

Introduction

*Yes. Why do we all, seeing of a soldier, bless him? bless
Our redcoats, our tars? Both these being, the greater part
But frail clay, nay but foul clay. Here it is: the heart,
Since, proud, it calls the calling manly, gives a guess
That, hopes that, makesbelieve, the men must be no less.¹*

The urge to praise soldiers has proved strong in most cultures. This stems from a number of emotions commonly held: gratitude towards those who fight, kill and sometimes die for what we might identify with; sheer envy of the sudden action, the rare clarity and decisiveness of mortal combat; and, not least, the persistent belief that those who have engaged in that sudden action can attain some sort of heightened moral quality forged in them during their time in the gap of danger. Samuel Johnson famously said that ‘were Socrates and Charles XII of Sweden both present in any company, and Socrates to say “Follow me, and hear a lecture on philosophy;” and Charles, laying his hand on his sword, to say, “Follow me and dethrone the Czar;” a man would be ashamed to follow Socrates.’² This sort of admiration has been (for a long time, anyway) particularly strong in England. The history of the engagement of Englishmen in armed conflict has been so enthusiastically followed by so many over such a long period of time that the discipline of military history – an area of study distinct from political, constitutional, intellectual or social history, yet free to borrow from them all – has long had an avid following, and England, consequently, has produced very many excellent practitioners of

¹ Gerald Manley Hopkins wrote ‘(The Soldier)’ while on retreat in Clongowes Wood College, County Kildare, a Jesuit school located on the borders of the Pale, which had formerly served as a castle for the Eustace family.

² *Boswell’s life of Johnson* (Oxford, 1934) 6 vols., Vol. III, pp. 265–6. See also Johnson’s ‘On the bravery of the English common soldiers’ in *Samuel Johnson: the major works*, ed. D. Greene (Oxford, 1984), pp. 549–50, where he concluded that the ‘courage of the English vulgar’ stemmed from the fact that ‘their insolence in peace is bravery in war’.

that art. This book is not a work of military history. It does, however, have fighting men at its centre.

The focus of this book is on martial officers and captains of the Elizabethan period, not primarily to sketch an episode in the broad and impressive history of English military development or to treat of the structure of 'Elizabeth's army', or even the technological accomplishment, or otherwise, of 'Elizabethan military science' (all very well done elsewhere) but rather to make a bid to redress an imbalance in the historiography of Tudor political thinking, political culture and, for want of a better term, 'mentalities'.³ Little study has been done on Tudor martial men as individual actors in history, their assumptions, what they took for granted, even their ideas, yet, as we shall see, quite a lot has been assumed about their collective character, their passions, their opinions, the 'type' to which they conformed.⁴ These assumptions invite further scrutiny.

Take, for instance, the example of the best flower of English Protestant knighthood, Philip Sidney, 'poet, soldier and statesman' who fell mortally wounded at Zutphen scone in September 1586, hit by a musket ball in the leg.⁵ Initially, his wound seemed mild, but it was deceptively so. Sidney's death was unpleasant and slow; it took three weeks for his gangrene to kill him. Subsequently, it was often held that in his person the most recognisable motifs of Elizabethan chivalry had found coherence: reformed Protestantism of a type compatible with the martial necessities

³ For essential treatments on all these topics see Paul Hammer's *Elizabeth's wars* (London, 2003), C. G. Cruickshank's *Elizabeth's army* (Oxford, 1966), L. Boynton's *The Elizabethan militia* (London, 1967) and H. J. Webb's *Elizabethan military science: the books and the practice* (Madison, Wisc., 1965).

⁴ In writing this sentence I have self-consciously borrowed from Peter Burke's defence of the humble and careful use of the term 'mentality': 'we need some way of speaking about human assumptions, about what people take for granted in a given place and time, as well as about the ideas which they hold consciously. If we throw out one word, we are going to have to coin another to occupy this conceptual space'. See M. L. G. Pallares-Burke *The new history: confessions and conversations* (Cambridge, 2002), pp. 154–5.

⁵ Philip Sidney was described as 'poet, soldier, and statesman' in the 1885–1900 *DNB*, but has, with more sobriety, been cast as 'author and courtier' in the 2004 *DNB*. In a letter to his brother Robert Sidney, future earl of Leicester, Philip recommended two hours of practice in swordplay a day, urging him to 'play out [such] play lustilie'. Although one can assume that Philip followed this discipline to some extent, he had hardly ever drawn his sword on an enemy in battle prior to his demise at Zutphen. See J. Osborn, *Young Philip Sidney* (New Haven, Conn., 1972), pp. 81–2. On the incompatibility of artillery and honour see Ariosto's denunciation, in Book 11 of *Orlando Furioso* of 'la machina infernal', the 'scelerata e brutta invenzion' which had destroyed chivalry: 'Per te la militar gloria è distrutta/ per te il mestier de l'arme è senza onore'. See also Don Quixote's meditation on the 'vile cowardly' effect that firearms had on the 'profession of knight errantry' in Vol. I, Chapter 38 of *Don Quixote*. However Hotspur in *Henry IV*, Part 1, Act I, Scene 3, mocks those who shun the battlefield because of their fear of being killed by gunshot.

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of the Huguenots and Dutch rebels, an appetite for tilting, aggressive vaunting of honour and a significant literary imagination.⁶ His posthumous reputation rested on a magnification of each of these qualities while his personal charm, obvious in his lifetime, died with him. During his life, Sidney had been adored by the most prominent Elizabethan statesmen. The principal secretary Sir Francis Walsingham ruined himself to honour Sidney's will and furnish him with a public funeral. Sir William Cecil once confided to the wunderkind's father that his affection for Philip was so strong that others might think it improper.⁷ The shadow of Philip, the Protestant knight, loomed large over the doomed vanity and frustration of Robert Devereux, second earl of Essex; it remained to dog the steps of the young Stuart prince Henry and spurred the ambitions of Algernon Sidney.⁸

His intellectual accomplishments tended to counter the austerity of his appointed status as puritan hero. His literary merits, his best and most lively legacy, were beyond reproach. His talent and commitment as a political thinker, although somewhat forgotten with the passage of time, had impressed his contemporaries.⁹ But he was not a soldier, a shortcoming he felt keenly. Despite his many accomplishments off the battlefield, it was obvious that he intensely desired to have triumphs on the field as well as off and that he regarded men of war with reverence.¹⁰ Why else did Sidney, on seeing Sir William Pelham go into battle without leg armour (probably because he had none), in a lonely impulse of delight rip off his own greaves in emulation? This was the decision that cost him his life.¹¹

⁶ For a meditation on the significance of Philip Sidney and his literary circle to the formation of a type of Protestant knighthood see M. E. James, 'English politics and the concept of honour, 1485–1642', *Past & Present supplement* 3, (1978), pp. 68–72.

⁷ Cecil to Henry Sidney, SP63/27/2, 6 January 1569: 'Your Philip is here in whom I take more comfort than I do openly utter for avoiding of wrong interpretation.'

⁸ For the psychological hold that the idea of Sidney held over Essex, who was knighted at Zutphen, see P. Hammer, *The polarisation of Elizabethan politics: the political career of Robert Devereux, 2nd Earl of Essex, 1585–1597* (Cambridge, 1999), pp. 51–4. For his influence over Prince Henry, see *Culture and politics in early Stuart England*, ed. K. Sharpe and P. Lake (London, 1994). Algernon inscribed 'PHILIPPUS SIDNEY MANUS HAEC INIMICA TYRANNIS EINSE PETIT PLACIDAM CUM LIBERTATE QUIETEM' ('This hand, enemy to tyrants, by the sword seeks peace with liberty') in the signature book of the University of Copenhagen in 1659, see Jonathan Scott, 'Sidney, Algernon (1623–1683)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004).

⁹ Sidney explicitly aimed to move his concerns 'out of the limits of a man's own little world, to the government of families and maintaining of public societies'. See B. Worden's *The sound of virtue: Philip Sidney's Arcadia and Elizabethan politics* (New Haven, Conn., 1996), pp. 209–96, for a sustained analysis of Sidney's political thinking and opinions.

¹⁰ In a fit of despondency in 1580 he had counselled his brother Robert, who was travelling through Europe, to seek out good wars, Worden (1996), p. 67.

¹¹ Crucially, neither Sidney's presence in the Netherlands nor his desire to imitate Pelham stemmed from personal success. Quite the opposite: it was only because he could not secure the circumstances of life

But what about Pelham? Can he be saved from a mere bit part in Sidney's narrative? Ironically, when he died in November 1587, it was also because of a leg wound which '[had] fallen into a dangerous case'.¹² Renowned for his martial prowess, he had served as marshal of the garrison in the Low Countries since July 1586. Previous to this, he had been lord justice of Ireland in 1579 and then lieutenant general of the ordnance in England: an apparently illustrious career. But if Philip Sidney had been frustrated at Elizabeth's disdain, his experience was nothing compared to the monarch's vindictive toying with poor William Pelham. Her treatment of the latter after his, admittedly controversial, stewardship of the Irish viceroyalty led one crown officer to reflect 'how dangerous a thing it is to disgrace an officer in so great a place'.¹³ Throughout late 1585 and early 1586, she prevented him from taking office as marshal of the earl of Leicester's army in the Netherlands by refusing 'to stall his debt [or] to take as much of his land as reasonably may satisfy his debt'. Pelham was in penury. He had horrific personal debts excluding a hefty debt to Elizabeth, incurred during his service as lieutenant general of the ordnance. In a calculated bid to shame Pelham, Elizabeth had determined that she would allow him to attend on Leicester 'as a private man' but would 'charge him with no service'. Pelham offered to go to the Tower instead. This harsh treatment did not go unnoticed. William Davison later reflected on 'the hard measure [Pelham] received' and concluded that it was 'enough to break the heart of any gentleman in the world of his sort and deserving'.¹⁴ Leicester noted that Pelham's mind 'had languished' for two to three months before his death. This depression was no doubt exacerbated by the scale of the misery that surrounded him in the Low Countries: the English troops were without hose and shoes, and the local merchants refused to have any dealings with them because the captains had taken everything upon credit and could not honour their transactions. Pelham's will, penned prior to taking up office under Leicester, shows that his personal financial arrangements were far from comfortable. Yet, despite

that would have best corresponded with his temperament – an aristocratic title coupled with senior government office – that he found himself in the company of hardened soldiers in the first place. See *The Prose Works of Fulke Greville*, Lord Brooke, ed. John Gouws (Oxford, 1986), pp. 76–80, 214.

¹² Leicester to Burghley, 17 November 1587, *Correspondentie*, Vol. III, p. 310.

¹³ Fenton to Walsingham, 3 January 1580, SP63/71/2. Thomas Churchyard wrote of Pelham's part in the siege of Leith: 'To save the ward from harm of enemy's shot / Full many a trench, did Pelham cause be wrought' *Churchyard's chippes* (London, 1575), sig. 4 v.

¹⁴ *Correspondence of Robert Dudley, earl of Leicester during his government of the Low Countries in the years 1585 and 1586* (ed.) J. Bruce (London, 1844), p. 45. Burghley to Leicester, 27 December 1585, Davison to Leicester, 17 February 1586, *Leicester corr.*, pp. 45, 125–6. It is Fulke Greville who tells how the desire to imitate Pelham's wonted courage led directly to his fatal injury at Zutphen.

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his ruin, Pelham's military prowess and 'long experience', for what they were worth, were highly regarded.

They were not worth much. There was no public funeral for Pelham.¹⁵ The charm and poise of Philip Sidney has counted historically (and historiographically) for more than the dogged despair of Pelham. This is understandable; whatever Pelham's talents happened to be, the writing of literary masterpieces was not one of them.¹⁶ But even the briefest consideration of contemporary views on the treatment of Leicester's marshal shows that the subaltern role that was forced upon him and other Elizabethan martial men up to the late 1580s was a source of disquiet and no little resentment in some quarters. The status of martial officers was a source of political and social tension, and this raises questions about Elizabethan society and politics. This study aims to answer some of these questions while attempting to analyse the thinking of Elizabethan martial men who served in Ireland up to the outbreak of the Nine Years' War in 1594.¹⁷

Why ask these questions at all? In my case, the interest was provoked by a problem. As an undergraduate, my interest in Elizabethan Ireland gave me a list of English *dramatis personae* – a sizeable group of administrators, governors and soldiers between 1558 to 1603 – which I found to be of little use in trying to get a handle on the historiography of Elizabethan England. In short, figures such as Sir William Pelham, Sir Nicholas Malby and Sir Richard Bingham, all very prominent in the history of Ireland, were hardly to be found in the standard works on the politics and society of their native land. Yet, the sophistication and scope of the emerging secondary material on Tudor political culture was both encouraging and presented a challenge: to find a contextualised location for the captains in the political and intellectual spectrum of the mid-Tudor and Elizabethan

¹⁵ Day, J. F. R., 'Death be very proud: Sidney, subversion, and Elizabethan heraldic funerals' in Dale Hoak (ed.) *Tudor political culture* (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 179–203.

¹⁶ See the verse supposedly written by Pelham endorsing Sir George Peckham's plan to establish a Catholic colony in the New World (also supported by Philip Sidney) in Peckham's *A true reporte, of the late discoveries, and possession, taken in the right of the Crowne of Englande, of the new-found landes: by that valiaunt and worthy gentleman, Sir Humfrey Gilbert Knight* (1583) with the words 'To valiant minds each land is a native soil, / and virtue finds no dwelling place amiss. / Regard of honour measures not the toil, / to seek a seat wherein contentment is'.

¹⁷ For a treatment of the nuts and bolts of impressment, payment and victualling see the relevant parts of C. G. Cruickshank's *Elizabeth's army* (Oxford, 1966), M. C. Fissel's *English warfare, 1511–1642* (London, 2001), pp. 82–105, and J. Nolan *Sir John Norris and the Elizabethan military mind* (Exeter, 1999). For a full description of the relationship between the mechanisms of the county militias and state formation over two centuries, see M. Braddick *State formation in early modern England c. 1500–1700* (Cambridge, 2000), pp. 180–232. For the pivotal nature of the mid- to late 1580s in this development, see p. 191.

world. Geoffrey Elton's posthumously published foreword to *Tudor political culture*, edited by Dale Hoak, indicated that even he, the Tudor historian most devoted to the idea that the structures of Tudor institutions and the Tudor Constitution were coterminous, was impatient with those who 'treated [the Tudor age] as essentially worked through'.¹⁸ Elton's coda and Hoak's advocacy of work on political culture were further amplified by John Guy two years later in the introduction to a compilation of some of the most important articles on Tudor monarchy and political culture from the 1980s and 1990s, *The Tudor monarchy*.¹⁹ Guy formulated a nine-point manifesto with a view to a 'New Tudor Political History', a call for historians to chart the constellated relationship between the different milieux in Elizabethan politics, the codes of political and social conduct, political ideas, institutional procedure, political actions and actual events.²⁰

Perhaps the flagship for history written in this manner has been the work done by many of the best Tudor scholars on the shared values of the milieu known as the 'Cambridge connection' – Nicholas Bacon, Richard Sackville, William Parr, and Ambrose Cave as well as Thomas Smith and Francis Knollys – Protestants who had endured their own 'mid-Tudor crisis', having previously been forged together in opposition to Bishop Stephen Gardiner, religious conservative and chancellor of the University of Cambridge in the early 1540s.²¹ This solidarity was lasting, binding not only those who went into exile, such as Knollys, but also those, such as William Cecil, who stayed and retired to the outer margins of politics. On Mary's demise, of course, they went on to institute the form of the Elizabethan church and to dominate the English polity under its new queen. This much had always been well known, but further exploration yielded particularly precious ore.

Spearheading a new approach to these familiar figures, Patrick Collinson famously argued that Cecil and his kindred spirits had been foremost in seeing England as a 'monarchical republic', and, accordingly, 'citizens were concealed within subjects' during the Elizabethan era. These 'republicans' did not constitute an anti-monarchical cabal; rather, they took the

¹⁸ See the foreword to Dale Hoak ed. *Tudor political culture* (Cambridge, 1995), p. xxi. Elton conceded that 'there is a lot still to be done both by way of elaboration and by way of re-thinking'.

¹⁹ 'The difference between politics and political culture is essentially the difference between political action and the codes of conduct, formal and informal, governing those actions', Hoak's formulation in Hoak (1995), p. 1 was endorsed by Guy in his introduction to John Guy, ed. *The Tudor Monarchy* (London, 1997).

²⁰ Guy (1997), p. 7.

²¹ Hudson, W. S., *The Cambridge connection and the Elizabethan settlement of 1559* (Durham, NC, 1980), pp. 35–9.

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standards and structures of republican Rome as their model for political emulation: consciously following Cicero, they championed the virtues of the dutiful participation of citizens in the government of the realm.²² They were also adherents of the view that the mixed constitution was the best type of government for a *res publica*, especially in one ruled by a woman.²³ Their advocacy of the mixed nature of the constitution as a radical formulation rather than as a weary truism was best instantiated by Cecil's assertion that parliament should actively address the issue of the royal succession. As principal secretary, he produced drafts for the controversial 1566 Commons' petition on the issue: parliament had a duty to counsel the queen, and the queen had a duty to listen.²⁴ So, far from being the taciturn bureaucrat that Conyers Read sketched in his works, he is now presented as a radical, or at least instinctive, conciliarist, an intellectually sophisticated and thoughtful man who proposed that, in the event of Elizabeth's death, the privy council should remain *in situ* as a type of council of regency endorsed by statute until such time as parliament had nominated a successor. Similarly Sir Thomas Smith, the foremost analyst of the concepts and structures of the Elizabethan polity, presented the mixed constitution as an institutionalised reality in his *De republica anglorum*, arguing, with a tone of certainty, that parliament could indeed give forms of succession to the crown, an issue that Elizabeth always maintained could and should be determined by herself alone.²⁵ Furthermore, the shadow of Mary Stuart in the wings and the persistent problem of

²² Collinson, P., 'The monarchical republic of Queen Elizabeth I' in Guy (1997), pp. 110–35 and 'De republica anglorum': or *History with the politics put back* (Cambridge, 1990).

²³ Peltonen, M., *Classical humanism and republicanism in English political thought 1570–1640*, (Cambridge, 1995). One particularly good example of the convergence of continental classical republicanism with an English context is that of Thomas Blunderville whose translation of Furió Ceriol's treatise *A brief treatise of counselors* into English (originally printed in 1559) asserted that parliament's role paralleled that of the 'council of revenues' and council of the 'matters of law', two bridles on monarchical power prescribed by the Spanish humanist. Of course the mixed constitution was also supported by indigenous common law authorities such as Christopher St German. See 'St German's doctor and student', ed. T. Plucknett and J. Barton, *Selden society* 91 (London 1974), p. 327.

²⁴ Alford (1998), pp. 149–50. The first draft protested that Elizabeth intended for parliament be 'deprived of at least sequestered from an ancient laudable custom always necessarily annexed to our assembly, and by your majesty most graciously always confirmed, that is, a sufferance and leeful liberty to treat and devise of matters honourable for your majesty and profitable for your realm' (my italics). The best work on counsel in early modern England is John Guy's 'The rhetoric of counsel in early modern England' in Hoak (1995), pp. 292–310.

²⁵ 'Parliament abrogateth old laws, maketh new, giveth orders for things past, and for things hereafter to be followed, changeth rights and possessions of private men, legitimateth bastards, establisheth forms of religion, altereth weights and measures, giveth forms of succession to the crown . . . etc.' in T. Smith, *De republica anglorum*, ed. M. Dewar (Cambridge, 1982), p. 78.

the succession led to the very un-English (but strangely Scottish) Bond of Association in 1584 (a ‘quasi-republican statement’) and the Act ‘for the surety of the queen’s most royal person’, which, as Collinson has pointed out, implicitly located sovereignty somewhere other than in the monarch. ‘Legally, sovereignty and all power to act, all offices and courts, would have lapsed with the queen to be at once transferred to her lawful successor’ he reminds us, but Cecil desired that in such circumstances ‘government [should] reside in a great council or grand council, acting “in the name of the imperial crown of England”’. Cecil’s plans are seen as an emanation of a civic republican *geist* that gripped England, high and low, in the second half of the sixteenth century. Indeed, the emblem of the ‘monarchical republic’ has been the ‘self-governing republic’ of Swallowfield, Collinson’s evocation of the town meeting in a politically anomalous part of Berkshire where the ‘chief inhabitants’ vowed to meet regularly, to regulate the mores of their community and to ‘be esteemed to be men of discretion, good credit, honest minds, and christianlike behaviour, one towards another’. Is Swallowfield closer to Tocqueville’s impeccably Protestant New England Town Hall meeting or, more traditionally, the spirit of the customs of Romney Marsh?²⁶

A broadening intellectual and methodological context for the thinking of Cecil and his circle has also emerged in the works of Stephen Alford and Markku Peltonen. Alford has quarried a particularly rich seam by investigating the implications of the educational formation of Sir William Cecil, paying particular attention to how he employed the skills in rhetoric he had attained to work out his thoughts on the state of the

²⁶ Collinson (1997), pp. 125–30. Collinson does, in passing, wonder whether Burghley’s plan to deploy a sovereign great council during an interregnum caused by Elizabeth’s sudden death ‘would have succeeded in defeating the *coup de théâtre* which brought that other Mary to the throne against all the odds, in 1553’, he also drastically limits the scope of his argument with his concluding remarks. Perhaps the possibility of such a coup happening, the shape it might have taken and a plausible list of those who might have backed it, might be given more consideration. In the event of Elizabeth’s death prior to 1587 might the possible survival and enthronement of Mary Stuart – bond of association and act for the surety of the queen’s royal person notwithstanding – have been enough of an assertion of the primacy of dynastic succession, of sovereignty being inherent in the ‘true’ monarch, to prove an obvious and devastating counterblast to the acephalous republican strategies advanced on paper by Burghley? What choice would the political estate of England have made between Burghley saying ‘Follow me, and institute a sovereign general council’ and (say) Lord Henry Howard declaring ‘Follow me and enthrone your queen’? We should not presume how Swallowfield would have reacted. Presumably Burghley’s frequent memos on both Mary Stuart and his interregnal plans, indicated his fear that such a thing could happen. For more on the customs of Romney Marsh and East Greenwich as benchmarks of English legal development see L. A. Knafla ‘Common Law and custom in Tudor England: or ‘the best state of the commonwealth’ in *Law, Literature, and the settlement of regimes* (Washington, DC, 1990), pp. 171–81.

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commonwealth.²⁷ Peltonen, among other things, has looked at the phenomenon of civic republicanism in the localities. Both the methodology and results of this work on high politics and the development of republican ideas throughout the country have been exemplary, giving us not only a 'history of political thought with an historical character' but one that has an emphatically demonstrable relationship with events and people, filling out our understanding of this crucial group, their influence and what influenced them.²⁸

Yet, there are some difficulties about seeing England's constitution *solely* from the vantage point of Swallowfield, or, indeed, from the lofty official heights commanded by the 'Cambridge connection'. Donald Kelley has quite correctly reminded us that 'there is no satisfactory historical account of political theory in Tudor England' and that (echoing J. H. Baker) 'the sixteenth century continues to represent the Dark Age of English legal history and so, to a degree, of political thought'.²⁹ While not denying the possibility that the men of Swallowfield and the partisans of the 'first' *regnum Cecilianum* may have shared certain assumptions, perhaps this point can be overstretched. The Cambridge men that commanded the early Elizabethan privy council were not a representative group; on the contrary, they were a caucus of exceptionally well-educated Edwardians who had been given a second chance. They were peculiar, and, it might be extrapolated, held peculiar views. Presumably if another peculiar caucus, say, the civil lawyers that made up the society known as Doctors' Commons, had wielded the dominant influence on the privy council and thereby on the monarch, parliament and court, they might have operated according to an entirely different view of the English constitution (Sir Thomas Smith's status as a prominent civilian notwithstanding), and perhaps they would have found willing fellow travellers to acquiesce in their view: the powerful generally do.

And whatever about the view of the English constitution and polity, its boundaries, its limits and its customs which were held in Swallowfield, around the council bench or at Doctors' Commons, the view from Dublin, Carrickfergus or Iar-Chonnacht must have been different again.

²⁷ Alford, S., 'Reassessing William Cecil in the 1560s' in Guy (1997), pp. 233–52, and also *The early Elizabethan polity: William Cecil and the British succession crisis, 1558–1569* (Cambridge, 1998), pp. 14–28.

²⁸ The phrase 'a history of political thought with an historical character' comes from Q. Skinner, *Foundations of modern political thought*, 2 vols. (Cambridge, 1978), Vol. I, p. xi.

²⁹ Kelley, D. E., 'Elizabethan political thought' in *The varieties of British political thought, 1500–1800* ed. J. G. A. Pocock, (Cambridge, 1993), pp. 50, 66.

Furthermore, whatever the received opinion about the shape of the English constitution and polity accepted by the burghers of London, the gentry of Berkshire or the Protestant survivors of Mary's reign (and maybe all these views were not the same), the opinions held by English captains serving in Ireland on the matter, for a variety of political, social and cultural reasons could well have been different. In short, all Englishmen might not have (in the term usually employed when speaking of the civil law) 'received' the 'monarchical republic'. Indeed, Kelley has suggested that Elizabethan political thought was made up of 'an extraordinary confusion of tongues'. It seems correct to assert that, although events did not seem to demand articulation of difference in the sixteenth century quite as starkly as they did in the seventeenth century, there definitely were differing varieties of English political thought during the Elizabethan era.³⁰ While one would not want to claim too much for the scope and internal logic of the political assumptions of English captains in Elizabethan Ireland, their views and experiences in the sister kingdom certainly were the views and experiences of Englishmen and therefore add to the spectrum of what we know about thoughts thinkable by the Elizabethan English. The generational bias of this book has concentrated on those figures who dominated military service in Ireland to 1594; figures who, like Cecil and Leicester, had also survived the warp and woof of the mid-Tudor period.

Of course, the mindset of certain martial men has always sparked patriotic feeling and provoked curiosity, namely those soldiers who distinguished themselves at sea. Sir Francis Drake, Sir Walter Raleigh and, at a stretch, Sir Humphrey Gilbert have received regular historical attention and have long been deemed emblems of what the age of Gloriana was all about. The vision of England to be found in the historiography surrounding these figures differs markedly from the fundamentally dull but decent ambience suggested by the good 'citizens' of Swallowfield in conclave. Where Swallowfield suggests the measured beat of English domestic values, the pluck of Drake and Raleigh suggests the audacity and exuberance of Empire. The fêting of this pluck was hardly an innovation in 1852 when James Anthony Froude enshrined it in his essay 'England's Forgotten Worthies', one of his *Short studies on great subjects*, in which he concluded that Elizabethan mariners had been short-changed in the volumes of the Hakluyt Society, which had turned 'the Prose Epic of the modern English

³⁰ Kelley (1993), p. 47. Note also Kelley's observation, quoting Conal Condren, that much work on political thought or political thinking is done by the 'political thought community' on the thought of former 'political thought communities'.