

INTRODUCTION

Background and context

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

English interest in the affairs of France was lively and often engaged during this period. A few years later the translator, John Eliot, published his topographical *Survey*,² while the most polished general account, by Robert Dallington, appeared in 1604.³ In the 1590s, Edmond Tyllney completed his vast unpublished *Topographical Descriptions*, Book II of which covered France.⁴ Edward

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

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

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

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

Hoby's translations of La Popelinière and Edward Grimestone's of Jean de Serres⁵ made the standard Protestant contemporary historians available in English at the end of the century.

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

English envoys to France needed a degree of fluency in the language throughout the sixteenth century (since knowledge of English in France was virtually nonexistent).⁹ The French language was studied with a high degree of technical expertise, as the work of Palsgrave (1530) shows,¹⁰ and was being taught from Claude de Sainliens's *French Littleton* (1576) and the works of Eliot, while Randall Cotgrave's *Dictionarie* was to appear in 1611.¹¹ What is perhaps more unusual in the texts under discussion is the phenomenon of the English writing on France in

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

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

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

⁷ See in particular Parmelee, *Good News*, ch. 2.

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

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

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

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

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

The texts

These can be listed as follows:

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

Text (A)

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

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

¹² BL Add. 48026, fos 65–231.

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

¹⁴ For example fo. 25v, ‘Rossy autrement Nefue’, where ‘Nefue’ is a corruption of ‘Mesme’, for Henri de Mesme, sr de Malassise. This list of gouv in Picardy is seriously

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

Text (B)

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

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

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

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

being an official and widely-known list;¹⁶ (ii) no. 85, fos 247–252, a text much more closely allied to the rest of the compilation, consisting of paragraphs on a large number of families, restricted to their main members, with marriage alliances, but occasionally noting income. The approach differs from the rest of the texts by not dividing its families by province but rather by family connection. The practical value of these compilations to the English government is obvious and continued to be pursued, as we can see a brief survey of the Breton nobility made in 1593.¹⁷ Additional information contained in these documents which throws light on texts (A)–(B) will be referred to in the notes as (B)(i) and (B)(ii) fos [...], and the full texts given in Appendix 2.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Sir John Smith on the Spanish monarchy, assembled during his mission to that country in 1577.²³

The household of the English ambassador to France – under Paulet, Cobham, and Stafford the only permanent English embassy – was bound to be an information factory; indeed one recent study has called it ‘the crossroads of the diplomatic world’.²⁴ In 1580, Bacon’s brother Anthony went to Paris and, though not attached to the embassy, began work as an ‘intelligencer’, travelling around France and staying in Geneva over the next few years (he spent much of 1584 and early 1584 in Bordeaux, for instance). In this role he is thought to have drawn up in 1582 ‘Notes on the present state of Christendom’, once attributed to Francis Bacon, as well as memoranda on the politics of most European countries, which he forwarded to Burghley via Nicholas Faunt, Walsingham’s secretary. Then, having steered rather close to the wind, he was in May 1584 taken directly into ambassador Stafford’s service in clandestine liaison work with the Navarrist camp, a course that was to lead to his famous legal troubles over accusations of sodomy at Montauban in 1586.²⁵ Stafford’s role remains an ambiguous one, especially in his relations with Walsingham at a time when there was a degree of tension between the latter and Burghley over the control of secret information from abroad. Recent work has shown how determined he was as a seeker of intelligence,²⁶ and since John Bossy’s work on Bruno and the French embassy in London, of course, we know much more about the importance of embassies in the collation of a wide range of intelligence and promotion of secret

²³ *Ibid.*, fos 65–231.

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

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

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

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

Robert Cecil therefore had plenty of examples to draw on for his travels abroad on behalf of his father. He was in France for some period during 1583, staying with the newly appointed ambassador Stafford, and seems to have returned in August 1584, staying this time with one of Stafford's gaming partners, the sieur de Marchaumont, a member of the late duc d'Anjou's household, who had himself been in England the previous year. The effects of the death of Anjou in June 1584 were an obvious reason for Burghley to send over his son to observe affairs in France. It has been suggested that Marchaumont was the source of much of his information²⁸ but, as we have seen, Cecil confined himself to editing an already existing work. Cecil was also in touch with his friend, the 'plausible scoundrel' William Parry, who had been in Paris as an agent for Lord Burghley in 1580 and 1583, supplying information on English Catholic exiles, but was arrested dramatically for treason early in 1585.²⁹

Text (C)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Who, then, was Richard Cook? There are many men of such name in records connected with Kent during the period, all of them unlikely to be this man.³⁴ A Richard Cooke matriculated at Trinity College Cambridge in 1556, was a scholar in 1560, and admitted to the Inner Temple in 1561.³⁵ He would surely have been of an earlier generation, since the author of the text is clearly a man setting out on his career. The records of all the Inns of Court are silent.³⁶ A likelier connection is provided by a family of Kentish landowners at North Cray and Erith, who seem to have emerged from Sussex and the world of London trade in the middle of the sixteenth century and to have retained connections in the city. So, a Richard Cooke was the younger brother of the head of the family, Edmund Cooke, who as JP sat on the bench

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

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

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

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