsuperscript{50} Ibid., p. 92.
we lose our fleeting contact with Henry Neville's continental tour. When Neville returned to England is unknown. We are only certain that he was back by the fall of 1584 when, at the age of 22, he first took a seat in parliament.

Oxford and the Grand Tour were important to Henry Neville's career. In the first place it is clear that Neville was a serious student. Although he stayed at Oxford for only one year, he probably remedied the defects of a brief stay there by traveling for three years with Henry Saville. Both the Sidneys and Throckmorton tended to pair Saville and Neville together in their communications. Saville had matriculated at Brasenose College, Oxford in 1561, and four years later was elected a fellow of Merton College. He graduated B.A. in January of 1566 and took an M.A. in May of 1570. At Merton he gave volunteer lectures on mathematics and was elected a junior proctor for two years. He left Merton to begin his tour in 1578, the same year that Neville did. He, too, returned before 1584. The relationship begun at Merton College blossomed in later years, and several warm letters survive between Neville and Saville. When in 1604 Neville became guardian of the sons of Sir Jonathon Trelawney, he sent them to Merton, and placed them under Saville's special care. When Neville needed legal advice, he repeatedly turned to Saville and was able to repay the aid by political favors. Thus, there is solid

51 Ibid., p. 94
52 Dictionary of National Biography, XVII, 856.
evidence that Saville may have travelled with Neville in some sense as a tutor. Even if their relationship was not that close, there can be no doubt that they planned their tours to coincide and were in frequent contact with one another, so that Neville must certainly have benefited from Saville's knowledge. Whether Neville was with him when Saville "made the acquaintance of the most eminent scholars of his time, and collected a number of manuscripts" we shall probably never know.53

In 1585, Saville became warden of Merton College, thanks partly to a letter of support signed both by Walsingham and Burghley. In 1592 he entertained the Queen there. Later he participated in preparing the Authorized Version of the Bible, and he founded in 1619 the first chair in Geometry at Merton. Such a man was unlikely to suffer fools as close friends. Neville was no country bumpkin.54

Henry Neville had enjoyed the standard education of the Elizabethan landed aristocracy. It was an education designed to prepare a man to serve his queen. But disputations at Oxford and the Grand Tour of the Continent developed in a man independence, judgment, and courage, qualities especially valuable for service in foreign courts and for leadership in English parliaments. But the education which prepared men to forward policies of Queen Elizabeth, which they believed would benefit their religion, their class, and their nation, also prepared them to stand against James I when they concluded that his policies

53 DNB, XVII, 856; Brodrick, Merton College, p. 61.
54 DNB, XVII, 856.
endangered those interests.  

Neville's formal education ended with his return from the continent. His apprenticeship began with his election in November of 1584 to Elizabeth's eighth parliament. His father came out of retirement to sit for the county of Berkshire, and young Henry took his seat for the borough of New Windsor, whose constituents doubtless considered themselves honoured to have the son of the local scion representing them.

Henry Neville served in a most inconspicuous manner in the 1584 Parliament. Sir Symonds D'Ewes' *Journals of the Elizabethan House of Commons* reveal little involvement on the part of the younger Neville. In the parliaments of 1584-5, and of 1586-7, his name does not appear at all. Apparently he did not even serve on a committee. It is true that his father served on ten committees, including one that met with the House of Lords to discuss the Bill of Jesuits and the subsidy bill. Sir Henry Neville performed his duties and stayed until the parliament was prorogued in March. Doubtless his son stayed too and learned first hand of parliament's concern to present religious

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55 J. H. Hexter even argues that Englishmen such as Francis Walsingham were already making a distinction between service to the state and service to the sovereign. Hexter, *Reappraisals in History*, 70; Conyers Read, *Sir Francis Walsingham* (Oxford, 1925), 1, 18-20.

56 *Sir Simonds D'Ewes, The Journals of All the Parliaments During the Reign of Queen Elizabeth* (1682), p. 352.

upheaval and detect plots of assassination against the queen. The younger Neville was only twenty-two, so that his invisibility was hardly surprising. His more renowned contemporary, Francis Bacon, did make his maiden speech during this parliament, and for his audacity earned a reputation as a prig.  

In the parliament of 1586-7 the younger Neville sat for New Windsor once again. This parliament sanctioned sending Mary Stuart to the block and exhibited a strong Puritan bias, but no record exists of participation by Henry Neville or his father.  

The Parliament of 1588 begins to give us some idea of the benefits that Neville hoped to gain from membership in parliament. New Windsor again elected him one of its representatives, but he chose instead to sit for the county of Sussex. Sometime between 1586 and 1588 he had moved out of his father's house with his new wife Anne, to establish himself in the mansion of Mayfield, a palace that had once belonged to Cardinal Wolsey, and had come to the Neville family in 1579 on the death of Sir John Gresham, uncle to Henry's mother Elizabeth. The palace, begun in 1350, was located in the center of Sussex, and had been a favorite residence of the Archbishops of Canterbury, until


60 *Sessional Papers*, XLII, 422, 425 R.R., Tighe and Davis in *The Annals of Windsor* argue that Edward Neville was Sir Henry's cousin rather than his brother, and that he failed to sit for the parliament as his father died before the session began and he moved to the House of
turned over to Henry VIII by Cranmer in 1545. It was then purchased by Sir John Gresham. Of sufficient quality apparently to attract a visit from Queen Elizabeth in 1571, it is little wonder that the palace, and the £6000 of land that accompanied it, made Neville very quickly the leading man in the district and the representative of the county. 61

His Sussex inheritance also brought Neville into contact with a new type of man, the man who had fought his way to wealth and social respectability in the competitive world of iron mongering. 62

During the reign of Elizabeth the iron industry continued to expand, to the great enrichment of the country; many families through its aid rose from the yeomanry to the ranks of the gentry, as the Fowles, the Fullers, and the Frenches, which many of the great landowners, the Carrylls, Pelhams, Nevilles, and others, added to their wealth.

While a man of Neville's stature certainly never worked the forges himself, his county leadership certainly brought him into contact with poorer men who shared the good fortune of finding iron on their lands, who developed the strength and skill to hammer the

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63 VCH Sussex, II, 247.
the dross out of iron ore and mould it into fine cannon.\(^{64}\) Neville also found himself allied with men of more prominence, such as Thomas Sackville, Lord Buckhurst, who was to become the Queen's Treasurer. Men of such diverse backgrounds were forced to ally with one another against strong criticism of the iron industry of Sussex.

In the first place, there were numerous complaints about the effect of carrying iron and charcoal on the already bad roads of Sussex. These complaints led to a law requiring all persons carrying such commodities between October and May to carry one load of "cinder, gravel, stone, sand or chalk meet for the repairing or amending of the said highways" for every six loads of charcoal and iron.\(^{65}\)

Furthermore, many objected to the impact of the trade on sixteenth century English ecology. No less a figure than Archbishop Parker had written in 1570 to Queen Elizabeth to complain of the iron works as a plague, "if it shall come into the county, I fear it will breed much grudge and desolation."\(^{66}\) Fears that the Sussex forest would be depleted to feed the iron furnaces led to legislation in 1585 to limit the industry.

Whereas by the overgreat negligence or number of iron works which have been and yet are in the wilds of Sussex, Surrey, and Kent, it is thought that the great plenty of timber which hath grown in those parts hath been greatly

\(^{64}\) Lower, "Iron Works," pp. 201-1.

\(^{65}\) Ibid., p. 192.

\(^{66}\) Ibid., p. 187.
decayed and spoiled, and will in short be utterly consumed and wasted, if some convenient remedy not be timely provided... therefore, forbids the erection of any manner of iron mills, furnace, finary, or iron metal, except upon ancient sites.  

A quick witted surveyor defended the iron mongers arguing that the cutting of trees not only increased pasturage and farmland, but also improved the character of the inhabitants as "people bred among woods are more stubborn and uncivil, then in the Champion Countries."  

More serious was the antagonism of the merchants of London, who in September of 1572 had procured a proclamation restricting the exports to that of a minion, in order to prevent such guns being used by the Spanish against their own ships. The Sussex founders apparently continued exports illegally, for in 1587 the earl of Warwick, master of the Ordnance, dispatched one Mr. Blincoe, and gentlemen of his, into Sussex to summon up all the gun founders of the county to London "to understand his pleasure respecting their further continuance of the manufacture." The leader of the ensuing Sussex delegation to London was Henry Neville.  

The Lords of the Council had referred complaints of illegal transport of ordnance to Warwick, who now applied pressure to the men of Sussex. 

They had as they said upon good advice set downe a general rate yearly which should serve the whole realm, and out of that they

67 Ibid., p. 192.
68 Ibid., p. 193.
69 Ibid., pp. 202-4.
were content to allot unto any of us a certain quantity. But at our hand they required that we should that we should enter into sure bondes as they should think good not to cast any greater quantity then should be allotted unto us, not to sell any but in this city, nor to any merchant but such as my Lord or his Deputy should name us, with certain other conditions of taking a stamp for all our pieces, out of the office and some other small points."

Ever the patriot, Neville could appreciate the danger and accepted all the limitations, save one. Why should he be required to sell to only one merchant, presumably at a fixed and low rate? He offered instead to notify Warwick of the name of the merchant to whom he sold his ordnance so that the office of the ordnance could take his bond against illegal sale overseas. This offer being rejected, Neville suggested that he might sell his pieces on open market on Tower Hill, and himself enter into any bonds necessary not to sell to any who was "not a natural born citizen or a denison." This offer Blincoe accepted.

But for reasons unknown the following day Blincoe informed Neville that the offer must be rejected. As a result Neville ceased founding ordnance for some time, until, finding that his neighbors continued in the trade, even in excess of their quotas, he returned to the trade. "I ventured also to cast some small quantity as they in our conference had allotted me"...for which a warrant had been forwarded against him. Neville sensed the sinister hand of the monopolist in all this and reacted as his father had done, by appealing to

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70 Lansdowne MSS, 65, no. 27, f. 70.
71 Ibid., no 22, f. 70.
their common patron, William Cecil, now Lord Burghley. His words were couched in humility and patriotic concern for the welfare of the queen, but they ring with the frustration of youthful ambition.

I beseech the good Lo: therefore to consider of my case, and judge of my offers if for my part it be thought good for the state that no ordance be made I desire to make none, but if there by any allowed I desire that I may make some as well as another, offering care I hope I do sufficient security to prevent the abuse of transportation; for this restraining us to a merchant of their choice i for my part do greatly fear that it tend rather to some private benefit rather than to the public good. And I have some cause to be suspicious of such a matter, because heretofore when I had made suit to my Lord for his liscense, and he had granted it and reserved me for the dispatching of it to one Gisen? That then was his deputy; which? I had planely told me that I should have no liscense unless I would give my Lord 40 shillings upon (date illegible) which I then refused, and I hope may do still... 

For once, the self effacing close traditional in such letters had the ring of truth to it. "...I do most humbly recommend my cause and myself wholly to your Lordship, as upon whom I do and will only rely for favor both in this and all other my occasion beseeching your Lordship, to stand my good Lord in this matter and I shall rest in all humility at your Lordship's continued command."  

We do not know if Neville's letter had the desired effect. He and his father continued to write Burghley, rather than Essex, when they needed help, but this may only indicate a common sense estimate

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72 Ibid.
73 Ibid.
of who was the more powerful of the two, rather than evidence that this first letter had produced results. Some evidence of a favorable reception does appear in a letter from Thomas Lord Buckhurst to Sir Robert Cecil, written in December of 1596. Having heard that the deputies of the States had requested the grant of certain demiculverins, Buckhurst argued against the grant, first because "the Queen is much abused by such a suit", but also because the patentees "Whose whole interest is now in Mr. Neville and my son, being to suffer great prejudice thereby, I do propose to move her Majesty therein for the stay of the grant thereof." In the past the States had sold such ordnance to ruin the market for those, like his son and Neville, who sold smaller pieces. He concluded by requesting a hearing from the Queen before she should sign such a grant.74

There is no question the "Mr. Nevel" was Henry Neville of Mayfield, for there are five letters concerning the sale of iron ordnance in the Neville Papers, letters from Robert Sackville himself and from Neville's associate, Abraham Jones, describing the delivery of the pieces.75 Neville's relationship with Sackville was apparently that of wholesaler to the retailer. And Neville was in no sense a junior partner, for Sackville requested in one letter the extension of credit on his purchases.76 Thus, with or without Burghley's help

74 *HMS Salisbury MSS, V, p. 505.
75 *Neville MSS, D/En/023.
76 Ibid.
Neville seems to have cornered the market on the sale of small ordnance in Sussex.

The prominence of young Neville in Sussex is beyond doubt. And, at last, in 1588, he appeared as an active participant in parliament. But in that parliament, held under the shadow of war and the Spanish armada, we do not find Neville dealing with any of the major issues of the day. Not only did he apparently not speak on the unprecedented request by the Queen for a double subsidy, he was not included in a grand committee of 100 members, to include at least one knight from every shire, to debate the issue. Nor did he speak on the bills attacking corruption in the Exchequer and in the use of purveyances, both popular issues in the House.\(^77\) It is less surprising to find him failing to speak on the religious issues raised by the Martin Marprelate Tracts, for while the audacious puritans might raise questions in parliament above the religious settlement, the more conservative Neville, however he might sympathize, was unlikely to challenge the queen's admonition against such discussion.\(^78\)

It was private interest, not public debate, that finally brought Neville to the attention of his colleagues. For sometime in February he had introduced a Bill for the assurance of the Jointure of his wife Anne. This was a somewhat unusual procedure. Normally a jointure, or guarantee of the widow's inheritance, was made "at the church


\(^78\) \textit{Ibid.}, pp. 216-233.
door," before the marriage, to assure the bride's father that his daughter would be taken care of. But Henry Neville had married Anne Killigrew five years before, in December of 1584. She was the daughter of Sir Henry Killigrew, who was a close friend of the Queen and had performed numerous military and diplomatic duties in her behalf. He had, for example, relieved Walsingham during his illness at Paris in 1572. There, he witnessed the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre, which no doubt intensified his already strong puritan sympathies. Such a man must no doubt have received a satisfactory marriage arrangement in 1584, and the apparent motive for the jointure in 1589 was Neville's manipulations of his Sussex lands. He had made conveyances of the manors of Weighfield and Wadhurst, among others, and sought now to void them, in order to guarantee clear title to the properties to his wife. The committee formed to consider the measure included his close friend Saville, and an equally ambitious young M.P., Francis Bacon. The bill had passed a second reading on the 22 of February. By the 25th the bill, amended at Bacon's request on technical grounds, was ingrossed by parliament. The bill received its third reading on the 4 of March and was sent on to the Lords, from

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80 Sir Simonds D'Ewes, Journals of the Parliaments of Elizabeth, p. 438.

81 Ibid., p. 438.
whence it returned on the 10 of March, with an admonition protecting
the Queen. The two houses required the holders of indentures and
conveyances on the property in question to deliver them, sealed, to the
Clerk of the Parliament, so that they might be held for the queen's
decision. 82 The Queen did cancel the deeds on May 12 of 1589, clear-
ing title of the land for Anne, and making Henry Neville's. third ven-
ture into the House of Commons a profitable one. 83

Sir Henry Neville died in January of 1592, just over a month
before the meeting of Elizabeth's next parliament on the 19 of Febru-
ary 1593. Apparently, his death was not unexpected, for young Henry
Neville, and his younger brother Edward, took both the seats for New
Windsor. 84 Considering the problems involved in readying the estate
for a thorough inventory of his father's property and the difficulties of moving from Mayfield back to Billingbear, the likelihood is
that neither even attended this parliament, which lasted less than
two months. 85 There is no mention of either Neville in D'Ewes's
Journal.

Indeed, Neville's next two years appear to have been dominated
by his efforts to establish his right to the inheritance of his
father's social predominance, as well as of his lands. This was no

82 Ibid., pp. 444-5.
83 Ibid., pp. 445.
84 Sessional Papers, XLII, 4.
85 Neville MSS, D/En/F42/F43.
small matter, for his step-mother Elizabeth, who had married Sir Henry during a fight for her first husband's Oxfordshire properties, now instituted a suit in the court of Chancery to prevent the younger Neville from gaining control of the manors of Wargrave, Warfield, and Culham, which she claimed by right of a jointure made the 13th of May, 1579, when she married Sir Henry. In spite of the jointure and in spite of her efforts to make a peaceable settlement, Henry Neville had, she pleaded, "made diverse and sundry entries" into the manors and had "usurped, entered and encroached upon the said franchises, liberties and hereditants meant to be conveyed to your said suppliant." Not only had he unlawfully "chased and hunted" within those manors, he had also set up his own manorial court at Lawrence Waltham and forced her tenants to do homage to him rather than to her, although there had traditionally been no court held there. When two of her tenants dwelling in Wargrave tried to resist, Neville had taken common law action against one and seized the plow horses of the second, forcing each to pay a fine of 40 shillings. Lately Neville had begun to hold court leets at Wargrave, and had made charge of trespass against her bailiff when he tried to enforce her rights in the manor. "(l)t appreareth that the said Henry Neville meaneth unjustly to vex not only your Lordship's said suppliant contrary to all right, equity and good conscience." Nor had he allowed her to receive "knowledge money" as recognition of her lordship over the lands. His actions were entirely "contrary to the true interest and meaning of the fore-said indenture." Normally she would, of course, have appealed to the common law, but Neville had, unfortunately, seized all the relevant
documents with which she might make a case, so that her appeal could only be to the chancellor. Thus did Elizabeth Neville make her case in four large and closely written pages.

In less than a page Neville responded, admitting no wrong doing, but denying none of his step-mother's charges. "(T)he bille of complaint is insufficient in the law and importeth no matter of equity sufficient for the complainant to maintain suit in this honorable court..." In the first place, this was a common law matter that had no place in Chancery. Secondly, it was true that he held the "evidence, court rolls, court books, rental books of survey and other writings." But as heir to his father, the documents were his "property...being in his own custody and he is not compellable in any law of equity to deliver his ancient evidence to his adversary, in order that she might maintain suit and title against him." He had over-ridden his father's jointure with apparent impunity. But in seizing his father's estates and in claiming the lordship of Wargrave, Warfield, and Culham, he also took upon himself the responsibilities that went with them. He clearly thought of himself as continuing his father's authority rather than breaking with it. At the same time he kept alive the valuable alliances at court that the elder Neville had won. Thus in February, 1594, he wrote to Burghley in behalf of one John Dolman, "who in my father's time took the pains to keep court under him for the Chace of Donnington, and doth now continue to do the like for me."

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86 PRO/C/3/246/6.
87 Ibid.
Joan Wheeler, a widow, had petitioned Burghley to the effect that Dolman had wrongfully granted a reversion of a copyhold to one Thomas Head, which by right belonged to her. Burghley, in turn, had warned Dolman to "do her justice therein that she might not have cause to renew her complaint." "For answer whereunto, because the matter doth rather concern my father and myself, than who was but a deputy in the office, I have made bold to offer unto your lordship a true relation of the matter as it stands...." Actually, related Neville, Joan Wheeler's husband had died childless, and the elder Neville, under direct instructions from Burghley, had granted a reversion for two lives to one Cecill, who had in turn sold his interest to Head and his son. Since her husband's death Joan Wheeler had continued to hold court on the manor, the customary right of the widow, but at the last court, held on Michaelmas day past, it had been proven that she had remarried and thus forfeited the rights of the widow. Thus Head was justified in claiming, and Dolman in granting, his reversion. Furthermore, her claim that the next of kin had a right to the hold by custom of the manner was both false and dangerous. "...I hope your Lordship will not Disavow this grant to Cecill from him to Head, being made by my father upon your lordship's own letter and commandment." 

By 1595 Neville had established himself locally as successor to his father's reputation, as well as his lands. He was chosen sheriff of Berkshire in that year. And by that year he had also made a new friend at court in Sir Thomas Windebanck, Clerk of the Signet. In

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88 Lansdowne MSS, 76, no.32, p. 67.
February he wrote to Windebanck thanking him for his "great love and favor" in helping to settle a Mr. Chambers in Berkshire. He was prevented from visiting Windebanck personally first by the assizes and then by some service required of him by the judges.

It is not clear what office Neville held during this period; only that his family name and ties at court brought him tasks of responsibility. That he was serving faithfully is suggested by the fact that in April of 1596 Lord Norreys inserted his name in a new list of Deputy Lieutenants for the county. Sir Henry Unton and Sir William Knollys had been appointed to the office in 1593, when the elder Neville died. Unton had since died, the elder Knollys was ill, and Sir Thomas Parry recommended Knollys's son and Sir Humphrey Forster as their replacement. But Norreys, who was the Lord Lieutenant of the County added Henry Neville to the list, "praying that the other knights nominated may not be disgraced." The appointment of Neville, who possessed no knighthood, to such a position no doubt raised the eyebrows of his contemporaries. But the lack of a knighthood was no reflection on his standing. Elizabeth simply was not generous, in marked contrast to her favorite and her successor, in the handing out of honors.

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80 PRO SP/12/247/93.

80 Privy Council documents that might throw light on the matter are missing from August 25, 1593 to October 1, 1595 and the assize records for Berkshire were destroyed by fire in 1700. Felix Hull, Records of the Berkshire Record Office, p. 70.

81 APC XXIV, 31.

82 HMS Salisbury MSS (20 April 1496) 149.
As Justice of the Peace and Deputy Lieutenant, Neville carried out the social policy of the Elizabethan monarchy, reporting to the Council a wrong doing done by Francis Hamond, the under sheriff of Berks to one Edmond Grove, protecting an honest clothier in Newbury from his voracious creditors, and protecting the interests of the poor kindred of John Hunt of Ham whose inheritance had been thwarted by the deceased man's wife and executors. Yet we have hints that Neville's attention was slowly turning from local affairs to those at the center of national attention, at court. Since the death of his father he had been formally introduced at court, apparently by Sir Robert Cecil, Lord Burghley's son. The bright promises that Sir Henry Sidney had forseen so many years before seemed on the verge of coming to pass with the support of men such as Windebank, Cecil, Norreys, and his father-in-law Killigrew. Suggestions that this might be the case begin to appear with the parliament of 1587.

One would expect to find Neville in his usual seat at New Windsor, the seat he had held in three of the four previous parliaments, and that his brother had held in 1588, when Henry sat for Sussex. Instead

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93 APC, (1596-97) XXVI, 211.
94 APC, (1597-98) XXVIII, 19.
95 APC, (1598-9) XXVIII, 32.
97 Amos Calvin Miller, Sir Henry Killigrew: Elizabethan Soldier and Diplomat (Leicester, 1963), p. 222.
those safe seats were held by Sir Julius Caesar, a member of the Queen's privy council, and John Norreys, son of the Lord who had intervened to gain Neville's appointment as deputy lieutenant. Henry Neville appeared unexpectedly far to the west in Cornwall, in the borough seat of Liskeard. Why was he there instead of representing his usual constituency at New Windsor?

In the first place, he had personal connections in Cornwall to guarantee him a seat there. Henry had married in 1584 the eldest daughter of Sir Henry Killigrew who, in addition to his services in behalf of the queen, was prominent in Cornwall. Killigrew's second daughter Elizabeth had married Sir Jonathon Trelawney. The three families had much in common. The Killigrews and the Trelawneys, like the Nevilles had stood for protestantism in the teeth of the Marian reaction. Old Sir Henry Killigrew had fled to the continent as had Sir Henry Neville. Even before the Marian period, the Trelawneys had benefited from the suppression of the prayer book rebellion in Cornwall in 1548-9. As a result of the rebellion and its suppression they had added to their property. Apparently a warm family relationship developed, for when Sir Jonathon Trelawney died in 1604 he named Neville the chief executor of his will, putting his young sons under his wardship. It was an arduous task and Neville's correspondence on the matter is second in quantity only to his diplomatic correspondence. Trelawney had been high steward for Liskeard, and this

98 *Sessional Papers.*

position traditionally gave its holder the right to choose the boroughs members for parliament. And in 1597 Neville's colleague at Liskeard was Sir Jonathon's son (brother) Edward. And when Elizabeth came to power, and four Justices of the Peace unsympathetic to the new religious order were returned, they were replaced with four protestant sympathizers, including John Trelawney and William Killigrew.

But there was another connection between Trelawney and Neville; a mutual regard for the wishes of Sir Robert Cecil. In 1601 as England prepared for its last parliament under Elizabeth, Trelawney wrote to Cecil, "I am bold now again to present you with two burgess-ships for this parliament." Obviously Trelawney had made the same offer in 1597. According to A. L. Rowse "no doubt the seats in question were those of the neighboring little borough of West Looe..."; but, A. L. Rowse notwithstanding, there is plenty of doubt. We know that Trelawney was high steward of Liskeard and that he probably had the right to fill the two seats there. Sir John Neale believes, though he states his case more moderately, that at least one of the seats in question was indeed at Liskeard, the seat held by Henry Neville.

To make sense of the situation one must take a closer look at the

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103 Rowse, *Tudor Cornwall*, p. 94.
elections of 1597, for they introduce a new and ominous element into English politics: the naked use of political influence in the modern, corrupting sense. The instigator of this new development was the Earl of Essex. 105

The Puritans had, of course, organized politically in previous parliaments most notably in 1588, but their organization was intended to arouse support for a cause, not for a man. "The Puritans had a parliamentary program; and their electioneering—whatever it amounted to—was truly modern in its purpose. We need not, and should not, attribute the same precocity to the Essex group...The presence of a well knit group of the Earl's adherents in the parliament of 1587 was a guarantee that—to quote once more a catholic stricture on Leicester—'nothing passes in parliament...that he dislikes.'" The campaign netted some thirty members, who might well have supported the earl. Twelve of them were friends and relatives; another eighteen were knights past and future that he had or would create. 106 This was still not as many as he had hoped. For the failure of his electioneering efforts there were two causes: Essex's absence on an ill fated expedition to the Azores and the opposition of Sir Robert Cecil.

Cecil apparently realized late in the day what Essex was doing, too late in many instances for him to assure that his proteges gained seats. "He...certainly employed new election tactics; or perhaps

105 Ibid., pp. 229-31.
106 Ibid., p 231.
it would be more accurate to say, he revived the tactics of Henry VIII's minister, Thomas Cromwell.\textsuperscript{107} Thus, he used his traditional patronage in the Duchy of Lancaster. In addition, he wrote letters to a number of boroughs asking for nomination.

The novel device to which Cecil had recourse was the transfer of nominations from other borough patrons to himself. Lord Cobham, Cecil's brother-in-law and a principal enemy of Essex, gave Cecil a nomination at New Romney. Then, a distant relative by marriage, one Jonathon Trelawney of Poole, Cornwall, presented him with either one or two seats in that county---certainly one at Liskeard.\textsuperscript{108}

With the addition of other seats, and his father's ample patronage, Cecil created a strong party in the House of Commons of 1597. Henry Neville was one of that party.

It could hardly be said that Neville was important in the parliament of 1597, but at least he was clearly present and active. He sat on only six committees during the proceedings, most of them typically dealing with affairs of purely local interest, such as a bill for the sale of lands of John Sharp and a bill for the prevention of horse stealing.\textsuperscript{109} Although he sat for a Cornish borough, he was appointed to a committee "for the establishing of the Town Lands of Wanting in the County of Berks to the relief of the poor, amendments of highways, and maintaining of a School-Master within the Town of Wanting aforesaid..."\textsuperscript{110} He was also named to a committee dealing with the "Reformation of sundry abuses committed by soldiers and others", for which

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{107} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 231.
  \item \textsuperscript{108} \textit{Ibid.}, pp. 231-2.
  \item \textsuperscript{109} D'Ewes, \textit{Journal}, p. 558.
  \item \textsuperscript{110} \textit{Ibid.}, pp. 554-5.
\end{itemize}
he had been well prepared by his experience as a deputy-lieutenant. And it was very likely his work as a justice of the peace that led to his appointment to a committee concerned with the "great charge and burden on the subject of the realm by having to maintain sundry sort of armour and weapons." But by far the most important committee upon which he sat dealt with the problems of monopolies and patents of privilege. This committee might have threatened the Queen's prerogative had Elizabeth not defused its search by joining in the attack upon the monopolists. She ordered the committee to seek information against the abuse so that she might punish the offenders herself. Thus, while Neville's participation in this parliament was limited, especially when compared with his extensive involvement in the parliaments of the early years of James I, he must, as a client of Robert Cecil, have gained much insight into the workings of parliament, the techniques of getting things done.

In any case, his eyes were directed elsewhere, toward advancement at court. He was already writing to Robert Cecil with advice on foreign policy. Thus it should have come as little surprise to anyone that in the spring of 1598 the court gossips began to report that Henry Neville had been appointed ambassador to one of the most important and difficult courts in sixteenth century Europe, the France of Henry IV.

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114 Neale, *Elizabeth I and her Parliaments*, 11, 357.  
115 *HMC Salisbury MSS*, VII, 534.
Chapter Three

AMBASSADOR TO FRANCE: YOUTHFUL HOPES

Henry Neville did not want to accept the appointment as ambassador to France. He knew that government service was expensive. Numerous manuals on diplomatic practices had, as we have seen, already arrived at the English universities, and they were recommended reading for young Englishmen on the Grand Tour, some of whom, like Neville, sought first hand information by a trip to Italy, the homeland of diplomacy. All of them agreed that "without a large personal income no one can be expected to keep up the proper state of a major embassy."¹

The ambassador had, for example to provide hospitality, not just on special occasions as at home, but all the time; for he represented not just his person, but his country.² He had the additional expense of travel for himself, his family, and his entourage, not only to the capital of the nation to which he was sent, but also into the countryside to follow the mobile sixteenth century court as it followed its prince in the endless search for pleasure. Furthermore, he was to maintain a thorough intelligence system, which required the expense of gifts to

² Hotman de Villiers, in his treatise L'Ambassadeur written in 1603, urged that in the ambassador's residence "The expenditure of the house must be well regulated, yet splendid in every respect, chiefly for the table and cooking, to which foreigners, especially those of the North, pay more attention than to any other item." J. J. Usserand, "The School for Ambassadors," American Historical Review, XXVII (April, 1922), p. 448.
friendly government officials, bribes to less friendly ones, and informants' fees. Finally, having attained information, he had to pay the high cost of transporting it speedily to the homeland.

In theory, many of these expenditures were governmental expenses to be defrayed by the state, but in practice.

...Ambassadors, like the army, served abroad. They were dependent, like the army, on what ministers could and would spare from the general treasury, without the army's recourse to mutiny or desertion or plunder if no money came. In an age when revenues were rarely adequate to expenditures, an age of rising prices, extravagant courts, obsolete fiscal methods and haphazard emergency financing, there was never enough public money to go around. Hence, constant complaints of tardy payment and mounting debt occur throughout the diplomatic correspondence of a century, and De Vera's realistic statement that a solid private fortune and a fat rent roll were among the most important qualifications for a major foreign embassy.

But Neville had more than theoretical knowledge of the financial burden imposed by diplomatic service. His father-in-law, Sir Henry Killigrew, had been one of Elizabeth's most trusted foreign servants. When, in the winter of 1572, Elizabeth's ordinary ambassador to France, Sir Francis Walsingham, had grown ill, it had been Killigrew she had called upon to go to his aid. There, Killigrew found Walsingham in such poverty that he could not afford to follow the French court when it moved the few miles from Paris to Moret. The cost of his foreign service in France, the Netherlands, and Scotland was one factor that pre-

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5 Mattingly, Renaissance Diplomacy, p. 199.
6 Conyers Read, Mr. Secretary Walsingham and the Policy of Queen Elizabeth (Oxford, 1925), III, p. 445.
vented Sir Francis from ever escaping his growing debts, so that when he died, in 1590, he had to be buried at night to avoid the predatory advances of his creditors. 7

Thus, rather than attend a meeting arranged by Cecil to discuss the ambassadorship in detail, Neville sent the secretary a letter asking to be relieved of the responsibility. He could not meet with Cecil personally, he wrote, because his wife Anne was ill, under the care of the Queen's physicians. He appealed to Cecil, whose own wife had died to his lasting sorrow, for sympathy. So far as the appointment was concerned, he pleaded that Cecil

understand and consider my poor estate at this time. I have sold my land in Sussex and some other places, in effect the chief substance of all I have, to bestow it in Berkshire upon some land that was Sir Henry Unton's, for which I am entered into recognizances of above 12,000 pounds to be discharged within three months. How impossible it is for me to accomplish this if I should be employed, I do know, and not accomplishing it, I foresee the overthrow of my poor estate. 8

All Neville's arguments were in vain, for he was impaled upon an Elizabethan variation of Morton's fork. His expenditure of 12,000 pounds on property in Berkshire might seem evidence to him of impending poverty, but to the government it no doubt illustrated the availability of just the sort of wealth essential to this position. Furthermore, Neville was uniquely endowed with other qualities that theorists considered essential in an ambassador. Although not titled, he was sufficiently well-born to command respect in a foreign capital. He could speak and write French fluently, an ability rare in sixteenth

7 Ibid., pp. 442-45. 8 HMC Salisbury MSS, VIII, 158.
century England. He was handsome, with the high forehead and eyes that reminded contemporaries of Henry VIII. He had the air of an aristocrat. His eloquence and intelligence Henry IV would avow after their first meeting. His only shortcomings were his youth and lack of experience; but these were more than balanced by the first-hand information he could draw from his father-in-law concerning French matters, and the fact that he had been participating for more than a year with Cecil in contacts with French representatives in London.

It is likely, therefore, that Neville knew he could not escape service, though he made earnest suit to do so. Like Francis Walsingham, nearly thirty years before, he probably hoped that his reluctance might win him some improvements in his situation. The appointment included a knighthood, which was a rare commodity in Elizabethan England. While he was denied an increase in his ambassadorial allowance, he did gain the concession that he should be paid his entertainment budget three months in advance. Furthermore, the Queen promised that he would

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11 For example, the copy of the Treaty of Blois used by Neville he had obtained from Killigrew. Sir Ralph Winwood, Memorials of Affairs of State in the Reigns of Queen Elizabeth and King James I, edited by Edmund Sawyer (London, 1725), I.
13 Read, Mr. Secretary Walsingham, I, 105-6.
14 Thomas Birch, An Historical View of the Negotiations between the courts of England, France, and Brussels, from the year 1592 to 1617... (London, 1749), p. 183.
serve not more than two years in Paris, and that upon his return, she would guarantee him a court appointment. For his part, Cecil allowed Neville the opportunity to review his instructions before they were signed, as well as some flexibility to adjust them if he found good cause. He also made arrangements for Neville to send him information that he felt was too sensitive for the Queen to see. Finally, Neville gained the appointment of a most capable secretary in Ralph Winwood. Cecil agreed to this appointment even though Winwood was a protege of Cecil's rival, the Earl of Essex. Neville may very well have known Winwood since Oxford days, for the two had matriculated on the same day, December 20, 1577, Neville at Merton and Winwood at St. John's. Winwood had since achieved a distinguished academic record, having received the A. B. in 1582, the M. A. in 1587, and a degree in civil law in 1592. He was, in addition, elected probationer-fellow at Magdelan College in 1582 and had become a proctor of the university in 1592. If they were not already, they were to become fast friends.

Once convinced he must serve, Neville began to prepare himself during the winter of 1599 for the most delicate diplomatic situation facing England at that time. The Treaty of Blois, negotiated by Walsingham in 1572, had marked a revolution in Anglo-French relations, bringing

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16 HMC Salisbury MSS, IX, 89.  
17 "When you make your dispatches hither, if anything be fit for me to know, which you would not have the Queen see, you may write a private letter, for she must see the dispatches." Winwood, Memorials, 1, 19.  
18 Master Neville...hath won Master Winwood at my Lord of Essex command" to accompany him to France. McClure, Chamberlain Letters, 1, 65.  
19 DNB, XXI, 704.
together age-old enemies. More important, though, was the necessity that arose in 1589 to support Henry of Navarre, Protestant claimant to the French throne against the Spanish dominated Catholic League. Since that time, Elizabeth had invested 1,339,116 French crowns, or 401,734 English pounds sterling, in what had finally proven a successful endeavor, for Henry achieved the title Henry IV. In addition, the cost in human suffering had been great. Elizabeth had been truly shocked by the accounts sent her by Lord Willoughby in the winter of 1589 and 1590 of Englishmen dying of exposure and lack of supplies for want of a French city in which to retire. This led to the first of a series of increasingly serious differences between the allies, for Elizabeth demanded possession of a French town for the protection of her forces, a demand that Henry, distrusting her motives, consistently rejected. Furthermore, there were strategic differences, for the English were concerned to defend the coast of France so that Spain could not seize a jumping-off point for an invasion of England, while Henry, seeking to reunite his country, wanted to use English troops inland. Despite such differences and despite advice from her council that France be left to her fate; indeed, that England might join with Spain to divide the spoils, Elizabeth continued to send English money and men to the Continent. There, on at least three occasions, they saved the French from disastrous defeats. For she knew that "whenever the last day of

20 Winwood, Memorials, I, 29.
France come, it would be the eve also of the destruction of England. Thus, she might well congratulate herself on her generosity.

But the French saw matters from a different perspective. While the English remembered how much they had given, the French remembered how grudgingly and reluctantly they had given it. They remembered how, in a time of emergency, Elizabeth's agents had coolly demanded and received bonds guaranteeing French payment of the expenses for the levying and transportation of English troops; how, in 1591, she had demanded and received the promise of all the taxes and customs levied at Le Havre and Rouen in return for the support she provided that summer; how, in the critical year of 1592 she had wracked the last pound of flesh from the French, getting Henry's promise to pay her troops, his guarantee of the port of Brest to be held as pledge for the loan, and control of his foreign policy in his agreement not to make peace without her. The French were certain she acted out of greed, and the French king's distrust of his ally was one factor in his decision to convert to Catholicism in May of 1593. To the English, this seemed a stab in the back; but Henry knew that his only hope of ultimate success lay in gaining the commitment of his own people. Neither English troops nor English money could give him that.

Henry's conversion and the acceptance of it by the French people marked a turning point in Anglo-French relations. To emphasize his

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22 Ibid. p. 62-64.
separation from Protestantism he repudiated the promised grant of the fortified port of Brest, leaving the English empty-handed and doubting his word. But in no other way could he win over his own nobility. At the same time, he turned more and more to Catholic advisers who had had nothing to do with his earlier policy of alliance with the English and felt no responsibility for living up to earlier promises.\(^{23}\) He was still tied by treaty and by self-interest (he could ill afford an Anglo-Spanish alliance) to close relations with England, but all trust was gone. For her part Elizabeth might well have washed her hands of Henry, and nearly did, but there was still the Spanish threat. Furthermore, without a French city in her hands there was no guarantee that the money she had loaned Henry would ever be repaid. To protect her investment, she continued the struggle, dragging the nation into a quagmire. From May to August of 1594, Elizabeth kept Norreys at the front in France, where his soldiers liberated Brest from Spanish siege with virtually no aid from Henry, who had his hands full at Rouen. Having succeeded, she withdrew her troops to Ireland and urged Henry to emulate her successes. From this point onward, however, Elizabeth put, or tried to put, her own interests first. She now sought a port city rather as a pledge of re-

\(^{23}\) ...it must be remembered that the King had changed his religion, and that he now was, or would soon be, lord of a united France. In such circumstances, no matter how conscientiously he might desire to acquit himself of the debt he had incurred while struggling for his Crown, it was certain to be a moot point whether France itself could be held responsible. And his Catholic councillors, who had always been against the English alliance, would not have much hesitation in advising a complete repudiation of the obligation. Hence the desire of Elizabeth to establish a hold over some seaport was not the outcome of a rapacious longing for the dismemberment of France, but a prudent precaution which we shall find, was more than justified by the event...." \(\text{Ibid.},\) p. 89.
payment of the French debt than as a refuge for English soldiers. Her avid quest for a port, while justified by the French King's ultimate refusal to repay her, nevertheless turned the French people against her, and did nothing to placate their growing demand for peace.

In the spring of 1595 Henry once more found himself in trouble, with the Spanish threatening to seize Cambrai. Elizabeth offered help, but only if her troops could invest Calais, a demand Henry could ill afford to meet. While the negotiations continued, Cambrai fell to the Spanish. Relations were further soured when France's special messenger to Elizabeth, Lomenie, blamed the Queen to her face for the fall of Cambrai and accused her of purposely failing to drive the Spanish out of Brittany, though it was in her power to do so. Lomenie clearly spoke for the King.  

The situation grew even worse in March of 1596. Elizabeth had removed troops from the Netherlands so that Essex might launch his attack on Cadiz. The Dutch had therefore withdrawn troops from France to protect themselves, leaving the French alone to face the invader. The Spanish seized the opportunity to invest Calais. Though Essex and his fleet lay idle only six hours off the coast, Elizabeth refused the desperate pleas for aid from the French because those pleas were not accompanied by a promise to turn Calais over to her if she saved it. This time the French were right to think their loss Elizabeth's fault.  

"The explanation she gave was to the effect that she had so consumed the

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24 Ibid., p. 92.  
25 Ibid., pp. 100-1.
goods and substance of her subjects without any fruit, that she could not content them unless they were convinced that they would draw some advantage from the expenses they were called to make. Even the English public reacted with hostility to Elizabeth's callousness and to the failure of their own policy makers to provide prompt aid to the French. From 1596 on, it was becoming clear to some Englishmen that the Anglo-French alliance was merely a sham, maintained for public consumption.

The English had one last chance to prove their friendship in March of 1597. The Spanish had taken the port of Amiens by surprise, and Henry again found himself in desperate straits. He appealed once more for English aid, this time even promising the cherished Calais. But the situation had changed and Elizabeth missed her chance. For Ireland was deep in rebellion, and the English no longer felt secure enough to send a large force to France. Furthermore, Mildmay, the English ambassador in Paris, believed that the French only wanted such aid as a lever to use in forthcoming peace negotiations with Spain. Henry, to everyone's surprise, recaptured Amiens without English help. Elizabeth had failed him once too often. He opened negotiations with Spain which culminated in the Peace of Vervins in May of 1598. The Peace of Vervins ended the war between France and Spain, leaving the Dutch and the English to fight on alone against the Spanish.

It is true that Henry IV had broken the alliance, but he did so only after Elizabeth had refused to provide the additional aid he needed

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26 Ibid., p. 102.  
27 Ibid., p. 106.
and had sought to keep him in the war by pleas of honor when reason of state cried for peace. Furthermore, Henry feared that Elizabeth might yet open negotiations with Spain herself leading to the exchange of an English stronghold in the Netherlands, Flushing or Brill, for Calais, which the Spaniards still held. Actually, the English followed no policy at all during the crucial winter of 1597-98, and the desperate efforts of a commission made up of Robert Cecil, John Herbert, and Thomas Wilks to prevent the conclusion of peace in March of 1598 was to no avail.28

Thus, as Elizabeth sought a new French ambassador in the summer and fall of 1598, her foreign policy was in shambles. France and Spain were reconciled and England in danger of isolation. The Spanish still hated the English Queen, and the French certainly had no sympathy for her. Nor did they give her credit for saving their new King on three different occasions. Instead of a gallant English defense of coastal France, instead of money and weapons worth over 1,000,000 crowns, the French remembered only the royal vulture who, during the last four years of the war, allowed French fortresses to fall while greedily demanding her pound of flesh.29 Nor had Elizabeth succeeded in winning the coastal town that might have served as the key to opening Henry's purse. Friendless, short of money, and beset by rebellious Irishmen, Elizabeth turned to Henry Neville to achieve the impossible task that her past blunders had created, the task of collecting payment from a scornful debtor.

28 Ibid., pp. 129-34. 29 Ibid., pp. 137-40.
Sir Henry Neville did not underestimate the difficulty. He made a thorough study of the bonds and contracts on which the debt was based. He decided that an accounting would be necessary, itemizing every iota of the debt, "for I make this account that they will be glad to take all advantages to put off the payment. If I come not thoroughly furnished of my proofs in every point, I shall but minister them some colourable pretext of delay, which they will lie in wait for..." He contacted English merchants trading on the Continent to learn what income the Queen might expect from the customs of LeHavre and Rouen which had been promised her so long before.

In addition, he reviewed the diplomatic situation, extracting from his studies sixteen points "wherein I desire to understand her Majesty's pleasure..." These ranged from whether he should concern himself with the developing quarrel between the King and the Prince of Conde to whether he should "intermeddle" in the King's impending marriage. These articles suggest that to Neville there were issues more important than the debt. For example, in posing the question about the Prince of Conde, he suggested a "healing" policy, because "the greatness of France is the only bar and bridle to the ambition of the Spaniard and his designs against us." Could he contact and "educate"

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30 "I am yet detained with the perusing and copying of the French King's bonds and contracts, whereon his debts to her Majesty grew, and conferring with the Treasurer at War about them, that I may be able to verify the particulars of every debt I shall be directed to charge him with, which will be a chief part of my business there..." CSPD, 1598-1601, p. 63.

31 HMC Salisbury MSS, IX, 72.

32 Winwood, Memorials, 1, p 18.
French Protestants "to look to the Queen of England for support and inspiration"? Might he offer the Queen's favor to Villeroy, the King's secretary, in return for "imparting advertisements and intelligence out of Spain"? If talks in progress should lead to serious peace negotiations with the Spanish, would he be permitted to attempt to induce the Dutch to insist upon the point that their provinces could never be reunited under the King of Spain, nor be used as a base for Spanish troops? But peace, the goal of the ideal ambassador, was far from Neville's mind. Should he not encourage the King of France to commit himself to regaining the Marquisate of Saluces, a province which had been seized during the religious wars in France by the Duke of Savoy, protege of Philip III. Neville put it thus, "this enterprise in all appearance is to draw with it a breach and war with Spain, the only assured means of our quietness." 33

Neville had discovered one of the two weapons at his disposal in the uneven diplomatic game he was about to play. If France could be drawn back into war with Spain over the Saluces, she would again need the assistance of the Queen of England, who might use French desperation to wring from her King stronger guarantees that he would repay the money Elizabeth had loaned him. A second possibility might arise from the talks of peace initiated by the Archduke Albert through the Belgian merchant Coomans, talks which were being carried on London that winter. Henry IV's fears that an Anglo-Spanish peace and the restoration of the old English-Burgundian commercial alliance might make him odd man out

33 Historical Manuscripts Commission Reports, VIII, 283b.
could impel him to buy English friendship by repaying the Queen's loans.

By April, 1599, Sir Henry had completed his preparations. He left London for Dover, where he was held up for several days because of bad weather and rough seas. Sir Thomas Edmondes, his predecessor, had informed him that the King intended to leave Paris for a tour of the provinces, and the world anticipated that the lusty Bourbon would take a new wife soon. This, Neville feared, might "make him [Henry] cease to think about his debt to the Queen, much less pay it."\(^34\) He finally arrived in France on the 3rd of May, whereupon he proceeded to Rouen for a conference with English merchants concerning the income Elizabeth might receive from the customs of Rouen and Le Havre.\(^35\) He and his entourage, which included his Cornish friend Sir Jonathon Trelawney, arrived in Paris on the 8th of May, to find the King still there.\(^36\)

The lateness of his arrival and the imminence of the King's departure made quick action imperative. As a result, Neville immediately arranged for his first audience with Henry IV, which was held the following Sunday at Moret. He managed a second meeting eight days later at Fountainbleau. Thereafter, he reasoned, the King's travels would reduce severely his contact with diplomats. Thus the pressures of time denied to Sir Henry a long period of diplomatic maneuvering. He had to face problems at once and make known immediately his hopes and intentions.

These early meetings proved most encouraging. At Moret, having been feted and dined by the King's cousin, Marshall Biron, Neville was

\(^{34}\) Winwood, *Memorials*, 1, 18.  
\(^{35}\) Ibid.  
\(^{36}\) CSPD, 1598-1601, p. 163.
led to the King's chamber where Henry IV approached him. In his report of the meeting, Neville made much of the fact that "I was very welcome, and that he had advanced himself to embrace me, but to the Spanish ambassador he had not stirred one foot..."\(^{37}\) Having exchanged mutual compliments, the two got down to business. Neville quickly moved to the fulfillment of his instructions from the Queen, the first of which was to congratulate Henry upon his narrow escape from an earlier assassination attempt by a deranged Jesuit priest. This seemingly innocent gesture had the calculated purpose of warning the King that he should not, as a recent convert to Catholicism, succumb to increasing pressures to reinstate the Jesuit order in France. Neville proceeded further to express the Queen's pleasure at the proclamation of the Edict of Nantes, and contrasted his toleration of Protestants with his predecessor's persecution of them. Henry responded pointedly "That no man could better discover the errors of his predecessor's counsels in that point than himself, for that it was he against whom they did chiefly put it in execution."\(^{38}\)

Having attended to these amenities, Neville moved to matters more serious, the question of depredations of merchant shipping, both French and English. He began by assuring Henry that Elizabeth had taken action to prevent English disruption of French shipping. She had issued a proclamation which he had seen and she had taken steps to punish such crimes by means of an "extraordinary commission" made up of "chosen

persons of wisdom and integrity." This was a touchy matter, for the English ambassador at Copenhagen had been "railed at by diverse gentlemen of the court, who called him thief, and said that our countrymen were a company of thieves..." A German pamphleteer in 1598 accused the Queen of organizing these pirate expeditions. In 1602 an Englishman reported of the French that "The better sort hate us for continual complaints in sea causes, as though our nation lived on their spell." And in 1603 the governor of Zante, off the western coast of the Peloponnesus, swore, "I myself am firmly convinced that there is not a sailor of that nation but is a pirate."  

Even the privy council was sensitive to the charges which resulted in "great infamy of this nation and impairment of good friendship and neighborhood abroad..." Nor was the English government blameless in the matter. The privy council, unable to control depredations by foreigners, authorized a form of vigilante justice through letters of mark and reprisal, which became so common that they came to possess a commercial value sufficient to serve as collateral for a loan. Since bearers of letters of mark and reprisal seldom had to show that the value of their seizures corresponded with that of their losses, and since the English admiralty received ten percent of the take, an innocent foreign merchant might easily find himself unjustly ensnared.

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39 Ibid., p. 22.
40 Cheyney, History, 1, 463.
41 Ibid., p. 463.
42 Ibid., p. 467.
43 Ibid., pp. 473-4.
Henry responded to Neville's assurances by making a distinction between the honorable intentions of the Queen and the questionable implementation of her policies by subordinates. In a personal letter to Cecil, which contained matters too "delicate" for the Queen's eyes, Neville revealed that Henry had specified the admiralty as the source of corruption, and in this allegation the King was probably correct. 44

Having urged the King to emulate his mistress in bringing such predators to justice, Sir Henry broached the subject of French trade with Spain, expressing the Queen's fear that French trade in war material might aid the Spanish in their continuing war with England. Furthermore, referring to letters he had received from Cecil, Neville said that English intelligence had information of an imminent invasion attempt from Spain. Under the circumstances, France might even cut off supplies of grain "because She is perfectly informed out of those parts of Spain, that without the great supply of corn which they have already received out of France, they would never have been able to have proceeded so far as they have done in their preparations." 45 Surprisingly, Henry seemed willing to cut off such supplies, not because of the English fear of invasion, which he felt was exaggerated, but in reprisal for the Spanish seizure of French merchant ships. Spanish corn had come from the Easterlings rather than France, in any case, he argued. 46

Until now Neville had maintained the initiative in this first conversation with the King, but Henry at this point presented information

46 Ibid., p. 23.
that planted the first seeds of doubt in Sir Henry's mind about his relationship with his own government.

The King began to question him about Irish matters, and specifically about the situation of the Earl of Essex, whom Henry had always much admired. When Neville could only report that Essex had been delayed at sea, Henry offered the additional information that he had already landed and that two or three of the chief rebels had submitted to him. "I was ashamed that he should know more of those matters than I," Neville wrote Cecil. Neville tried to cover his lack of knowledge, but unsuccessfully, for the King began to probe again in a more sensitive area.

"How near is the peace between her Majesty and the King of Spain to a conclusion?" asked Henry.

"Your ambassador has been made acquainted with all that passed in this matter," responded Neville.

"Oh," said the King. "I think I know more than he doth of it."

"At my coming away there was no more past than had been communicated both to his ambassador there and to himself by Mr. Edmondes," Neville insisted.

"Well, the other side tells me another tale."

Neville again made reassurances that he had no further information and the King allowed the subject to drop.

Trying to regain the initiative, Neville suggested to Henry that the surest way to establish good relations between their two countries was by free trade. In raising this matter he was influenced more by his conversations with English merchants in France than by his instructions.
He argued that "those were the surest and most durable friendships, which were founded not only upon the disposition of the Princes, but upon the interest of the subjects also." The King promised to consider the matter if Neville would put it in writing. Henry then concluded the audience with a joke at the expense of the newly wed Archduke to the effect that he had been unable to consummate his marriage with the Infanta. Both men were pleased with their first encounter.

Sir Henry would have liked a second meeting almost immediately, at which he would raise the central issue of the King's debt to Elizabeth, but he was put off for eight days because Henry wanted to spend some time hunting and sight-seeing. The King's sense of humor and his propensity for hunting and other diversions would prove increasingly irritating to the more straitlaced Neville.

In analyzing this first confrontation, Neville suggested to Cecil the two tactics that he believed ought to be adopted in order to achieve a favorable trading arrangement with France, as well as a high return on the Queen's loan. On the one hand, they should play upon French fears of an imminent peace between Spain and England, a peace that might leave France diplomatically isolated. On the other hand, there existed the possibility that Henry's efforts to regain the Marquisate of Saluces, which had been seized by the Duke of Savoy in 1582, while France was sunk in the morass of civil war, might lead to a renewed war with Savoy's

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48 Kermaingant, pp. 55-6.
49 Winwood, Memorials, 1, 24.
ally Spain. Specifically, Neville urgently wanted to know whether the
Queen would accept a renewal of the commercial clauses of the Treaty of
Blois negotiated in 1572, but now virtually a dead letter because of
the wars of religion. "I beseech you to let me understand her Majesty's
pleasure in it, for I think the King will be easily drawn to that, or
any other reasonable matter that shall be proposed, during the suspense
of her Majesty's treaty with Spain, and his own with Savoy." He was
less hopeful that any means would suffice to assure the Queen repayment
of her debt beyond the 20,000 crowns already promised to Edmondes.50

Nevertheless, on Monday the 21st of May, he returned to Fountain-
bleau to raise the sensitive issue that was central to his mission. The
result was anti-climatic. Henry acknowledged the justice of the Queen's
demands, and promised to be open with Neville and to do all in his power
to repay her. But he implied that once all the facts were available,
Neville would see the impossibility of his making a large immediate
payment. Henry, as Neville had expected, then asked that he present his
proposal in writing for the study of his council. Sir Henry presented
the carefully itemized accounts, showing a year-by-year statement, both
in French crowns and in English sterling, of the Queen's loans, figured
down to the last half-pence. The sum was 1,339,116 crowns and 20 st. in
French currency, 401,734 pounds, 16 shillings, 5½ pence English.51 Hand-
ing these documents to Villeroi, Henry then began an hour's private
conversation with Neville. The French King spoke in a friendly manner
and ranged over a great variety of topics. Beginning with a discussion

50 Ibid., p. 25.  
51 Ibid., p. 29.
of possible new wives, he turned to his relationship with the Pope. Henry made much of the Pope's friendship for him, and of the Pope's willingness to accept the principle of religious toleration as put forth in the Edict of Nantes. Neville was frankly and openly sceptical. Henry argued that the Pope was about to issue a bull threatening to excommunicate anyone who plotted against Henry's life. In addition, he insisted, the Pope and the Spanish King were at odds over which of them should receive the homage of the King of Naples, and the Pope had appealed to Henry IV as his champion against Philip III. Neville's response was open disbelief.

"The Pope is politique," suggested Neville, "and to keep the Spanish King in awe he would be contented to make some good show and demonstration toward him; but I think the Pope, or at least the Consistory, too much Spaniard, for you to make any great foundation of them."

"I think I have as good credit there as the King of Spain," said Henry. It was a remark Neville would remember.52

The French King expressed his belief that the Emperor was on his deathbed, and that the German states were not likely to choose as a successor another representative of the House of Hapsburg. Neville decided to test Henry's ambition, suggesting they would not have to look far to find a worthy candidate. Henry took the bait. He had not and would not seek such a position, "but if it pleased God to put in their minds to choose him, he had no reason to refuse it." Neville was hardly

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52 Ibid., p. 30.
pleased. "I fear as they grow in greatness, they will grow in insolence, and neglect of their friends," he wrote to Cecil.\(^{53}\)

Henry then informed him of the situation with regard to the Saluces. The Pope had persuaded him to give the Duke of Savoy two more months to give up the Marquisate, which he had held now for some 16 years. Henry prided himself on the fact that during the waiting period the Duke would have to pay additional sums to his own armies, while France would simply use regular forces now occupying fortresses. Henry was willing to go to war and did not believe, as Neville suggested, that the King of Spain would be drawn into the conflict to protect Savoy's interests.\(^{54}\)

The following day Neville followed up his conversations with the King by holding a meeting with his secretary, Villeroy. Cecil had already had dealings with Villeroy in 1598 and considered him entirely too Catholic to be a friend to England. Nevertheless, the King's secretary spoke fair words of the Queen's virtues and his own affection. Neville pointed out that this affection might better be shown by action than by words, and that Villeroy should throw his weight in support of payment of the debts to the Queen. Villeroy said he had yet to discuss the matter with the King or with the royal financiers. Neville suggested that these financiers should be avoided, as they would always create more difficulties than solutions. He suggested that the debt should be considered a debt of honor. Villeroy expressed his belief that in

\(^{53}\) Ibid., p. 31. \(^{54}\) Ibid., p. 31.
spite of their desire to pay, the budget would not permit it that year. Neville began to press the point with fervor. Villeroy's response might be satisfactory if Elizabeth sought a loan, but she was seeking the return of what was rightly hers. She had suffered to give it, and the King might suffer to return it. Elizabeth was too great a princess to buy friendship, and her relations with France were becoming one-sided. For men and money she got nothing but promises. Henry IV had paid his debts to the Swiss and the United Provinces and had satisfied his own rebels. He had neglected only the Queen who might well question the sincerity of his friendship.55

Villeroy sought to mollify Neville by pointing out that the King had already written to all the French ports to cut off shipping of French corn into Spain. They had done so because of Spanish seizure of French ships in the past, and Dutch threats to raid French shipping in the future. Neville was not to be put off so easily. "I replied," he said, "that these respects were but for a time, but that the other respect of the Queen, my mistress, was like to continue, and therefore prayed to know what I should answer..." Villeroy promised a written reply at a later time.56

They then turned to a discussion of French trade with Spain. The King was willing to issue proclamations banning the purchase of war material for sale in Spain, and this might be put in the form of a treaty. But Villeroy then began to complain of the injustice done French merchants in English admiralty courts, as reported by the French

55 Ibid., p. 32.  
56 Ibid., p. 33.
ambassador in London. Perhaps, responded Neville, the ambassador had been too ready to believe the merchants' self-serving reports. After all, "the Queen had already established a commission for that purpose, which the King had not yet done; and till they were as forward on their part, as the Queen had been on hers, they had no reason to complain, for princes used to march with equal paces; but the Queen had so used to prevent them with kindness, that it seemed they look for it still." Nevertheless, Sir Henry offered to write to London about the matter if Villeroy would provide the particulars, but Villeroy preferred to allow the French ambassador to take care of the matter.

Growing out of their discussion of a possible new treaty between England and France, Neville asked Villeroy why Henry had failed to declare his intention to continue the existing Treaty of Blois of 1572. Villeroy said that the King was willing to do so. "Why then," asked Neville, "did he not relieve English merchants, as he had Dutch merchants, of the onerous droict d'Aubeine", which required the forfeiture of the estates of foreign merchants dying in France. The Treaty of Blois had promised its repeal. Villeroy replied that the Dutch had demanded and received the right when the King had need of them, indeed, could not do without them. To this the exasperated Neville replied, "it was more honor for the King to requite kindness with kindness freely, than to do all things by way of bargain: That the Queen had dealt like an honorable princess, and had not made merchandise of her favors, yet

\[^{57}\text{Ibid.}, \ p. \ 33.\]
she had reason to look for some fruit of her friendship." 58 As for the Treaty of Blois, Villeroy argued that the English, by ceasing trade in France after 1572 had failed to implement it themselves. Neville made the obvious response that the English had been forced by the Massacre of St. Bartholomew and the ensuing civil wars to stop the trade and that with the restoration of internal peace in France the treaty should come into force. Villeroy thought this a matter easily to be settled.

In his reports of these two meetings Neville outlined the major continuing concerns of his embassy. He also requested an addition to his allowance should he have to follow the King in his journey to the south of France. These concerns would remain the same throughout his tenure. First, he would be concerned with protecting the interests of members of "the religion", both French Huguenots and English Protestants. Second, he would seek to improve the situation of English merchants trading in France. Third, he would try to prevent French aid of any kind to Spain. Fourth, and to Elizabeth the most important matter, he would continue to press the French King for relief of the Queen's financial difficulties. In all these matters, he would be ever conscious of the Queen's status in the world and highly sensitive to any affront to it. The weapons he would use to achieve his goals he had already outlined—the threat of English peace with Spain, or the possibility of bringing France back into the war through a confrontation with Savoy and Spain over the Saluces. His first two meetings with Henry IV led him to believe he could provide Elizabeth "good contentment" in fulfilling most of these goals.

58 Ibid., p. 33.
Neville's courage in pursuit of the Queen's interest, illustrated by his first two confrontations with Henry IV, characterized his entire embassy in France and was his greatest strength. But his youthful optimism proved naive and short-lived. For in his third meeting with the King at Orleans on the 8th of July, he found both the matter and the manner of his negotiation changed.\(^1\)

Neville had exchanged letters with Villeroy between the second and third meetings. The French secretary had expressed the King's good intentions to repay the debt, but pleaded for patience, arguing that this sudden requirement of full payment before the kingdom had recovered from its long period of foreign and domestic wars was to ask the impossible. After all, the money spent by the French had benefited the Queen too.\(^2\)

In his response, Neville argued that there was nothing sudden about the request for payment, as the debt was of long standing. Furthermore, the critical problems of the Queen did not allow time for the French to regain fully their prosperity before repaying her.\(^3\) What he had told the King's secretary by letter, he repeated at Orleans to the King's face. Neville told Henry that he considered Villeroy's answer "so cold, and to savor of so little respect towards the Queen

\(^1\)Winwood, Memorials, I, 65. \(^2\)Ibid., pp. 38-9. \(^3\)Ibid., p. 43.
my mistress...that to prevent any unkindness she might justly conceive of it, I was bold to suppress it for a time, and to desire Monsieur de Villeroy to deal with you to re-advice it, and to strain yourself to give the queen some better commitment." Villeroy had told him that the king would consider the matter further in council, and Neville had come for an answer. 4

"You have no reason to charge me with want of respect towards the queen your mistress," retorted Henry. "Though I know myself, and every man would confess me to be the first king of Christendom, yet I have always professed myself to be her servant, and her soldier."

Sir Henry would back down only slightly. He did not accuse the French king of personal disrespect to Elizabeth, but

my meaning is to note a want of respect and regard to her estate, and present occasions, in not seeking to render her at least some part of those means, she had need to use now for her own defense, seeing the cause of her being disfurnished of them, was only her care to preserve him.

Henry, who doubtless did not appreciate the implication that the "first king of Christendom" depended upon the support of a mere woman, nevertheless admitted the services Elizabeth had done him. "In requital thereof, I would employ myself, and the forces of my whole kingdom in her defence, if she had need; but more cannot be had of a man than is in his power, and for money, I have utterly none."

This the king repeated not once, but three times. But Neville would not be put off.

4Ibid., p. 61.
It would be a strange answer to proceed from a king of France, who though he commanded not a country so flourishing as sometimes it had been, yet was never so low, but upon so just an occasion as this was, he would be able to find so much as would serve her majesty some reasonable contentment, and enable her to expect his better convenience for the discharge of the rest.

When Henry tried to protest that the queen should have patience, that he would try to provide some money the next year, Neville interrupted him. "This answer will be found so strange, after so long expectation, and promise of better contentment, that I shall scarce be believed in relating it."^5

Neville pressed the matter further the next day in a meeting with Villeroy, arguing that Elizabeth deserved "to be better regarded."

"You insisted much in your speech with the king, upon the point of want of respect towards the queen," responded the French secretary, "and if you had repeated a little more, you might perhaps have been answered little to your contentment."^6

But Neville feared Elizabeth more than Henry. "I have patience to bear whatsoever the king should say, and would refer it to my mistress to interpret, but I would not leave for that to deliver whatsoever she should command." He thought it "an argument of small respect" that a king as noted for his generosity as Henry IV "should plead disability to pay the queen anything, in so great occasions as he knew she had." He demanded a written answer to his pleas, but received no satisfaction.

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^5 Ibid., p. 62.
^6 Ibid., p. 63.
In spite of growing French hostility, Sir Henry continued to press for the money with all the ingenuity he could muster. On the 24th of July he met with Villeroy to urge repayment on the grounds that the queen had performed more for the king than "all the allies of the crown of France put together." To Rosni, the leading protestant adviser to the king, Neville suggested that Henry might at least provide some grain for the use of Elizabeth's soldiers in Ireland, to be credited against the debt.

In August he argued that the queen's needs in Ireland and the justice of her demands justified giving her special treatment. The French were not dealing with rich and secure states like Florence and Venice, but a nation under siege in their behalf. The world might discover that the "friendship of France is rather...burdensome than profitable to them which embrace it." They had even denied her the promised income from Rouen and New Haven. "I marveled how they could make with any show or regard of honor, giving just occasion to the queen to think, that in offering her assurance for her money there was an intention to abuse her, seeing the same was before engaged to others." To Cecil he wrote that Henry was touring Champagne, Tours,

7 Ibid., p. 79.

8 Ibid. To Cecil he wrote, "it may please your honor to let me know how much or to what a value her majesty will accept in that sort; for mine own part, I think all is well gotten that can be won out of these men's hands: and as for the prices, I make no doubt but that they will be as reasonable, or more, than the prices in England, for it is the only thing that is cheap here."

9 Ibid., p. 85.
and Samur until the end of the summer, while his council remained at Blois, "and this is thought to be purposely to put off business and suits for money wherein he is continually pestered, but payeth no man." Little wonder that Neville had difficulty gaining access to the king and had to appeal through a friend against the extension of French aid to Spanish ships requesting it at Brest. Under continued pressure from Cecil, Neville continued to solicit "them as much as with any good manners I may..." His fifth audience with Henry came in January, five months after the fourth. He was dismissed abruptly after telling the king that "the world would ground a judgment how to esteem and value his friendship towards others." In the ensuing discussions with Villeroy Sir Henry reiterated the old litany, with one new touch. Playing on French fears of a peace with Spain, Neville suggested that Elizabeth "should have just cause given her to repent her that she had left a more ancient and constant amity to embrace this, wherein there was less assurance." In February he managed two meetings with the king at which he argued that further delay in payment, considering the queen's duress, was as bad as refusing to pay altogether. He continued to press for meetings and to secure a commitment from the king before any final agreement was reached with Spain, but on the

10 Ibid., p. 87.
11 Ibid., p. 92.
12 Ibid., p. 91, 117.
13 Ibid., p. 142.
14 Ibid., p. 149.
15 Ibid., p. 153.
12th of March he reported to Cecil that he had been kept waiting for three weeks, during which time the Papal nuncio, the Venetian ambassador, the Scottish ambassador, and the Patriarch had all had audience. "The matter is evident either to be done as a scorn, or upon design to avoid the answer I am like to press them to." He had will and occasion to press them hotly, but wanted authorization from Cecil before he went further. 16

Neville had certainly done all that London could have expected of him in seeking to regain the Queen's money. But in his attempts to renegotiate the Treaty of Blois, he may have exceeded his mandate. The treaty had been drawn up in 1572 by Walsingham, Sir Thomas Smith, and Neville's father-in-law, Sir Henry Killigrew, but it had never come into effect because of the interruptions caused by the French wars of religion. English merchants had convinced Neville that the treaty was most beneficial to them, and he in some sense represented the merchants against the objections of both the French and English governments.

The Treaty of Blois, for example, gave English merchants an exemption from the hated "droict d'Aubeine," which authorized the French government to confiscate the property of merchants who died in France. 17 In addition, the French had greatly increased tariffs on foreign goods since 1572. Establishing the Treaty of Blois would force the elimination of those impositions and further benefit English merchants in France. 18 Neville provided Cecil with a list of the customs duties to be removed,

16 Ibid., p. 158. 17 Ibid., p. 64. 18 Ibid., pp. 73-4.
but he also had to concede that the treaty called for similar favors for French merchants in England. He was certain that Elizabeth had raised so few customs duties since 1572 that she would "make no great difficulty to revoke (them), rather than that they should hinder so great a benefit to her subject."\textsuperscript{19}

There were, it was true, some aspects of the treaty that the merchants would have liked adjusted. Neville pressed for the elimination of the requirement that the English merchants build a staple in France comparable to the ones in Antwerp and Bruges because his merchant friends thought the project too expensive. If the French refused to give way on this matter, the merchants must be guaranteed free practice of the Protestant religion in the mercantile house that they did build.\textsuperscript{20} He further argued that the treaty might be changed to provide some guarantee that the sale of English woolens in France would not be interfered with.\textsuperscript{21} He believed depredations upon trade that troubled relations between the two countries could be reduced by limiting the application of letters of mart to ships at sea. Such letters should not be applied to ships in port or to merchandise on land.\textsuperscript{22} This was an ideal standard for the English, who had a larger fleet at sea and great amounts of goods in French warehouses. All these "grants and privileges" should be unconditional.

Neville did not distinguish between the interests of English

\textsuperscript{19} Ibid., pp. 73-73, 112.  
\textsuperscript{20} Ibid., pp. 73-74, 76-76.  
\textsuperscript{21} Ibid., pp. 73-74.  
\textsuperscript{22} Ibid.
merchants and the interests of the English nation. Intermingled with his recommendations for mercantile advantages to be sought in a revived treaty, he included the suggestion that Henry promise not to tolerate any college or seminary run by English fugitives. The French King should further deny access to his ports to any armed ships belonging to Spain or her allies, "which if it be performed will take away that great liberty and boldness which they have used upon the narrow seas of late, to Her Majesty's exceeding dishonor and the damage of her subjects." The French might aid the English war effort further by cutting off exports of corn to Spain.

Neville conceded that the French would make counter demands, such as requiring that the English not stop ships flying the French flag. He thought that the substitution of passports from the King or the French admiralty, rather than the flag, would protect French interests without prejudicing English need to prevent the flow of contraband to Spain.

Any illusion Neville might have had as to French willingness to accept so one sided a solution to their mercantile problems was quickly shattered. Both Henry and Villeroy insisted that the English establish the required staple, and that they accept the sanctity of the French flag without additional passport. Villeroy also said he would insist upon concessions benefiting French merchants to match any Neville might

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23 Ibid., p. 73
24 Ibid., p. 74.
25 Ibid.
want to secure for the English. Neville hypocritically criticized the French for standing upon such "petty respects of profits," but he quickly realized that "reason of state" would forbid their accepting his suggested revisions. And Cecil quickly pointed out to him that he had gone further than the interests of his own nation permitted. He warned Neville not even to consider any limitations upon the search of ships flying French flags, "for the Queen cannot endure it." He also informed his young ambassador that "the Queen had raised many impositions and customs of late years, and some upon the French." The mutual reduction of customs duties to the level of 1572 might benefit English merchants, but the royal financiers wondered whether "this be good for the Prince, though it be for the subject." Cecil discreetly suggested that Neville restrain himself and "keep things in the temperature they are..."

Nor did the government provide him the kind of support he felt was necessary to protect the interests of English merchants in France. Even the expense of entertaining English gentlemen while they complained of their plight became burdensome, especially when London fell three months behind in providing his entertainment budget. In addition to continuing his efforts to obtain relief for them from the "droict

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26 Ibid., pp. 76-78.  
27 Ibid., p. 83.  
28 Ibid., pp. 56, 70.  
29 Ibid., p. 113  
30 Ibid., p. 92.  
d' Aubeine," he had to defend his countrymen from attacks by hostile French capitalists who sought to re-establish themselves after years of war and unrest. The port of Bayonne, for example, began issuing letters of mart against English merchants in retaliation for seizures made by English men of war. Neville believed this to be "directly contrary to all our treaties," in that only those actually guilty of seizing French shipping should be punished, and not innocent merchants.  

The merchants of Marseilles caused him further problems by seizing an English ship in retaliation for an English seizure made some eight years before. Under Elizabeth's instructions, Neville pointed out to the French that Marseilles had been in rebellion against Henry IV eight years previously. Henry had authorized the English capture at that time himself. As the King had forgiven his own rebels their crimes during the time of troubles, he should hardly continue to punish those whose only crime had been loyal service to him as an ally.  

But the president of Aix argued for the citizens of Marseilles that, in surrendering to Henry, they had received a guarantee of immunity for their rebellious actions, including the capture of the English ship. Neville warned Cecil that the acceptance of this argument would be fatal to the efforts of most English merchants who sought repayment for goods lost during the civil wars, for these goods had generally been seized by citizens living in areas in rebellion against

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32 Winwood, Memorials, I, 68.
33 Ibid., p. 69.
the King. They could make the same claim of immunity.  

But English efforts to gain justice for losses during the civil wars received little sympathy in France. An effort by the English to appeal an unfavorable verdict in the court of Rochelle was thwarted when the King's advocate ruled that such appeals were invalid if brought more than a year and a day after the original dispute. Neville saw that such a ruling would effectively invalidate the claims of most English merchants, who had been denied earlier access to French courts by the chaos of civil war.  

In addition to assisting Englishmen who sought satisfaction for losses to the French at sea, Neville had to deal with new and damaging limitations on English trade within France. In November, the English privy council informed him that the citizens of Rochelle had established regulations requiring English merchants there to limit their residence to a period of not more than four months and to spend at least one sixth of the value of their products sold in Rochelle on French wine.  

He had also to struggle against the efforts of French drapers who lobbied for the prohibition of the import of cheap English woolens. And such prohibitions were actually imposed at Rouen against woolens that were poorly made, as well as cheap dyed woolens. And English merchants complained to him continually that French customs duties remained far above the level established by the Treaty of Blois. He was

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34 Ibid., p. 114.  
36 Ibid., p. 164.  
37 J. B. Black, Elizabeth and Henri IV (1914), p. 149.
stung by their charge that he was "very negligent" in failing to deal with their problems.  

Actually, he was doing the best he could from a weak bargaining position, and with little support from London. He had urged Henry to establish a commission to settle English claims similar to the one which Elizabeth had created in England. Henry went through the motions of complying with this request, but the difficulty of gaining approval for such a commission in the many parlements of France and corruption in the English commission that made it less than a convincing model, prevented any real satisfaction. Neville continually demanded specific evidence of any failing by the English commission, and, on the few occasions when it was provided, he urged Cecil to "recommend the cause earnestly unto them (the English commissioners), that all mouths may be stopped, and Her Majesty's proceeding may be justified to be, as it hath been always, most just and princely. So shall I have also the better occasion to urge satisfaction in the behalf of Her Majesty's subjects that be grieved in the like kind."  

On the other hand, he recommended that the government maintain a hard line against any limitations upon English trade in France. While he believed free trade to be a key to friendship, he saw limitations upon trade as, in some sense, an act of war. He constantly urged stronger action than Cecil and Elizabeth were willing to take. When

38 Winwood, Memorials, I, 155.  
39 Ibid., 141; Black, p. 149.  
40 Ibid., p. 152.
the French failed to create a functioning commission, he urged that Elizabeth should suspend the commission that she had established.\textsuperscript{41} When the drapers attempted to cut off the woolen trade, Neville complained to Henry that "this debarring of our traffic were rather to cut off the root and foundation of all true friendship." When that appeal failed, he urged Cecil to threaten the French ambassador with the possibility of cutting off English trade to France, or at least to limit French trade in England. When the prohibition became a reality Sir Henry argued that England should quit dealing in French wines to bring them to their senses.\textsuperscript{42}

If Neville's concern for English mercantile interests sometimes blinded him to political realities, his religious commitments alienated him even further from the moderate policies of his government. Living in a nation whose monarch had recently converted to Catholicism, in contact with English exiles all too willing to win his favor by filling his ears with news of Spanish plots against the Queen, ever conscious of the insecurity of the Protestant minority in France, Neville found his natural inclination to Protestantism deepen nearly to fanaticism. He had made this concern clear in that first meeting with Henry, when he spoke against the introduction of the Jesuit order into France and reminded the King of his obligation to tolerate the Huguenots. To Neville, Henry IV was a thoroughly untrustworthy person. Unfaithful

\textsuperscript{41}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 128.
\textsuperscript{42}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 154.
to both wife and mistress, devoted to hunting and gaiety, neglectful of business, ruling a nation of Catholics and surrounded by advisers committed to the Catholic Church, he might seek international power by leading the Catholic cause. And the pressure on the King was growing, "for the restitution of the Jesuits goeth on with full sails in the jurisdiction of all the parlements but Paris, where it is thought the King being turned, will likewise turn those messieurs too in the end." Furthermore, Henry needed the Pope at that moment, both to mediate a dispute he was having with the Duke of Savoy over the Saluces, and to provide him a much desired divorce. 43

And the King's closest advisers sought a more catholic policy. The most important of these, and to Neville the most dangerous, was the King's secretary Villeroy, who was a "great favorer" of the restitution of the Jesuits. 44 Villeroy had, in August, led a faction of the King's council who favored providing harbor facilities and supplies to a Spanish fleet at Brest and, though over-ridden by the King, Neville feared the Catholic faction would ultimately wear him down. Those same advisers sought to separate the Protestant allies by sewing seeds of doubt with the Dutch, suggesting that the English would make peace without them and that their only salvation lay with France. Only in the friendship of Henry IV, "which perhaps is not very sure anchor neither," was there sympathy for the English cause. The French had shown delight at

43 Ibid., pp. 116-17.
44 Ibid., p. 86.
the prospect of a Spanish invasion of England in August of 1599. Their refusal to pay the Queen's loan and the little respect they showed her were also indicative. But most dangerous was "the drift that in my poor judgment may be discovered daily in the chief ministers and coun­cillors here, to work a persuasion and hope in the King, that he may become head of the Catholic party throughout Christendom," a position he could hardly hold while showing friendship to heretics. Evidence for this plot he saw everywhere: in the recent paring down of the protection guaranteed the Huguenots by the Edict of Nantes, in the neglect of the interests of protestant Geneva when negotiating with Savoy over the marquisate of the Saluces, and inevitably, in the "in­clination, almost the resolution" to readmit the Jesuits. Finally, he sensed personally a great coldness on the part of the French. How long could a King who preferred to delegate responsibility while he enjoyed the pleasures of the hunt withstand such pressures? "I cannot forget however in my first audience the King told me, upon occasion of some speech when then passed between us, that he stood in as good terms at Rome and had as good credit as the King of Spain...." In voicing such speculations Neville realized that he might have exceeded his responsibility as an ambassador, "yet my zeal to Her Majesty's service cannot contain itself within ordinary bounds, and methinks I see some­what more than I can by a bare advertisement explain...."

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45 ibid., p. 107.
46 ibid., p. 108.
47 ibid.
Neville's fears of a Catholic conspiracy continued to grow. In November he forwarded to Cecil a copy of a papal bull authorizing an archpriest for English Catholics. The following April he reported the introduction of the decrees of the Council of Trent into France. On both occasions he reported the increasing insecurity felt by the Huguenots, against whom French priests aroused the populace. On one occasion priests desecrated their own churches in hopes that the towns­men would murder their innocent Protestant fellows. By May of 1600 Neville had become convinced of the King's involvement against the Huguenots, and of the imminence of civil war in France. Henry, he reported, would winter in Languedoc and Guyenne "to favor and fortify with his presence a design he has, to dismantle the towns held by those of the religion, which if he do or attempt, it is like to prove the first act of the tragedy which all men expect here within short time." Any favorable negotiation with France would have to come quickly, "for the friendship is very hollow, and will grow every day more unsound, as his combination with Rome grows more straight, to which he is wholly carried by those that do absolutely govern him."

Neville fought such tendencies with every device he could muster. He avowed his own Protestantism so openly that he became known as "Wholly Putitan." He had Protestant sermons openly preached in his

48 Ibid., p. 128.
50 Ibid.
52 Ibid., p. 184.
house, to the disgust of French Catholics, who threatened him with mob violence. He spurned this threat claiming protection "by the King as belonged to my place, and as he would look that his ambassador should be in England, where his mass was as distasteful to the people there as my sermon was here...." His reputation was such that the Spanish ambassador believed Neville capable of hiring an assassin to kill him.55

Neville also sought the aid of French Huguenots for Elizabeth, whom he characterized as the "buckler of Christianity." Upon Rhosny, who was to become famous as the Duke de Sully, he urged a special responsibility to see that the King repaid his debt so that Elizabeth could continue to champion "the religion." Sir Henry told him that

> God had not advanced him to that place of honor and authority...only for his own good, but to the end also that both the King's subjects and allies of the religion should reap some fruit and comfort by it. That no man knew better than he how profitable Her Majesty's friendship hath been to the King's estate in general and to the cause of the religion in particular.56

Finally, he waged war upon Catholicism by means of disgruntled English Catholic exiles who had once supported Mary Stuart but who had refused to recognize the claim of the Infanta and who now wished to regain the good will of Elizabeth. Their leader was Charles Paget, a wily, disreputable figure who constantly reaffirmed Neville's anti-

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54 Winwood, Memorials, I, 128; Harrison, Last Elizabethan Journal, p. 53.

55 Ibid., p. 228.

56 Ibid., p. 149.
Catholic bias. Cecil warned Sir Henry against Paget, but was unable to reveal to his ambassador that he had a more reliable informant in France. As a result, Sir Henry became increasingly frustrated by the numerous plots recounted to him by the exiles and by the refusal of the better informed Cecil to take his warnings seriously.  

When he learned from Paget that those English exiles supporting the Jesuit Parsons continued to avow the claim of the Infanta to the English throne, Neville launched a counter-attack. He encouraged and supported the efforts of Paget and his friends to publish defamatory remarks on the Jesuit order. He urged Cecil to torture any captured priests to gain information about such a plot, and to include a clause denouncing the Infanta's claim in any treaty made with Spain. Her refusal to renounce the throne would prove the truth of the plot; her renunciation would destroy it. Furthermore, her renunciation would "give satisfaction to some who have taken too hot an alarm of

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57 In 1591 Cecil and his father Lord Burghley had agreed to release from an English prison the Jesuit father John Cecil, on the condition that he spy for them in France and elsewhere. Father Cecil had insisted that only Burghley and Cecil know of this arrangement. P. M. Handover, The Second Cecil (London, 1959), pp. 108-9. Thus, when in the fall of 1599 Neville recommended Cecil as a spy to Sir Robert, the Secretary wrote back, "For the book which you have sent me, if the author be he that I take it, (a lewd priest, though of an honest name,) I wonder upon what audacity he thinks fit to come over hither, for writing a pamphlet against another as himself." Cecil may have felt it necessary to keep this confidence even from his ambassador, but Neville was certainly justified in his feeling that important matters were being kept from him. Winwood, Memorials, I, 109.

58 Winwood, Memorials, I, 101, 117, 122. He asked Cecil, for example, for details of a reputed Jesuit plot to poison the Queen that he might use.
it, and to prevent it, have almost precipitated themselves into dangerous counsels both to themselves and us; I mean the King of Scotland, whereof I shall be able to certify you more, ere it be long."  

Neville feared that James VI of Scotland, the obvious protestant candidate to succeed Elizabeth, might become a Catholic and ultimately introduce religious toleration into England. He had intercepted a letter from one Jesuit priest to another warning the second not to write a pamphlet attacking James. This suggested to Neville that the Jesuits considered James a potential friend.  

He had also learned that a young man named Ogilvy had in 1596 traveled through Italy and Spain asking the Pope to recognize James's claim to the English throne (instead of the Infanta), and asking the Spanish King for money and troops to help James invade England.  

And he learned that a priest named Bennet had been traveling in France at the instigation of the Scottish ambassador seeking support for a policy of religious toleration in Scotland.  

The Scottish ambassador continued to act suspiciously. On November 29th Neville reported that he was successfully seducing young noblemen from "the religion" into popery, and that he was aided by the

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59 ibid., p. 52.  
60 ibid., pp. 109-10.  
62 Winwood, Memorials, I, 123. Neville feared toleration would spread to England. "It is a thing much labored, and greatly feared by the best affected to that nation. It were a dangerous precedent for their neighbors."
Scottish Lord Hume in this activity. By January Neville was convinced that the Jesuit leader Parsons had reunited Hume and the Earl of Bothwell, and that James might himself be involved. "In sum, Sir, by all advertisements I receive, I find a great concurrence towards some alteration in those parts, and many are won to the adverse side; which will not declare themselves until the instant, and in the meantime hold false fellowship with our side, to do the greater harm...."

By the 25th of January, 1600, Neville had found a new spy, who confirmed his worst fears. Catholics gathering at the house of the Scottish ambassador "speak big that they will have the mass in Scotland ere many months." To a young nobleman who resisted their attempts at rational conversion, they threatened "that within few years, and possibly within few months, he would repent him if he refused to become Catholic...." The alteration in Scotland could still be prevented, thought Neville, so long as James VI was not too deeply involved; but he worried that his difficulties in developing a commercial treaty with France or gaining repayment of the Queen's debt might worsen the situation in Scotland.

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63 Ibid., p. 134.
64 Ibid., p. 146.
65 Ibid., p. 147.
66 Ibid., p. 163. James was negotiating with the Pope in 1599, and seemed willing to deal with anyone who could help him gain the throne of England. Henry IV wrote of James, "He practices in Rome, in Spain, and everywhere else, as he does with me...without attaching himself to anyone, and is easily carried away by the hopes of those about him without regard for truth or merit...." Willson, King James, pp. 146-8.
Cecil certainly sympathized with Neville's religious commitments. Unfortunately, Sir Henry allowed his avid Protestantism to interfere to some extent with his duty as ambassador. Sixteenth century theoreticians of diplomacy all agreed that an ambassador should "zealously act in such fashion that he be rather the maker of peace and concord than of discord or war." And in August of 1599 Cecil had assured Sir Henry "that if the war may receive an end with honorable and safe conditions, it is the thing I much desire...." But Neville could not separate the war against Spain from the war on Catholicism. He believed that the Catholic clergy of Spain helped fund the war, and that rumors that Spain wished to negotiate a peace were fabrications designed to weaken English defenses. In spite of the duty imposed upon him by diplomatic theory and the desires of Elizabeth and Cecil, Neville did all he could to draw the French back into the war, to continue it to a successful conclusion.

In the late fall and winter on 1599 and 1600 the English government was engaged in discussions with the Belgian businessman, Jerome Coomans, who represented the Archduke Albert, the representative of the

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68 Winwood, Memorials, I, 96; On September 8 Rowland Whyte informed Robert Sidney from London that "The peace is much desired here...and some say it is so forward that commissioners are to be chosen on both sides..." Collins, Sidney Papers, I, 120.

69 Winwood, Memorials, I, 65.
junior branch of the Hapsburg family resident in the Low Countries.
The object of the discussions was peace between England and Spain.
But Neville filled his dispatches with information gathered by the unreliable Paget that the Spanish were gathering a new armada for an invasion of England. And he continued such reports even after Cecil warned him that Elizabeth wanted him to disregard Paget and his fellow ambassadors assured him that the Spanish flotilla was bound for America rather than England. 70

Neville further denounced the suggestion that their Protestant allies, the Dutch, might participate in negotiations with Spain. 71 He warned once more that to make peace with Spain would only play into the hands of Henry IV, who would make himself protector of the Dutch. If the matter were not warily dealt with Neville feared "it will come to pass as I have signified, and then I doubt our latter end will be worse than our beginning, and that in weakening one enemy we shall set up another more dangerous." 72 In December Cecil conceded that the Dutch would not negotiate, but that England intended to pursue conversations toward peace with Spain. 73 Neville reported that the ambassador for Savoy had information that he claimed would not only convince Elizabeth that she should continue the war, but also bring the French into the war on the side of England. 74 As late as March of 1600 Neville

70 Ibid., pp. 134, 138.  
71 Ibid., p. 133.  
72 Ibid.  
73 Ibid., p. 137.  
74 Ibid., p. 136.
pointed out that the appointment of Fernando Carrillo by the Spanish as a commissioner to the peace negotiations at Boulogne "makes men conceive it may prove more full of difficulties than was expected. For this man is known to be no great favorer of peace, and withal very haughty and peremptory like a right Spaniard." 75

For his part, Cecil patiently guided his young ambassador in a direction he did not want to go. He pointed out, for example, that the Duke of Savoy only wanted France in the war with Spain, so that the Spanish would defend the Marquisate of Saluces from Henry IV for him. In general he remarked that as peace neared all states "do begin to play their parts, every one in their several quarter; and to that end, do seek to sew such bruits as they may think may best concur with their own particular ends." He expressed confidence that Neville could distinguish the valid from the self-serving. 76 Cecil remembered the impatience of youth and realized the difficulty of a first diplomatic assignment. From the beginning of Neville's tour in France, Sir Robert had taken care to encourage his young protege. He congratulated Neville after his first letter from Paris, pointing out that Elizabeth had publicly commended it, "wherein I must confess to participate with you as feelingly, as the dearest friend you have living." 77 He praised Neville's "discreet proceedings" and capable responses to Henry IV and his ministers. "I know not how the wit of man could have

answered better.\textsuperscript{78} He sent messages of approval to Neville by means of English visitors like William Killigrew, and vowed never to neglect him "either as a public minister or as a private friend."\textsuperscript{79}

Nevertheless, the pressures of his office began to erode Neville's confidence. Accustomed to the good feeling afforded the leading gentleman of the county by his neighbors, Neville could not adjust to the hostility of the French. "I am ashamed to see what idols we make of ambassadors there when so little courtesy is shown them here."\textsuperscript{80} He resented the slowness of Cecil's responses to his letters, though he should have appreciated the burden under which Cecil suffered.\textsuperscript{81} He was burdened by the expense of the office, and by personal tragedy in the death of a son and his own illness.\textsuperscript{82} And he especially resented the fact that Cecil too readily agreed to negotiate through Boissise, the French ambassador in London, rather than through him.\textsuperscript{83} Sir Henry Neville sought the glory of making policy, but instead saw his advice consistently rejected. By December of 1599 he wanted nothing more than to "be a hermit in Ashridge or the forest, and do penance for the faults committed here."\textsuperscript{84} Abjectly he pleaded with Cecil that the Queen "might not impute the blame to want of seal or diligence in me, but consider

\textsuperscript{78}Ibid., p. 46.  \textsuperscript{79}Ibid., p. 68.  
\textsuperscript{80}CSPDomestic (1598-1601), p. 379; Harrison, Last Elizabethan Journal, p. 66.  
\textsuperscript{81}Collins, Sidney Papers, I, 119.  \textsuperscript{82}Winwood, Memorials, I, 119.  
\textsuperscript{83}Ibid., p. 114.  \textsuperscript{84}CSPDomestic (1598-1601), p. 379.
I am come hither in a time when the King hath no more need of her as he hath had, and is besides governed by those which are not the best affected to her." ^85

Cecil could only reassure Sir Henry that neither the Queen nor the world thought him useless "unless it be of no use to be well served when of necessity she must be served." ^86 For in March he had for Neville an even more unpalatable assignment. Neville was to be a commissioner to the peace negotiations at Boulogne, negotiations about which Sir Henry was skeptical. Nor could Cecil offer any relief from his burdens in France.

Only this was one direct speech the Queen used to me, that she would not have you think of coming over though you came so near the sea; it being her full meaning that you shall complete your second year. For she did plainly tell me that there could be no greater wrong to her service than to be ever sending those who, as soon as they had gotten one year's experience, then they make suit to come home; and yet shall he see (saith she) at his two years' end that I will take care of him.

But on March 2, 1600, Neville received another letter from Cecil which seemed to offer a reprieve. Sir Robert informed Neville that his

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^85 Winwood, Memorials, 1, 131. ^86 Ibid., p. 139.

^87 Ibid., p. 157. Sir Henry had not even the consolation of having been a first choice for this mission. The original commission had included Sir Julius Caesar rather than Neville. His heading the commissioners was also an accident of diplomacy. The Spanish had chosen their ambassador to France, Don Baltasar Suniga, to lead their mission, and for the English to have followed their original intention of appointing a noble would have tacitly admitted the fact of Neville's social inferiority to the Spanish representative. Nathan Gerson Goodman, Diplomatic Relations between England and Spain, with special reference to English Opinion, 1597-1603 (Philadelphia, 1925), p. 46-7.
eyes had been opened to Hapsburg intentions by the actual demands made by the representatives of the Archduke in London. First, they had insisted that England renew the offensive and defensive treaties which had formerly existed with Burgundy. Secondly, they demanded that all English trade with Holland and Zealand be forbidden. Thirdly, England must restore the cautionary towns of Flushing and Brill. Fourthly, fugitives on both sides must be returned. These terms represented abject surrender. They would force the Dutch either to fall once again under the control of Spain or to save themselves by becoming satellites of France. Those who had fled Catholicism would be betrayed to the Spanish Inquisition. The English cloth trade into the Netherlands would be stifled. War might break out with France. As Cecil put it, "The substance of his coming, we plainly discovered...was rather to propound and receive answer than as having commission to give us satisfaction." Cecil told Verheyken, the Archduke's representative, that the Queen desired a more precise understanding before the meetings, but Vereyken only responded "Ah Monsieur, les premieres propositions ne sont point logees, 'a la Conference on en advisera mieux." On this slender reed the English resolved to continue discussions "considering that the opinion of a peace...keeps up the Queen's reputation." 89

This hint that at last Cecil had come to concur in Neville's

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88 HMC Salisbury MSS, X, 145-6; Goodman, Diplomatic Relations, p. 41.
interpretation of the situation, coupled with the impossible demands made in London, led Neville to seek the center of the stage. Fed up with criticisms voiced by English merchants, with French impudence and delays, with the onerous and distasteful task of dunning a reluctant King, with remaining uninformed while policies he despised were made in London, Neville sought to cut across all this with the stroke of a pen. "It may please your honor to remember that I have often written that it was not believed the King of Spain had any sincere purpose to make peace," he wrote to Cecil on the 12th of March. "These exhorbitant demands, to my simple understanding, do import as much..." And he had other evidence that peace was not at hand. Charles Paget, ever informative, assured him that Spain would make no peace unless the cautionary towns held by the English in the Netherlands were surrendered to Spain. Henry IV supported this opinion, and Vereyken's actions in London confirmed that this obstacle would never be overcome. At that very moment, according to Paget, three Spanish ships carried money and munitions from Spain to Ireland, where the Earl of Tyrone had agreed to serve the Spanish King, and to provide 6,000 or 7,000 men for an invasion of England should Philip III order it. Although Neville knew Paget was distrusted in London, Neville believed him, for he could see no gain in Paget's lying. Paget had further informed him that under no circumstances did the Spanish intend peace, but sought only the delivery of the cautionary towns, "with great disadvantage and danger to us...joined with infinite dishonor." Should the peaceful

\[90\text{ibid.}, p. 160.\]
seizure of the towns fail, "the King of Spain resolveth to set up his
rest and venture his whole fortune upon us; which notwithstanding he
(Paget) thinks safer for us to endure, than to render those towns,
which would in the end make them masters of those seas, and enable
them to give the law for our trade as they would."  

Neville thought this development should be put to good use. Henry
IV was concerned that England and Spain not make peace. Why not make
the French King a straightforward offer, a commitment to continue the
war, if he would settle all the pending disputes between England and
France to Elizabeth's satisfaction? Henry should agree to renew the
mutual defensive treaty between the two nations, to pay the Queen a
fixed sum each year until her loan had been made good, and to establish
English trade in France under the favorable conditions of the Treaty
of Blois. Further, he should agree to forbid the carrying of all
arms and munitions into Spain, to forbid his subjects serving against
England, and to continue his assistance to the United Provinces. Final-
ly, he should use his credit with the German states and the Emperor to
gain the entrance of English trade there and to do the like in Scotland,
to help thwart any designs the King of Spain might have in that country,
and, for good measure, to aid the Queen with money and men to put down
the Irish rebels, if she should request such aid.  

Neville urged
Cecil to strike quickly. "For undoubtedly he (Henry IV) could be
contented if (treaty talks) were broken, and while it is in balance

\[91\text{Ibid., p. 161.}\] \[92\text{Ibid.}\]
would perhaps be drawn to somewhat which afterwards, when he sees it broken of itself, he will hardly be brought to...." He recommended, in conclusion, that Paget and his friends be rewarded for their information, and that he be released from the negotiations at Boulogne.93

Confident that he had the support of his government at last, Neville approached Henry IV. "Upon occasion of so many probable conjectures that this intended treaty will have no such ready passage as was conceived; in which case it cannot be amiss Her Majesty should know what assurance and foundation she may make of her allies: I resumed (though I had no special direction to do so) to press the King at a late audience for a direct answer in some points I had heretofore moved him of." Neville found Henry, who was "in a very good humor," willing to assure his good affection "with very liberal offers of his person and all his forces, to be employed in her defence if she needed." Sir Henry begged Cecil to authorize his fully unfolding his plan to Henry IV, who agreed with Neville that England should take a hard line with Spain. Neville now amplified upon the advantages of his proposals. The King of France would be won away from his dangerous sympathy towards Rome, a much more important factor than any gains for English merchants. This would discourage plots in Scotland to win James VI to Catholicism.94

Even Villeroy could not dampen Neville's enthusiasm. At their last meeting he had complained to Neville, as usual, of English piracy though "in some milder sort than he hath used at other times." This

93Ibid., p. 161.  
94Ibid., p. 164.
had inspired Sir Henry with another idea. Why not discount against the French debt losses in any proven acts of English piracy? "This course the King cannot except against, and by this means either he will become less eager in the prosectuing of such matters, or at least Her Majesty shall receive some part of her money." 95

But Sir Henry's efforts to become the moving force in the negotiations came to nought. Even before he had heard from Cecil, he found the French changing their tune. Villeroy approached him on Saturday the fifth of April to say "that the King's intent and desire was not only to entertain all former treaties and alliances made with Her Majesty and her predecessors, and namely that of 1572, but to fortify and renew them." But the negotiations would be carried on by "a man of very good quality", sent from France into England, who would also have the power to arrange for the time and conditions of repayment of the English loan to France. Stung personally by this proposal, and seeing it as only another delaying tactic on the part of the French, Neville rejected it. He replied that the best way to show their good faith in paying the Queen her money. He asked for another audience, which Villeroy promised him, but which he could not secure, for the King had retired to Fountainbleau, "to be private and take the diet for 10 or 12 days." 96

Neville explained this turn of events in two ways. First, the French did not believe that Elizabeth was truly willing to renew the Treaty of Blois. Boissise, the French ambassador in London, had reach-

95 Ibid., p. 164.
96 Ibid., p. 168.
ed this conclusion "upon some cold answer...received in that matter about two months since, either from Her Majesty or your honor." Second-
ly, Villeroy still believed Neville to be acting on his own initiative. The solution was for the Queen to avow his proceedings and to make the renewal of the treaty a condition for the repayment of the debt. Neville believed the French would accept such a condition; if they refused they would show their hypocrisy. To increase the likelihood of French cooperation, Elizabeth should flout the possibility of peace with Spain, whether she intended it or not. Even if peace seemed likely, she should put it off until she had gotten what she wanted from France. The French would not insist that she continue the war against Spain, but only that she agree not to ally with Spain against them "which is the thing they extremely fear." Finally, they must not allow the negotiations to be shifted to London. "If Her Majesty be pleased to continue this negotiation, she must first avow my proceeding with them, else you confirm Monsieur de Villeroy's suspicion and overthrow the very ground of all." 97

Cecil's response to Neville's letter of 20 March, in which he had outlined his proposals, did not arrive in Paris until after the posting of his letter of 9 April. Sir Robert's answer crushed Neville's hopes, not by rejecting his ideas, but by treating them as insignificant. The Queen had been pleased with his course, but insisted that he dismiss

97 Ibid., p. 169.
anything told him by Paget. 98 "For the points concerning the treaty you do very wisely and reasonably remember them; not that I think he will be brought to many of those things, but because I see the lack of renewing the treaties between him and the Queen makes him think that he doth Her Majesty a pleasure to suffer her cloth to be vented, or almost any certainty to be observed for imposition." He then pointed out once more that the Queen had increased customs on French imports and was reluctant to negotiate these increases away. This was not a good time for further negotiations, as they had already held meetings with Spain and Denmark. As for Neville's desire to escape going to Boulogne, it could not be done. Cecil, however, would not make the trip because of the expense. Neville's only consolation was that he would not have to travel with the King to Marseilles. The last third of the letter concerned Cecil's request that Neville find a home for one Townshend, who needed to learn French so he could become a companion to Cecil's son. In a postscript Sir Robert wrote, "Since the writing of this letter, Her Majesty hath commanded me to tell you merrily that, although you write one letter of state matters, yet she must have always one half sheet of court news and accidents!" 99 Neville sought to make policy in the Queen's behalf. She responded with jokes.

98 Ibid., p. 166. It is not altogether clear why Elizabeth was so hostile to Paget. Cecil had known Paget during his first trip to Paris in 1584, but since that time Paget had been part of the newsgathering force of Anthony Bacon, who was in the service of Essex. Whatever the motivation, we again find Cecil renouncing Neville's advice without explanation. Handover, The Second Cecil, pp. 105-8.

99 Winwood, Memorials, 1, 166-7.
By the time he wrote again on the 19th of April, Cecil had received Neville's letters of 2 and 9 April, and had a better insight into how seriously Sir Henry was taking matters. He assured Neville that Elizabeth made matters difficult for Boissise, having broken off a conversation with him abruptly when he proved evasive on the debt. She rejected, as Neville had, the idea of a special embassy to discuss matters in London. In his own conversation with Boissies Cecil had specifically authorized Neville's course of action. London would go on with the renewal of the Treaty of Blois, though Cecil expressed some reservations as to the benefits for England. The Queen would even tie payment of the debt to the commercial treaty, but only after the French had made a previous partial payment to show their good will, and to protect her honor. She did not want to be considered a merchant selling her favors for cash.

Neville could not have been mollified by Cecil's long letter. The negotiations for repayment of the debt would be carried on through Boissise in London, not through Neville in Paris. This was, of course, necessary, since Elizabeth would not relieve Sir Henry of going to Boulogne. He would have there the honor of supreme place, but this was more a diplomatic accident than an expression of confidence in him.

"...you shall supply the supreme place in this commission; out of this reason that the King of Spain's ambassador must not appear in the world, to be too good to be matched with Her Majesty's ambassador, yea though there were odds in their particular qualities, (which if it be, the best I am sure is on your side.)" Originally they had thought the Admiral of Aragon would hold the chief place for Spain, and he would
have been matched by the Earl of Northumberland. 100

The fact that the meeting was going on at all must have seemed incredible to Neville. Despite her concern at the embarrassment of a failed meeting, Elizabeth decided to go forward solely on an inference drawn from a letter by the Archduke's representatives in which they suggested "that seeing they desire to meet, we ought to imagine they have a purpose to accommodate; for if they had not, it may be well judged, that it doth behove them to be as sensible of a vain colloquy as the Queen." 101 Under the circumstances, Cecil's statement that Neville had "too much religion and discretion to give way to any private passion or prejudice disposition either violently to war or blindly to peace" may have been more an admonition than an observation.

Obeying Cecil's instructions, Sir Henry spent the weeks of late April and early May preparing himself with arguments on precedence for his meeting with the Spanish. He continued to press the King for the money that he knew was not forthcoming and reluctantly outlined the "petty matters" of court gossip requested by the Queen, which in the reign of Henry IV were plentiful. 102 His studies of the problem of precedence and his conversations with Henry and Villeroy convinced him that precedence would prove a difficult problem. 103 In the third week

100 Ibid., pp. 171, 174. 101 Ibid., p. 171.

102 Ibid., p. 176.

103 Ibid., p. 185. Cecil saw that the French advice was based on self interest "being of opinion, that Monsieur Villeroy would have us fall out at the meeting, because we should never agree at the end."
of May he began, without enthusiasm, his journey to Boulogne. He had been in Paris almost exactly a year, and had accomplished nothing.

Little happened at Boulogne to improve Neville’s outlook, unless he received some perverse pleasure from having his opinion that the Spanish never intended to make peace thoroughly justified. In Boulogne, as in Paris, he found the English court more flexible than he and the other English commissioners. Thus, when the commissioners, in accordance with Elizabeth’s directive that they "have good regard to the validity of their commission," raised several technical objections to the credentials of the Spanish representatives Zuniga and Carrillo, Elizabeth bade them drop those points because of her confidence in the sincerity of both princes. 104 That this confidence was misplaced became readily apparent on the 24th of May less than a week after the Spanish commissioners’ arrival. The English made a bid for precedence, but only as a prelude to accepting equality. Thomas Edmondes, who had met with the Audiencer in Brussels, claimed that Vereyken had agreed to this point. 105 There followed an acrimonious and unedifying exchange of arguments in which Spain claimed precedence because Spain was larger than England, because cosmographers placed Spain at the top of maps where she stood to other nations as the head to the body, because the Spanish Kingship extended back in direct lineal ascent to the Goths, and because of the decrees of various church councils. But the English commissioners discovered the real motive to lie in the fact that "they

104 Goodman, Diplomatic Relations, p. 53.
105 HMC Salisbury MSS, XV, 87.
(Spain) contested with France for the place, and we yielding it to France, if they should now assent to an equality with us, it were to quit their pretension against France. The English rejected the work of cosmographers as the inventions of "idle brains", but made direct attacks on the rest of the Spanish arguments. As a direct descendent of Ethelbert, Elizabeth represented a line of 900 years. England had in antiquity been reduced later by and freed sooner from the Romans than any other nation. Christianity had existed in England since 597, while the Moors had only been driven out of Spain in the late 15th century. Constitutional authorities showed that the English monarchs had always had absolute authority in England, which the Spanish had only received in 1204. The Queen had more ecclesiastical power in not being subordinate to the Pope, and church councils at Constance, Pisa and Basle had given England precedence over Castille and Aragon, Spain not yet having come into existence.

Two commissioners from each side debated these matters endlessly in informal meetings. The Spanish declared it was insult that the English had even claimed precedence. On the 11th of June the Spanish asked time to confer with the Archduke by letter, and on the 17th they asked an additional two weeks for a personal meeting between the Archduke and one of the commissioners in Brussels. Actually, as the English surmised, they intended to contact the King of Spain in Madrid;

106 Cotton MSS, Vespasian CVIII, 343-4; Goodman, Diplomatic Relations, pp. 54-55.
107 ibid.
but the English did not press the point. They had already been ordered to break up the negotiations if such an appeal to Spain were made.  

The English commissioners took advantage of this lull to send Edmondes to London to request further information on the six points in their instructions. They wished to know how strictly they were to hold the Spanish to them. Without exception, the privy council gave them great leeway in either conceding or evading confrontation on these points, giving evidence of desire for peace on the part of England.  

While two weeks stretched into a month, the English accused the Spanish of insincerity in aiding the Irish while negotiations went on, and the Spanish countered by accusing the English of continuing to aid the Dutch rebels. Then Richardot, the second representative of the Archduke, suggested privately that they adjourn to the Low Countries where they would give England precedence if she would bring the Dutch into the negotiations. But Elizabeth had had enough of promises, and instead ordered the commissioners to return home if the Audiencer did not return by the 26th of July.  

Vereyken actually returned on the 18th, but with a sharp reprimand from the King of Spain for even debating the matter of precedence with England. The English were to give over precedence, or the meeting

108 Winwood, Memorials, I, 204; CSPSimancas, IV, 669-70.  
109 Goodman, Diplomatic Relations, p. 58.  
110 Ibid.  
111 Ibid.  
112 CSPSimancas, IV, 669-70.
was to be broken up at once. Neville had been right all along. It had
been the Archduke, ruling over a suffering populace, who had initiated
the talks. Philip III had participated only in order not to be deemed
a warmonger. The Spanish council had debated the matter, and seriously
considered the case for peace; but they decided against it for two
reasons. First, Elizabeth could not live much longer, and there seemed
every chance of a disputed succession. Why should Spain tie her hands
by a treaty when the opportunity might soon arise to regain England
for Catholicism. Secondly, there was little gain for Spain in ending
the conflict, unless she could also stop the war in the Netherlands.
This explains Richardot's "personal" suggestion that the meeting be
moved to the Low Countries and that it include the rebels. 113

Thus, in the six weeks that he spent in Boulogne, Sir Henry
Neville never once met with the Spanish representatives. He had,
however, through Edmondes and Beale, learned enough to appreciate
how haughty a Spaniard could be; and he would never forget it. During
the meetings, he expressed to Winwood his conviction that they were
pawns rather than players in the diplomatic game, "not worthy to know"
the real concerns even of their own nation. 114

113 Ibid.; C. H. Carter, The Secret Diplomacy of the Hapsburgs,

114 Winwood, Memorials, I, 230. Neville referred to information
that Raleigh and Cobham had traveled to the continent to observe the
war, which Cecil assured him was only out of their interest, but which
Neville and others suspected was a separate diplomatic undertaking of
some sort. Nothing came of the Raleigh effort, whatever its intent.
He continued at Boulogne his duties as ambassador to France. Winwood, who seems to have accompanied him to Boulogne, he later sent back to Paris, and then on to Lyons to follow the King into what they hoped would be a war with Savoy over the Marquisate of Saluces. On the very day, the 18th of July, that the Audiencer returned from Spain, Neville wrote to Winwood his opinion that the peace was broken. "I thought good you should know it, but use it as you see cause; you may communicate it if you will to the Duke de Bouillon if he be there, and see if he will not take occasion before it be thoroughly known, to set a foot again the motion I made for renewing the treaties between the Queen and the French King." But he pressed also another negotiation, for in spite of the Queen's explicit command that he not cross the channel, "I send tomorrow into England, to solicit my leave to step over thither when we have ended here; this last accident I fear will much disappoint my hopes that way."\textsuperscript{115} In his next letter of the 23rd of July he warned Winwood to seek intelligence about a possible Spanish invasion attempt in Ireland. The peace having failed, he feared such an invasion would be attempted. He seemed dangerously close, at this moment, to disobedience.

I am not certain what shall become of me, for in the letters from Her Majesty whereby we are authorized to return, the permission seems to be restrained to those that were sent over purposely for this business, which seems to be exclusive to me; But I have sent over Michael purposely to bring me some certain resolution, and I make full account to go over.\textsuperscript{116}

\textsuperscript{115}Ibid., p. 230. \textsuperscript{116}Ibid., p. 231.
On the 29th he wrote to tell Winwood that the Spanish had already left, and that the English commissioners only awaited a ship. A face saving device had been arranged so that talks could be resumed by letter within sixty days, but Neville saw no hope of resumption. But he was Machiavellian enough to advise Winwood carefully how to use this "information to the best advantage. If Winwood found that the King would more readily enter into a war with Savoy because of the breach, then Winwood should inform him of the truth, that peace was impossible. If, however, the King had already begun the war,

you shall do well to turn your language clean the other way, and accemare, that the small assurance and contentment she finds here will enforce her in all reason to provide for her repose and safety some other way; at least to disburthen herself of certain enemies, seeing she finds so uncertain friends.

Winwood should also discuss with the King and Villeroy a recent edict which restrained and even confiscated cloth out of England. Thus, no relief seemed in sight for Neville. On only one point had he been successful in his negotiations. He had gained at last permission to return to England for one precious month. On the 2nd of August he arrived at Dover, resolved never to go back to France.

117 Ibid., p. 232.
118 HMC Salisbury MSS, X, 268; Collins, Sidney Papers, 11, 209; Goodman, Diplomatic Relations, p. 61.
When Neville reached London four days later, on the 6th of August, he found awaiting him a note from an old acquaintance, one Henry Cuffe. Cuffe was a Somersetshire man, of Celtic yeoman origin, who had raised himself from humble beginnings to a reputation as an academician. It is not clear how long Neville had known Cuffe or how they had come to meet, but he was apparently a member of that group of Oxford scholars, including Henry Saville and Ralph Winwood, with whom Neville established a firm friendship. Saville, in his efforts to improve the climate of scholarship at Merton College, had gained for Cuffe, some time around 1586, an appointment as professor of Greek. Cuffe was also a proctor of the University. When Queen Elizabeth and the Lords of the Council visited Merton in 1592, they were entertained by a disputation on the usefulness of civil dissent to the state, in which Cuffe was the respondent, and over which Saville presided.

From that point forward Cuffe seemed intent on putting his thesis to a practical test. In the early 1590's he joined the retinue of the Earl of Essex, where he served as one of four secretaries to Anthony Bacon. Bacon had established an intelligence system, paralleling that

of Cecil, for the benefit of Essex. As the decade wore on and Bacon grew increasingly ill, Cuffe became Essex's most important and influential subordinate. When in 1597, for example, Essex wanted his version of the Cadiz expedition circulated in London, it was Cuffe that he sent back to do so. During the summer of 1598, Cuffe had traveled to Paris to instruct Essex's good friend Henry Wriothesley, Earl of Southampton, in the finer points of Aristotle, a duty he later performed with the young Earl of Rutland as well. These efforts in Essex's behalf earned Cuffe the reputation of a Puritan and a dangerous man, at least among Southampton's Catholic family.

It was said of him that "Mr. Cuffe's brain can be wonderfully shaken by the importunity, or rather sauciness, of the indiscreet martial sort." He had shown that to be true during the summer of 1600 when, to Essex's face, he sneered at his attempts to win over the Queen by humility. Neville had kept track of Cuffe through Winwood and Saville, but he probably did not know in August that Cuffe had only recently regained the good graces of his patron, who was now prepared to follow the dangerous advice of his secretary.

The note that Cuffe had left contained a friendly warning from Essex, who insisted that he had it on good authority from someone at the court, that Neville's activities at Boulogne had aroused disfavor in high circles. Neville knew Essex only by reputation, but he liked what

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4 Winwood, Memorials, I, p. 229.
he knew. Back in January of 1600, in a bitter letter to Windebanck, he had written this observation on Essex, whom the Queen had just imprisoned for returning from Ireland without her permission.

The late alterations in England are talked of throughout Christiendom. Pray make a good end of the———, that the Queen may retain the respect due to her, and not deprive herself of a servant so necessary; for though peace is talked of, I believe there will be great use of such men. I have little interest in his standing or falling, except that I hold him a profitable instrument.5

Cuffe had asked for a personal meeting with Neville, to be held when Cuffe returned from Oxford in four or five days. During the interval, Sir Henry was concerned enough to ask questions at court, and he satisfied himself that there was no truth to the rumor Essex mentioned. But Cuffe pressed the matter further at their meeting the following Monday, the 11th, saying,

"however such things are turned now there is such an intention; and my Lord has received it from so good a hand as there could not be but some truth in it; and that my Lord in good will would have you know it, being one that he esteemed very much and was sorry to see so wronged..."6

In spite of all protestations to the contrary, Neville was certainly not happy with his situation, and he was flattered by Essex's compliment. He therefore entered into correspondence with the Lord through Cuffe.

But in August Essex was still confined to his house in London

5CSPD (1598-1601), p. 379.
6James Spedding (editor), Life and Letters of Francis Bacon, II,
and Neville had other concerns. Thus he left London on the 11th to go
to Billingebear to settle his wife and family and to deal with those
pressing personal problems (probably land settlements) that had been
his excuse for requesting leave. He also continued his duties as am-
assador to France, acting through his secretary, Ralph Winwood. Win-
wood was traveling with Henry IV in the south of France, where the long
hoped-for war between France and Savoy seemed imminent. In some ways
Neville in England and Winwood in France had taken up the relationship
formerly maintained between Cecil in England and Neville in France.
Like Neville, Winwood found himself urging more rapid and more frequent
 correspondence. He also found himself unsuccessful in all he attempted,
and he too argued that it was not lack of effort but the situation at
the French court that prevented his achieving any fruits for his efforts.
For his part, Neville could only console Winwood with apologies and
assurances that his work was appreciated, for he found that moving the
Queen to action was no easy matter.

But the friction that had grown up between Neville and Cecil dur-
ing Sir Henry's tour in Paris was missing from the correspondence be-
tween Neville and Winwood. This was partly because Neville and Winwood
were in closer agreement as to policy, but it also reflected a difference
in the character of the two men. Winwood was not driven by the consuming
ambition that fired Sir Henry. He was content merely to carry out the
orders of his superior, and he was reluctant to act without Neville's

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7 HMC Salisbury MSS, X, 270-2.  
8 Winwood, Memorials, 1, 246.  
9 Ibid., p. 271.  
10 Ibid.
explicit instructions. Thus, when the ambassador of Florence opened discussions with him in August, towards the establishment of an intelligence link with Spain, Winwood wrote to Neville, "What directions your Lordship shall give herein I will punctually observe, but of my self, your Lordship knows, I am no undertaker."\footnote{Ibid., p. 244.}

Three issues dominated the correspondence between Neville and Winwood in the fall of 1600. First, there was increasing pressure placed by the French on the trade in English woolens, which had, since the previous April, been effectively driven out of the Rouen market. Secondly, efforts to obtain payment of the French debt carried out through the same channels and with the same lack of success. Thirdly, Winwood carried on efforts begun by Neville to obtain alternate sources of aid. He sought grants or loans from the Italian states, especially Florence and Venice. He regarded these grants and loans as good investments against the Spanish threat in the Mediterranean. Unfortunately, the beginning of the long desired war between France and Savoy effectively scuttled such appeals, for Henry IV was quickly and decisively victorious in the struggle with Savoy, and the Italian states could see no sense in investing in a war against Spain when France seemed the greater immediate threat.\footnote{Ibid., p. 244.}

Meanwhile, Neville was having but little better luck in London, where he spent most of August and the first part of September. He defended Winwood from those who felt he wrote too infrequently and slowly,
pointing out the tight budget for poste that he had to work under. At the same time he met regularly with Boissise, the French ambassador in London, trying to justify the English Commission's maritime decisions, and finding that the French had more justice on their side than he had been aware of while in Paris.\textsuperscript{13}

But more important to him than any of his diplomatic activity was Neville's determined effort to escape his office. He had been home less than a month when he wrote Winwood that he could not "yet be discharged!" from his ambassadorial duties, "although I labor it much, but I hope in the end to prevail."\textsuperscript{14} The good opinion he found at court concerning his work did not tempt him to stay on. To the contrary, the Queen's gracious acceptance of his service made him "think it a very fit time to leave off, lest the latter end should not answer to the beginning."\textsuperscript{15} In September Sir Henry began to press in earnest, informing Winwood "it will come shortly to a crisis, whether I shall return into France or not."\textsuperscript{16} The revival of peace talks with Spain might provide a means of escape. By October, his stubborn persistence had become something of a cause celebre among court wags. Rowland Whyte informed Sir Robert Sidney that "Sir Harry Neville is commanded by her Majesty to make himself forthwith ready to back to the French King...He works all the means he can to put it off, but I understand he must go..."\textsuperscript{17}

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{13}Ibid., p. 253. \hspace{1cm} \textsuperscript{14}Ibid., p. 248. \\
\textsuperscript{15}Ibid., p. 248. \hspace{1cm} \textsuperscript{16}Ibid., p. 253. \\
\textsuperscript{17}Collins, Sidney Papers, II, 216; HMC De Lisle & Dudley, Penshurst, II, 487.
\end{flushright}
Sidney was in no mood to sympathize and urged Whyte to make certain that he was not the one to replace Neville. Whyte reassured him that Lady Warwick, and not an authoritative source, had suggested Sidney might become French ambassador, and that "as I wrote lately Sir Harry Neville must go."  

The Queen, meanwhile, pressed Neville to be off, and his reluctance began to grow dangerous for him. He had written to Elizabeth to beg her forgiveness if he could not leave as soon as she had directed him. She answered pointedly that "without any further delay, upon his peril, he should be gone upon Monday next..." But Monday had come and gone when Chamberlain wrote to Carleton that in spite of the Queen's admonitions Neville makes many excuses, "and so resolute resistance that he pretends he will not go back again unless he be sent pieds et poings liez..."

Finally, Sir Henry had to give up, and he turned without enthusiasm to the resumption of his diplomatic duties. To Winwood he wrote unhappily on the 2nd of November:

I am now at length enforced to return into my charge after long contestation, even to the extremity almost of a commitment. All I have won is a confirmation of the Queen's promise that I shall but serve out my two years; which how it will be kept I know not, but I have now some more ground

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18 Collins, Sidney Papers, II, 217; HMC Penshurst MSS, II, 487.
20 Collins, Sidney Papers, II, 218; HMC Penshurst MSS, II, 488.
than I had to press it, and I leave my wife behind to solicit it: I think to set forward on my journey a fortnight hence. I put it off all I can, because I would avoid any further journey than to Paris...22

Not only did he not trust the government to keep their promise to him about the length of his stay, he also questioned their willingness to support him strongly enough to make his work effective. Bitterly, he observed the proceedings at court over which he had no control, but which, to his mind, would make his task even more difficult. He had, for example, approached the ambassadors of Venice and Florence while in Paris to seek financial aid for the Queen against Spain. Winwood sought to carry these negotiations forward, but found himself hampered by lack of direction from London. Neville explained that Elizabeth feared admitting her needs and then getting nothing, but she also suffered from an "innate and inveterate humor to desire things till they be offered, and then to neglect them..." He still hoped that offers would be embraced, "but till we see some likelihood, we are loath to discover ourselves to need anybody." He would press the matter on his return to France.23

He also felt that the government was not pushing the French as hard as they might to rescind the arrest of English cloth at Rouen. Boissise, in his meetings with Neville, had been most evasive about this matter, "which kind of juggling between them, methinks is very strange, and deserves to be more seriously apprehended than I see it is; but at my coming I will put it to an issue one way or other.24

22Winwood, Memorials, 1, 271.  
23Ibid., pp. 270-1.  
24Ibid., p. 273.
Nor did he think information on the activities of Catholics in Europe received the attention that it should.

If you meet with Colvel at Avignon, I hope he hath delivered you some more light of their intentions. His last advertisements which you sent by Simons were not to be condemned; we are much distasted with that which we hear daily to that purpose. But I do not see that we go about to provide any remedy, especially any lenitive, but rather such as is likely to exasperate, and consequently hasten the mischief. 25

We have seen that by November Neville had given up hope that he might escape returning to France. Although he was sceptical that he might achieve anything there Sir Henry nevertheless prepared himself for his journey. He assumed that what little chance he might have for success depended on his getting back to France while the war continued between the French and Savoy, which might lead yet to a Franco-Spanish conflict. In his letter to Winwood of the 15th of November Neville assured his secretary that he expected to be back in Paris by the middle of December. 26 In anticipation of his early return, Neville did not write to Winwood for the next six weeks. On the 28th of December he finally explained to Winwood that he had "stayed for nothing else any time these three weeks, but for the two letters which the Queen intends to write with her own Hand to the King and the Queen..." She had been prevented by rheumatism in her hand, which had now passed. He hoped to receive one more letter now before he left, in which Winwood could inform him where the King would be staying during the winter,

25 Ibid., p. 273.

26 Cecil, Carew, p. 62; Winwood, Memorials, I, 273.
as well as the present French attitude toward repaying Elizabeth. He had received two letters from Winwood by the 23rd of January, at which time he assured his secretary that he was on his way. He would travel by way of Rouen, where he would contact English merchants "for the wrongs we have received by the French." On his arrival in France he would send a messenger to Paris so that Winwood could meet him at Rouen. "Many other matters I refer till our meeting." But by the 28th he had still not left. "I may perhaps put off my journey some three or four days longer than I wrote in my last; and if I could, I would be glad to defer it till the end of the term, which is the 12th of February; for I have much business to dispatch about my own private estate, but I fear I shall be hastened away."29

In his letters Sir Henry also kept Winwood abreast of the most recent court gossip about the Earl of Essex. The Earl had, on the 26th of August been relieved of his confinement to his own home, which many took to be a sign of reconciliation with the Queen, though Neville was sceptical. For Essex was still denied what he needed most, personal access to the Queen. He had retired to the estate of Sir William Knollys in Oxfordshire where he remained during most of September, sending letters to Elizabeth pleading for a personal meeting. The Earl was peculiarly vulnerable to any withdrawal of the Queen's favor, for his personal fortune depended largely upon the lease of the sweet wines that he had held for some ten years, and which expired Michaelmas Day, the 29th of

27 Winwood, Memorials, I, 287. 28 Ibid., p. 290. 29 Ibid., p. 291.
September, 1600. In his letter of November 2 Neville revealed that

The Earl of Essex continueth without access to the Court. At Michaelmas last his lease of the sweet wines expired; and after a month's suspense whether it should be granted him or nay, it is at length put into Sir Henry Billingsley's hands, and others, to husband it for the Queen, which is no argument of any such relenting disposition towards him as was supposed. Yet notwithstanding there is an expectation of his running at the Coronation Day and that it shall be the first step of his grace and access to the court, but I am not very prone to believe it. 30

What Neville failed to reveal to his secretary was that he had personally had a secret meeting with Essex. He and Essex had resided during late September and early October within ten miles of one another, Neville at Billingbear and Essex at Ewelme in Oxfordshire. Sir Henry rode regularly past the front gate of Essex's park, and Cuffe on one occasion brought new commendations from his Lord. But it was late in October, when both had returned to London, that he finally succumbed to Cuffe's temptation. Neville had put him off for four or five days, "But at length he named me a time, saying that he had told my Lord I would come, and that he expected it and would marvel if I came not."31 According to Neville, the meeting was entirely innocent. He answered Essex's questions concerning foreign affairs and listened while the Earl expressed his hopes that his license for the sweet wines would be renewed. It is not unreasonable to suspect that Neville made Essex aware of his suspicions about Catholic plots, especially in Scotland. It is certain that the two men discovered much similarity in their attitudes towards foreign matters, in their mutual antipathy to the Spaniard, and

30 Ibid., p. 271. 31 Spedding, Life of Bacon, II, 345.
in their common desire to assure that James VI of Scotland, the logical successor to the English throne, continued a Protestant. However innocent he may have believed this meeting to be, Neville left discreetly by the back gate, and mentioned his encounter to no one. 32

Unfortunately, the respite from his official duties which seemed to Neville such a godsend also provided Henry Cuffe the opportunity to continue his campaign to win Neville over to the cause of Essex. The two men met often during the fall and early winter. And when Neville asked Cuffe how Essex stood at court

...he would sometimes give show of hope and sometimes of despair. And at those times when he seemed to despair he would break out into words of heat and impatience: as namely once I remember he repeated this verse—Arma tementi omnia dat qui justa negat. Whereunto I answered in French tout beau, he spake very big. And either at that time or another upon like occasion he said it made no matter, it would give my Lord cause to think the sooner of some other courses...33

Indeed, after a month spent trying to cajole the Queen into renewing the lease on French wines, Essex had in November begun to sulk at Essex House, surrounded by malcontents: ex-soldiers from the Irish campaign, bewailing the fate of their fallen leader, and Puritan divines, who daily harangued their listeners with stories of the corruption at court. One preacher urged that it was within the purvieu of the great magnates of the land to curb the monarch. 34

Under these circumstances, the Earl and his supporters seized upon every rumor to support their growing belief that there was a conspiracy

32 Ibid., p. 345, 351. 33 Ibid. 34 Lacey, Essex, p. 274; Akrigg, Southampton, p. 109.
against them and against the Protestant cause at court. By Christmastime
they had become convinced that Cecil intended to support the Infanta's
claim to succeed Elizabeth to the throne, and that Cecil, Lord Cobham,
Lord Grey, and Sir Walter Raleigh intended physical harm to Southampton
and Essex, the leaders of the group that would oppose such a succession.
Thus, on Christmas Day the Essex group agreed to send a letter to James
outlining their fears and offering their services.\textsuperscript{35}

On the same day Cuffe carried news of their fears to Neville. He
also impressed upon Sir Henry the Earl's wish that he meet with Sir
Charles Danvers, who was living at Drury House, and with the Earl of
Southampton, in order "to breed a confidence between them and me."\textsuperscript{36}
As a result, two weeks after Christmas, Neville did meet with Danvers,
in what he later described as purely a social engagement. Then, in the
latter half of January, Cuffe again urged Neville to meet with Danvers
and Southampton at Drury House. Essex, convinced of Neville's good
affection to him and to the state, wanted Neville's advice concerning a
plan that had been conceived for the benefit of both. Cuffe promised
Neville that nothing was intended against the Queen or the state, and
that he would not be required to do more than he wished in the matter.
Sir Henry reluctantly consented to the meeting. Very likely he was in­
fluenced in his decision by a physical attack made on Southampton on
the 9th of January by Lord Grey, which gave color to Cuffe's earlier
assertion that someone was plotting against Essex and his associates.

\textsuperscript{35}Spedding, Life of Bacon, II, 342. \textsuperscript{36}Ibid., pp. 345-6.
Furthermore, he could see that he and Essex agreed on the need for a Protestant succession and an anti-Spanish foreign policy, neither of which received the attention Neville thought they should at the English court. In addition, the Earl of Essex was a powerful and popular man, certainly capable in Neville's eyes of regaining the Queen's favor. Sir Henry was ambitious enough to avoid offending a man who might one day control patronage at court.

Even so, he continued evasive. Having agreed to a meeting the following day, a Sunday, he was prevented by a late conference with the French ambassador. On Monday and Tuesday he met with Secretary Herbert to work out suitable answers to the French ambassador's complaints, which Neville presented to Boissise on Wednesday afternoon. On Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, he pleaded pressing personal business to avoid the meeting, but Cuffe warned him ominously that "they began to make an evil judgment of my delay." He therefore waited until he knew Danvers was away and left a message at his house that he had been to call. But Cuffe continued to press the point, and Neville's reserve was weakened by more bad news concerning his embassy.

The negotiations concerning the complaints of French merchants about English seizures of their cargos had seemed in the first part of January to move toward some settlement. Neville had offered to inform Boissise of all answers made by the Judges of the Admiralty and other commissioners to his charges, to receive his reply, "and upon report thereof made unto my Lords, to be a means for his further satisfaction

\[37\text{Ibid.}, \ p. \ 346.\]
wherein there should appear cause, which he seemed to accept very well of..."  

38 Winwood, Memorials, 1, 291.  

39 Ibid., p. 291.  

... But, on the day on which they were to meet, Boissise went instead to the court itself, in some heat, and peremptorily accused the Queen of denial of justice. In the subsequent discussion it came out that, in spite of Boissise's previous assurances to the contrary, the war between France and Savoy had been settled. It was clear to Neville that Boissise's confrontation with Elizabeth was a charade made possible by the end of the war and designed to discourage Neville's pressing the King for the Queen's money. "All this tends little to the sweetening of my entertainment there, or to the enabling me to effect any grateful service; but I must have patience."  

39 It was with this knowledge that his embassy was unlikely to prove fruitful that he saw, four days later on Candlemas Day, the Earl of Essex in his coach, accompanied by Southampton, Danvers, and Sir Christopher Blunt, driving down the Strand. Being seen, and having told Cuffe that he would visit them that day, he proceeded to Drury House where he found Southampton and Danvers. After a short period of reminiscence about their brief acquaintance at Burghley's house when Southampton was a child, the Earl of Southampton began to assure Neville that Essex had gained through Cuffe a high opinion of him, and had authorized Southampton to reveal to Neville "a matter of great secrecy and importance." Essex believed that personal enemies sought his life; that they held positions of authority about the Queen; and that they denied him access to her. Without such access Essex could not explain
the reality of the situation to the Queen. Essex had been advised to overcome these enemies of his by forcing himself into her presence with the aid of forty or so armed men. He would then "declare both his particular grievances and many others..." His men would organize themselves into small groups and await his arrival, with Southampton, in his coach, at which time they would seize the gate and hold it open, while others would proceed to the hall "and seize upon the guards' halbreds, and so be masters of that chamber." He needed, at that time, to have some lords and others to countenance his action by accompanying him to the Queen. What advice would Neville give on such a project?

"I told him it was a matter of too great weight to be suddenly digested. But for the assurance Mr. Cuffe had given me, if he had not exceeded his commission, which I hoped he would not, being an honest man, I would perform what he had delivered from me." By this, he clearly indicated that he would advise the lords upon their action, not that he would participate in it. Although he would later claim to have had no sympathy with the project, Neville did not reject it out of hand. Instead, he raised difficulties that would have to be met. He cited Tacitus to the point that the effort would be judged by its success. He pointed out the difficulty of maintaining secrecy with so many people involved. If any door were closed against them, they were lost. And the City of Westminster might rise to retake control of the gate once they realized what had happened. The conspirators assured him that their men would be raised on another pretext, without prior notice, on the morning of the day they were to act. There would not

40 Spedding, Life of Bacon, II, 347.
be time allowed to shut any doors, and once they had established the appearance of authority all would support them. As Essex himself put it to Cuffe, he "expected that when he came to the court he should come in such peace as a dog should not wag his tongue against him..."  

Their goal, they assured him, was merely to require justice of the Earl of Essex's enemies, who would be replaced by other men. Sir John Davies would also be able to seize the Tower in their behalf, and they would call a parliament to validate their actions. They concluded by asking that Neville think the matter over. Danvers would get in touch with him further.

It was not Danvers, but the ubiquitous Cuffe, who came to him a day or two later. Sir Henry first demanded an oath of the conspirators not to harm the Queen or her estate. He then stated his awareness that the plot was aimed at Cecil. Therefore, "I said I would have no hand nor be an actor in it, because I was near allied unto him and had been beholden to him, as all the world took knowledge. And I would not blot my reputation to be false unto him or any man." He demanded that Cuffe guarantee that he would be embarked upon nothing against Cecil.

Cuffe's response was cunning. He assured Neville that no harm would be done to the Queen for the conspirators were all "religious men", such as Sir Henry Bromley, Sir Thomas Scot, and Sheriff Smith.

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41 Ibid., p. 348.
42 John Bruce (editor), Correspondence of King James VI of Scotland with Sir Robert Cecil and others in England during the reign of Queen Elizabeth (Camden Society, 1861), p. 90.
43 Spedding, Life of Bacon, II, 348.  
44 Ibid., p. 349.
45 HMC Rutland MSS, I, 370.
He could understand why Neville could not take action against Cecil, and would not press him to do so. All he asked was that Neville should be present at court when the rebellion took place. "And asking why? he said my Lord meant to name me among other to supply some place there, and he would have me at hand..." It is not clear whether Neville knew that the official whom Essex intended him to replace was Sir Robert Cecil.

Sir Henry did not attend the meeting held at Drury House the next day, in which the project was discussed in more detail. But, indeed, he was not expected. On the other hand, the gratitude he claimed to feel for his benefactor Cecil and his allegiance to the Queen were not strong enough to cause him to report to them the treasonable activity that he had discovered. To the contrary, he continued to meet with Cuffe, who presented convincing evidence that the project must inevitably succeed. Rumors of "a practice against my Lord's person" had aroused many noblemen and others to commit themselves to Essex. Twenty or twenty-one of the twenty-four aldermen of London would support him. Cuffe urged Neville to sound an unnamed minister "how he stood affected to my Lord," which Neville did not do. He found the man was out of town when he sought him. In their last meeting Cuffe, speaking for Essex, asked for Neville's promise of neutrality, if not support. To this Neville responded "very well."

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46 Winwood, Memorials, II, 349.  
47 Bruce, James VI, p. 90.  
48 Spedding, Life of Bacon, II, 347.
Before his last meeting with Cuffe, Neville's diplomatic papers had been approved. He awaited only the advance of his money before he left for France and, in contrast to his former reluctance, he began pressing the Exchequer so that he could be off. No longer did he wish to remain in London until the end of the session, February 12. But events caught up with him before he could leave England. The impatient men surrounding the Earl of Essex began to express openly their discontent. On the 6th of February they successfully urged the command performance of Shakespeare's Richard II at the Globe Theatre, a pointed reminder of the possibility of rebellion against a fallible monarch. This signal aroused the court to action. On the evening of Saturday, February 7, the council sent Secretary John Herbert to Essex House to demand that the Lord appear before them to explain the activities of his subordinates, and his own intentions. Essex pleaded first ill health, and secondly fear for his life if he should leave the protective walls of his house. Herbert returned to the council, which adjourned near midnight, after deciding to put off further action until the following morning. The Essex conspirators must now act upon their plans or lose the offensive. Indeed, Sir Charles Danvers advocated flight, but he was over-ruled. Temple, another of Essex's secretaries, was sent into the City to see what support lay there. He returned with news that Sheriff Smith would raise 1,000 men to support the cause. The following morning the die would be cast.

That Sunday morning, Sir Henry Neville came down to court with one Oswald Smith intending to speak to Cecil about the merchants' causes at
Rouen. He learned, to his chagrin, that rebellion was in the air, that a small deputation from the court had been sent to Essex. He must have realized that the court was unready to defend itself. He did not know the immediate intent of Essex and his malcontents, but he did know that an attack on Whitehall was a real possibility. He kept his own counsel.

While Neville waited in suspense at court, Essex rejected the appeals and promises of the council's deputation, placing the four men under arrest, and ignoring their admonition to lay down his arms. It was not to be Sir Henry Neville who would save the Elizabethan ministers from the rebellious lord; it was the Earl of Essex himself. "At half past ten on the morning of 8 February 1601 the Earl of Essex had England at his mercy, but he turned out of Essex House east instead of west—and his chance was lost." To the confusion of his men, he marched to the City to seek the reinforcements promised by Sheriff Smith, which did not materialize.

Sir Henry Neville did not participate for or against the Earl of Essex in his marching through the City, his confrontation with the City militia, his retreat to Essex House, or the government siege of Essex House that lasted until late that night when the Earl and his comrades lay down their arms and threw themselves upon the mercy of the Crown. According to his own testimony, that entire day Sir Henry remained at court "with a purpose to have spent my life in her Majesty's defence,

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49 I bid., p. 350.  
50 Lacey, Essex, p. 289.
if there had been cause."

All we know of Neville's activities during the next two weeks is that his reluctance to leave for France faded. He left London before the Earl of Essex and the Earl of Southampton were arraigned on the 19th of February. He could hardly have been comfortable in the City which, since the rebellion, had been turned into an armed camp by the government. On the 12th of February, a tense situation was made worse when Colonel Thomas Lea, one of Essex's Irish veterans, approached Sir Henry Neville of Kent, son-in-law to Lord Buckhurst, and Sir Robert Cross, to suggest that they seize the Queen and "pin her up" until she released Essex. This Neville, whose knighthood was granted by Essex rather than by the Queen, nevertheless showed no hesitation in reporting the matter to Cecil. Lea was seized and executed the following Tuesday, the 17th. The only result of his escapade was to make the government redouble its effort to bring the Earl to trial and execution. On the 19th he and Southampton were arraigned, found guilty of treason, and sentenced to death. During the trial, the Earl's self-assurance, his belief that he had acted to defend himself from a court conspiracy against him, was undermined. First, Francis Bacon pointed out the inconsistency of the Earl's attempt to overthrow Cecil when he purported to believe that it

51Spedding, Life of Bacon, 11, 350. 52HMC Salisbury MSS., XI, p. 74.
54CSPD, 1598-1601, p. 598.
was Raleigh, Cobham, and Grey who opposed him. To this Essex replied that he had it on good authority that Cecil had been plotting to bring the Infanta to the throne. At this point Cecil himself appeared dramatically from behind a curtain, where he had been listening, and demanded of the Earl verification of this story. Essex referred to Southampton for confirmation, and Southampton identified the source as Essex’s uncle, William Knollys. The old councillor was brought forward, and reluctantly recounted the fact that Essex had totally misinterpreted a statement made by Cecil, a statement in which Cecil had actually marveled that the Infanta could make a claim to the throne. From that point forward the Earl was besieged by increasing self-doubt.

The court had achieved the conviction that it sought, but it lacked the full story of the rebellion. Some 80 of the Earl’s adherents still remained in prison, and no one but Essex could say for sure which of them were leaders in the operation. As a result, the council approached the Earl’s chaplain, the Puritan divine Abdy Ashton. They asked him to press Essex for further information. Ashton was peculiarly well placed for such a task because he had Essex’s complete trust. One of the conditions on which Essex had surrendered on the 8th had been that Ashton would be allowed access to him, to offer him consolation. But it was not consolation that Ashton offered Essex as he prepared himself for the scaffold. On the 20th he demanded that the Earl purge himself by revealing all that he knew of the rebellion. He then urged Essex to reveal the same information to the Council, threat-
ening to do so himself if Essex would not.55

Thus, on the 21st of February, the Earl of Essex broke the bond of secrecy that surrounded the meetings of the conspirators, and to which all the others had been loyal. He told Cecil, Buckhurst, Egerton, and Nottingham all they could want to know. He spared no one. His sister Penelope he accused of goading him on. Lord Mountjoy, his successor in Ireland, he accused of participating in a plot to bring in the Scottish army. He called for Henry Cuffe to be brought before him and accused him to his face as "one of the chiepest instigators of me in all these my disloyal courses into which I have fallen." He bade Cuffe reveal all that he knew. He identified Sir Henry Neville, "Whom no man did suspect", as one of the participants in the first Drury House meeting.56

Cecil immediately sent a warrant to Sir Thomas Fane at Dover Castle to stop Neville from leaving the country. Sir Henry obviously sensed he had been discovered. Upon being stopped by Fane, he leaped to his horse and, abandoning his wife, his children, and his servants, rode off to court with two of Fane's men in pursuit to guarantee that he did not vary from his course.57

His wife Anne, in her misery, returned to London, only to find her father so enraged by Neville's duplicity that he would not permit her in his house until ordered by the Privy Council to "receive her into his


56Spedding, Life of Bacon, II, 285. 57HMC Salisbury MSS, XI, 76.
house and to use her with that countenance and comfort that heretofore he had done." 58

Meanwhile, Sir Henry had been placed under arrest at the Lord Admiral's house in Chelsea, "a very honorable prison," from which he wrote a few words of reassurance to his wife. He saw immediately that his only recourse was to throw himself upon Cecil's mercy, and the tone of his letters indicate that he expected that mercy to be forthcoming. By the 26th of February he had completed the first of two confessions that he would write. In this document, presented to the Council on March 2 in preparation for the trial of the minor conspirators on the 5th, he joined with the others in making manifest every bit of information which he had on the matter. He seems to have been assured that the confession was to be used against the others, and not against him. 59 His statement was remarkably open. Later, he would make a second statement in which he would try to explain away much that he had admitted. 60 With the exception of brief confessions by Essex, Southampton, and Danvers implicating him, and a longer admission by Cuffe, who took responsibility for drawing Neville into the affair, Neville's own words are the source for our knowledge of his connection with the rebellion. His openness may have saved his life, and it has caused historians to treat him charitably, more charitably perhaps than he had deserved. In general, most seem to agree with James Spedding, who observed that

Neville's only offence was that he had known of the consultations and had not betrayed them. Under the circumstances, one is surprised to find that of those conspirators who escaped execution, only Neville and Southampton remained in prison at the time of Elizabeth's death. That a man who only failed to report the conspiracy should receive a more severe punishment than most of the conspirators themselves demands explanation. The explanation throws light on Sir Henry Neville's subsequent political career.

The four confessions provide a good circumstantial case that Neville was more directly involved than he claimed or historians have believed. For example, Neville made much of his delaying tactics, delineating carefully the days that passed before he would consent to meet with any of the conspirators, citing his ruse in leaving a message at Danvers's house. This reluctance might well be understood, however, as awareness on Neville's part from the beginning that what he was doing was seriously wrong.

Indeed, in November he had imparted to Winwood information from Scotland that should have made him sensitive to the implications of his silence. In that letter, written on November 2, he reported to Winwood the aftermath of the Gowrie Conspiracy against James VI.

...Out of Scotland we hear...Bruce, and some other ministers are put from their charges, and banished Edinburg town and the court, with an express prohibition not to come into England. Their crime is that they refused to declare the conspiracy and attempt of Gowrie and his brother against the King in such as they were required. 62

61 Spedding, Bacon, 11, 236.

62 Winwood, Memorials, 1, 271.
He certainly knew that his duty, both as an Englishman, and as a member of the Queen's government, required that he make Cecil aware of his conversations. He did not yet know of a conspiracy, and when such a plan came to his attention he had so compromised himself by his guilty knowledge that he would not be able to come forward.

And he daily received evidence that should have made him aware that something sinister was brewing. Henry Cuffe continued to come to him.

And when I asked him how his Lord's matters stood in court, he would sometimes give show of hope and sometimes of despair. And at those times when he seemed to despair he would break out into waords of heat and impatience: as namely once I remember he repeated this verse---Arma tenenti omnia dat qui justa negat. Whereunto I answered in French tout beau, he spake very big. And either at that time or another upon like occasion he said it made no matter, it would give my Lord cause to think the sooner of some other courses...63

Furthermore, he continued to entertain Cuffe long after it was clear that the man hoped to instigate violent action on the Earl's part, and Neville never once, according to his own testimony, tried to dissuade Cuffe or warn the Earl of Essex. Indeed, his comment that Cuffe "spake very big" seems more likely to incite him to prove his words by action than to calm him. When confronted by the conspirators at Drury House with a clearly treasonable plan, he continued to accept their judgment that he was becoming involved in nothing dishonorable. At no time did he flatly oppose the plan. Instead, he did what they asked; he advised them on it, outlining difficulties that would have to

63Spedding, Bacon, II, 345.
be met for the plot to succeed. His whole testimony indicated that he urged them, not to stop what they were doing, but to be certain that they succeeded once they started. Following that meeting he expressed to Cuffe his understanding that the plot, however innocent in regard to Elizabeth, was clearly aimed at Cecil. On this technical point he refused to raise his sword, but he refused also to take any action to protect his patron. Quite the reverse, though he failed to carry out Cuffe's suggestion that he sound a minister as to his attitude towards Essex, he did stir himself far enough to learn that the minister was out of town, which suggests that he might have been in the process of making the requested inquiry. He had also argued that Essex could hardly have counted on him since he was about to leave the country, but the fact was that as late as January 29 he had told Winwood of his intention to remain in London, at least until the 12th of February; and he did remain there until February 18, ten days after the rebellion. Most damning of all was his admission that, to Cuffe's request that he be at court to receive an appointment from Essex, and that he remain neutral, Neville responded, "very well." And when the rebellion broke out, Neville went precisely to the place that he had told Essex he would, and finding the court poorly defended, he failed to raise a warning that they might be the target of Essex's attack. 64

In addition to the internal discrepancies in Neville's testimony, there were the observations of the other conspirators. Neville's wife, Anne, who immediately began pleading with both Windebanck and Cecil for

64 Spedding, Bacon, 11, 345-50; Winwood, Memorials, 1, 302-4.
mercy, believed that Henry Cuffe had proved her husband's innocence. "I hear that Cuffe, who best could tell what had passed between them, cleared him absolutely at his death." What Cuffe had actually said was that "The declaration of Sir Henry Neville of 2 March is in substance true..." Cuffe felt deeply his responsibility as the agent who brought Neville into contact with Essex. But even he suggested that Neville was not an unwilling victim. He said, "Sir Henry Neville, shortly after coming out of France, was desirous that the Earl should hold a good opinion of him..." Nor is there anything in the testimony of either Neville or Cuffe (beyond Neville's after the fact denial) to suggest that Southampton was telling anything less than the truth when he stated his belief that "I delivered unto him what my Lord of Essex intended, which he allowed of and concluded that when he should be appointed he would be at the court before, to give him furtherance with himself and his people."

Neville realized that his story contained weaknesses, and in his second statement concentrated on the question of motivation, arguing that he had no reason to wish Essex successful.

...it was not from any malice or discontent against the state, for who had more interest therein than I? Nor any desire that the attempt should succeed, for who could have more disliked it than I? Nor any personal affection to my Lord, for I never had any particular obligation to him? But partly upon contempt of the matter, being so weak and

65 HMC Salisbury MSS, XI, 145.  
66 Spedding, Bacon, II, 352.  
67 Bruce, James VI, pp. 91-2.  
68 Spedding, Bacon, II, 351.  
69 Bruce, James VI, p. 100.
unlikely a project (neither formed nor resolved of) as I hoped would have proved abortive, and vanished of itself, whensoever they should have laid aside the passion of discontentment and examined it with reason; and partly upon an imbecility and weakness of my own nature, (if so it be termed,) which could not resolve to become an accuser; which how odious a thing it is, all the world knoweth; especially in respect of the person, whom I must have accused; who I desire may be considered, not as he hath been found since, but as he was reputed. Although I confess that my duty to the public should have prevailed above all respect of my own private disgrace which I apprehended in it...70

His open testimony showed his honesty, he argued. Had the story not come to light, he had intended to redeem himself by continuing to serve the Queen "with all that faith, zeal, and counsel can witness I had done, in my former employment; and will always do, whensoever it shall please her Majesty to call me to the like again."71 This statement would be more credible had Neville not fought so hard and long in September and October to avoid the service in which he intended to show his faith and zeal.

David Hume, as rational a man as one can find, accepted Neville's argument that he was "no further criminal than in not revealing the Earl's treason, an office to which every man of honor naturally bears the strongest reluctance."72 One need not doubt Neville's affirmation of support of the Queen. But where is the honor in his failure to act in Cecil's defense? Cecil's father had poured favors and honors on Sir Henry's father; Cecil himself had taken the younger Neville under his

70 Winwood, Memorials, I, 303-4. 71 Ibid., p. 304.
wing, gaining for him honors, income, and position. Yet Neville would have us believe that he owed greater loyalty to a man whom, by his own testimony, he hardly knew. As a matter of fact, it was not honor at all that prevented Neville from revealing the plot. It was ambition.

In spite of his disclaimer of any commitment to Essex, we know that Neville much admired the man as a fellow warrior against Spain and Catholicism, as a man of "the religion." At the lowest ebb of his embassy in Paris, he had expressed his sympathy and good wishes for the Earl in his letter to Windebanck. His secretary, Winwood, had received his preferment from Essex, and through Winwood, Cuffe, and Saville, he had continuing access to information about Essex.73 Furthermore, while Cecil offered him an undesirable post and unpalatable policies, Essex promised high position at home, the pressing of the war against Spain, and the guarantee of the Protestant succession in James I. If we have no proof of his faith in Essex, we have Neville's frank scepticism towards Cecil's promise that he would soon be relieved in France.

Nor is it likely that Neville failed to raise the alarm because he considered the plot too feeble. In his confession, he alluded both to Essex's great popularity, and to Cuffe's continuing assurances that many men of substance and authority would support him. His tour in France must have made him aware of Essex's international popularity. And in the end, he must have been surprised at how feeble the project proved to be. Nor is it entirely accurate to say that he placed his personal weakness

73 HMC Buccleuch MSS, I, 28.
against the welfare of the state. For everything we know about Neville suggests that he would have considered the state better off with a more aggressively Protestant foreign and religious policy, and with men like Essex and himself in control of those policies. The temptation was too great, especially when he found that all he desired might well come about without his having to raise his own hand. Patience and faithfulness might have led him to the highest offices in the land. But, as Sir Thomas Hobby observed when he heard of Sir Henry Neville's disaster, "his cousin Neville was ambling towards his preferment, and would needs gallop in all the haste, and so stumbled and fell."\textsuperscript{74}

\textsuperscript{74}John Bruce (editor), \textit{Diary of John Manningham} (Camden Society, 1868), p. 135.
At first, Neville hoped that his involvement in the Essex conspiracy might be forgiven. He had, after all, cooperated fully with the government. For Cecil he had written a confession which, he was told, would be used against the other conspirators, but not against himself. He continued for two months in an "honorable prison" at the house of Lord Admiral Nottingham in Chelsea. Henry Cuffe had, previous to his execution, sought to shoulder the blame for Neville's implication in the plot.\(^1\) By April he thought his imprisonment was nearing its end and wrote to Cecil perfunctorily so that he might "not seem too senseless or secure in so great a calamity." The ambition which had attracted him to the French embassy and had caused him to hide his knowledge of the Essex plot continued. He pleaded neither for the protection of his life, nor for the preservation of his fortune, both of which he deemed secure. Instead he urged Cecil to protect his reputation "that I may not by any public disgrace be made unable or unworthy to be commanded by Her Majesty and you hereafter. For God is my witness, I desire to cancel by some faithful service the fault I have now committed."\(^2\)

If Neville really believed that his disloyalty to Cecil would be so easily excused, he was naive, as he soon learned. Lady Anne

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\(^1\) Bruce, James' Correspondence, pp. 91-2.

\(^2\) HMC Salisbury MSS, XI, 175-6.
Neville had written immediately after her husband's arrest an appeal to Cecil for intervention in his behalf, only to receive word from the Queen's secretary that his "place must endure not partiality." From his "honorable prison" Neville heard that his confession might be published to his ruin, and in spite of Cecil's promise. Although this did not happen, Cecil made public comments about the conspirators in general that touched Sir Henry's honor. "These noble and resolute men," he wrote, "being all taken, severed, examined and the principals arraigned and condemned, they...made such plain confessions and accusations one of another, that they seemed to strive who should draw one another in deepest." But Neville had little time to reflect upon his tarnished reputation, for on the first of May he was moved to the Tower amid rumors that he might share the fate of the major conspirators. He petitioned the Privy Council for mercy and pleaded desperately with Cecil "not to look upon my offence only with the severe eye of a councillor of state, but sometimes also with the affectionate eye of an honorable friend." Fortunately, Elizabeth had satisfied her desire for revenge and decided to sell the remaining conspirators their freedom. She established a commission which rated them more by their ability to pay than by the extent of their involvement in Essex's folly. Early in June Neville

3 CSPD (1601-1603), p. 12.
5 HMC Salisbury MSS, XI, 93.
6 McClure, Chamberlain Letters, I, 123.
appeared before the commission with Sheriff Smith, who had promised to provide Essex 1,000 men, but had disappeared when the revolt became a reality. John Chamberlain reported that "Sir Henry was fined £10,000 and dismissed from his office, worth £5,000 a year, but Mr. Smith had little said to him."

The impact of this judgment was devastating. According to his own account, all of Neville's wealth in land was worth less than £15,000. But that could not be sold, for it was already legally committed to his eldest son. The very evening of the commission's judgment he wrote to Cecil to point out that he had sold £4,000 in land to pay the costs of his embassy. He intended to fulfill the Queen's demands, "but more than my state will yield cannot be had." In July he argued that he would be "undone and made unable to do any duty or service that may deserve it." He offered to pay £4,000, and when that was rejected increased the amount £5,000 in August. This the council rejected when they learned he wanted to pay £2,000 immediately and yearly installments of £200. By January, imprisonment had driven the former French ambassador to desperate straits. He told Cecil that

No man will pay me anything that is due unto me, but every man is ready to detain and to take from me that which is mine, so that I have been forced to sell my plate, horse and cattle, and even my bedding to supply my necessities: but the calamity of the innocents who are made miserable by my occasion woundeth me most deeply."

\[\text{\underline{Notes:}}\]

7 CSPD (1601-1603), p. 89.
8 HMC Salisbury MSS, XI, 274.
9 Ibid., XI, 300.
10 Ibid., XII, 43-4.
11 Ibid., XII, 6-7.
In February he pleaded that he might be left enough money to keep his eldest son at Merton. He begged that his record of service to the Queen might bring some mitigation of his suffering. All was to no avail. Neither Cecil nor the council would bend. In March he reluctantly agreed to meet their terms, to pay £1,000 immediately and £4,000 in annual payments, although this would "leave scarce £50 a year to maintain myself and wife and eight children which I am sure Her Majesty herself would consider little enough." Driven to frustration by Cecil's obduracy, he concluded, "Seeing mercy is proposed to me, let it be such as both I and mine may have cause to acknowledge with thankful mind."\(^{13}\)

But his frustrations were not over. Neville wanted release on his own recognizance, and could cite Lord Sandes as a precedent. The Council demanded sureties. Sir Henry sought to provide his own land as surety. The Council demanded that he find friends they could trust to put up land for security. Having once negotiated proudly with the King of France the future of nations, Neville found himself reduced to haggling over pennies. His name no longer provided satisfactory guarantees. On every point he had to give way until, in April of 1602, freedom seemed within his grasp. If Cecil would only intervene in the matter of the surety "all may be finished in four days.\(^{14}\) But freedom did not come. In spite of the poverty of his estate, in spite of increasing ill health, in spite of his and his wife's pleas to Cecil and to the Council, in

\(^{12}\)Ibid., XII, 43-4.  
\(^{13}\)Ibid., XII, 72.  
\(^{14}\)Ibid., XII, 113; CSPD (1601-1603)p. 188.
spite of the fact that he and Southhampton were the only conspirators still in prison, he remained in the Tower.

Indeed, however serious Neville's misdeeds might have been, he was the victim of a grievous double standard, and he knew it. His wife Anne had early appealed for his freedom because it had "pleased Her Majesty...to take a gracious course towards the offenders of all degrees and sorts, even in open action. If Mr. Neville may but taste of the same favor, and be restored to me and his poor children, though we live poorly together, I shall think myself happy and have cause to pray for you." 15 Though Neville was sentenced, Sheriff Smith suffered nothing. Neville himself pleaded that Elizabeth might "hold the like measure and proportion of grace and clemency towards me that she has done towards all other offenders whom she has been pleased to chastize, but not to ruin." 16 All he asked was "that among so great examples of mercy he may not be made the only precedent of rigor." 17 But instead of acting in Neville's behalf, Cecil was content to shed crocodile tears for him. He wrote to Lord Mountjoy in Ireland lamenting the fate of his "cousin german," fully knowing that Mountjoy had been deeply implicated in the plot, and had posed a greater danger to the state. 18 But Mountjoy had become a valued servant of the state, having succeeded where Essex had failed. He successfully put down the Irish rebellion. But Sir Henry

15 HMC Salisbury MSS, XI, 259. 
16 Ibid., XI, 300. 
17 Ibid., XI, 371. 
Neville had failed either to gain repayment of the Queen's loan to Henry IV or to achieve a successful peace with Spain. The Queen and Cecil could not afford to give up Mountjoy to the arms of justice. Neville served as a handy and prominent scapegoat.

Furthermore, Cecil had belatedly adopted the policy urged upon him by Neville in 1600 and taken up by Essex as his cause. Even before Sir Henry had been removed from his "honorable prison" in Chelsea to the Tower, Cecil had initiated contacts with James VI of Scotland. He had learned from Henry Cuffe that Essex had intended to negotiate with James through the Earl of Mar. Thus when in March the Earl of Mar arrived in London, Cecil contacted him in order to inform James that he was not committed, as the Essex group had charged, to the Infanta as successor to Elizabeth. He further hinted that he was ready to secure for James peacefully what Essex had promised to win for him by violence. Cecil now demanded of James the same promise that Neville had demanded of Essex: that no harm should come to the Queen. Patience would bring James the throne. James was ecstatic. He could afford to wait so long as Cecil assured him his rightful place. To Sir Robert's initiative he responded

...ye need not to think that I am so evil acquainted with the histories of all ages and nations that I am ignorant what a rotten reed mobile vulgus is to lean unto, since some in your country have very dearly bought the experience thereof of late. I am no usurper; it is for them to play the Absalom.

Cecil had managed to secure the end desired by the Essex conspirators, while leaving Southampton and Neville with the onus for the method.

19 Bruce, Correspondence of James VI, p. 10.
they had adopted. Had Cecil initiated this policy eighteen months before, when Neville advised it; had Neville seen before him service to a Protestant King and a thankful chief minister, he would hardly have been enticed into the Drury House fiasco.

But Neville may not have known that his patron had adopted his policies, and he seems not to have blamed Cecil for his long imprisonment. The lieutenant of the Tower and Neville's uncle Sir Robert Killigrew informed him that Cecil had intervened in his behalf with the Queen. Thus in January of 1603, when Elizabeth retired to Richmond with a serious cold, Neville wrote to Cecil to thank him "that neither my errors which I have committed, nor the evil suggestions of malignant spirits apt and ready to make the worst interpretation of them have been able to alter your constant and favorable dispositions towards me." Queen Elizabeth, made inconsolable by the death of her old friend the Countess of Nottingham, grew worse as the winter progressed. Her death on the night of March 23 brought Neville more hope than sadness.

As Elizabeth had feared and as human nature made inevitable, her body was not yet cold before Englishmen turned their eyes northward to Scotland. There James Stuart most willingly played the part of the benevolent monarch. He first reassured Elizabeth's ministers of their security. He then suggested the general bounty to come from his accession by his particular promises to the two men who had suffered most in his behalf, the Earl of Southampton and Sir Henry Neville. John Cham-
berlain, who knew London opinion as well as any man, observed that

The King uses all very graciously...Neville is restored (as he writes himself) to all his titles and fortunes. The tenth of this month the Earl of Southampton and Sir Henry Neville were delivered out of the Tower by a warrant from the King. These bountiful beginnings raise all men's spirits and put them in great hopes, insomuch that not only Protestants, but Papists and Puritans, and the very poets with their idle pamphlets promise themselves great part in his favor...

Neville's desire, often expressed to Cecil, that he might have the opportunity to redeem himself, seemed about to be achieved. John Manningham wrote in his diary that "The Earl of Southampton must present himself with the nobles, and Sir Henry Neville with the Councillors, like either shall be of their ranks." They were appointed to appear with the rest of the lords when they went to meet the King. The Venetian ambassador reported to his government that James had "destined to great rewards the Earl of Southampton and Sir Henry Neville."

Unfortunately, James never fulfilled these bright promises. Although Neville did receive his freedom and the restoration of his lands, he received no appointment to the privy council or to any other governmental office. He soon realized that promotion was not coming and retired to the countryside where, by the winter of 1603-4, he had begun

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21 McClure, Chamberlain Letters, I, 192; Thomas Birch, The Court and Times of James the First (edited by R. F. Williams), (London, 1849), 1, 7; J. Nichols (editor), The Progresses...of James I (1828), I, 52.

22 John Bruce (editor), Diary of John Manningham, 1602-3 (Camden Society, 1868), p. 171.

to sulk. Sir Ralph Winwood, once his secretary in Paris and now his successor as Ambassador to France, wrote to chide Neville for failing in his duty to the state. Stung by this charge Neville responded in February. He acknowledged Winwood's admonition to serve but denied that he deserved censure.

I hold it the duty of every honest man to dedicate his life to those ends more than to his own private contentment. But withal I think it may satisfy any man's conscience, that he shuns not service imposed; and I hold no man bound to seek employments. Those of honor I know are too high for me; and if I did not know it, yet others do. The same I have not refused, to live in Court, where non proficere is deficerere, without any office, business or regard, were the next degree to idleness...

He wished to serve as much as Winwood wished him to, and promised to accept an appointment when those in power came to think him worthy of it.

Neville's involvement in the Essex plot had destroyed his access to the normal channels of government advancement. There was no one to intercede for him with James, who was prejudiced against him. His ambassador to France had informed the Scottish King that Neville was a Puritan. Henry Howard, who had kept James informed of events in England while Elizabeth still lived, was a Catholic who had no love for Neville. Nor would Cecil, having once been betrayed, likely make a sincere appeal in behalf of his former protege. But more important than any of this was James's deathly fear of conspiracy. Every Tuesday he had a sermon preached to commemorate his narrow escape in 1600 from the plot of the Earl of Gowrie. He held every August 5 a feast to honor Sir John Ramsay,

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24 Winwood Memorials, 11, 17.
who had intervened to save his life.  

That he believed Neville capable of such treason became clear in the summer of 1604, toward the end of the first session of James's first parliament. On the 24th of June there came to his attention rumors of a plot to kill several of his Scottish friends, and perhaps the King himself. In a panic, James ordered a special guard of Scots to surround his quarters and sent word to the heir to the throne, Prince Henry, that he should not stir from his house. After conferring late into the evening with his council James had Southampton, Neville, Sir Maurice Berkeley, Sir William Lee, and Lord Danvers all arrested and interrogated. No evidence was found and the men were released the next morning. The charges against them were attributed to "the malignity of some of their enemies, who are numerous."26 But Neville and his friends could have been left with few illusions about the possibility of advancement by normal means.

But if Neville lacked the confidence of the Court, he had the support of the countryside. Sir Henry had suffered for two years


26 CSP Venetian, 1603-1607, pp. 165, 168. Anthony Weldon, in his scandal mongering Secret History of the Reign of James I, suggests that Cecil had engineered the arrests to prevent Southampton's becoming too popular with James I. But G. P. V. Akrigg argues more sensibly that Henry Howard was the accuser. One rumor about the court had been that the plot was aimed not at James, or Prince Henry, or the Scots, but at the English Catholic advisers. Furthermore, a poet named Pricket had recently published a scathing denunciation of the Howards that may have aroused their fears and Northampton's retaliation. G. P. V. Akrigg, Shakespeare and The Earl of Southampton (Cambridge, Mass., 1968), pp. 40-42. Certainly no man had greater means or opportunity or more inclination than Northampton to cause so much trouble.
because of his connection with the Earl of Essex. For, in spite of real shortcomings, Essex had enjoyed a charismatic relationship with the English people. Eighteen months after his death a German visitor to England was shown the spot where "the brave hero" had been beheaded. At Whitehall he was shown the shields which "the great and noble warrior" had presented to the Queen. In the taverns he heard nothing sung but "Essex's Last Good Night." By contrast vandals had scrawled above the door of Cecil's chamber within the walls of Whitehall, "Here lieth the toad"; and the Earl's old servants spread the word that Cecil was "an atheist" and a "machiavel." They said darkly that "it was as unwholesome thing to meet a man in the morning which hath a wry neck, a crooked back or a splay foot." A courtier summed up the situation when he wrote that Cecil was "much hated in England, by reason of the fresh bleeding of that universally beloved Earl of Essex." 

Thus the Essex conspiracy, which had prevented the fulfillment of Neville's ambition to rise in the English administration, opened up to him the alternative of service in parliament. But the quality of his parliamentary service would be quite changed. His previous service had been mainly a form of education and social introduction. In the Elizabethan House of Commons he supported the policies of the government. But the Essex involvement, which had done nothing to quell his ambition or his fame, cut him off from information about the intentions of the government, while it opened up greater access to and trust from the

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28 Ibid., pp. 230-1.
gentlemen and lawyers who opposed government policy. At the same time, the promotion of Cecil to the House of Lords as Viscount Cranborne removed from the Commons the most effective guiding hand that the government had. Furthermore, the development of the parliamentary committee put into the hands of parliament men a tool ideally suited for the talents of a man like Neville, by training, temperament, and experience a political manipulator.

Because he worked in committees rather than speaking out on the floor of parliament, Neville has for a long while been unnoticed by historians. But his contemporaries knew him well. In the elections of 1604 he was elected from the borough of Lewes, which he had served more than ten years before. But he also won the more important county seat for Berkshire, which indicates that he represented one of the most important families of the county. When the parliament came together on March 19, 1604, Neville's name was "muttered," along with that of Francis Bacon, for speaker of the House. When Cecil considered laying aside the office of secretary in 1605, Sir Dudley Carleton thought Neville a good replacement. Thus the fact that he seldom spoke indicates discretion and ambition rather than insignificance. In the committee room he could speak his mind without offending those who had the power to advance him.

In the first session of James's first parliament, which met in

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29 Journals of the House of Commons, 1, 141b.
30 Winwood, Memorials, 11, 45; Nichols, Progresses, 1, 475.
March of 1604, Neville felt his way carefully. He served on 22 of 158 committees. For example, he served on the committee formed to deal with "sundry important causes", raised by Sir Herbert Wroth at the opening of business. These included confirmation of the Book of Common Prayer, wardships, purveyors, monopolies, dispensations of penal statutes, transportation of ordnance, and abuses in the Exchequer. 31 These were all touchy issues, and as the Commons came to deal with them more closely, smaller committees were formed. On March 26 Neville became a member of the committee on wardships; on the 4th of April he joined the committee investigating processes in Exchequer Court; on April 16 he met on a committee to draw up grievances; and on the 5th of May he participated on a committee studying the abuse of purveyances. Finally, the Wroth committee drew up, at the end of the session, the "Apology" of the House of Commons which, though never formally presented, aroused the ire of the King. 32

The only evidence we have of Neville's personal activity during this session suggests that he supported the popular side on these issues. On the 26th of March he offered "a motion touching two important causes." He wanted to develop a "declaration of all kinds of treasons" and an "explanation of certain maxims of the common law, concerning the King's grants." This latter issue he considered important enough to be included

31 Commons Journals, I, 151a; HMC Salisbury MSS, XVI, 42.
as part of a conference with the House of Lords on the matter of wardships. Since the Commons were "well nigh desperate" about wardships, Neville was placing great emphasis indeed upon misuse of the King's grants, though he in no way blamed James for this abuse.\textsuperscript{33} To the contrary, he argued that "The King's grant should be taken most beneficially for himself." He suggested that some had gained such grants by misinformation, and that where misuse could be proven the grants might be made void---to the benefit of the King, who would receive a greater profit, and to the people, who would gain fairer service.\textsuperscript{34} Although the Commons did not join this grievance to that of wardships, they did make Neville chairman of a separate committee to deal with his two proposals. This committee continued to meet, but the records do not show that it ever brought a proposal to the Commons for a vote.\textsuperscript{35}

Neville further gained access to the "special committee" to deal with the disputed election of Sir Thomas Shirley, to a large committee that dealt with the seating of Sir Francis Goodwin against the will of the King, and to an "instantly formed" committee to justify the Commons' crossing the King on this matter.\textsuperscript{36} In addition, he served on lesser committees which probably reflected concerns of personal interest. For example, he served on a committee to deal with the return to Southampton of his lands, and the return to Essex's heirs of the lands once belonging

\textsuperscript{33}Ibid., p. 153. \hspace{1cm} \textsuperscript{34}Ibid. \\
\textsuperscript{35}Ibid., I, 166b. \hspace{1cm} \textsuperscript{36}Ibid., I, 155b, 157a, 160a.
to Essex. He participated on several committees that enquired into ancient laws and liberties of the land, and on three that sought to improve the religious life of the nation.\(^{37}\)

Finally, Sir Henry Neville served on a committee that dealt with the recommendation, probably initiated by merchant members, that England introduce a policy of free trade. Traditionally, historians have assumed this was an effort by merchants of the outports to undermine the monopoly of trade held by the city of London.\(^{38}\) More recently, however, Professor Rabb has shown that the impetus for this measure came not from merchants at all, but from country gentlemen usually associated with opposition to government measures.\(^{39}\) Of the twenty-two members of the committee named in the Commons Journals, only two clearly opposed free trade. Sixteen members certainly supported freedom, but only five were outport merchants. The other eleven were gentry. The real issue then, was not trade monopolies, but the kinds of monopolies. The old Merchants Adventurers of London required a large membership

\(^{37}\)Ibid., I, 173a, 231b, 232a, 237. The committee on religion dealt with the driving out of unworthy ministers, the ending of pluralities, and the establishment of a learned ministry.

\(^{38}\)S. R. Gardiner, History of England from the accession of James I to the outbreak of the civil war, 1603-1642 (London, 1883-4), I, 188-90; Astrid Friis, Alderman Cockayne’s project and the cloth trade: the commercial policy of England in its main aspects, 1603-1625 (London, 1927), pp. 132-3, 149-56. In 1603 freedom of trade did not mean an absence of tariffs, but an absence of guild regulations that prevented non members from participating in the trade.

fee, apprenticeship, and mercantile abilities, none of which the country members of parliament had. What they preferred was the establishment of joint stock companies, like the East India Company, whose membership was cheap, and for which no special abilities were required, since the ventures were carried on by the board of directors rather than by the individual members.

Neville must have been an invaluable member of this committee. He had recommended the adoption of free trade to Cecil some five years earlier, and as Ambassador to France he had been in sympathetic contact with English merchants. His father had had a merchant's license which Sir Henry may have continued, and he knew by his unpleasant encounter with the iron monopolists the problems they faced. He further continued to receive information from Winwood, who had been transferred to that most successful trading nation, the United Provinces.

In the report presented by the committee to the House by Sir Edwin Sandys, every conceivable argument was used. Sandys cited the natural right to trade, the evil of allowing 200 men to dominate trade, the improvement in the economy that would follow. He concluded by appealing to the basic concern of the gentry for their children. What should become of the younger sons of country gentlemen if they were denied access to trade that their peers in foreign nations received? This was a clever but misleading argument.

What was in fact at stake was the opportunity for younger sons such as Sandys himself, who did not want to make commerce a full time career, to share in the profits of overseas enterprise. The argument for younger sons was thus an argument for the gentry. And Sir Edwin underlined its importance by placing it
last among the arguments in favor of free trade, where it could have maximum impact.\footnote{ibid., p. 668.}

The bill ultimately passed the Commons "with great Consent and Applause of the House with scarce forty voices dissenting."\footnote{ibid., p. 669.} And though the government managed to find sufficient legal technicalities in the measure as it was drawn to convince the Lords not to carry it further, the purpose of the bill was won. The great authority of Sir Robert Cecil was not based on his ignoring of the will of those gentlemen who counted, for he was essentially an Elizabethan. In 1606 he promoted the passage of a bill guaranteeing Englishmen liberty of trade into Spain, Portugal and France. Furthermore, charters issued by the King in the future guaranteed that "no one who would pay a reasonable fine on entrance should be refused admission." When a new trading company for France was established in 1609 the entrance fee was only £4 for those under 26, and £10 for those older.\footnote{Notestein, \textit{House of Commons}, p. 123.} Nor were parliaments backward about taking advantage of these new opportunities. Fully one-third of the members of the 1604 parliament invested at one time or another in foreign trade. Nine of the ten gentry members of the committee on free trade made such investments. And though Henry Neville was not, like Sandys, a younger son, he had innumerable progeny to worry about. He invested in the Muscovy Company, participated with Sandys on the committee to oversee the Virginia Company to which he sold goodly
amounts of Berkshire timber, and he invested in the East India Company.\textsuperscript{43}

There is no evidence that Neville felt any special hostility to the government during that first session. But, during the interval between the first two sessions of James's first parliament, Sir Henry grew less sympathetic, for personal and public reasons. Personally, his hopes for advancement waned. He had been shocked into an awareness of this by the midnight arrest at the end of the first session of parliament. And while Southampton had received some gifts of land as an apology, Sir Henry got nothing.\textsuperscript{44} There was a rumor in December of 1604 that he might be sent as ambassador to Spain; such an appointment would not likely have pleased Neville, James, or the Spanish. But he was doubtless disappointed early in 1605 when Cecil, because he was unable to find a competent successor, decided not to give up the secretaryship.\textsuperscript{45} Actually, Cecil was reluctant to prepare a successor for leadership, in contrast to his father. He left his clients with continual hope which he consistently frustrated.\textsuperscript{46} And Neville showed that frustration in June of 1605 when he wrote to Winwood of political matters, only to


\textsuperscript{44}Winwood, \textit{Memorials}, II, 41.

\textsuperscript{45}Winwood, \textit{Memorials}, II, 45; Nichols, Progresses, I 475.

conclude: "I am out of my proper orb when I enter into state matters; I will therefore leave these considerations to those whom they appertain, and think of my husbandry." 47

Neville had also grown increasingly unhappy with the policies of the government. In the fall of 1604 England had made peace with Spain. This must have doubly irritated Sir Henry, first because he hated the Spanish, and secondly, because he had himself failed to negotiate such a treaty. He wrote disparagingly of the Spanish constable's procession through London, though less prejudiced observers found the ceremony and the man quite impressive. 48 This hatred for Spain, which he had first clearly shown while ambassador to France, continued throughout his parliamentary career and probably did much to cause his association with Puritan elements in society. In December of 1604 he complained to Winwood of Spanish atrocities against English merchants and pointed out that trade with Spain had proved not at all so profitable as some had hoped. For English merchants had been driven to poverty by the long Anglo-Spanish war. The Spanish during that time had begun their own cloth production to compete with English merchants, and the French, because of their geographical advantage, consistently under-sold English merchants in grain. 49 He hoped that Spanish bribes to English "grandees" would fail to maintain such a fruitless peace, and that the lack of profit combined with the difficulties suffered by the Dutch (because they

47 Winwood, Memorials, 11, 78. 48 ibid., p. 25.
49 ibid., p. 38.
lacked English aid) might "cool that ardent affection which carried us so strongly to that treaty" so that "this will be but a short peace."  

This hawkishness continued as a regular theme in his correspondence. In June of 1606 he again wrote to Winwood of the plight of English merchants who were "imprisoned and put into the gallies in Spain." The nation suffered "much injustice and oppression" there, even personal slander against the King. "I hear it hath moved much, and this I will assure you, that the kingdom generally wishes this peace broken, but *Jacobus Pacificus* I believe will scarce incline to that side."  

When in the summer of 1608 even the Dutch seemed on the verge of peace with Spain, Neville thought it tragic. He did not blame the Dutch. He blamed the confederates who failed to aid them. "Shame be to France that was able and would not, and woe be to us, that would and cannot."  

Neville hated excessive expenditure by the government and the burden it placed on the taxpayer so much that he begrudged even the Queen's laying in with child or a visit from her brother the Prince of Denmark. But despite this hatred of excessive expenditure, he would "as willingly contribute even beyond all proportion of my means, and cooperate as seriously with my voice and best endeavor in parliament to enable the King to yield them a real assistance, as I would for the reduction and pacifying of Ireland." He was further convinced that his personal commitment was general and that parliament "would sooner

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be drawn to yield him a contribution for that end, than for any other
than can be proposed." Yet all this was useless speculation, for

I confess I am out of hope that he will make any
use of their affections that way. We are afraid
of every shadow, least it should give a pretence
unto Spain to foment the rebellion we expect in
Ireland; as if when he resolves and finds himself
ready to do it, he will frobear for want of a
pretext.\footnote{53}

But in that interval between the first and second sessions of
James's first parliament, Neville concerned himself with the more im­
mediate danger represented by English Catholics. James, who hoped to
entice a large subsidy and union with Scotland from his parliament,
publicly urged his judges to enforce the laws against Catholic recusants
more stringently.\footnote{54} But Neville was unimpressed. The recusants would
never become loyal citizens unless they got their own way. Although
they claimed to want only toleration, they would never rest with that
alone, but would continue to demand further liberties. Tolerance was
the first step to Catholic domination. Therefore, the recusants should
be forced to show their true colors, to obey or disobey lest, as he
wrote ominously to Winwood, "it break out (alienore tempore) when they
be more prepared, and we peradventure entangled in some other business."\footnote{55}
The first step in the war upon Catholicism should be the execution of
captured priests he could find in his own county of Berkshire.\footnote{56}

\footnote{53}{Ibid., p. 411.}
\footnote{54}{Ibid., p. 132. Wallace Notestein believes that James's public
statement may have inspired the gunpowder plot. Notestein, House of
Commons, p. 145.}
\footnote{55}{Winwood, Memorials, II, 78.}
\footnote{56}{HMC Salisbury MSS, XVII, 470.}
Thus, when England was rocked by the news that a few Catholics had intended to blow up both King and parliament at the opening of the session on November 5, Neville decided that the danger to the nation far outweighed his concern for personal advancement. He led the pack of parliamentary hounds who ignored the King's financial needs as well as the union with Scotland to sniff out popery wherever they could find it. He served on 38 committees, twice as many as in 1604, and 14 of these committees concentrated on harassing Catholics or comforting native Protestants. These committees produced sixteen articles to deal with the problem of recusancy, the most important requiring Catholics to take an oath of loyalty. They had to vow that James was the lawful and rightful King, that the Pope could not depose the King or authorize any foreign power to harass him, and that they would maintain this stance even if the Pope should excommunicate James. They had further to swear "that (they) abhorred, detested, and abjured as impious and heretical the damnable doctrine that prices who were excommunicated may be deposed or murdered by their subjects," and that neither the Pope nor anyone else had the power to absolve them of this oath. All was to be sworn without mental evasion or secret reservation. The power to impose the oath was

57 W. M. Mitchell, The Rise of the Revolutionary Party in the English House of Commons (New York, 1957), pp. 35, 44. This book rightly directs attention to the committee room, but provides less help than it promises. Frequency of committee service and speaking in parliament is provided for only the top ten in each session. Mitchell is casual in distributing members among court and country parties. He includes George More among the country group without citing a reason. He gives Neville too much credit for service on committees, probably because he failed to realize that there were two Nevilles in the parliament of 1604-10.
invested in the bishops and justices of the peace who could require it for such minor matters as failing to attend communion twice within a year. Refusal to take the oath resulted in imprisonment. A second refusal brought the penalties of praemunire. Neville approved of this oath and thought it should be required of anyone traveling abroad. He hoped that such a requirement would discourage English Catholics from going overseas to aid the Spanish against the Dutch.\textsuperscript{58}

In general, the members of the Commons took seriously the fear (expressed by Neville) that the government would deal too easily with recusants. They tried to deal with the matter by increasing the authority of the justices of the peace. Justices of the peace should not only impose the oath, they should also share with the justices of the assize and of gaol delivery the power "to inquire, hear and determine" of all recusancy and other offences. In addition, they adopted a scheme to detect absence from church. Churchwardens were to list absentees of the age of nine or over. As a reward they would receive the fine of 40s., collected from the absentee. If the churchwarden failed to turn in his neighbor, he would be fined 20s.\textsuperscript{59}

These and the other thirteen articles concerning recusancy introduced into the parliament of 1605-6 had almost universal support. There is no record of significant opposition. The Archbishop of York expressed the essential unity of the nation on these matters. He wrote to Cecil:

\begin{quote}
The Puritans, whose fanatical zeal I dislike, though they differ in \underline{\hspace{2cm}} and accidents, yet they agree with us in substance of religion, and I think
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{58}Notestein, \textit{House of Commons}, pp. 146-7. \textsuperscript{59}Ibid.
all, or the most part of them, love His Majesty and the present estate, and I hope will yield to conformity. But the papists are opposite and contrary in very substantial points of religion, and cannot but with the Pope's authority, and Popish religion to be established.

Cecil gained himself "much love and honor" in the parliament of 1605-6 for his willing support of the recusant witch hunt, and even James came to believe that the oath was a wise invention and to imagine that he had initiated it himself. 61

This common zeal for the security of the King and kingdom had brought Neville into contact with men of a more radical turn of mind than his own. In working with such men on the committees of religion he found them to be capable hard workers like himself, and unlike the courtiers who wasted their time in "hunting or daring of dotterils." 62

And Neville had more in common with these men than their religious commitments, their concern for the danger from English Catholics, and their hatred of Spain. They sought, as they showed in advocating free trade in 1604, to find means to increase their personal prestige and wealth. They resented the corruption at court, especially the extravagance of James and his Scottish supporters, which not only bled them of their tax money, but also impeded their own access to patronage. Thus Neville joined with them in attacking the King's servants for their abuse of patents, the most troublesome being the abuse of purveyance.

60 Winwood, Memorials, II, 40.
62 Winwood, Memorials, II, 217. The dotterel is "a species of plover so called from the apparent simplicity with which it allows itself to be
Purveyance, the right of the King's servants to purchase at long
outdated prices the necessities of the household, destroyed the mutual
affection of King and parliament in 1605-6. Neville joined the committee
that dealt with the problem and raised issues that would outlast the
immediate concern.

No one doubted that the King needed money for his household. The
problem was how to devise a means that would assure that the King, rather
than some subordinate, actually received the benefit. The surest method
was for the King to emulate Elizabeth by carefully overseeing his own
servants, but the Commons could no longer trust James to do that. As a
result, they studied other means and considered most thoroughly the
possibility of compounding with the King, buying out his feudal right to
purveyance by making a fixed parliamentary payment each year. But Sir
Roger Wilbraham pointed out that "the great objection against composition
was that the King or parliament could not secure the composition...for if
36 acts of parliament cannot restore the people to their right of inheri-
tance against purveyors, one act now is not available." Neville probably
agreed with his close friend Sir Maurice Berkeley of Somersetshire in
opposing composition, "for we may as lawfully though not so possibly
be drawn to compound for our lives and lands." Such arguments allied
approached and taken." Neville may have been punning on a secondary
meaning, a silly person of decayed intelligence. OED, III, 610.

63 H. S. Scott (editor), The Journal of Sir Roger Wilbraham...1593-
1616 (Camden Society, 1902), p. 76.

64 David Harris Willson (editor), The Parliamentary Diary of Robert
Neville and Berkeley with parliamentary radicals like John Hare, Richard Marten, and Lawrence Hyde; and, as the session continued, Sir Henry came to see that his integrity stood in the way of his ambition. He informed Winwood, "for my own business I am at a stand, if I go not backward. This parliament hath done me no good, where not only speeches and actions but countenances, and conversations with men disliked, hath been observed. But in these points I cannot betray my own mind, speed as it will." 65

The session of 1606-7 revealed just how far Neville had moved from his natural support of monarchical authority. From the beginning of his reign James had sought to end the wasteful competition and mutual hostility of England and Scotland by uniting the two countries. The reluctance of the Commons to carry out this goal greatly irritated James. In the fall of 1604 Neville served as one of twenty-four English commissioners who drew up an instrument of union with their Scottish counterparts. He had drawn upon his contacts with Winwood in the United Provinces for information concerning treaties between France and Scotland, and concerning methods used in Germany during the time of Charles V and more recently in the Provinces for drawing disparate elements together into one nation. The instrument of union had pleased him. He reported to Winwood that it would end all hostile laws between the two nations, would replace border laws and customs with the normal law of the two countries, and would, for the most part, establish free trade between the two countries. Both Scottish and English merchants

65 Winwood, Memorials, 11, 216.
would be able to import and sell foreign goods, though the Scots would have to pay a special tax on goods imported from France, where special treaties allowed them to buy more cheaply than their English competitors. Scots as well as English would have the right to trade in foreign parts, though this right was extended only to individuals, not to trading companies. The issue that aroused the greatest controversy was the naturalization of the Scots. A compromise had been reached allowing all Scots born since the coming of James to the English throne to be natural subjects of England, while those born previous to James's accession would be denied the right "to have voice and sense in parliament, and to bear any office of the crown, or judicature." Neville was especially encouraged by the fact that, although the last three points had aroused great debate, "in the end the King was won to our side."66

The discovery of the gunpowder plot and the need to raise a subsidy forced James to abandon his intention to have the union debated in the second session of parliament. Unfortunately for James, by the autumn of 1606, when the third session began, neither the Commons nor Neville were so happy with the instrument of union. The presence of the Scots at court had aroused old prejudices. The English had long considered them barbaric, and had resented their lower standard of living, which allowed them to undersell English merchants overseas. They derided the Scots as mere "peddlars" because they did not organize trading companies like the English. Furthermore, in the two years since the commissioners had met it had become clear that the Scots,

66 Ibid., p. 38.
led by the Earl of Dunbar, had gained the cream of James's benevolence, while the English went wanting. Neville observed upon the promotion of Lord Erskine and Sir John Ramsay to viscountcies that Ramsay "hath a £1000 land given him to support the title; so the King's land, enclosed to all other, is open only to them...."67

Nevertheless, James especially wanted the union, and Cecil did all in his power to gratify the King. Assured of the support of the House of Lords, Cecil sought to bring the Commons to deal with the union in a joint committee, so that the Lords might intimidate the country gentry. To avoid such pressure in the previous session the King's solicitor, Sir John Doderidge, had declined the burden of carrying for a second time a weighty message to the Lords, arguing "that the Lords might conceive this House to be slenderly furnished if they shall send one man twice together." The House accepted his excuse and appointed Sir Henry Neville to carry the message and to return with the Lords' answer.68 Now, in February of 1607, the Commons had been drawn under similar circumstances to another conference with the Lords concerning the matter of Scottish naturalization. In March the committee formed to prepare for the conference sought spokesmen, but Sir Roger Owen refused the assignment, "for fear of distaste," as did the lawyer William Brock, who had never before spoken in the

67 Ibid., p. 38.
68 Willson, Bowyer's Diary, pp. 104-5.
presence of the Lords. Even such formidable figures as Lawrence Hyde and Sir Edwin Sandys refused for reasons of their own. The task was at last assigned to Sir Henry Neville, who had the assistance of his associate from the French embassy, Sir Dudley Carleton. Drawing upon his diplomatic experience Neville delivered a slashing denunciation of the union, so long as Scotland continued to retain its special relationship with France. Should the benefits of English citizenship be given the Scots who continued to hold such benefits in France? Should not the Scots first renounce their French ties? This alliance between France and Scotland, Neville argued, went back to the days of Charlemagne, and was aimed against England. The Scottish nobility were required by their oaths to "join with the King of France against any King whomsoever opposite to the King of France," and the French King was required to support as King of Scotland the man preferred by the Scottish nobility, "which how dangerous this may be we may guess by the example of Richard III."  

This speech could not have pleased James, who took up the issue in a scolding speech to the Commons delivered on the 31st of March. He

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69 Notestein, House of Commons, p. 226.

70 Willson, Bowyer's Diary, p. 226. In July of 1607 Neville stood clearly with radicals in the House like Fuller and Hyde against a bill suppressing unlawful assemblies, a bill which the government wanted to continue in force should parliament be dissolved. The members rejected the government's argument that the bill was necessary to put down rebellious meetings in the midlands. The privy councillors in the Commons were incensed and tried unsuccessfully to have the names of the opposition taken, but their motion was "denied upon just cause lest the names should be showed to high persons and so some particular members which with their conscience denied the continuance might have displeasure." Ibid., pp. 366-7.
argued that the Scottish league with France was only between princes, and furthermore, that he had not continued it. Neville alone did not wreck the proposed union with Scotland, but his stand on the matter won him no affection from the King.

Thus by the summer of 1607 Sir Henry Neville, once ambassador to France and now a courtier of James I, had come to be identified with the "popular" party in the House of Commons. He had certainly stood with the opposition on the issues of free trade, religion, and foreign policy. He had probably also opposed the King on purveyance and the subsidy. He sneered at the "grandees" at court for their idleness and corruption. He probably compared James I unfavorable with Henry IV for their common love of hunting, their inattention to business, their love affairs, their softness on Catholics, and their vanity. His opinions had very likely been the cause of new rift between himself and his old patron Cecil.

But if on matters of principle he could not "betray his own mind," Sir Henry Neville also had a strong sense of self-interest and political reality. For whatever differences might have arisen between Neville and Cecil, Sir Henry had no choice if he sought advancement but to follow Cecil, for Sir Robert controlled the strings of patronage. Furthermore, Cecil stood as the prime bar to the accession to power of Henry Howard, Lord Northampton, the leader of the Spanish party at

71 Notestein, *House of Commons*, p. 244.

72 PRO/SP/14/43/22.
court. As a result Neville concealed the bitterness he probably felt at Cecil's failure to free him from the Tower or gain for him some appointment at Court. He had credited Cecil at that time with saving his life and had refused to blame him for his long imprisonment.

In December of 1604 Cecil had served as god-father to Neville's third son. Sir Henry had expressed pleasure at the credit Cecil had gained for his "just dealing" in religion during the session of 1605-6. Neville had taken responsibility in 1604, with Cecil's support, for the wards of their common friend, Sir Jonathon Trelawney, with whom Neville had served in the parliament of 1604. This tedious burden occupied Neville for six years and, in an age when wardships were viewed as a means of looting the wealth of a hapless minor, Neville showed consideration to the feelings of his charges and protected their interests.

In the fall of 1607 Neville proposed and sought to carry out under Cecil's direction "a project to raise a present sum for His

73 P. M. Handover says aptly of Northampton that "No man was more fitted for conspiracy, no man so venomous against those he hated, or so obsequious to those he hoped to make his friends. His mind, remarkable for its great learning, was so perverted that in a bawdy and outspoken age he wrapped up his filthy imputations in Latin and ascribed them to ancient authors. Not only was he impure in thought and deed, but he lacked a grain of loving kindness, of nobility of mind, or generosity of heart. Few men have been so purposelessly bent upon destroying the fellowship of man." Handover, The Second Cecil, p. 240.

74 HMC Salisbury MSS, XII, 589-90. 75 Ibid.

76 Winwood, Memorials, II, 25.

77 Berks Record Office, Neville MSS, D/En/F7.
Majesty's use without any wrong or just cause of grievance to any man." Neville argued that corruption of local officials, as well as of royal servant, allowed certain individuals to escape service on juries and as constables, and threw an excessive burden on those who obeyed the law. He suggested that James compound with two men in each parish to avoid such service; in return for exemption they should pay the King 5. He estimated that there were more than 8,000 parishes in England and Wales and that his project would raise £80,000 for the King. And the principle might be expanded to allow compounding for exemption from churchwarden's duties, which had become especially onerous ever since parliament had given the wardens the duty of overseeing attendance at church. The plan was rational. He had seen it work in France. He had sounded out his friends in the country, who expressed enthusiasm for it. And it would harm no one. Whereas "now by the corruption of officers, some men are spared from those services with no advantage to the state, they shall hereafter be eased in a more lawful course, and yield the state a benefit." Cecil actually sent the project with his blessing to the King, who approved its use on February 28 of 1608.

Nor was Neville's project inconsistent with his stand in parliament against excessive use of the King's prerogative. Thriftiness had
as much to do as principle with the Commons' reluctance to fund the King. Neville may have been influenced by his close friend, Sir Maurice Berkeley, who had urged in 1606 that the King be funded "in perpetuity" so long as the funding was "without any charge to the people." And in 1607 Neville had sat on a committee to consider Sir Edwin Sandys's suggestion that James might raise sufficient revenue without increased taxation by taking over the draining of fens and the profits of reclaimed lands, presently going to private entrepreneurs.

Although Sir Henry's project came to naught, James's acceptance of it, as well as Cecil's encouragement, had raised his hopes. He gained further hope when in May of 1608, upon the death of Lord Treasurer Dorset, Cecil was made Lord Treasurer and raised to the rank of Earl of Salisbury. He told Winwood that he knew "not anything the King hath done in that kind more universally applauded: so great a reformation many imagine will follow this change."  

Neville hoped that Cecil's promotions would prove valuable to him personally, as well as beneficial to the nation as a whole. His parliamentary opposition had won him no favors from the government in the five years since his imprisonment. By 1608 he was having serious financial difficulties. His son was of the age to be knighted and he had three daughters who needed husbands and dowries. He felt obligated to aid two nephews who were in financial difficulty at Oxford, and he had a brood of young children whose future needed securing. The origin of his financial problems had been his ambassadorial service to France.

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80 Willson, Bowyer's Diary, p. 62. 81 Winwood, Memorials, II, 399.
nearly ten years before, on which he had spent £4,000 of his own money. Early in 1609 he pleaded with Salisbury to press the King to reimburse him for his service. He could perhaps get by on one-half of his original expenditure. Even an annuity for his younger sons would greatly ease his burden. But without the "charitable office" of Salisbury he feared he would "sink beneath the burden of his debts." 82

Thus Neville's opposition to royal policies did not preclude his reconciliation with the government. He was needy and ambitious, and he had the ear of significant figures in the House of Commons. As the beginning of the fourth session of James's first parliament approached in 1610, Sir Francis Bacon could safely include Neville in a list of men with whom the government could hope to deal. 83

The government needed such men. Salisbury, since he had become Lord Treasurer in 1608, had managed to reduce the King's standing debt from nearly £1,000,000 to about £300,000 and to increase his yearly income by about £100,000. But it was all to no avail, for James had increased his expenditure by more than £200,000 annually. Unable to restrain the King's spending Salisbury decided to bargain with the House of Commons, offering the redress of grievances in return for a permanent increase in the King's income. 84

82 PRO/SP/14/43/22.

83 Spedding, Life of Bacon, V. 75. In addition to Neville, Bacon's list included Sir Walter Chute, Sir Francis Popham, Sir William Herbert, Sir Herbert Crofts, and Sir Maurice Berkeley.

But the Treasurer's financial demands were high and the King's definition of permissible redress limited. Salisbury asked for an immediate supply of £600,000, which would erase the King's debt and provide an emergency surplus, and £20,000 in annual support. The House of Commons offered £100,000 in support and demanded an end to wardships and purveyances. To James these were not grievances, but the very "flowers" of his prerogative. He demanded that the £100,000 for wardships and purveyances be added to the £200,000 he had originally requested.

To negotiate such a bargain, Salisbury needed James's help. The King should win over the country gentlemen with his charm, should reassure them by his consistency, and should keep them at their work by his presence. Instead, James vacillated from moments of anger to moments of conciliation, disappeared at crucial times to go hunting, gave his bounty to worthless favorites, distracted parliament men from their duty by his petulance, and drove moderate men into opposition by his arrogance. In March of 1610 he compared himself to God, with whom he shared the power "to create and destroy, to make and unmake, to give life or death, (and) to judge all..." He declared that he was accountable only to God. Thus did he offend the "most strictly religious." His power was like that of the father who could disinherit his children, "make them beggars or rich at his pleasure," and

who was the fountainhead of the law. These observations won him no
sympathy from the gentry or the lawyers.

Again in May he chided the Commons for encroaching upon his auth-

ority by questioning his right to levy impositions. He even denied they
could discuss the matter. "What a King will do upon a bargain is one
thing and what his prerogative is is another." Their argument that
impositions were not based on precedent was a question for the law-
yers, "yet I that am King ought to know them and this I dare affirm,
no act of parliament denudes the King of the power to impose." They
should thank God they had a good King, for they had no right to bridle
even an ill one. "If the King be resolute to be a tyrant, all you
can do will not hinder him...Never put me in question of the prero-
gative, put not me to precedents unless you will let me reckon prece-
dents too for my prerogative." 86

The opposition in the House of Commons seized upon the King's
words and used them to arouse the worst fears of their colleagues.
Thomas Wentworth, son of Elizabeth's nemesis Peter Wentworth, "saw
nothing in that speech any way to restrain the power of imposing even
upon lands and good, our property, but that we must be still at the
mercy (for the moderation thereof) of a good and gracious King." If,
as James had once suggested, it was seditious to question what a King
could do, then "all our law books are seditious, for they have ever

86 Elizabeth Read Foster (editor), Proceedings in Parliament, 1610
James Whitelocke, newly elected member for Woodstock, Oxfordshire, argued that to allow the King's speech to pass unchallenged would do more than allow impositions. It would surrender the most basic rights of parliament: the right to consent to taxation and the right to approve legislation. And without these rights parliament would cease to be "the storehouse of our liberties." Outside the halls of parliament so moderate a man as John Chamberlain shuddered to see our monarchical power and regal prerogative strained so high and made so transcendent every way, that if the practice should follow the positions, we are not like to leave our successors that freedom we received from our forefathers, nor make account of anything we have longer than they list that govern.

For five months Commons and King remained at odds. During that time increased foreign policy commitments to France, increased security costs at home (made necessary by the assassination of Henry IV), and the expenses for the creation of Prince Henry as Prince of Wales compelled the King to seek an immediate supply. In June Salisbury admitted that the contract would have to be put off until "another time and another season than in the heat of summer."

87 Foster, Proceedings, II, 108; Notestein, House of Commons, p. 326.
88 Foster, Proceedings, II, 109; Notestein, House of Commons, p. 327.
89 McClure, Chamberlain Letters, I, 301; Notestein, House of Commons, p. 327.
For three days the Commons considered Salisbury's request that they turn to that necessary supply. They began by reducing the amount to a pitiful single subsidy and one fifteenth. Then they failed to vote James even that. Instead they set aside a full week to discuss impositions, added them to their list of grievances, and presented James a bill for their relief on the morning of July 10. That afternoon James greeted parliament with "ill looks." For once he had little to say. He "scorned" their failure to relieve his wants and disclaimed responsibility for their complaints. "If I have done wrong," he told the Commons, "blame the Lord Treasurer who told me I might impose." Thus did the King add to the burden of his "little beagle," who swore on his knees before the whole company that he had neither abused the King's trust, "nor deserved the censure of Empson and Dudley", which was current against him.91

That very evening the weary Lord Treasurer sought to accomplish at his house in Hyde Park what he had failed to bring about during the long session of parliament. "To justify his courses" he met with "a select number of the lower house...which were Sir Henry Neville, Sir Maurice Berkeley, Sir Edwin Sandys, Sir Herbert Croft, Sir John Scott Sir Francis Goodwin, and Mr. Alford...." These men had in common sympathy for the person of the Lord Treasurer and for the program of the great contract. What they discussed beyond the issue of impositions we do not know, but the very fact of their meeting aroused the members

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91 Foster, Proceedings, 11, 133; Notestein, House of Commons, pp. 387-9; HMC Downshire MSS, 11, 490.
of the House to suspect that they plotted some new designs. According to Dudley Carleton, "the great matter of the contract was in danger, by this jealousy, to have sped the worse, which most of these did seek to advance." 92

But Carleton's judgment was questionable. The King's situation and that of the great contract could hardly have been worse than they were on the afternoon of July 10. Yet the members of the House of Commons, who "went away ill satisfied" that afternoon voted James the subsidy and one fifteenth the next day, which they had refused even to bring to a vote less than a month before. 93 One week later, on the 17th of July, these same gentlemen voted to increase from £180,000 to £200,000 the amount they would pay the King for relinquishing his feudal tenures, thus sealing the great contract which Salisbury had abandoned for the session on the 10th of June. The Earl of Salisbury knew more about the intricacies of parliamentary politics than Dudley Carleton ever dreamed of.

But during the summer recess that began July 23 both parties began to have second thoughts about the contract. The members of the Commons wondered how they would raise the vast amount they had offered the King, and how they could make certain that he would abide by the contract once he did not need them. For his part James had offered more than he had intended and yet received no means to deal with his

92 Foster, Proceedings, II, 174; Birch, Court of James I, I, 123.
93 Notestein, House of Commons, p. 389; Birch, Court of James I, I, 123.
mammouth existing debt, which had been recently inflated by a loan of £100,000 from the London merchants. Furthermore, his chancellor of the exchequer, Sir Julius Caesar, argued that projects might be devised to raise the needed money without parliament. Thus on the 6th of November, only three weeks after the beginning of the fifth session of parliament, James informed the House of Commons through the Speaker that he must have £500,000 in immediate supply, in addition to the £200,000 annual support already voted, if he were to abide by the contract. In addition, this levy must be firm and stable, must not bear upon the poor, and must not diminish any of his other income. Finally, pains must be taken that those whose jobs depended upon the administration of the tenures, wardships, and purveyances be compensated.\textsuperscript{94} The next day the Commons moved, in spite of the Speaker's efforts at delay, to the question of whether to continue negotiating the contract on the King's terms; "and the whole house (I think not five voices excepted) answered, No."\textsuperscript{95}

James was ready to give up, but Salisbury, whose idea the contract had been, tried once more. On the 14th of November he and the other privy councillors urged upon the Commons' eight lesser concessions which the King might give up for an immediate supply. He reminded them of their duty to maintain the monarchy. Amid growing tension the Commons debated this offer for two days. By the morning of the 16th an

\textsuperscript{94} Foster, Proceedings, II, 313-16; Notestein, House of Commons, p. 408.

\textsuperscript{95} Foster, Proceedings, II, 319.
ominous silence hung over the House, for no man was anxious to speak his mind. Samuel Lewknor of Shropshire observed, "tis a hard choice when a man must either speak with danger or against his conscience. I know that terror regis est quase rugitus leonis and a word ill taken, though not evil spoken, may blot the memory of many well deserving actions." The debate continued sullenly in that atmosphere until the adjournment, when the serjeant accosted thirty of the departing members with a warrant to appear before the King at two that afternoon.

Accordingly, they came before the King, who sat among the Lords of the Privy Council. James spoke first, saying he had some questions to ask them and demanding that they answer directly. He pointed to Sir Nathanial Bacon, who answered in a low voice, apologizing for a speech he had made that morning against the subsidy, but nevertheless repeating its contents. James sought to relieve the tension.

"I would have you speak freely and will pardon what you should say to me," he urged.

Sir Francis Bacon began to speak but James, though no judge of men, sensed from his flowery beginnings that Sir Francis would not tell him what he wanted to know, nor impress the others present. He interrupted his solicitor and pointed to Sir Henry Neville. "Am I in want?"

Neville, perhaps remembering the days ten years before when he had had to deal with the angry thrusts of Henry IV, responded, "Yes,

96 Foster, Proceedings, 11, 332; Notestein, House of Commons, p. 417.
I believe you are in want."

"Ought not my wants to be relieved?" pressed the King.

"To this," said Neville, "I must answer with a distinction. Where your Majesty's expense grown by the Commonwealth we are bound to maintain it. Otherwise, not. In this one parliament we have already given four subsidies and seven fifteenths," he continued, "which is more than ever was given by any parliament at any time, upon any occasion; and yet withal that we have had no relief of our grievances."

James, wounded perhaps by an answer he had not expected, demanded that Neville cite those grievances. Sir Henry would not back down.

"To all their grievances I am not privy," he answered, "but of those that are come to my knowledge I will make recital." He began by complaining "that in the matter of justice they could not have an indifferent proceeding, (aiming perhaps at his Majesty's prerogative nullum tempus occurrat regi); and then falling upon the jurisdiction of the marches of Wales..." This issue, whether the four counties on the border of Wales should be relieved from the control of the Council of Wales and given the rights of common law, had long been an especial concern of Herbert Crofts, who interrupted Neville to lead the discussion into a long and fruitless debate. John More expressed his belief to Winwood that had Crofts not interrupted, Neville would have "delivered his judgment in all, in what respect soever it might be taken." More further believed that he might even have told the King

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that the House "could be content to replenish the royal cistern (as they call it) of his Majesty's treasury, were they assured that his Majesty's largesse to the Scots' prodigality would not cause a continual and remediless leak therein." Gossips in the Lower House reported that the King owed his Scottish followers £100,000, and that they carried bills in hand to be paid "when the new taxes shall come into the Exchequer."

The next day James sent a message by Sir Thomas Lake flatly and finally rejecting the contract. In the future he would refer to the thirty members contemptuously as his thirty "doges." Sir Julius Caesar believed the meeting illustrated the "contempt in the inferior towards the superior" which had been breeding in the country and in the parliament. Yet Caesar conceded that these men were "held amongst the common people the best patriots that ever were." James would still be better off dealing with them, rather than dissolving this parliament to face a new one.

Nevertheless, after proroguing parliament several times, James dissolved it on February 9, 1611, thus ending his first parliament, which had lasted for seven years. Sir Thomas Lake had told James that he had heard from Salisbury of a plot in the House of Commons to send

98 Foster, Proceedings, II, 337-8; Winwood, Memorials, III, 235-6; HMC Rutland MSS, I, 424-5; CSP Venetian, 1607-1610, p. 125. In addition to the Welsh shires they discussed impositions, prohibitions, and proclamations. The Venetian ambassador believed the King had satisfied the members on all but impositions and the meeting had ended in harmony, but the King's actions seem to belie this analysis.

James's Scottish favorites home. James was furious, both at the idea of such an action in the Commons, and at his Lord Treasurer for failing to keep him informed. Taken aback by the King's fury, Lake decided to check his story. He turned to Sir Henry Neville, who assured him that, as Salisbury very likely realized, such a plan was the product of an "intemperate brain" and would never have passed the House. James realized that Lake had "made a mote of a mountain," but he still blamed Salisbury, whose error had been "that ye ever expected to draw honey out of gall, being a little blind with the self love of your own counsel in holding together this parliament, whereof all men were despairred, as I have oft told you." 100

But Sir Thomas Lake, like Salisbury and James before him, turned to Sir Henry Neville when he wanted reliable information from a man who was willing to tell it plain.

This point was not lost upon Neville himself.

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100 Ibid., p. 346.
Sir Henry Neville believed that misunderstanding between King and Commons, not irreconcilable matters of principle, caused the failure of the parliament of 1610. His experience in the Commons had convinced him that its members were moderate men, with sound motives for their opposition to the King. He suspected that their intentions—as well as his own—had been misrepresented to James by hostile advisers. Furthermore, he believed that Salisbury had badly mishandled the situation. If he could only make contact with James, he concluded, he might reconcile King and parliament, and do himself good service in the bargain.

The problem was access to the King. Salisbury had failed him too often in the past and was in some disgrace because of the failure of the great contract. But an alternative to Salisbury had appeared at last. In March of 1611 James had created Robert Carr, a Scottish favorite, Viscount Rochester, thus confirming to the world his special affection for a man who soon had "more suitors following him than the Lord Treasurer." Neville and Rochester were unlikely allies. The young Scot had first gained the King's attention in 1607, when he broke his arm in a fall from his horse in the King's presence. James became attracted to the young man for his good looks and simplicity. Imagining that he might mould Carr to his own liking, he showered him with gifts and favors. In 1609 James gave Carr the manor of Sherburne, which had be-

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1 HMC Buccleuch MSS, 1, 102.
longed to Sir Walter Raleigh, making Carr thereby as wealthy as he was unpopular. It may have been Carr, sensing the unpopularity he had aroused, who spread rumors of a parliamentary plot to drive the Scots out of England, a rumor which led James to dissolve his first parliament.²

But Neville was a realist, who knew that Rochester had become the key to advancement. And fortunately for him, Rochester was very much under the influence of Sir Thomas Overbury.³ Overbury had met Carr when Carr was a page to the Earl of Dunbar at Edinburgh in 1601. They had confirmed their friendship two years later when Carr came to England in the train of James I. Sir Thomas had gained some reputation as a poet and a writer of "characters" and was on intimate terms with Ben Jonson and other wits who met regularly at the Mermaid Tavern. There these Jacobean intellectuals gathered to drink and ridicule the corruption of the court whose patronage they sought. Inevitably they came to sing the praises of the popular opposition to the court, to members of the House of Commons like John Hoskins, Richard Martin, Christopher Brooke, and Sir Henry Neville.⁴ Thus it was probably Overbury who convinced Rochester that he should represent the popular cause to the King and take under his wing Sir Henry Neville.

For if Neville needed court connections to gain the King's ear, he

² Foster, Proceedings, II, 346; Notestein, House of Commons, p. 429.
could also offer Rochester a solid political base from among his many friends and allies in the House of Commons. For Salisbury's decline from power had loosed those political animosities at court which he had so long controlled. Rochester's ascendancy over the King was threatened by the Howard family, led by the Lords Northampton and Suffolk, both of whom were dedicated to a pro-Spanish foreign policy and a pro-Catholic domestic policy.

But Neville, who had learned by bitter experience the cost of crossing Salisbury, refused openly to oppose his former patron. Nevertheless, rumors of his political activity leaked out in the autumn of 1611. In October of that year John More, who frequently served as a channel of London gossip to Neville's old friend Sir Ralph Winwood, wrote to Sir Ralph of a strange conversation he recently had with Livinus Munck, a naturalized Dutchman long in the service of Salisbury. Munck, who had not considered Neville worthy of the secretaryship when Salisbury had pondered retirement in 1605, expressed his surprise at rumors that Sir Henry might soon become a privy councillor, and perhaps even secretary to the King. More, who had not heard the rumors, was also surprised. He objected that Neville was in poor health, had given himself over to a country life, and had failed in the last parliament to speak in behalf of the King. Surely he would have done so if he had sought advancement. Munck, nevertheless, assured More that Neville was working through Overbury and Rochester to gain the appointment, and that once he had it he would "undertake to deal with the lower house, and then

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5 Winwood, Memorials, II, 59.
(so as my Lord Treasurer would not intermeddle) there was no doubt but that better effects would come of the next session (which is like to be in February next) than did come of the former." More was taken aback by this information, and speculated that it might actually be an attempt to discredit Winwood's old friend. And Neville went to much effort to deny any such ambition, even when Salisbury became dangerously ill in February of 1612.

Salisbury's disability brought the wheels of government grinding to a halt. London gossips speculated that he would have to give up the secretaryship, even if he recovered, and they drew up lists of possible successors. The list included Neville, Sir Charles Cornwallis, Sir Henry Wotton, Sir Thomas Edmondes, and Sir Thomas Lake, all men with backgrounds in diplomatic service. Wotton and Lake openly lobbied for advancement, but Neville could afford to remain discreetly in the background while Rochester pressed his claims. False hopes were raised in April of 1612 when rumors spread that Sir Henry had been made a privy councillor.

As Salisbury's health waned, partisan pressures intensified and rumors spread that the office would be shared by Neville and by Lake (whom Northampton had adopted when his own dependent, Cornwallis, failed to attract support). Lake, as clerk of the signet, already

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7 McClure, Chamberlain Letters, I, 338.

8 HMC Downshire MSS, III, 266; Winwood, Memorials, III, 338.
carried out the more perfunctory duties of the secretary's office, and sought to create the impression that advancing anyone above him would be an injustice. But James proved reluctant to commit himself. He appointed the Earl of Pembroke, a leader of the Protestant cause in the House of Lords, to the privy council, but denied promotions to his allies the Lords Sheffield and Southampton and their comrade Sir Henry Neville. Although Southampton's spirit was said to pervade the court, Neville had to "tarry the time."10

Late in May Salisbury died, relieved at last of his burden of overwork and ingratitude. His death freed Neville to seek openly the secretaryship which popular opinion vowed should be his.11 He waited expectantly for the call to James's presence, but was continually put off. Apparently the strategy that Neville and his friends had developed, that Neville should remain in the background while they pressed his qualifications, had backfired. For James was "much troubled" by the "multitude of competitors" for the position, and Neville's claims were hindered by "too much soliciting" in his behalf.12 James had learned that parliament men "flocked about" Neville and met secretly with him and the Protestant Lords, Southampton and Sheffield, in Rochester's

9 HMC Buccleuch MSS, I, 131.
11 HMC Downshire MSS, III, 308.
chamber. He would "not have a secretary imposed upon him by parliament."
Southampton took the hint and retired discreetly to the country, but
Neville continued to seek an opportunity to outline his plan to the
King.\textsuperscript{13}

Finally, in July, his chance came. According to Neville's own
account he met James at Windsor in the routine performance of his duties
as keeper of the game there.\textsuperscript{14} It is more likely that Rochester had
arranged this coincidence and had convinced James that he had nothing to
lose by listening to Neville's advice. The King was sufficiently im­
pressed by Sir Henry's proposals to ask him to put them in writing.
James continued to encourage Neville for the next three months, granting
him another audience in September and accepting further information from
him through Rochester.

Assured that his friends at court would support his candidacy for
the secretaryship, Sir Henry could afford to take a statesmanlike stance
during this period. He requested nothing for himself. In failing to
do so, he did not delude the King, who knew that he sought advancement;
though he did delude later historians who have tended to treat his pro­
posals separately from his attempts to gain office. In his written
advice to James, Neville addressed himself to the most pressing issue
of the day, the means by which the King could escape his increasing bur­
den of debt and regain the good will of his people. Since the failure

\textsuperscript{13}Ibid., I, 358-9; Birch, Court and Times, I, 175-6; CSP Domestic
(1611-1618), p. 135.

\textsuperscript{14}HMC Portland MSS, X, 132; W. R. Notestein, F. H. Reif, and H.
Simpson (editors), Commons Debates, 1621 (New Haven, 1935), VII, 639.
of the parliament of 1610, the government had sought desperately to raise money, considering such devices as the sale of hunting licenses, impositions on the sale of bricks, a tax on the interest gained from loans, and the minting of brass coins. Few of these projects had been judged worthy of implementation, and only the trebling of the cost of wardships and the sale of the newly created title of baronet had produced any money. Nevertheless, "it became quite the thing for every public-spirited subject who had an idea which he thought might benefit the crown, and incidentally himself, to write the lord treasurer about it..." In July James was in the process of creating a new committee to seek out even more projects. But Neville knew by painful experience that there was little hope of success. In 1608 he had seen his own plan to raise money by exempting men from being jurors or constables fail because local officials had refused to abide by it and because the King's servants had intimidated those who tried to impose it. He told James that he was "induced to believe that either they will fail or fall short in the practice, however they may seem likely in the theory; or that they will prove like some medicines, which do rather take away sense of pain for the present than cure the grief for which they were applied." Furthermore, projects,

16 Ibid., p. 145.
17 PRO/SP/14/55; PRO/SP/14/57.
even though they filled the King's coffers, would not ultimately solve
the problems raised in 1610. For the "apprehensions" felt by both King
and parliament had spread throughout the country. Indeed, Neville con-
tinued, reflecting no doubt upon his own experience as ambassador to
France and his more recent contacts with Winwood in the United Provinces
and Dudley Carleton in Venice, these disagreements were well known in
"all foreign parts that have any commerce or dealing with us." Nothing,
he feared, could more embolden a potential enemy to strike than knowledge
of such divisions. Then, choosing one of the King's favorite metaphors,
he urged that the world be shown that the present quarrel "was no other
but that which happeneth often by some distemper between a tender father
and dutiful children which quickly vanish when the distemper of either
side is removed." To bring about this reconciliation, James must call
another parliament, "for there this error grew, and there and nowhere
else it must be repaired." Those who advised against a parliament, he
knew, argued either a permanent hostility on the part of the Commons
which would prevent their ever giving money, or at least a tendency to
take advantage of the King's necessity to make "unreasonable demands."
Neville, as one who had "lived and conversed inwardly with the chief
of them that were noted to be most backward" and knowing their "inward-
est thoughts on that business" did
dare undertake for the most of them that the King's
Majesty proceeding in a gracious course toward his
people, shall find those gentlemen exceedingly will-
ing to do him service, and to give him such content-
ment, as may sweeten all the former distastes, and
leave both His Majesty and the world fully satisfied
of their good intentions, and of the general affection of his subjects. 19

It was true that some gifts by way of grace would be expected of the King and, though Neville could not speak definitively, he included in a separate memorial a list of possible concessions drawn from his friends in parliament. James would find them neither unreasonable nor a threat to his prerogative. They were matters of little value to the King, but of great irritation to the people.

Having presented these propositions for the King's consideration, Neville moved to three pressing questions: when to have a parliament? how to prepare for it? and how to manage it once the members had come together? As to the first, he argued the sooner the better. If James called a parliament of Michaelmas (September 29) he might well expect satisfaction of his financial needs by All Hallows Eve. "I do not see but in a month or five weeks this point of supplying the King and of his retribution will be easily determined if it be proposed betimes and followed close afterwards." From this disquisition, likely drawn from his experience in Elizabethan parliaments, he went on to give the King a lecture on royal manners reminiscent of the age of the great Queen. James should forbear irritating speeches. He should show confidence in, rather than diffidence towards, his people. He should place blame for earlier differences on unnamed evildoers and common misunderstanding. He should speak more openly to the people during his progresses, singling out prominent local gentlemen for special grace. Swayed by his more recent

19 Ibid.
parliamentary experience, Neville then urged that James order the Archbishop to prohibit writings critical of parliament. He should also eliminate, if possible, those grievances presented in the last parliament, and do so before being pressed again for their redress. He should especially be certain that all promises made at that time were kept. Finally, he should abandon both the efforts made by Salisbury to control the Commons from the House of Lords and his own attempts to choose spokesmen for the Commons. Instead he should call upon the members of the lower house to choose from among their own ranks thirty or forty men to discuss matters of importance with him, though without binding their fellow members to any commitments, "but only to clear things and report all back to the House." After such preparation and management, and the King extending his grace "in the points proposed or any other of the like nature which may be thought of by the House, when they meet (for beforehand no man can precisely say these things will be demanded and no other)", Neville was confident that "His Majesty shall receive as much contentment of this next parliament as he received distaste of the former..." Once reconciled with his people, James might find even projects "less subject to offence."

Neville concluded by taking upon himself the responsibility for the success or failure of his proposals. "I am not ignorant what a hazard I run if things should fall out contrary to my expectation." He knew he was overzealous, but the matter was of such importance both to King and people "that I would think my life of little value in respect of it, and had rather hazard anything that may befall me than leave
such an office unattempted."\(^{20}\)

Neville attached a Memorial to his proposed "undertaking". This Memorial should be considered more as a collection of graces designed to win the sympathy of parliament than as a serious program to solve the great constitutional issues of the day. Most of them were not of great moment, for Neville was less concerned with outlining a thorough program of reform than he was in winning James's good will. But his proposals are of some interest, as reflecting some minor grievances of the time. He called for a clearer statement of the law of treason, so that "every man might know it and avoid it, and not fall upon a hidden rock before he be aware," and that no man might be ruined by an "inference" or a "superinduced interpretation" of a judge. A subject should be allowed to plead not guilty to a charge of intrusion, and retain his gains until convicted of a misdeed. Offices should not be taken away in the King's name, without those losing the office having had the opportunity to defend themselves for their conduct in it. Royal patents and grants not already overthrown by the courts should be conceded to the holders; this would not be of much loss to the King, since such patents had already been "narrowly sifted." Local men collecting the King's taxes should be held responsible for a thorough collection for only a limited amount of time, "seeing those men take pains in the King's service without any reward."\(^{21}\) Pardons from Exchequer charges should not be overthrown by

\(^{20}\)Ibid.

\(^{21}\)Cotton MSS, Titus F IV, f. 11; Lansdowne MSS 486, f. 25.
avaricious officials seeking their own personal gain. Finally, James should grant a liberal pardon to cover all debts incurred before the death of Elizabeth. This would include royal estates alienated before 1612, crown wardships whose existence had been concealed from the Court of Wards by individuals who had since died, and fines and amercements imposed by the King but not levied by September of 1612. Sir Henry conceded that all these pardons would be of benefit mainly to the well-to-do gentlemen of the shire. But he argued that few examples of such violations still existed undiscovered. And he knew from his experience of 1608 that royal officials rather than the King would benefit from the collection of any additional fines. Whereas the renunciation of these charges would provide the gentry a sense of security and make them more willing to pay exactions openly imposed by parliament. As a sop to the poor, he recommended forgiving all trespasses and poaching in the royal forests and parks. Taken altogether, as Professor Willson has pointed out, "These concessions sought chiefly to protect the subject from the technicalities of the law through which unscrupulous royal agents constantly fleeced the public."22

22 Ibid.; David Harris Willson, The Privy Councillors in the House of Commons: 1604-1629 (New York, 1971 reprint of 1940 edition), p. 30. The search for concealed wardships, carried on by informers to the Court of Wards, was especially invidious. Furthermore, the informant who discovered the hidden ward and the Master of the Wards, rather than the King, gained the greatest benefits from such discoveries, the royal share of the income having diminished since 1560 although the number of such discoveries had increased from 60 a year in 1560 to 90 a year at the end of Elizabeth's reign. Joel Hurstfield, The Queen's Wards (London, 1958), pp. 35-41.
In addition to these concessions, which Neville drew up from information gained from his parliamentary colleagues, Sir Henry reminded James of the eight concessions that his ministers had offered the Commons in the late stages of the parliament of 1610. Salisbury had put these forward as a last effort to gain something from the parliament after the failure of the great contract. For the most part these were also measures to eliminate grievous legal technicalities; to take away respite of homage was one; a promise not to question the possession of "assart or drowned" lands was another. But they also included the King's promise not to levy any further impositions without parliamentary consent, a controversial matter indeed, and one Neville was content to leave alone. "These I meddle not with," he said of the eight concessions, "because they were publicly offered and many thousand copies dispersed of them and therefore I shall need to give no reason for them because they were free offers on His Majesty's part of his own abundant grace." Historians such as Thomas Moir and Menna Prestwich have criticized these proposals as ephemeral, but they have failed to see that Neville saw them as a means to win office, not as a solution to the King's problems. Others have argued that on impositions Neville went further than his colleagues in the House of Commons would have been willing to follow. Thus James Spedding in his Life of Bacon observed that it was difficult to conceive why parliament, which had rejected the King's offer in 1610, "should have

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23 Cotton MSS, Titus F IV, f. 11; Lansdowne MSS 486, f. 25.
been better satisfied now with the arrangement proposed by Neville."

Spedding may have found no threat to the prerogative in Neville's proposals, but James's advisers did. They pressed Neville to know what effect his proposal would have on the King's prerogative. James's proposition to parliament in 1610 had clearly left the right to impose with the throne. Though James had promised not to impose further, those impositions already being levied would remain. And with them, as James Whitelocke had seen, remained the precedent for the King's right to levy them. Nor was the King's promise sufficient tender to reassure the gentlemen of the country. James found that Neville's proposal on impositions did differ from that which he had offered parliament in 1610. For Sir Henry believed that existing impositions should be legalized by vote of parliament for James's life only. The continuation of this levy during the reign of his successor would clearly lie in the vote of the Commons rather than in the will of the King. Neville tried hard, in an explanation presented in the fall of 1612 to the King, to hide the reality of the situation. He assured James that the King's power of imposing was not specifically mentioned in his proposal; and that lawyers always required that the King's prerogative could be limited only if "expressly named, and that some go further and maintain that the King's prerogative cannot be bound at all by an act." This impress-


ive and artless argument happily ignored the constitutional question whether the King had the authority in his prerogative to do more than regulate trade by means of impositions. Neville went on to argue that the King's promise not to impose further implied that he might impose if he had not restrained himself. Thirdly, the King had made no promise that his successor might not impose. His fourth argument was by analogy to the parliamentary grant of tunnage and poundage. This tax, a customs duty, had been voted the King upon his accession for life, without question since the time of Henry VI. Neville probably did not foresee that he had introduced a double edged weapon into the debate, for in little more than a decade Charles I would be denied tunnage and poundage. Neville's fifth argument was the perennial ally of the diplomat—the passage of time. The English gentry would have paid impositions quietly and by their own consent for many years by the time Prince Henry succeeded to the throne. The issue would not even be raised. Again he cited the example of tunnage and poundage.

Having made his points, Sir Henry contradicted them all in his conclusion, which was an appeal to James's vanity. The condition of his subjects would be hard indeed if parliament had voted the King and his successors impositions forever. This would deny them the right to regulate those levied by his successors. And would it not dishonor James's 'memory in succeeding ages, that the parliament should, upon this grant of the impositions, look to restrain the King (by his promise) from imposing any more, and not require the like of his successors?  

26 Cotton MSS, Titus F IV, f. 350; Lansdowne MSS 487, f. 484.
Were it not our express confession that they doubt more of him whom they know, than of those they know not?" These were arguments worthy of a renaissance diplomat who had studied his trade at Oxford and upon the Grand Tour, had tempered it in serving at the Court of Henry IV, had since used it to save his life after the Essex affair, and now sought to achieve his greatest personal and public ambitions through it.

Clearly, Neville blunted his own opinions in hopes of winning the secretaryship. He had been, since his days as ambassador to France, an advocate of free trade. He now defended impositions. He had long supported the Protestant cause; he now made no mention of religion. There is an explanation for his vagueness on impositions and silence on religion. Like most Englishmen, he had great hopes for the heir apparent, Prince Henry, who was sound on matters of religion and more trustworthy than his father. He probably hoped that the end of impositions and safeguards for Protestantism could be more readily secured from a later parliament and a future King.

A Memorial written by Neville for Rochester in September 1612 provides further evidence that Neville was less than honest with James. Sir Henry advised Rochester, who was secure in the favor of the King, to sharpen statements that Neville had made to the King. To the King Sir Henry had suggested that past differences with parliament be blamed on mutual misunderstanding. He urged Rochester "to transfer the blame of all that hath been in any kind distasteful since His Majesty's reign

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27 Ibid.
upon him that is dead [Salisbury], who in the opinion of most men was the instrument to withdraw and withhold His Majesty's gracious inclination toward them in many things...But if this opportunity be let pass, and no alteration follow upon his death, he will be altogether excused, and the envy will revert and settle, where by all means, I wish it to be avoided."

And whereas the objections that he had voiced to James against projects had been entirely impersonal, he now urged that Rochester tell the King that they had been originated by men "who have spent their time in court or about London only and have not had sound experience of the state of the country and humor of the people."

Thus the rumors reported by John More to Winwood nearly a year before proved true. Neville did intend to use the contacts he had made in parliament to further the King's business and his own self-interest, but he was under no illusion that he could accomplish his goal without the King's support. Before he could "undertake" the management of parliament he had to have palpable signs of James's favor, which meant his appointment as secretary and a changed attitude on the part of the King towards parliament. But Neville sought even more. Certain key offices must be distributed to his friends, both to assure their support and to

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28 Cotton MSS, Titus F IV, f. 350; Lansdowne MSS 487, f. 484.

29 Neville was not alone in his assessment. John Chamberlain wrote to Winwood on August 10, 1612, "There is a commission till the end of this month to Sir Julius Caesar, Sir Thomas Parry, Mr. Attorney, Sir Francis Bacon, Baron Sotherton, Sir George Carey, Sir George Moore, Sir Walter Cope, and one or two more, (whom I have forgotten) to devise and project the best means for money. The world goes hard when such must be employed for that business, the greater part of whom have given no good proof of well governing their own affairs..." Winwood, Memorials, III, 384-5.
advertise to the world the King's good will towards them.

Neville seems to have rejected the compromise suggested by the Howards—that Lake and Neville share office. Instead, he nominated his old friend Sir Ralph Winwood to take responsibility for foreign affairs. This was a shrewd move. Winwood, who was noted for his honesty, experience, and Protestantism, could relieve the ailing Neville of some of the burdens of an office that had killed Salisbury. Furthermore, a man of such character no doubt assuaged the anxiety of those who, like John Chamberlain, may have been concerned by Neville's excessive dependence upon the unpopular Rochester. Winwood returned to England from the United Provinces in the same month that Neville met with the King for the first time. Sir Henry, Winwood, and Overbury consulted together about the possibility of bringing them both in. Chamberlain believed there was "great likelihood" that Neville would receive the first office of secretary and Winwood the second which, he observed, "would prove a jubilee."30 By the end of the month the rumor had become general that either Winwood or Neville, or perhaps the two together, would be appointed secretaries.31 Hopefully, through the summer and fall Neville sought to strengthen and maintain the political alliances that might bring him to power. On the one hand he sounded members of parliament to see

30 CSP Domestic (1611-1618), p. 138; McClure, Chamberlain Letters 1, 369; Birch, Court and Times, 1, 186.

31 HMC Downshire MSS, III, 341, 344; Birch, Court and Times, 1, 191, 194.
whether they would support him in a new parliament. On the other he sought to conciliate the Protestant Earl of Pembroke and Rochester, continuing to press through Rochester for the appointment not just of himself, but of himself and his friends. In November Chamberlain informed both Winwood (who had returned to the United Provinces) and Carleton that "Neville takes great pains to reconcile and set all in tune, and is in good hope to affect it." In January James, tired of the duties of office, pressed by the privy council to find someone who could lead, urged by Rochester to employ his friends, agreed in principle to appoint a new secretary.

Sir Henry Neville continued a candidate for the secretary's position for another year, but he was never again as close to gaining the appointment as he was in January 1613. James did not want Neville as secretary. He disliked Neville as a person and rejected what he stood for. Nor could he follow Neville's advice as to how a King should act toward his people. James, unlike Elizabeth, hated crowds of people. He was too vain to take a personal interest in the concerns of his inferiors. As a divine right monarch he did not feel the need to woo his

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32 Edith Farnham, "The Somerset Election of 1614." *English Historical Review*, 46 (October, 1931), 581. Miss Farnham cites a letter in the fall of 1612 from Sir Maurice Berkeley to Sir Robert Phelps in which Berkeley says, "I like well of your purpose of treating with Sir H. N. and I do assure myself it will be grateful to him to see such as you are so well affected, but in this and all other your treaties give me leave to give you this caution; be rather earnest than seem so." Although Phelps was the son of the Speaker of the session of 1610, he supported the opposition in 1614.

33 *MMC Duceleuch MSS*, 1, 118.

34 McClure, *Chamberlain Letters*, 1, 387; Birch, *Court and Times*, 1, 201.
people. And he certainly opposed the idea that a King should limit his choice of advisers to any one group or faction. Only three years before in 1609 he had advised his son in the Basilikon Doron to "choose your own servants for your own use and not the use of others...For you as must command all, so reason would...you should be served out of all, as you please to make choice." Avoid flatterers, he recommended, and choose men "who are free of all factions and partialities." Having chosen them, "let them know no father but you." Teach them obedience and let them not think themselves overly wise.  

Furthermore, James was receiving advice more to his liking, and more humbly presented. On the one hand, Northampton assured him that the key to his financial difficulty lay in a Spanish dowry and "that he should in no case call together and join his enemies" in a parliament. On the other hand, there were those who urged the King to call parliament, promising to manage it in a manner he would find more becoming. Among these Sir Francis Bacon was pre-eminent.

Sometime in 1613 Bacon, who considered himself a candidate for the secretary's office vacated by Cecil's death, advised James to call a parliament. This was sound advice, especially since Bacon had served on the committee for projects and knew well the financial situation. But

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35 Mcllwain, James I, pp. 32-3.
Bacon also knew the potential political power of the King's patronage. He made several suggestions how it might be mobilized in James's behalf. Whereas Neville had advised James how he might more effectively bargain with the House of Commons, Bacon offered the more palatable suggestion that bargaining was itself beneath the dignity of the King. In the eyes of historians, Neville's proposal has suffered in comparison to Bacon's, but less for its intrinsic merit than for Bacon's greater reputation. James Spedding argues that the nation needed a man of Bacon's philosophic abilities; Miss Prestwich considers him "the most acute political observer of the time."\(^{37}\)

To fail to call a parliament, Bacon urged, would be to admit that the "ordinary remedy" for the King's needs would not suffice. It was as bad not to call a parliament out of fear as to have a parliament refuse one's demands. More important, Bacon believed that the situation had changed much since 1610 and that James stood "in better term with his people than he did the last parliament." The death of Salisbury and the Earl of Dunbar "had drawn much envy in a charoit into the other world." Furthermore, the old grievances waxed "dead and flat." Much of the difficulty of the last parliament had been infused by men who created issues where no issues existed. He then praised James's handling of the opposition, his refusal either to favor or to punish those who had failed to support him in 1610. And he saw in the King's wise conduct the key to success in the next parliament.

\(^{37}\)Prestwich, Cranfield, p. 137; Spedding, Life of Bacon, V, 18-19.
The opposite party heretofore is now dissolved and broken. Yelverton is won, Sandys is fallen off, Crew and Hide stand to be serjeants, Neville hath his hopes, Martin hath money in his purse, Brook is dead. Besides they find the vanity of that popular course, the King having kept a princely temper towards them, not to perfect or disgrace them, nor yet to use or advance them.

Whereas Neville had said nothing about parliamentary elections, Bacon explicitly advised discreet packing. The King should consider what persons "in respect of their gravity, discretion, temper, and ability to persuade" should be brought into the House and what persons reputed to be "violent and turbulent are fit to be kept back from being of the House..." though all was to be done "without labouring or packing." To that end he recommended that the boroughs of the Cinque ports and the Duchy of Lancaster, as well as boroughs under the control of the King's councillors be used to bring into Parliament "persons well affected and discreet." Thus while nothing should be left to chance, all should be done discreetly, "as it may have no show, nor scandal, nor nature of the packing or briquing of a parliament."

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38 Lansdowne MSS 487, f. 455-6; Cotton MSS, Titus F IV, f. 334. Spedding, Bacon 365-6. Henry Yelverton, M.P. for the borough of Northampton, supported the King and gained appointment as Soliciter in 1613; Sir Edwin Sandys, M.P. for Stockbridge, continued in moderate opposition leadership; Randolph Crew became Speaker of the House in 1614 and a serjeant in 1615, but his brother Thomas, M.P. for Lichfield in 1610, continued in opposition; Sir Henry Neville did indeed have hopes; Richard Martin of the Middle Temple and Nicholas Hyde were M.P.s for Christchurch. Martin's money came in the form of loans from Northampton's protege, Lionel Cranfield; Giles Brook, M.P. for Liverpool, was apparently the man Bacon referred to, for Christopher Brooke of York proved very lively in 1614.

39 Later Bacon rescinded this advice, warning James against intrigues or canvases "whereof I hear too much." Lansdowne MSS 487 ff. 455-6, 466.
As to issues, Bacon's main advice was to avoid those that were dangerous, such as impositions, and to provide the members "gracious and plausible laws or other matter...to be propounded...for the comfort and contentment of the people." Parliament should be restrained from acting upon grievances until the King's wants were satisfied. James should consider what harmless boons he might offer to win over the lawyers, the gentry and the townsmen, the most important segments of the House; and what methods he might apply to dissuade them from making parties in Parliament. Specifically, Bacon suggested trade, the colonization of Ireland, and reform of the laws as proper topics for parliamentary discussion. Finally, the King should take care to give the appearance that he came to his people out of love rather than need, so that the parliament would end in harmony, even if it meant accepting less money than he needed. For a belief that the King was in need encouraged the opposition to unite against him.

Bacon's advice was impersonal and statesmanlike, but Bacon was not the man to distribute the King's patronage, for his sycophancy had led parliament men to distrust him. But though Bacon's appointment as secretary would not have been a wise solution to James's problems, it would have been wiser than the half-way measures James actually took. Confronted by Bacon's advice as an alternative to Neville's, he vacillated between the two, committing himself to neither.

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40 Lansdowne MSS 487, f. 454-5; Cotton MSS, Titus F IV, ff. 333-4.
41 Ibid.
Bacon did not approve Neville's undertaking, but conceded that James might find it worthwhile if the "undertakers" should prove sincere. More dangerous were the personal attacks launched against Neville by the Earl of Northampton and his allies, attacks which strengthened James's personal prejudice against Neville. For example, in January of 1613 Lord Fenton, one of James's Scottish favorites, complained to the King of Sir Henry's handling of the will of Sir John Norris of Haywood, Berks, one of Neville's neighbors. Sir Henry had been a witness at the postnuptial settlement made between Sir John and his wife, Margery, in 1608. There seemed no reason for complications. But Lady Fenton, who had once been married to Sir John's cousin, Edward Norris, had occupied Sir John's house and meant to hold it by force. Although Lady Elizabeth had earned a reputation for "violence and oppression" by "beating, kicking...reviling" and imprisoning her mother-in-law, Lord Fenton went "with open mouth to complain of him [Neville] to the King..." Neville had only "taken the way of law and justice," and was "to reap no greater benefit than only to discharge the trust reposed in him"; yet Chamberlain wrote that he feared the incident would "cross and hinder that good we expected."
Neville may have shared Chamberlain's assessment. In February Sir John Holles reported to Sir John Digby, the English Ambassador to Spain, that "he that cannot have the mistress begins to make love to the maid. For these two years Neville hath wooed the secretaryship, an office of state, and now betakes himself to my Lord Wotton's place, and office of the Household, if he can get it..." And that same month Sir Henry wrote to Carleton thanking him "that amidst your public employments, you retain a memory of so unprofitable a friend as I am. But what I want in power, I assure you I supply in will and desire to merit of you."

Neville's growing anxiety about the secretaryship led him to seize upon any opportunity to prove himself. In April of 1613 he received orders from the King to appear before the privy council to provide any insights he might have about a project to develop the Muscovy trade. Adam Anderson suggests that Neville originated this plan, but John Chamberlain, the only source on the incident, states that Neville was only a consultant. Actually Mr. Merrick, a distant relation of Chamberlain, had conceived the idea. Merrick had been approached in 1611 by a group of Russian nobles, who offered to put

\[^{46}\text{HMC Portland MSS, IX, 32.}\]
\[^{47}\text{CSP Domestic (1611-1618), p. 58. Neville had not given up hope. He still believed that the "wheels" at court were "nearer to be moved than is generally conceived."}\]
\[^{48}\text{McClure, Chamberlain Letters, I, 445. Neville had served on the committee for the Muscovy Company in the previous parliament.}\]
their country under the suzerainty of James I. They apparently hoped
that James would send his younger son, Prince Charles, to Russia to
serve as their emperor. In the ensuing two years, however, Prince
Henry died. It was clear to Chamberlain that Prince Charles, as heir
to the throne, could not go to Russia, and he thought the whole matter
"but discourse in the air." It seemed unbelievable to him that anyone
could consider sending the ten or twelve thousand men needed to support
such a venture, even if the Russian nobles could be induced to accept a
royal proxy for their emperor. In view of James's financial difficul-
ties, the expense of such a project seemed prohibitive. Yet to
Chamberlain's surprise, Neville discussed with some distinction the
possibility, once James had achieved control of the country, of draw-
ing the trade of Persia and the East Indies up the Hydaspes and Oxus
Rivers to the Caspian Sea. There the precious cargo would be trans-
ferred to small ships, built especially for the purpose of carrying
it up the Volga River. From the Volga it would be carried forty miles
across a straight of land to the river Dvina, and down that river to
the regular English ports of St. Nicolas or Archangel. This project
bore no fruit, neither for James nor for Sir Henry Neville, but it may
have given rise to a dangerous counter-stroke by the Northampton fac-
tion against Neville and his allies.

Neville's chance for promotion depended heavily upon the willing-

50 Ibid.
51 McClure, Chamberlain Letters, 1, 447-8; Winwood, Memorials, III,
453; William McElwee, The Murder of Sir Thomas Overbury (London and
ness and the ability of Viscount Rochester to support him against the
villification of the Howards. Left to his own devices, James would
have undoubtedly dashed Neville's hopes in a moment, but he was reluctant to offend the favorite. The Howards knew this and had for years
groomed handsome young men in hopes of diverting the King's eye from
Rochester. But in 1612 they turned to the alternative policy of winning Rochester over to their side, for Rochester had become infatuated
with Lady Frances Howard, Suffolk's daughter. Two things prevented
this marriage, which would bring the impressionable Scot into the
Howard political circle. First, Lady Frances was already married to
Robert Devereux, who had upon the accession of James been restored to
his father's title, Earl of Essex. However, when the marriage had
been contracted in 1606, Essex was fourteen and Lady Frances thirteen.
Thus the two had only lived together since 1609 and they had no chil-
ren. Lady Frances managed to convince a royal commission that the
marriage had never been consummated. Since in English law failure to
consume a marriage within three years was grounds for annulment, the
marriage became null in 1612.53

The second obstacle was Sir Thomas Overbury, Rochester's friend
and adviser, and in all probability the man who had drawn Neville and
the royal favorite together. Sir Thomas, who had grown arrogant with

52 Robert Ashton (editor), James I by his Contemporaries (London,

power, seemed to enjoy the spectacle of his charge seducing the daughter of the Lord Suffolk and the wife of the Earl of Essex. He even composed love letters for his friend to send to his mistress. He was horrified when Rochester began to talk of marriage. Too late Overbury realized that Lady Essex was acting as a political agent for the Howard faction, yet his conceit was such that he threatened to reveal the whole sordid affair if his master should desert him. For the Howards to break up the Protestant alliance at court they must rid themselves of Sir Thomas Overbury.  

The discussions in the privy council of the Muscovy project provided an ideal vehicle for eliminating Overbury. It would have required little effort for one of the Howard faction to convince James, who also hated Overbury, that the way to separate the favorite and his "governor" was to appoint Overbury to an ambassadorship which would remove him from the court. On the 21st of April James sent Archbishop Abbot to Overbury with an informal offer of the embassy to Muscovy, presumably to negotiate there the project upon which Neville had been consulted. Overbury turned down the offer and appealed to Rochester to save him from exile. He failed to see the trap. Later that day, the Lords Ellesmere and Pemborke brought from the King the more reasonable offer, expressed officially, of his choice between the embassies of France or the United Provinces. Overbury refused, pleading ill health and lack of languages. When pressed, he became impetuous, vowing not to leave his country "for any preferment in the world," and

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54 McElwee, Murder of Overbury, pp. 70-2.
denying that the King could "in law or justice force him to foresake his country." These peremptory answers earned him close imprisonment in the Tower.

Court gossips, who knew nothing of the background of the episode that led to Overbury's imprisonment, at first believed that it signaled the fall from grace of the favorite, Rochester. James quickly disabused them of that notion, asserting that he intended even greater rewards for Rochester. The assumption then became that Overbury's imprisonment would be brief. Overbury himself expressed to Neville his confidence that Rochester would save him, never doubting his hold over the young Scot. But Viscount Fenton, who had attacked Neville in January over the Norris will knew better. He had the King's assurance that Overbury "will be no longer a courtier in haste, and for anything that I can hear, not out of prison, so that we let him stick there and it matters no how long." He suspected that the opposition to the Howards would try to make an issue of the matter, but he was certain they would not be able to gain Rochester's support, or the King's.

Actually, even Neville had become disillusioned with Sir Thomas


56 Beatrice White, Cast of Ravens: The Strange Case of Sir Thomas Overbury (London, 1961), pp. 51-2. At the trial of Somerset for the murder of Overbury, Sir Dudley Digges testified that "on expressing to Sir Henry Neville his fear that Rochester was desirous to be rid of Overbury, both he and Sir Thomas Mansell told him, from Overbury's own mouth, that he was confident Rochester would not dare to abandon him."

57 HMC Mar & Kellie MSS, p. 51.
Overbury. He probably did not appreciate Overbury's importance to his own campaign for secretary. Sir Henry had informed Winwood just before Overbury's imprisonment that Sir Thomas was cooling in his hopes for Neville's advancement. He told Winwood further that "there hath been much poison cast out of late unto the King both against him and me, but more especially against him and with more danger, because I doubt he hath given some advantage to take hold of; being, as you know violent and open." Indeed, Overbury had brought his troubles upon himself, and had, perhaps, ruined Neville's chance for the secretaryship.

Assuredly, if I miscarry, it is for his Overbury's sake, and by his unadvised courses, having not only refused to take any help in the work, under pretence of not sharing obligations, but irritated and provoked almost all men of place and power by his extreme neglect of them, and needless contestation with them, upon every occasion...58

Thus Neville, almost as much as Northampton and Rochester, seemed willing to leave Overbury to his fate. But little did they know what his fate was to be. Frances Howard, who had failed once before to hire a duellist to kill Sir Thomas, took the opportunity of his imprisonment to slip him ever increasing doses of poison. In the meantime, Rochester, who probably did not know of his fiance's plot, sadistically exchanged messages with Overbury, sending them into the Tower baked inside game pies, and receiving Overbury's responses concealed among his dirty dishes. Overbury, unable to perceive the real source of his danger,

58 HMC Buccleuch MSS, I, 131.
created a childish code, designating Neville as Similis because of his resemblance to Henry VIII. Like some deposed medieval Pope he spewed out anathema against his enemies and drew up plans that Neville and Rochester might use to bring about his freedom, plans that Sir Henry never saw. In a bizarre tableau more suited for an Italian tragedy than the political stage of England, Overbury spent his last days generally unlamented. Even his main tormentors, Northampton and Rochester, seemed not to know the cause of his agonizing death. And certainly no amount of Italian travel, or reading of Machiavelli, or parliamentary experience, could have prepared Neville to suspect the facts of this dreams being played out in the Tower of London. He might have realized, however, the damage it had done to his cause.

Northampton, having removed Overbury from the political scene, sought also to end Neville's credibility with the King. He first intimated to James that Neville had been in communication with Overbury in the Tower, a charge which Sir Henry denied to James's satisfaction. Then Northampton tried to portray Neville as an opponent of the King's prerogative by proving his involvement with Sir Robert Mansel and Sir James Whitelocke in obstructing a commission appointed by James to investigate mismanagement in the navy.

Lord Admiral Nottingham, who was still revered by the nation for his part in defeating the Spanish armada in 1588, took James's appointment of the naval commission in the winter of 1612-13 as a personal

insult. He ordered Mansel as Treasurer of the Navy to seek an opinion on the legality of the commission. Mansel turned to Whitelocke, a young lawyer who had made a reputation for himself by speaking out on constitutional grounds against impositions during the parliament of 1610. Whitelocke prepared a paper in which he argued that the commission was illegal because it violated the guarantees of trial by jury contained in Magna Carta. An unsigned copy of this document came to James's attention. Although he was furious, James could do nothing without proof that Whitelocke had been its author.

While the King was in this black mood, Whitelocke brought down upon himself the anger of Lord Chancellor Ellesmere. He had argued, in behalf of a plaintiff in chancery court, that his adversary's attempt to have the trial shifted to the Court of Earl Marshall was invalid because the King had made a technical error in giving the Howards a commission to set up the court. Ellesmere, Northampton, and Suffolk carried the story of Whitelocke's obstruction to the King. They reminded James that Whitelocke had opposed impositions and had probably opposed the navy commission. The King immediately had Whitelocke called before the council where he pleaded in vain that he had not questioned the King's right to appoint a commission. James was unimpressed and had him committed to the Fleet, where Mansel was already confined.

After three weeks in prison, Mansel and Whitelocke were again brought before the council and charged with making false statements and using unceremonious language. They acknowledged their error, begged forgiveness, and received their liberty the following day,
June 13. Whitelocke later revealed that Northampton had tried to get him to implicate Neville in the obstruction of the navy commission. Northampton was certain of Neville's involvement, but he dared not name him without proof which Whitelocke refused to provide, though he knew Neville "was an actor in it with far greater men."  

Although Sir Henry Neville had avoided physical danger, he had lost his grip upon the secretaryship which he had sought for three years. He still had friends from Parliament, especially among the younger lords led by Pembroke and Southampton. But while his friends in the Commons remained loyal, the lords were willing to accept another candidate, so long as he was a Protestant. Furthermore, the fall of Overbury had turned the Rochester connection from an asset into a liability. The Reverend Thomas Loring of Cambridge said of Neville in the summer of 1613, "I suppose his hopes quite dashed; for merely depending upon my Lord Rochester, he wants not opposition; and then, besides, Overbury being fallen into disgrace he is thereby deprived of his best instrument."  

Neville's former advocate, John Chamberlain, had come to prefer Winwood for the secretary's post, though he saw the difficulty of pro-
moting Sir Henry's former secretary above him. He had been encouraging Winwood for some time, and in September of 1613 Sir Ralph returned to London to test the political waters for himself. What he found did not encourage him. Chamberlain informed Carleton that "Sir Ralph Winwood is weary here already,... and for Sir Henry Neville I think he now chiarito that there is no truth in promises, and I marvel that he would be carried away so long by vain hopes, for since the conjunction (as they call it) of the chief favorites of both factions he might easily see how the world went." Rochester sought to soften the blow by giving Neville an office worth £2,000, but Sir Henry refused to take money or anything bought with money at a subject's hand, and withall thought himself undervalued to be ranked with Overbury, and after he had been so long upon the stage for a secretary to accept a meaner place." Neville had wooed too long, and not well enough. Chamberlain was embarrassed for him. He wished that his old friend had "not hung so long by a twine thread till all is fallen to the ground; where though he be no lower than he was before, yet it is with some loss, and imputation that he could not discern in time, but suffer himself to be sucked and drawn dry, and then left as it were empty."  

64 Ibid.  
65 Ibid.  
66 HMC Downshire MSS, IV, 244. J. Beaulieu, with Thomas Edmondes in Paris, informed Trumbull on November 4, 1613, that Edmondes had "had such a reply from the King about his going to England with such cautioning and conditioning that he is rather brought to stay than to go lest
Neville’s misery did not end with his humiliation in the fall of 1613. His old friend Sir Ralph Winwood ultimately received the office of secretary in April of 1614. By forgoing unwanted advice to the King, by emphasizing his zest for humble service rather than his potential for leadership, and by using traditional methods for gaining promotion, such as obsequious appeals well seasoned by gifts, Winwood gained the high office that had so long eluded Sir Henry.\textsuperscript{67}

During the winter Neville had been virtually incapacitated by gout in both feet. In that condition he learned that the Howards, in an attempt to prevent Winwood’s receiving the office of secretary, had cynically put in his name once more for the position.\textsuperscript{68} The plan he had proposed to the King in the summer of 1612 received the consideration of the privy council in February, as they prepared in February for the long delayed parliament. His old ally Pembroke sounded out some of the members of the parliament of 1610 and found no sympathy for Neville’s project, but he did not identify the author of it. It was rejected by the Council as a "pragmatic invention."\textsuperscript{69}

\textsuperscript{67}Winwood, when asked by Lady Essex to loan a team of horses for her wedding to Somerset, gave her the team. He was also rumored to have made cash payments, though Chamberlain did not think these rumors true. When Winwood heard that Neville had been put forward, he wrote Somerset "I seek no man...out of due respect to your (Lordship), whose favors have bound me to be...wholly and solely yours." McClure, Chamberlain Letters, I, 481, 484; Moir, Addled Parliament, p. 71; HMC Buccleuch MSS, I, 148-9.

\textsuperscript{68}Cotton MSS, Titus F IV, ff. 329-30; Lansdowne MSS 487, ff. 445-6, 468; Chamberlain Letters, I, 509-10.

\textsuperscript{69}Ibid.
Pembroke, by his actions, may have aroused parliamentary suspi-
icions, suspicions which increased until they captured the undivided
attention of an angry parliament during the first weeks of the session.
Apparently the Howards added fuel to these suspicions by circulating
copies of the fifteen concessions recommended by Neville in 1612 and
by attributing them to a few parliament members who sought to manipulate
the House for their own private ends. James made matters worse in
March when, upon hearing that the elections were going poorly for his
supporters, he sent out letters to his servants to use their patronage
to return well-affected men. Thus it was an angry group of men who
came together in the House of Commons on April 5th. They ignored the
pleas of Sir Ralph Winwood, a man they knew only vaguely, to provide
supply for the King, and instead they turned to the creation of two
committees, one to investigate the rumors of "packing" the parliament,
the other to investigate offers to "undertake" the management of it.

For six weeks these two committees sought evidence that would
give substance to these rumors. Sir Henry Neville, who had been elect-

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70 Moir, Addled Parliament, pp. 188-9; Menna Prestwich discovered
a copy of a paper endorse "Project of the Undertakers in Parliament"
which enumerated Neville's proposed concessions. (Sackville MSS, 4308)
The words "These I meddle not with because they were publicly offered
and many thousand copies dispersed of them and therefore I shall need
to give no reason of them because they were free offers on His Majesty's
part of his abundant grace, whereof no reason to be given but his own
goodness", she mistakenly attributes to Cranfield; they are actually
Neville's comment on the eight proposals made by the King in 1610.
That this document was in Cranfield's possession suggests that he, as
a dependent of the Howards, may have circulated it to undermine the

71 Cotton MSS, Titus F IV, f. 342; Lansdowne MSS 487, ff. 470-1.
ed once more from the county of Berkshire, had to bear the indignity of hearing his plan distorted and denounced until the very word "undertaking" had become a vile epithet. Then, on the 9th of May, the committee on "packing" accused Sir Thomas Parry, Neville's colleague from Berkshire, with unlawful interference in the election at Stockbridge.

The House suspended Parry without a hearing while they continued their investigation. On the 10th, threatening letters written by Parry were produced, and voters coerced by him testified to his misdeeds. Supporters of the crown tried to save him, even Bacon, who argued that Parry as Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster had a right to nominate a member from each duchy town. Bacon also pleaded Parry's advanced age and his years of loyal government service, all to no avail. Although James promised to suspend Parry from the privy council, the Commons would not be mollified, and they expelled him from the House.

The committee on "undertakers" had been frustrated in their search. They found nothing more than hearsay evidence. A list of proposals actually presented to parliament by the King had circulated previous to their meeting. A merchant had said there were "undertakers". Two years before Prince Henry was reported to have asked Overbury why he was in contact with men who planned to "do the King good service in the next parliament." So heated did the discussion become that

73 Commons Debates, 1621, VII, 634.
on the twelfth of May, members of the committee nearly came to blows as they debated. On Saturday the 14th, their chairman, Sir Roger Owen, presented to the full House the unsigned list of fifteen concessions originally offered the King by Neville in 1612, and more recently circulated by the Howards. With the memory of the fate of his neighbor still fresh, and "stooping under the burden of whatsoever might be thought to be blameworthy, Neville affirmed it came from himself." 74 He told the story of his meeting with the King at Windsor in July of 1612 and swore that "his intent was to breed a love between the King and subject, that he was no undertaker to lead the parliament." 75 He made no attempt, he contended, to list all the grievances of the House, but had written those he could remember to satisfy the question of the King. He had intended only to divert the King from projects.

To this, Mr. Randolph Crew rose to say "that this question was first well moved, now well removed. That we have fished long, and caught nothing." He wanted to proceed to the King's business. He was followed by Sir Richard Weston, who argued that the business should certainly "be severed from Sir Henry Neville." Indeed, John Chamberlain avowed that Neville did "in so good a manner inform them and justify the whole carriage of that business, both for the good of the realm and the King, that he not only calmed their troubled spirits, but won

74 Birch, Court and Times, I, 315.
75 Commons Debates, 1621, VII, 634.
himself much credit and commendation.” Thus did Neville illustrate his insight into the real aims of his parliamentary colleagues, and the political skills which he had sought unsuccessfully to put to the King's service.

Indeed, much of the heat aroused by "undertaking" grew out of a misunderstanding of its source. Thus on the 12th of April Sir Robert Mansell expressed his fear that "this smoke hath proceeded from the fire of some Popish spirit." This argument was taken up the following day by the excitable John Hoskins, who agreed that "this proceedeth from a rotten foundation of Popery." Sir Dudley Digges confessed that he had first suggested Papist origin to undertaking, but the rapid spread of the story suggested to him the possibility that the rumor was kept alive to prevent parliament from proceeding to its business.

Others, with a better sense of the real intent of the "undertaking", tried early to clear the matter from the House. Sir Maurice Berkeley, who knew the truth of the matter, unsuccessfully moved to clear on the 13th of April. Sir Dudley Digges admitted that he was nearly an "undertaker", for he had advised the parliament to be called "for ease of the subject's grievances and supply of the King's wants." Sir Herbert Crofts admitted that he had been saluted as an undertaker when he entered the House, and he did not deny the charge, but his

76 McClure, Chamberlain Letters, I, 530-1; Commons Journals, I, 485; HMC Portland MSS, X, 132; Birch, Court and Times, I, 315. The reporter in the Portland MSS observed that "though the House applauded his apology yet the business was left indefinite..."

77 Commons Journals, I, 463, 470.
colleagues refused to pursue him for they knew he was "a pillar of
the House." Sir Edwin Sandys supported the motion to clear, and
grrieved that loyal members from the last parliament would fall under
the shadow of suspicion of undertaking unjustly. Sir H. Poole agreed
that the House spent too much time on "undertaking", that it should
not dwell upon uncertainties without either an accuser or an accused,
and "that many worthy members of the House [were] wronged. Men who
spoke thus may have been motivated by an uncomfortable knowledge of
the original of "undertaking". Indeed, there is some evidence that
Neville's friends sought to divert attention from the true "under-
taker." 78

For example, Nicholas Fuller argued on the 2nd of May that it
was "not a right course...to accuse the undertaker." The real danger,
he argued, came from the "packer" of parliament. He had heard of one
great man, presumably Northampton, who had procured 60 votes by means
of his letters. 79 And some of the heaviest attacks upon Parry for
"packing" came from men who might well have been "undertakers" had the
opportunity presented itself. Thus Robert Phelips, who had been in
negotiations with Neville in the fall of 1612, and had earlier spoken
against expanding the powers of the committee seeking "undertakers",
sought to defuse the issue by accusing Sir Thomas Parry of being an
"undertaker". He further led the move the seclude Parry from the

78 ibid., pp. 463-4, 470.
79 ibid., p. 470.
House during the investigation, perhaps to prevent Sir Thomas from clarifying the matter. Sir Roger Owen, who would later say that "undertakers" "have done him no harm, but good...", nevertheless agreed on the 9th of May that Parry had been an "undertaker" and should be punished. Herbert Crofts, another defender of "undertaking", argued that most wanted to treat Parry too tenderly, "none to the quick but Sir R. Owen, with whom he concurreth."\textsuperscript{80}

Thus these men of experience from the first parliament of James I, men who might have formed the nexus of parliamentary leadership in support of the King, were instead thrust upon the defensive by James's mismanagement and the Howards' purposeful efforts to sow confusion. In self defense, they joined the radicals in their attacks upon the King's program, some parts of which had originally been suggested by Neville himself. His fifteen concessions, criticized by historians as "peripheral" or "too trifling to attract support," did fail to divert attention when presented by Winwood (rather than Neville). "Mr. Middleton, a London member, said coldly of them that 'the heads of the matters of grace tend to the gentility, not to cities, boroughs, burgesses, or merchants,' and offered instead a bill on the ugly central issue of impositions." Middleton was followed by Sir Maurice Berkeley "whom Bacon had hoped would be respective," and he launched an attack on the High Commission.\textsuperscript{81} But it had been Bacon, not Neville, who believed the King could avoid impositions. Sir Henry had argued stren-

\textsuperscript{80} Commons Journals, I, 477-8, 485.
\textsuperscript{81} Prestwich, Cranfield, p. 150.
uously, though unsuccessfully, for a compromise, a compromise which
the King found too favorable to parliament. Furthermore, all that we
know of Neville suggests that he sympathized with Berkeley's attack on
the High Commission.

More importantly, the essence of Neville's plan was that he would
manage the parliament in association with his allies. And if any man
in parliament knew of Neville's intention and supported it, that man
was Sir Maurice Berkeley. Neville and Berkeley had been friends since
at least 1599. In 1604 they had been arrested, together with Southamp­
ton, when the King suspected a plot against his Scottish favorites.
They had been on Sir Francis Bacon's list of men who might be worth
conciliating in 1608. In 1610, the two of them had been among the
eight supporters of the great contract who had met with Cecil in his
home at Hyde Park just previous to parliament's temporary acceptance
of the contract. Berkeley's son was the husband of Neville's eldest
dothing. And in November of 1612, when Neville seemed near to achiev­
ing the secretaryship, Berkeley wrote to Sir Robert Phelips, son of the
Speaker of the House of 1610, but destined to be an opposition member
in 1614, to say

I do like well of your purpose of treating with
Sir H. N. and I do assure myself it will be
grateful to him to see such as you are so well
affected, but in this and all other your treaties
give me leave to give you this caution; be rather
earnest than seem so.82

It is not conceivable that Berkeley would have attacked the proposals
presented by Winwood had they been presented by Neville instead, as

the King's secretary of state.

Middleton, too, well might have supported the "undertaking." This was Robert Middleton, whose brother Hugh Middleton had between 1612 and 1614 built the much-discussed New River from Berkshire to London to provide the city fresh water. This project, undertaken by Middleton in behalf of the city of London, had Sir Henry Neville as a charter "adventurer" with a significant investment in the venture. Robert Middleton must have favored the project for private and public reasons. This business connection might have served Neville well had Sir Henry been in a position of responsibility, from which he could assure Middleton that the King was informed of his concerns. 83

Neville, Berkeley, Middleton, Digges, Crew, Sandys, Mansell, Weston, Crofts, Owen, Poole, Fuller, Hakewill, Philips, and Whitelocke were all moderate men. They were sympathetic to the financial plight of the King, but alarmed by the King's idiosyncrasies as well as by his policies. They feared that, unrestrained, he might do harm to the constitution that guaranteed their liberties. Respected by their colleagues, they might have accomplished great service in James's behalf had he been willing to authorize them to represent his policies

83 Neville MSS D/En/024, ff. 1-3; J. W. Gouch, Sir Hugh Middleton; Entrepreneur and Engineer (Oxford, 1964), pp. 17-19, 37, 61, 71-2. Neville purchased two shares of the company on 8 May 1612, for which he paid £200. He had the additional liability of paying 1/16 of the charges when expenditure exceeded £3200. Receipts in Neville's papers from Middleton indicate that he paid at least £300 into the company, but it is not clear whether this included the original payment of £20, or was in addition to it. Altogether there were 29 adventurers who shared 36 shares of stock. Neville profited in other ways from his connection with the company, to which he sold £67 worth of elms to be used as water pipes.
to their fellows, had he been willing to shower them with the favors he wasted on his pro-Spanish Catholic mignons, had he acted towards his people in the ways that Neville recommended.

Instead, James followed the advice of Bacon not to advance them. He made known to everyone his insistence that Neville "and the rest should amend the faults they made last parliament before he would set marks of favor upon them..." And it is not at all "plain," as Williams Mitchell argues, that by following Bacon's advice "King James accomplished his purpose of breaking up the opposition of 1604-10."

It is true that some of them, men like Berkeley, Whitelocke, Crofts, and Crew, supported the King in the parliaments of the 1620s, or as royal officials. But what drove them to that decision was not the King's wisdom, but the increasing radicalism of their new colleagues in those parliaments. And if they ceased to form an opposition, they never became a party in support of the King. On the other hand, Digges, Fuller, Hakewill, and Sandys continued to lead the opposition in the Commons which refused to accede to the King's extreme claims of sovereignty and moved inexorably towards revolution.

Sir Henry Neville never had to make the difficult choice of his colleagues. He had been a sick man in the winter of 1614, and as cold weather approached with the coming of 1615 he prepared to pass on his estates to his progeny. Under the circumstances, he had finally

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84 Cotton Mss, Titus F IV, ff. 340-1; Lansdowne MSS 487, ff. 468-9.
86 Neville MSS, D/En/F6/1/18.
to swallow his pride and accept the promise of "other contentment" made him by Rochester when he lost his chance at high office. In November of 1614 Lord Chancellor Ellesmere and Lord Treasurer Suffolk approved a profitable patent for Sir Henry to prosecute spoilers of the forest lands. But even this was denied him in February of 1615 when his patent was "crushed" leaving "all his hopes at an end." Chamberlain wrote sadly to Carleton that this was "a bad medicine for a man that hath at this instant three dangerous diseases upon him, that is the jaundice, the scurvy, and the dropsy, which have brought him to a very weak case and will utterly overthrow him if he find not present remedy." He lingered on through the spring of 1615 and died July 10, at the age of 52. Chamberlain observed that scurvy had killed him. But the French ambassador, Philip Bouverie, offered a more romantic diagnosis when he wrote that "Sir Henry Neville standing for the place of Secretary to the Council and missing of it, took it so to the heart that he shortly after died..." His son and namesake never wrote Neville's epitaph on the space provided on the monument Sir Henry had dedicated to his father. Historians too have failed sufficiently to note the significance of his career.

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87 CSP Domestic (1611-1618), p. 273; McClure, Chamberlain Letters 1, 577.
88 Ibid.
89 McClure, Chamberlain Letters, 1, 607.
90 HMC Tenth Report, p. 84.
CONCLUSION

Sir Henry Yelverton, who had voted with the opposition in the House of Commons during the first three sessions of the first parliament of James I, decided by 1610 that office was more important than honor. He appealed to James for forgiveness, both for his opposition and for some unkind remarks he had made of the Scots. The King, intent upon humiliating a former enemy, bade him first obtain the forgiveness of the Earl of Dunbär. Yelverton did so, and then wrote to the King saying that he groveled under his royal indignation. At length, James granted him an audience. On his knees, in the presence of three councillors, Yelverton received a thorough scolding from the King and promised to be more loyal. He quickly fulfilled that promise by defending the royal collection of impositions in the session of 1610, earning the denigration of his former friends, and the office of serjeant from the King. Sir Henry Neville desired political office with as much passion as Yelverton, but he had too much pride to emulate his self effacement.¹

Instead, Neville tried to make an asset of his greatest liability. He assured the King that he knew the opposition well, and suggested the means for winning their support. He audaciously set the conditions under which he would "undertake" to manage parliament in the King's behalf. James must show greater confidence in his people, prove his

¹Notestein, House of Commons, pp. 374-76. Of Yelverton's actions, Dudley Carleton wrote to Edmonds, "This Henry the Hardy had the honor to do absolutely the worst, and for tyrannical positions that he was bold to bluster out, was so well canvassed by all that followed him, that he hath scarce showed his head ever since." Cited in footnote of Notestein, p. 560, from Birch, Court and Times, 1, 120-22.

271
good will by eliminating certain grievances, and show his favor to Neville by giving him some control over royal appointments. Although submitted with proper submissiveness, the project was so radical that John More refused to believe that Neville had proposed it. Although James was reluctant to cross his favorite, he told Rochester he would never advance Sir Henry until he supported royal policy in the House of Commons.

Indeed, both Bacon and Neville in their respective proposals to the King foreshadowed developments in the British constitution. Bacon, in calling upon the King to control parliament by means of patronage, anticipated the system used during the reign of George III and described so well by Namier. Neville, in urging the King instead to turn to those who had the ability to win him support in the Commons, stumbled upon the system which triumphed in the 19th century and is known to the world as cabinet government. Neville sought office from the King, fully aware that a failure to win support for the King in the Commons would result in his loss of favor and office.  

Historians have depicted Neville as little more than a muddle-headed country gentleman. His plan they have rejected as an impractical dream, the implementation of which led to the disaster of the Addled Parliament. Thus F. M. Evans, in her book on the Principal Secretary of State, dismisses Neville in a paragraph and regrets that James could not find, in this time of crisis, a capable man to succeed

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Professor David Willson, in his study of the privy councillors in the House of Commons, argues that Neville's cardinal error was to give half a promise that the Commons would respond to the concessions he proposed. Even Thomas Moir, who provides a sympathetic portrait in his study of the Addled Parliament, criticizes Neville for failing to "grapple with the real issues at stake between Crown and Commons." But most unfair of all is James Spedding, who compares Neville favorably with Sir Francis Bacon, and argues that Sir Henry "did not thoroughly understand his ground... (H)e had not thoroughly fathomed the depths and shallows of popular judgment in such an assembly as the House of Commons had not become." He suggests that Neville and his friends "ran the vessel aground" when "James took them for pilots." He concludes that Bacon, with his philosophical insights, would have been a better choice.

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3 Evans, Principle Secretary, p. 242. "Sir Henry Neville also was a candidate for the post solely because of his influence with the commons, and it was little short of a tragedy for James now, when parliamentary affairs began to be peculiarly entrusted to the secretary as distinct from the other privy councillors, he failed to find a man of high ability to attempt a task of exceptional difficulty."  

4 Willson, Privy Councillors, p. 31.  

5 Moir, Addled Parliament, p. 17. Moir writes later that "Neville's programme...was too trifling to attract support" and suggests unjustly that members of parliament confused election tampering with undertaking, which they did not. (p. 107) He further argues that "The programme put forward by Neville and his associates to conciliate the Commons had failed completely." (p. 113) He thus suggests that Neville's program was actually tried, which it was not.  

6 Spedding, Life of Bacon, IV, 365.
While the Addled Parliament certainly proved a disaster, there is little evidence to support either Spedding's explicit assertion or the implicit suggestions of other historians, that Neville sought to implement his design. The responsibility for the failure of the Addled Parliament lies with James, who failed to lead himself or to delegate sufficient authority to others to lead, and with the Howards, who succeeded in undermining the parliament they never desired.

There was, of course, a certain naivete in Neville's proposals. Sir Henry was an impatient man, as his career shows. Repeatedly he sought to cut through the petty details that limited his freedom of action, to find dramatic and far reaching solutions to myriads of difficulties. He did this in 1600 when he sought to solve all the diplomatic issues that he faced by the simple expedient of war with Spain. His complicity of silence in the Essex rebellion probably grew out of similar hopes that the Earl could with one stroke fulfill his personal ambitions and set the country on the proper courses in religious and foreign policy. In 1608 he sought to relieve the King's finances, to improve the quality of local government, and to gain promotion in his project for the relief of the King. He found Cecil's great contract appropriate as a solution to the King's financial plight in return for satisfaction of the grievances of the nation. While his project of 1612 was still under consideration he succumbed to the allure of the strange Muscovy project that appeared in the spring of 1613. He had that peculiarly Renaissance desire to see ideals brought to political fruition. For the most part, his ideas never received the test.
Thus the so-called failure of the undertaking had nothing to do with its triviality or with Neville's naivete. On the contrary, John Chamberlain, the most reliable correspondent of Jacobean society, consistently supported Neville as the ablest candidate for secretary, and others echoed this assessment. Thoughtful and influential men held him in high esteem to the end of his days. James Whitelocke wrote at the time of Neville's death that "he was the most sufficient man for understanding of state business that was in this kingdom..., and a very good scholar and a stout man, but was as ignobly and unworthily handled as ever gentleman was...."7

The poet Ben Jonson, who had his own political difficulties with James I, contrasted Neville's virtue with his lack of fame or titles. In an epitaph to Sir Henry, he emphasized Neville's commitment to public service and contrasted that commitment to the motives of personal gain that dominated the politics of the time. Neville had sought true honor rather than the mere appearance of it, and had been willing to dedicate his life to a cause that offered no guarantees. He was a man who could serve the state well because he first knew himself. Jonson made to Neville this promise, still unfulfilled and yet perhaps prescient:

Go on, and doubt not what posterity,
Now I have sung thee thus, shall judge of thee
 Thy deeds unto thy name will prove new wombs,8
 Whilst others toil for titles to their tombs.

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7 Whitelocke, Liber Familicus, p. 46.
8 W. Gifford and F. Cunningham, (editors), The Works of Ben Jonson (1871), III, 250-1.
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