

# The Dudleys, Sir Christopher Hatton and the Justices of Elizabethan Warwickshire

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## **The Dudleys, Sir Christopher Hatton and the Warwickshire justices**

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### **Abstract:**

Robert Dudley, earl of Leicester and Ambrose Dudley, earl of Warwick, were the most important magnates in Warwickshire for the first thirty years of the reign of Elizabeth I. During the 1570s, Christopher Hatton rose from apparent obscurity to become one of Elizabeth's most important councillors and was appointed lord chancellor in 1587. This paper suggests that Hatton's rise during the 1570s was partially a response to the activities of the Dudleys and that Hatton's previously neglected connections to Warwickshire made him well-placed to act as an alternative source of influence in the county. It analyses the Warwickshire commission of the peace as background to the political narrative of this period and presents the suppression of the prophesyings in 1576 and the political marginalisation of the Catholic Throckmorton kinship network as consequences of the influence of Hatton and the Dudleys respectively.

**Keywords:** Warwickshire, Dudley, Hatton, Throckmorton, Arden, justices.

## The Dudleys, Sir Christopher Hatton and the Warwickshire justices

From 1561 to the late 1580s, Robert Dudley, earl of Leicester and Ambrose Dudley, earl of Warwick, were the leading magnates in Warwickshire.<sup>1</sup> Christopher Hatton came to Queen Elizabeth's attention in the early 1560s but during the 1570s his rise at court accelerated and in 1577 he was knighted and appointed to the privy council.<sup>2</sup> Hatton's connections to Warwickshire have been neglected and the circumstances of his rise to power and influence at a crucial time for the Dudley ascendancy in the county may not have been coincidental. The extent to which Dudley influence in the county was countered by that of Hatton forms the heart of this article. It considers the Dudleys' political control of Warwickshire and explores Hatton's activities in the county, suggesting why he was active in the first place and the ramifications of this for Sir Christopher's political career. It argues that Hatton's role in Warwickshire was the local manifestation of national concerns over the activities of the Dudleys and also suggests why Hatton should have taken on such a role. Analysis of the Warwickshire commission of the peace provides a background to the national political narrative of the 1570s and 1580s and reveals the consequences of the Dudley ascendancy for the Throckmorton kinship network, presenting a narrative of Elizabethan politics that links local and national affairs to a series of complex, shifting alliances in a fraught political arena that raises questions about the stability of the Elizabethan state.

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<sup>1</sup> S. Adams, ' "Because I am of that countrye and mynde to plant myself there": Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester and the Midlands,' in *Leicester and the Court, Essays in Elizabethan Politics* (Manchester, 2002), 310; further references to Adams are to this volume unless stated otherwise. See also *Oxf. DNB.*, Adams, 'Dudley, Ambrose' (Jan 2008) and 'Dudley, Robert' (May 2008).

<sup>2</sup> *Oxf. DNB.*, W. MacCaffrey, 'Christopher Hatton' (2004).

Many of the previously held assumptions regarding the selection, appointment and work of the county magistracy have now been challenged.<sup>3</sup> General surveys as well as studies of Norfolk and Suffolk have shown that appointments to the commission were far from stable and subject to a variety of factors, including those caused by national issues of political and religious policy.<sup>4</sup> While Simon Adams has already noted the increasingly Protestant character of the Warwickshire bench in the 1570s and 80s, this development was by no means a smooth transition.<sup>5</sup> Between 1569 and 1573 a large group of new justices closely associated with the Dudleys were appointed to the Warwickshire commission for the peace and remained there until at least the end of the 1580s. Sir Thomas Lucy, an important figure in Warwickshire since 1558, was joined on the commission by Sir Fulke Greville, who would lead the county with him for the next thirty years. Other justices included Edward Holte, Humphrey Ferrers, Thomas Dabridgecourt, John Higford, George Digby and Edward Boughton, several of whom the earl of Leicester took with him to the Netherlands in 1585 and who maintained their loyalty to the Dudleys until their deaths.<sup>6</sup> In contrast, leading Warwickshire families such as the Throckmortons, Catesbys and Ardens found themselves politically marginalised. Thomas Throckmorton and his brothers-in-law, William Catesby and

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<sup>3</sup> R. B. Manning, *Religion and Society in Sussex: a study of the Enforcement of the Religious Settlement, 1558-1603* (Leicester, 1969); A. Hassell Smith, *County and Court: Government and Politics in Norfolk, 1558-1603* (Oxford, 1974); D. MacCulloch, *Suffolk and the Tudors: Politics and Religion in an English County 1500-1600* (Oxford, 1986) are all county studies that pay particular attention to commissions of the peace. The most recent articles are A. Wall, '“The Greatest Disgrace”: the Making and Unmaking of JPs in Elizabethan and Jacobean England', *Eng. Hist. Review*, CXIX, 481 (2004), 312-332 and 'The great purge of 1625: “the late Murraine amongst the Gentlemen of the Peace”', *Hist. Res.*, 82, 218 (2009), 677-93.

<sup>4</sup> Hassell Smith, *County and Court*, 58-66; MacCulloch, *Suffolk and the Tudors*, 113-5. MacCulloch also makes the point that Suffolk's commission was generally more stable than that of Norfolk.

<sup>5</sup> Adams, 'Because I am of that countrye', 339.

<sup>6</sup> Adams, 'Because I am of that countrye', 348-9; 'Baronial Contexts?', 393-99.

Edward Arden, all inherited large estates and became leading land-owners in the county. However, not only did they fail to maintain a seat on the bench, they failed to hold onto any official position in the county at all. Nevertheless, the hegemony of the Protestant Dudleys and their supporters was not a foregone conclusion and further evidence seems to show that Dudley dominance in the county was not only open to challenge but that alternative patronage could be found.

Although Christopher Hatton was born in the neighboring county of Northamptonshire, his connections to Warwickshire were long-standing. His strongest ties were to the family of Richard Newport, a lawyer whose will of 1565 showed a deep attachment to Catholicism.<sup>7</sup> William Hatton died in 1547 and by the early 1560s Richard Newport married William's widow, Alice, and became Christopher's step-father.<sup>8</sup> At some point before 1565 Hatton's sister, Dorothy, married Richard Newport's heir, John.<sup>9</sup> In 1566, John Newport died and Christopher made John and Dorothy's son, William, his heir and in 1567, links between the Hatton and Newport families were further strengthened when Christopher's younger brother, Thomas, married one of John Newport's sisters,

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<sup>7</sup> The National Archives (hereafter TNA), PROB11/48, fos. 249r-250v, will of Richard Newport. Of more than one hundred gentry wills surveyed for this period, Newport's is one of the most overtly Catholic. His preamble invoked the intercession of the 'Lady Saint Mary and all the hollye companye of Heaven' as well as leaving money to the 'mother churche' of Lichfield and ten pounds for the poor to pray for his soul.

<sup>8</sup> E. St John Brooks, *Sir Christopher Hatton, Queen Elizabeth's Favourite* (London, 1946), 26, notes the death of William Hatton in 1547. The marriage between Richard Newport and Alice Hatton (*née* Saunders) has generally been missed, even by Brooks. However, in Richard Newport's will he bequeathed all his household goods at Holdenby to his wife, Alice, suggesting they were living there together. See also TNA, PROB11/48, fos. 347v-348v, will of John Newport, in which Newport refers to Alice as his 'mother-in-law', making it clear she was Dorothy's mother. John made William Saunders and Bartholomew Tate his supervisors, alongside his brothers-in-law, Christopher and Thomas Hatton. Saunders and Tate were Hatton relatives and later also appointed overseers of Dorothy's will.

<sup>9</sup> Brooks, *Sir Christopher Hatton*, 27.

Ursula.<sup>10</sup> Around the same time, the widowed Dorothy married the Catholic Warwickshire lawyer, William Underhill, although she died shortly afterwards.<sup>11</sup> After Underhill's death in 1571, Hatton, who already held the wardship of Dorothy's son (who succeeded to his estates as Sir William Hatton), also gained that of her step-son, William Underhill, giving him control of a significant, if not particularly substantial, estate in Warwickshire.<sup>12</sup>

Moreover, Hatton was already part of a network of connections that reached from the Inns of Court to the Warwickshire gentry via the judiciary and the privy council. Hatton's maternal cousin, Sir Edward Saunders, was recorder of Coventry from 1541 to 1553, one of Queen Mary's justices of the Common Pleas and of King's Bench and presided over state trials including those of Ambrose and Guildford Dudley and Lady Jane Grey.<sup>13</sup> Although Saunders appointment as chief baron to the court of Exchequer after Elizabeth's accession has sometimes been seen as a demotion, it appears that Saunders retained his professional reputation and he remained an influential figure.<sup>14</sup> He was appointed alongside Lord Buckhurst, Sir Francis Knollys, Sir William Cecil, the solicitor-general Richard Onslow and the lawyer Miles Saunders as overseer of the will of his uncle, Sir Ambrose Cave, a member of the Privy Council from November 1558 until his death a decade later.<sup>15</sup> It was also Saunders, together with Knollys, Cecil and Onslow, who were left funds to support the four divinity scholarships endowed by Cave. In

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> TNA, PROB11/52, fo. 10v, will of Dorothy Hatton.

<sup>12</sup> Brooks, *Sir Christopher Hatton*, 57.

<sup>13</sup> S. Bindoff (ed.), 'Edward Saunders', *House of Commons 1509-1558*, 3 vols. (London, 1982), III, 271-2; *Oxf. DNB.*, J. H. Baker, 'Saunders, Sir Edward (1506-1576)' (Jan 2008).

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> TNA, PROB11/54, fos. 66r-67r, will of Sir Ambrose Cave.

his own will of 1576, Saunders named Sir Walter Mildmay and the prominent Catholic lawyer Edmund Plowden as his executors, along with his Warwickshire cousin William Saunders and two of his servants.<sup>16</sup> He made a number of personal bequests, including 'my best gelding' to his overseer, Christopher Hatton, who had entered the Inner Temple in 1560, probably at the recommendation of his cousin, and ten pounds to 'my very good and trusty frende' Robert Atkinson.<sup>17</sup>

Atkinson, a fellow Inner Templar whose entry in the *House of Commons* ponders the conundrum of how a known recusant could remain recorder of Oxford for forty years, was a colleague of Arden Waferer, who became one of Christopher Hatton's closest legal advisors and men of business.<sup>18</sup> Arden Waferer connects Hatton with one of Warwickshire's most controversial figures, Edward Arden, who was Waferer's first cousin.<sup>19</sup> Edward Arden, for whom Waferer acted as legal counsel at the same time as he was working for Hatton, was son-in-law to Sir Robert Throckmorton, along with Ralph Sheldon, Sir William Catesby and Sir Thomas Tresham, Hatton's fellow Northamptonshire resident and a long-standing acquaintance of Hatton's.<sup>20</sup> These men are regularly referred to by historians and

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<sup>16</sup> TNA, PROB11/58, fos. 298r-300r, will of Sir Edward Saunders.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.; Brooks, *Sir Christopher Hatton*, 28-30.

<sup>18</sup> P. W. Hasler (ed.), 'Robert Atkinson', *House of Commons 1558-1603*, 3 vols. (London, 1981) I, 362; Brooks, *Sir Christopher Hatton*, 150, 301, 359, 389; Northamptonshire Record Office (hereafter NRO), FH688; British Library (hereafter BL), Lansdowne MS 25, fo. 46, grateful thanks to Professor Glyn Parry for bringing this letter to my attention.

<sup>19</sup> J. Bannerman Wainwright (ed.), 'Two lists of influential persons apparently prepared in the interests of Mary, Queen of Scots, 1574 and 1582', *Miscellanea VIII* (Catholic Record Society [hereafter CRS], 13, 1913), 98, identifies Arden Waferer with Warwickshire. Waferer's mother was sister to Arden's father, William.

<sup>20</sup> Warwick Record Office (hereafter WRO), CR1908/146; Birmingham City Archive (hereafter BCA), MS3375/434072, MS917/496 (Norton 184) show Arden Waferer working for Edward Arden in 1570, 1575 and 1576. Brooks, *Sir Christopher Hatton*, 210-11.

have been subject to thoughtful and original enquiry.<sup>21</sup> Nevertheless, it also makes sense to consider their activities in the context of their connection to each other, even if the level of unity between them is by no means clear. However, Thomas Throckmorton represented Arden's interest in a land dispute in 1576, and in 1579 Sir Robert committed many of his estates in Warwickshire and Worcestershire in trust to Sir John Goodwin, Edward Arden, Ralph Sheldon, and Sheldon's brother-in-law, Edmund Plowden.<sup>22</sup> Sir Thomas Tresham and Sir William Catesby were married to daughters of Sir Robert Throckmorton's second marriage and seem to have been closely involved in each others' affairs.<sup>23</sup> Both were knighted at Kenilworth in 1575, an act that suggests that the instincts of the earl of Leicester at this point tended either towards conciliation or the principle of keeping your friends close but your enemies closer.<sup>24</sup> Both also visited Kenilworth in April 1576, where they attended the earl of Warwick with Sir Fulke Greville.<sup>25</sup> By 1579 the Throckmorton kinship network may have been hoping for a more permanent return to the pre-eminence that was eluding them and in 1578/9, Sir Robert Throckmorton commissioned stained glass that celebrated these family alliances.<sup>26</sup> In October 1579, dealing with the personal fallout from his marriage to Lettice Knollys and the political horse-trading surrounding the negotiations for the Anjou match, the earl of

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<sup>21</sup> S. Kaushik, 'Resistance, Loyalty and Recusant Politics: Sir Thomas Tresham and the Elizabethan State', *Midland History*, 21 (1996), 37-72 is a case in point. R. Williams, 'Cultures of dissent: English Catholics and the visual arts' in B. Kaplan (ed.), *Catholic Communities in Protestant States: Britain and the Netherlands, c. 1570-1720* (Manchester, 2009), is one of the more recent examples of the ongoing scholarly interest in the artistic patronage of this group.

<sup>22</sup> Shakespeare Centre Library and Archive (hereafter SCLA), DR5/964.

<sup>23</sup> *Acts of the Privy Council* (hereafter APC), 1579, 645; Historical Manuscripts Commission (hereafter HMC), *Var. Coll. III*, 66.

<sup>24</sup> *Oxf. DNB.*, J. Lock, 'Tresham, Thomas' (May 2009).

<sup>25</sup> H. Kemp (ed.), *The Black Book of Warwick* (Warwick, 1898), 221-3.

<sup>26</sup> This glass was originally installed in Throckmorton's house at Weston Underwood in Buckinghamshire and can now be seen in the gatehouse at Coughton Court, Warwickshire.



Leicester wrote bitterly to Cecil from Kenilworth: 'I doe assure your lordship since Queen Mary's time the papists were never in that jollity they be at present in this country.'<sup>27</sup>

The jollity was short-lived. By summer 1580, Ralph Sheldon and Thomas Throckmorton were in prison. By summer 1581, so were Sir Thomas Tresham and Sir William Catesby, imprisoned for their refusal to testify to their association with the Jesuit, Edmund Campion.<sup>28</sup> In 1582, William Tresham, Sir Thomas Tresham's younger brother, fled to France after a row with Leicester. Although the details of the row are unclear, letters after William's flight suggest long-standing animosity between William and Leicester as well as William's closeness to Hatton. Shortly after his arrival in France, William wrote an emotional letter to Sir Christopher in which he not only accused Hatton of rejecting him 'for the sole pleasure of the earl of Leicester' but also warned him to beware Leicester, who 'affecteth you only to serve his own turn'.<sup>29</sup> Although Leicester and Hatton were apparently allies in late 1579, by 1582 court gossip hinted at renewed tension between the two.<sup>30</sup> By the end of 1583, Edward Arden had been executed, victim of a plot that *Leicester's Commonwealth* alleged was part of a plan by the earl of Leicester to trap Hatton.<sup>31</sup> The context for these dramatic events may be better understood by turning to the more prosaic matter of the Warwickshire commission for the peace.

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<sup>27</sup> Oxf. DNB., Adams, 'Dudley, Robert'.

<sup>28</sup> A. G. Petti (ed.), *Recusant Documents from the Ellesmere Manuscripts* (CRS, 60, 1968), 6-9.

<sup>29</sup> H. Nicholas, *Memoirs of the Life and Times of Sir Christopher Hatton, Vice-chamberlain and Lord Chancellor to Queen Elizabeth, Including his Correspondence with the Queen and other Distinguished Persons* (London, 1847), 352-3.

<sup>30</sup> S. Doran, *Monarchy and Matrimony: the Courtships of Elizabeth I* (London, 1996), 173; Oxf. DNB., MacCaffrey, 'Hatton, Sir Christopher'.

<sup>31</sup> D. Peck (ed.), *Leicester's Commonwealth* (Athens, Ohio, 1985), 114-5. Digital edition (used throughout) available to download <<http://dpeck.info>>; please note variations in page numbers between the printed and digital edition. Brooks, *Sir Christopher Hatton*, 257-9.

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Justices of the peace were instruments of the crown in the localities and the fact that they licensed pubs and prosecuted poachers has downplayed their connection to high politics. However, analysis of the commissions still provides one of the most significant tools that we have for identifying the ways in which local power structures reflected national political struggles. As Hassell Smith has shown for Norfolk, in the sixteenth century court patronage became increasingly necessary for those wishing to gain appointment.<sup>32</sup> Although appointments were nominally made by the lord chancellor (or lord keeper), it is clear that these were enabled through a variety of patrons including local peers, assize judges and bishops and, as Alison Wall has shown, courtiers including the earl of Leicester, Christopher Hatton, Francis Walsingham and the earl of Essex.<sup>33</sup> Such patronage played several roles in the relationship between the court and the localities, not least providing the most important courtiers with loyal local clienteles. Hassell Smith has suggested that before the execution of the duke of Norfolk in 1572, 'he appears steadily to have packed the Norfolk Bench with his own clients', while Wall has noted that in the 1590s the earl of Essex made 'outright requests for appointment' to the lord keeper, Sir John Puckering, to ensure dependency amongst his following.<sup>34</sup> The Elizabethan gentry were desperate to be appointed - in Suffolk the commission for the peace has been described as one area where

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<sup>32</sup> Hassell Smith, *County and Court*, 58-9, 340.

<sup>33</sup> Wall, 'The Greatest Disgrace', 313-14.

<sup>34</sup> Hassell Smith, *County and Court*, 32; Wall, 'The Greatest Disgrace', 314.

‘the government retained the whip-hand [...] knowing that it had a surplus of applicants’.<sup>35</sup>

Amid this feverish competition and aware of the political and personal rivalries that could dominate local commissions the privy council tried to restrict the number of those appointed. In this it appears to have been largely unsuccessful. The frequency of identifiable purges during Elizabeth’s reign suggests how difficult it was to either limit the numbers appointed or ensure acceptable personal and religious allegiances.<sup>36</sup> While subscription to the Act of Uniformity in 1569 was intended to bar the appointment of Catholics as magistrates, the number of Catholics willing to subscribe shows not only how far consciences could be compromised on such issues, but also how the lure of the office was strong enough to make such compromise wide-spread. As Manning remarked of Sussex, even though no outright recusants can be identified amongst the Sussex magistracy after 1569, the commissions were never ‘wholly purged’.<sup>37</sup>

Surviving manuscript sources for Elizabethan Warwickshire are not easy to find and personal letters are particularly thin on the ground. Letters either crowing or complaining about appointment to the magistracy are (so far) non-existent for the period between 1558 and 1590. However, identification and analysis of appointments is possible. Using the patent rolls and most complete *libris pacis*, together with the annual pipe rolls, a list of JPs for the county has been created,

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<sup>35</sup> MacCulloch, *Suffolk and the Tudors*, 338.

<sup>36</sup> Wall, ‘The Greatest Disgrace’, 320.

<sup>37</sup> Manning, *Sussex*, 244.

though some names may still resurface.<sup>38</sup> The appointees come from families with strong connections to Warwickshire during this period and can be found in numerous other sources, including subsidy rolls and family papers. The difficulties these sources sometimes present have been discussed in detail by Wall and they can best be used to provide a general overview of those appointed.<sup>39</sup> In this context, the picture the list provides of appointments, dismissals and general trends largely reflects the current historiography.

To fully appreciate the changes that affected the commission during Elizabeth's reign, it is necessary to start with the reigns of Edward VI and Mary. The enrolled commission from May 1547, shortly after Edward's accession, gives an excellent overview of the composition of the county's elite at this point. Leading gentry appointments to the commission was Sir George Throckmorton, representing Warwickshire's most important kinship network.<sup>40</sup> The commission included two of his sons, Robert and Clement, and the Throckmortons were connected by marriage or blood to at least six of the other magistrates. Sir Richard Catesby left a grandson and heir who would marry one of Sir George's granddaughters. Their fellow justice, Thomas Arden, was head of a Warwickshire family that claimed direct descent from the Saxon lords of Warwick. His estate at Curdworth in north Warwickshire had been held by his ancestor, Thurkil, at the

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<sup>38</sup> Appendix 1, 'Warwickshire justices, 1547-1590'. This list has been revised and updated and supersedes that printed in my thesis.

<sup>39</sup> Wall, 'The Greatest Disgrace', 328-332.

<sup>40</sup> P. Marshall, 'Crisis of Allegiance: George Throckmorton and Henry Tudor', in P. Marshall and G. Scott (eds.), *Catholic Gentry in English Society, The Throckmortons of Coughton from Reformation to Emancipation* (Farnham, 2009), 31-68, is the most recent analysis of Sir George's political career.

time of the Norman Conquest.<sup>41</sup> In around 1552, Arden's grandson and heir, Edward, also married one of Sir George's grand-daughters. However, William Lucy (d. 1551) and his fellow justice, John Hales, were a sign of things to come. In contrast to most of the others on the 1547 commission, they were the most important supporters of reformed religion in Warwickshire during this period.

Two other significant kinship networks were represented. Their social status could not match those such as the Throckmortons, Catesbys and Lucys but they had two attributes that kept them at the heart of the Warwickshire magistracy for decades – legal knowledge and wealth. The kinship network of William Wigston (kntd. 1553) was a constant presence on the commission until the end of the sixteenth century. In 1547 the commission included his half-brother, Edward Pye, and his brother-in-law, Giles Forster. Another brother-in-law, John Higford, joined them on the commission by 1548 and in 1552 Edward Aglionby, a close associate of the Dudleys, by then dominant at the Edwardian court, joined this network by marrying Forster's widow.<sup>42</sup> After Elizabeth's accession, Aglionby had an exceptionally long and stable career, ending his life as recorder of Coventry, Warwick and Stratford-on-Avon.<sup>43</sup> The second network centred on William Willington, who had amassed such a fortune as a merchant of the staple that in the 1549 subsidy lists the next richest (Sir Richard Catesby) was assessed at £300 less.<sup>44</sup> His money bought his daughters' marriages to the heirs of three men amongst the first five listed while another justice, Robert Middlemore, was

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<sup>41</sup> A. Williams and G. H. Martin (eds.), *Domesday book: a complete translation* (London, 2003), 659.

<sup>42</sup> Adams, 'The Dudley clientele', 204. In 1557 Edward Pye referred to 'my sayd brother' Aglionby in his will, Lichfield Record Office, B/C/11.

<sup>43</sup> Hasler (ed.), 'Edward Aglionby', *House of Commons, 1558–1603*, I, 297-8.

<sup>44</sup> TNA, E179/193/183-4, Warwickshire subsidy rolls for 1549.

Willington's step-son. Also on the 1547 commission was Richard Newport, later step-father to the Hattons. The four Warwickshire hundreds roughly corresponded to the points of the compass, with about a third of the justices living in Hemlingford (north) and only three in Kineton (south).<sup>45</sup> Five and seven were appointed from Barlichway (west) and Knightlow (east) respectively.

The main challenge facing Mary I in 1553 was the absence of local peers to appoint in Warwickshire, given the fall of the dukes of Northumberland and Suffolk. While nine peers and officers of state were named in the 1547 commission, only three were named to that of 1554, with another added by 1555. Ironically, the only local peer that Mary found to lead Warwickshire's commission was the Protestant earl of Huntingdon, Francis Hastings, who had avoided the fall-out caused by the attempt to establish Lady Jane Grey as queen in 1553 by judicious support of both the queen's and his own interests in thwarting the revolt of Lady Jane Grey's father, the duke of Suffolk.<sup>46</sup> Of the twenty-five gentry appointed in 1547, eleven magistrates retained their positions in 1554. Of those not reappointed, the majority had died and about half were replaced by another member of their immediate family. Known Catholics/conservatives such as Humphrey Dymock, Sir Robert Throckmorton, Edward Greville, John Somerville and Sir William Wigston, and known Protestants such as Clement Throckmorton, Sir Fulke Greville and John Fisher of Packington continued to serve alongside each other under Mary as they had under Edward. The exile of John Hales and the youth of Thomas Lucy, now head of the Lucy family but still only in his mid-twenties, made it easier to omit

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<sup>45</sup> The figure for Kineton includes Sir Richard Catesby. Though officially in Kineton Hundred, his main estate was geographically between Barlichway and Hemlingford.

<sup>46</sup> D. Loades, *Two Tudor Conspiracies* (Cambridge, 1965), 33-4.

those with advanced Protestant beliefs during Mary's reign. Sir Richard Verney (d. 1567), a former member of John Dudley's (d. 1554) household, was probably the man who had been closest to the Dudleys during Edward's reign.<sup>47</sup> However, Sir Richard's activities during this time are unknown and he did not hold any office in Warwickshire until the accession of Elizabeth.

Elizabeth's early reign is represented by four surviving commissions including one from very early on, in December 1558/January 1559. When supplemented by the pipe rolls, it is clear that during Elizabeth's reign the Warwickshire commission underwent some dramatic changes. Robert Dudley's appointment as lord lieutenant in 1559/60 showed an early willingness by Elizabeth to re-associate the family with Warwickshire.<sup>48</sup> Sir Robert Throckmorton's appointment as deputy lieutenant acknowledged his county position, despite his well-known commitment to Queen Mary.<sup>49</sup> However, in a hugely significant move, in 1560 Robert Dudley started negotiations with Sir Robert in order to obtain those offices Throckmorton had been granted by Mary.<sup>50</sup> Seventeen of the gentry named to the commission of 1555 remained on it in 1558/59. Most of these were from long-standing Warwickshire families such as the Throckmortons, Grevilles, Feildings, Shuckburghs and Middlemores and reflected the situation at the beginning of Mary's reign, in which there was no major displacement of local gentry. This group included Catholics such as Sir Robert Throckmorton and Richard Newport, and men with Catholic sympathies such as John Somerville and

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<sup>47</sup> Adams, 'The Dudley clientele, 1553-63', 154.

<sup>48</sup> Adams, 'Because I am of that countrye', 335.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> Adams, 'Because I am of that countrye', 321.

Thomas Fisher, suggesting that at this early point in Elizabeth's reign, personal religious tendencies mattered less than local position. Four of the new appointments – Thomas Lucy, Sir Richard Verney, Sir William Devereux and Richard Knevett – support Simon Adams's claim that the duke of Northumberland's clientele largely regrouped around his sons after Elizabeth's accession.<sup>51</sup> All were Protestants with prior connections to Northumberland and had not been on the Warwickshire bench during the Marian period. The appointment of Thomas Lucy and Sir Richard Verney, both based in Kineton Hundred and connected through the marriage of Lucy's sister to Verney's heir, not only marked the return to the bench of the two families most likely to have maintained connections with the Dudleys in Mary's reign but also the start of a power shift from the north to the south of the county.

In 1562, the Warwickshire commission shrank dramatically. Although this happened during a period in which the reduction of the number of justices was one of Sir William Cecil's pre-occupations and something that occurred in several counties, it also probably represented the burgeoning Dudley influence on appointments.<sup>52</sup> Reductions on such a scale were not universal. Although the enrolled commission for the neighbouring county of Leicestershire in 1562 was also small, listing only thirteen gentry, this was not a significant change from that of 1554 in which sixteen local men were appointed.<sup>53</sup> In contrast, Warwickshire lost nearly half of its justices over the same period.

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<sup>51</sup> Adams, 'The Dudley clientele, 1553-1563', 151-175.

<sup>52</sup> Hassell Smith, *County and Court*, 81-2.

<sup>53</sup> *Calendar of Patent Rolls (hereafter CPR)*, Mary I, 1553-1554, 21, appointments in Leicestershire.



Twelve of the gentry listed had been appointed in 1558/59 and three apparently new appointments were made. The pipe rolls suggests that the longest-serving of these, Edward Aglionby, had occurred by 1559, likely given his local connection with Sir William Wigston and his patronage relationship with the Dudleys. Although half of those not reappointed had died, another four omitted - Richard Newport, John Somerville, Ralph Brome and Thomas Fisher - all had Catholic or conservative sympathies. However, Warwickshire's most prominent Catholic, Sir Robert Throckmorton, maintained his position as did conservatives such as Sir William Wigston and Robert Middlemore, suggesting that religious allegiance had still not become a definitive reason for exclusion. Nevertheless, an early strike against Sir Robert Throckmorton can be seen in the enrolled commission for 1563/64 where Sir Anthony Cooke, Sir William Cecil's father-in-law, was named above him. Although Sir Anthony had property in Warwickshire, he never appeared on the pipe rolls and has left no trace of involvement in county politics beyond his apparently symbolic position as the first-named the gentry appointments to the commission, a place that had been taken by a Throckmorton for two generations.

These commissions confirm that by the early 1560s appointment to the Warwickshire bench was available to far fewer men than had previously been the case. Even so, Throckmorton dominance of the bench continued in the first decade of Elizabeth's reign and Sir Robert Throckmorton's attendance at quarter sessions seems to have increased during the 1560s, possibly in response to a perceived threat to his status. The appointment of Thomas Throckmorton in the early 1560s, alongside his father and two uncles (Clement and John) represented a sizeable

Throckmorton presence amongst the magistracy. Despite different religious convictions, Clement, John and Robert seem to have maintained good relationships during the 1560s and 1570s. While Peter Marshall has suggested that a loosening of family ties may have occurred 'as the horizontal bonds of fraternity became dispersed through second and subsequent generations', this was a development that took place later in Elizabeth's reign.<sup>54</sup> Other active justices during this period included Sir William Wigston, Simon Arden, Robert Middlemore and William Devereux while Edward Aglionby and Sir Thomas Lucy consolidated their dominant positions. Simon Adams has noted the diversity of religious allegiance amongst the Dudley clientele, and one of the earls' most important officers, Sir John Hubaud, was believed in 1564 to retain conservative sympathies.<sup>55</sup> Personal loyalty and professional expertise probably allowed those such as Wigston and Hubaud to retain their positions. Sir Robert Throckmorton possessed personal connections, influence and wealth that were very much more considerable. It was these attributes, as well as his unwavering Catholicism, that made his position different from theirs. Local clientele with conservative tendencies were not a problem. Powerful Catholics were.

By 1569, the year of the northern rebellion, the relationship between the earls of Warwick and Leicester with the political elite in Warwickshire was well-established and can be traced through the survival of a group of documents mostly

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<sup>54</sup> P. Marshall, *Faith and Identity in a Warwickshire Family: the Throckmortons and the Reformation*, Dugdale Society Occasional Papers, 49 (Dug. Soc. with Shakespeare Birthplace Trust, 2010), 19.

<sup>55</sup> Adams, 'Because I am of that cuntrye', 338-9; M. Bateson (ed.), 'A Collection of Original Letters from the Bishops to the Privy Council, 1564', *Camden Miscellany IX* (London, 1895), 13.

related to county matters for that year.<sup>56</sup> Krista Kesselring's recent account of the rebellion led by the earls of Westmorland and Northumberland has restored religion as the heart of the matter, noting that 'despite the historiographical focus on them [the earls] as the last defenders of a defunct feudal order, they clearly understood their grievances in terms of religion and were driven by others to act.'<sup>57</sup> In mid-November 1569, Ambrose Dudley, appointed with Lord Clinton to lead the army against the rebels, stopped at Warwick on his way north, while Edward Aglionby was given responsibility for the treasure to be used to pay the troops, travelling north with it in January 1569/70.<sup>58</sup> The rebellion had other consequences for Warwickshire as in November Mary Stuart was moved to the Guild Hall in Coventry, where she remained until early January 1569/70.<sup>59</sup> At the same time, Sir Nicholas Throckmorton became a key figure in the negotiations over a potential marriage between Mary, queen of Scots and the duke of Norfolk, an episode in which the motivation of those such as Throckmorton and Leicester has still not been satisfactorily resolved.<sup>60</sup>

Throughout this explosive period, Sir Nicholas's Catholic brother, Sir Robert Throckmorton, remained one of the most prominent figures in Warwickshire and was first named in the muster commission sent to the county in March 1569.<sup>61</sup> This was followed by a request from the commissioners on 5 April 1569 for Sir Fulke Greville, Thomas Throckmorton, Henry Goodere and Edward Aglionby to be

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<sup>56</sup> TNA, SP12/61, fos. 1-68.

<sup>57</sup> K. Kesselring, *The Northern Rebellion of 1569: Faith, Politics and Protest in Elizabethan England* (Basingstoke, 2007), 56.

<sup>58</sup> TNA, SP12/66/27.

<sup>59</sup> P. Collinson, *The English Captivity of Mary, Queen of Scots* (Sheffield, 1987), 31.

<sup>60</sup> Kesselring, *Northern Rebellion*, 35-8.

<sup>61</sup> TNA, SP12/61, fos 14-15.

appointed to serve with them.<sup>62</sup> Those named were fellow justices and their known religious views were varied, ranging from outright Catholicism to moderate Protestantism. Shortly afterwards the additional commissioners were added as requested, suggesting that the religious allegiances of the commissioners were not a concern at this point.<sup>63</sup> With the new commissioners in place, the muster certificate requested in the original commission was prepared and submitted to the council in June 1569, signed by Sir Robert Throckmorton, Sir Thomas Lucy and Sir William Wigston.<sup>64</sup> However, it was the beginning of the end for Sir Robert's pre-eminence in Warwickshire. The certificate was 'not very well acceptid of the Counsaill especially by therle of Leicester because of the smaleness of the number c[er]tyfied wherupon the lords directed other l[ett]ers to the commiss[ion]ers' and the Warwickshire commissioners found themselves required to reconsider their numbers.<sup>65</sup>

It is possible that the rejection of the certificate was a direct challenge to Sir Robert's authority in the county, designed to question his loyalty. When the commission next met, on 24 July 1569, it resulted in 'articles and orders agreed upon' by only Sir William Wigston, Sir Thomas Lucy, Sir William Devereux, Clement Throckmorton and Edward Aglionby.<sup>66</sup> Whether Sir Robert or his son Thomas attended is unclear but neither seems to have served on the muster commission in Warwickshire again. In November, Ambrose Dudley appointed Sir

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<sup>62</sup> TNA, SP12/61, fo. 19r; the signatories to this letter were Sir Robert Throckmorton, Sir William Wigston, Sir Thomas Lucy, Sir William Devereux and Clement Throckmorton.

<sup>63</sup> TNA, SP12/61, fo. 19v.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, SP12/51/9 and 9.1 appear to be the original letter and certificate.

<sup>65</sup> TNA, SP12/61 fo. 20r.

<sup>66</sup> TNA, SP12/61. fo. 21v.

Thomas Lucy and Sir Fulke Greville as his deputy lieutenants in the county.<sup>67</sup> Although the easy explanation is to see the disappearance from the commission of the Catholic Throckmortons as one consequence of the Dudley ascendancy against a backdrop of the northern rebellion in which the restoration of Catholicism was a stated aim, it may not have been quite so straightforward. It is possible that Sir Robert and Thomas were provoked, their removal seen as necessary by a council that was concerned about local leaders with suspect loyalties mustering against Elizabeth, an issue that surfaced during the rebellion.<sup>68</sup> It would also seem that while the Throckmortons were gone from the muster commission, their removal from the Warwickshire bench was neither a foregone conclusion nor one necessarily sought by their fellow justices.

In November 1569, the request for justices to subscribe to the Act of Uniformity was sent out by the privy council. By the end of December, over fifteen other counties had returned their subscriptions, including the neighbouring counties of Worcestershire and Leicestershire.<sup>69</sup> In Warwickshire, the situation was different. In January 1570, justices led by Sir Thomas Lucy and Sir William Devereux wrote to the council, explaining that some of their fellow justices 'have required respect to consider of such pointes as they are in doubt of' and that 'uppon their request to us, wee have assigned them tyme to consider thereof'.<sup>70</sup> The justices were playing for time and it is likely that it was with Sir Robert and

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<sup>67</sup> TNA, SP12/61, fo. 67v.

<sup>68</sup> Kesselring, *Northern Rebellion*, 63-64, notes that 'the muster books for the border region had been stolen during the rising, presumably for use by the rebels' and that 'so too, did they [the earls] also hijack musters ordered by Sussex and his agents'.

<sup>69</sup> *Cal. State Papers*, Elizabeth, I, 1569, 350-8; subscriptions sent in from (at least) Surrey, Sussex, Berks, Herts, Dorset, Norfolk, Kent, Devon, Essex, Suffolk, Leics, Worcs, Herefs, Cornwall, Chester.

<sup>70</sup> TNA, SP12/66/28.

Thomas Throckmorton in mind that they went to such efforts to avoid submitting full subscription. Eventually, four months after the original request, the leading JPs wrote to the council in March 1570, attaching the list of subscribers. Even so, the letter was carefully worded with reference to the non-subscription of Sir Robert and Thomas Throckmorton, saying that Sir Robert 'before the receipte of your first l[ett]res and ever sins hath lyen in Buckinghamshire' and that 'Thomas Throckmorton, who lately came from London very sicke [...] so remayneth as we are enformed'.<sup>71</sup> The other non-subscriber, Robert Middlemore, had no excuses proffered in his favour and probably subscribed soon afterwards, as he was listed on commissions and the pipe rolls until around 1573.

The response of the leading magistrates such as Sir Thomas Lucy and Sir William Wigston to the Throckmortons' refusal to sign suggests that there was still a measure of unity between Sir Robert and the other magistrates during 1569/70 and that there was probably some hope that the Throckmortons could be persuaded to sign. The steadfast refusal of the Warwickshire justices to submit their subscription well after other counties had submitted theirs can be seen not just as an act of political independence but one that acknowledged the gravity of removing the Throckmortons from the bench. Nevertheless, by the summer of 1570 the Throckmortons of Coughton were gone from the commission of the peace. While the reference by the justices to Sir Robert's residence in Buckinghamshire was true, it was only ever partially true. Henceforth, the Throckmortons would both be of the county and not of it – included as those

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<sup>71</sup> TNA, SP12/67/24.

required to provide horse and men for musters, described as of the county in legal documents but as far as local office went, officially absent.<sup>72</sup>

The commission now changed dramatically. Even though the absence of extant commissions between 1564 and 1573 leaves us reliant on the pipe rolls, it is clear that a significant group of new justices came onto the commission between 1569 and 1573 and remained there until the end of the 1580s. By 1573 the number of gentry on the Warwickshire bench had risen to a total of twenty-three. Only eleven justices remained from the commission of 1564.<sup>73</sup> Edward Aglionby and Sir Thomas Lucy continued their exceptional level of service. Sir John Hubaud and Sir William Devereux were also regular appointments in the late 60s and early 70s, as were Clement Throckmorton and Sir William Wigston. However, Clement Throckmorton died in 1573 while Wigston's career started to fade and he was replaced as recorder of Warwick by Edward Aglionby in 1572.<sup>74</sup> The 'flamboyant, if wayward' Henry Goodere was off the commission by 1573 after nearly a decade of regular appointments.<sup>75</sup> Sir Fulke Greville (d. 1606) appeared on the pipe rolls for 1569/70 and started a career on the bench that would endure until his death, acting as *de facto* leader of the county with Sir Thomas Lucy. The new appointments

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<sup>72</sup> APC, 1571-1575, 286, privy council asking Sir Robert Throckmorton, Sir John Littleton, Sir John Hubaud and Ralph Sheldon to mediate in a property dispute; BCA, MS917/496 (Norton 184) refers to Thomas Throckmorton of Coughton; TNA, SP12/142/13.1, 1580 list of gentlemen charged with providing arms and horse includes Sir Robert and Thomas Throckmorton and Sir William Catesby.

<sup>73</sup> The eleven re-appointed from 1564 were Edward Aglionby, Sir Thomas Lucy, Clement Throckmorton, Simon Arden, Anthony Cooke, Sir William Devereux, Basil Feilding, Sir John Hubaud, Robert Middlemore, John Throckmorton, Sir William Wigston.

<sup>74</sup> Kemp (ed.), *Black Book*, 86.

<sup>75</sup> Adams, 'Because I am of that countrye', 334. It is not entirely clear where Goodere's loyalties lay and by 1585 he was again part of the Dudley clientele. Adams, 'Baronial contexts?', 380, 382, 389; Hasler (ed.), 'Henry Goodere', II, 202-3.

represented the biggest change in the composition of the commission since the beginning of Elizabeth's reign.

The great majority of the new magistrates had clear connections to the earls of Warwick and Leicester and their associates. Edward Holte was the stepson of Sir Ambrose Cave and his sister, Margaret, was married to Henry Knollys, son of Sir Francis.<sup>76</sup> Humphrey Ferrers was Edward Holte's brother-in-law and later claimed to have worked for Leicester from around 1569.<sup>77</sup> George Digby and Edward Boughton were personal officers of the Dudleys and both accompanied Leicester to the Netherlands.<sup>78</sup> Thomas Dabridgecourt and his cousin, John Higford, were members of the Wigston kinship network, whose most influential member was the Dudley client, Edward Aglionby. Only the appointments of Anthony and John Shuckburgh and Humphrey Peyto may have reflected traditional patterns of appointment related to local standing and local need. The pipe rolls and the *libris pacis* suggest that these justices enjoyed either consecutive or near-consecutive periods of appointment to the bench. The dominance of this core of Dudley clientele can be most clearly seen in the pipe rolls. These show the move from payments made to county families such as Throckmorton, Arden and Middlemore and a wide range of other local men, to payments made particularly to Lucy, Greville and Aglionby and those appointed between 1569 and 1573.<sup>79</sup>

However, in around 1574 it looks as if those gentry not favoured by the Dudleys started to fight back and it is at this point that Christopher Hatton may

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<sup>76</sup> TNA, PROB11/54, fos. 66r-67r, will of Sir Ambrose Cave.

<sup>77</sup> Adams, 'Because I am of that countrye', 402, n.36.

<sup>78</sup> Adams, 'Because I am of that countrye', 333.

<sup>79</sup> Appendix 2, showing selected entries from the pipe rolls.



have started to act as an alternative source of patronage. From the mid-1570s to the early 1580s, the Warwickshire bench can be roughly divided into those who were associates of the Dudleys and those who were not. Of those who were not, the common thread is a connection either to Hatton or to the legal establishment, which may have amounted to one and the same thing. In 1574/75, Sir John Throckmorton re-appeared in the pipe rolls, nine years after his last appearance. This was the year after Clement's death and may have been Sir John's attempt to retain some Throckmorton influence in the county. In November 1574, Sir Robert Throckmorton's son-in-law, Edward Arden, was appointed sheriff. More importantly, the pipe rolls suggest that he was appointed to the bench in 1576 and in 1577 he was listed on the commission. Edward Arden was a major landowner in Warwickshire and from a long-established magisterial family. However, it was not Edward who became a regular magistrate in the county but his uncle, Simon Arden. Simon Arden was first appointed to the bench in 1558, aged around sixty. He was then regularly appointed until 1584, even though he did not appear on the pipe rolls after 1568 and seems to have lived Staffordshire after 1569.<sup>80</sup> It is possible that Simon Arden's appointment provided some kind of pretext for not appointing Edward, even though appointments within the same family were very common. Nevertheless, Simon's appointment acknowledges the Arden expectation of a place on the bench and raises further questions about Edward's exclusion. By 1575 it seems as if the relationship between Edward Arden and the earl of Leicester was one of deep personal animosity and Arden's execution in 1583 was

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<sup>80</sup> *VCH. Staffs.*, N. Tringham (ed.), X, 288-9.

attributed to the enmity of the earl.<sup>81</sup> While it is clear that Arden's supporters were often Catholics, it is likely that the accusation was not without some basis in fact. Likewise, the later accounts given by Camden and Dugdale cannot simply be dismissed as gossip, given their contacts in Warwickshire, the specific details that they give of the feud and the strong position that both men take on this episode.<sup>82</sup> Edward Arden's appointment to the bench is therefore significant in suggesting political tension in Warwickshire, particularly coming at a time when Arden Waferer was working for both Arden and Christopher Hatton. In 1577, Arden's brother-in-law, Sir William Catesby, also absent from office until this point, became sheriff. The acquisition of office by Arden and Catesby also suggests that their usual exclusion was not sought but imposed.

Another new appointment to the bench in 1577 was the anti-puritan lawyer Edmund Anderson, who had bought property in the county in 1567.<sup>83</sup> Moreover, Anderson's 'inflexible conservatism' was at odds with the position of many of the justices associated with the Dudleys. The commission for the same year also suggests that Anderson's fellow Inner Templar, Francis Gawdy, was appointed as

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<sup>81</sup> L. Hicks (ed.), *Letters of Father Persons*, 2 vols. (CRS, 39, 1942), I, 192-3; J. H. Pollen (ed.), *The English Martyrs* (CRS, 5, 1908), 303-5; R. Kingdon (ed.), *The Execution of Justice in England by William Cecil and A True Sincere and Modest Defense of English Catholics by William Allen* (New York, 1965), 108-9.

<sup>82</sup> W. Camden, '1583', *Annales* (1625) <<http://www.philological.bham.ac.uk/camden>>; W. Dugdale, *The Antiquities of Warwickshire* (1656), 931; J. Broadway, 'Aberrant Accounts: William Dugdale's Handling of Two Murders in The Antiquities of Warwickshire', *Midland History*, 33, 1 (2008), 19; although not the focus of the article, Broadway notes Dugdale's rejection of Arden's guilt. See also J. Broadway, 'No history so meete', *Gentry Culture and the Development of Local History in Elizabethan and Early Stuart England* (Manchester, 2006), 161. The manor in question is Curdworth and served to emphasise the ancient connection between the Ardens and Warwickshire. A brief account of the relationship between Edward Arden and the earl of Leicester and the most recent analysis of Arden's subsequent trial is in C. Enis, 'The Warwickshire gentry and the Dudley ascendancy, 1547-1590' (University of Reading PhD thesis, 2011) 134-7, 184-196.

<sup>83</sup> *VCH. Warks*, L. Salzman (ed.), IV, 176; G. C. de Parmiter described Anderson as having 'a hatred of every kind of non-conformity', *Edmund Plowden*, CRS, monograph 4 (London, 1987), 141.

one of the assize judges for Warwickshire alongside the long-term appointment, Sir James Dyer. Gawdy was another conservative who 'may have harboured Catholic sympathies' and his association with Sir Christopher Hatton was cemented in the late 1580s when his daughter married Hatton's heir.<sup>84</sup> Differences between the Warwickshire justices associated with the Dudleys and the assize judges had surfaced in 1574, when a public reprimand by Sir James Dyer sufficiently offended justices including Sir Thomas Lucy and Sir Fulke Greville that they complained to the Privy Council.<sup>85</sup> While Dyer left the earl of Leicester a bequest in his will, he was also a friend to Warwickshire lawyers such as William Underhill, Dorothy Hatton's second husband.<sup>86</sup> Although his differences with the justices apparently related to the blind eye they were turning to the shady land-dealings of Sir John Conway, Dyer accused the justices of 'a generall slacknes of ther dueties' and suggested that they acted 'as plesed them'.<sup>87</sup> Anderson stayed on the Warwickshire commission until at least 1590, but in 1579 Dyer was joined by Thomas Meade as assize judge for the county and Gawdy did not appear on the commission. Nevertheless, the appointment of assize judges in the county suggests those with conservative views were strongly favoured. After Dyer's death in 1582 his place was taken by Robert Shute, whose daughter married Sir Christopher Hatton's cousin, John.<sup>88</sup> Thomas Meade died in 1584, leaving the way

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<sup>84</sup> *Oxf. DNB.*, D. Ibbetson, 'Gawdy, Sir Francis (d. 1605)' (Jan 2008).

<sup>85</sup> *APC*, 1574, 277.

<sup>86</sup> TNA, PROB11/90, fos. 473r-474r, will of William Underhill. Underhill described Sir James Dyer as 'my frende and master' and appointed him as overseer.

<sup>87</sup> J. H. Baker (ed.), *Reports from the lost notebooks of Sir James Dyer*, 2 vols. (London, 1994), II, 312-8.

<sup>88</sup> Brooks, *Sir Christopher Hatton*, 23; Hasler (ed.), 'Robert Shute', *House of Commons 1558-1603*, III, 379-80; 'Francis Gawdy', II, 178-9. Gawdy's entry states that he was usually employed as an assize judge on the home or eastern circuits. Nevertheless, his position on the commissions of the

clear for the reappearance of Gawdy. While the appointment of men such as Arden, Catesby, Anderson, Shute and Gawdy is suggestive of Hatton's influence, particularly given his appointment to the privy council in 1577, it is obviously not conclusive. It is also clear that if Hatton did start to act as an alternative source of influence in the county at some point during the mid-1570s, it has to be asked why he was doing so. The most likely answer is that Hatton was active in Warwickshire in order to prevent Dudley patronage leading to the overwhelming dominance of those in favour of further Protestant reform. This is borne out by further evidence of Hatton's interference in Warwickshire politics during the mid-1570s through his suspected involvement in the suppression of the prophesyings.

In 1576 the Puritan prophesyings at Southam, which had been going on since the early 1570s, were again provoking unease at court, an unease that apparently originated with 'sundry of the bishops and sundry also of her justices of circuit'.<sup>89</sup> The letters between the Puritan Thomas Wood and the earls of Warwick and Leicester after the suppression of the prophesyings make the connection between the prophesyings and the earls clear.<sup>90</sup> Ambrose Dudley also wrote to Wood that:

'I will then give yow to understand of one that carieth the countenance of a very precyse fellow and a preacher of no small reputacion, who hath used my brother so vyllenously as never vyle person did use any noble man. I can term him no otherwise, considering he was most bound to my brother of any creature in the world.'<sup>91</sup>

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peace available for 1584, both of which contain some emendations up to 1587, suggests he may have also served on the midland circuit.

<sup>89</sup> P. Collinson, *The Elizabethan Puritan Movement* (London, 1967), 193, *Godly People: Essays on English Protestantism and Puritanism* (London, 1983), 375-8.

<sup>90</sup> P. Collinson (ed.), *Letters of Thomas Wood, Puritan, 1566-1577* (London, 1960), reprinted in *Godly People*.

<sup>91</sup> Collinson, *Godly People*, 93.

The preacher described is possibly John Aylmer, who had been part of the Grey clientele and a Marian exile.<sup>92</sup> Robert Dudley may have helped Aylmer in the early 1560s, even if this friendship did not result in the office he craved.<sup>93</sup> By the 1570s Aylmer was clearly seeking patronage elsewhere and he owed his 1576 appointment as bishop of London to Christopher Hatton, an appointment that also shows how influential Hatton was by this point.<sup>94</sup> Hatton's involvement in the suppression of the prophesyings has long been suspected. Patrick Collinson has suggested that 'there remains the possibility that the affair in its innerness was an episode in the upward progress of the particular favourite of the hour, Christopher Hatton'.<sup>95</sup> Peter Lake also attributes the suppression of the prophesyings as crucial to the rise of the 'Hatton/Aylmer nexus', noting that 'also rising in and through these events – making his final breakthrough from favourite/courtier to councillor – was Sir Christopher Hatton'.<sup>96</sup> Certainly, by 1577 Hatton had formed an enduring alliance with John Whitgift, later archbishop of Canterbury, and Aylmer.<sup>97</sup>

The events at court surrounding the suppression, which were no local spat but a shift in religious policy that resulted in the suspension of Archbishop Grindal, have been analysed in detail by Patrick Collinson.<sup>98</sup> Central to the political fallout from the prophesyings was Leicester's own role in their suppression. While it might be true that Patrick Collinson's earlier depiction of the Midlands as 'strongly

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<sup>92</sup> *Oxf. DNB.*, B. Usher, 'Aylmer, John' (Jan 2008).

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>94</sup> W. MacCaffrey, *Queen Elizabeth and the Making of Policy, 1572-1588* (Princeton, 1981), 452.

<sup>95</sup> Collinson, *Godly People*, 378, *Elizabethan Puritan Movement*, 193-4.

<sup>96</sup> P. Lake, 'A Tale of Two Episcopal Surveys: the strange fates of Edmund Grindal and Cuthbert Mayne Revisited', *Trans. Royal Hist. Soc.*, 18 (2008), 135.

<sup>97</sup> Collinson, *Elizabethan Puritan Movement*, 193-4, 259; *Oxf. DNB.*, MacCaffrey, 'Hatton, Christopher'.

<sup>98</sup> Collinson, *Elizabethan Puritan Movement*, 167, 191-6; *Godly People*, 60-9, 371-397.

Puritan' has been modified, it is clear that the Dudleys favoured those who favoured reform and that a Protestant Warwickshire led by the earls of Warwick and Leicester might lead to politically divisive extremism.<sup>99</sup> Collinson has considered Leicester's religious identity in the light of Wood's letters and although Simon Adams questions the precise extent of Leicester's personal religious commitment, there is no doubt that he and the earl of Warwick were hugely significant sources of patronage for those in favour of further Protestant reform.<sup>100</sup> As Patrick Collinson has written 'so notorious was Leicester's familiarity with these circles that the author of *Leycester's Commonwealth* could plausibly present the preaching communions held in gentlemen's houses in the Midlands as secret meetings of Leicester's faction.'<sup>101</sup>

Those involved with the prophesyings were closely connected to Warwickshire's Protestant elite. John Oxenbridge, the moderator and rector of Southam, was a friend of John Hales' brother, Stephen. Another Hales brother, Christopher, was married to Sir Thomas Lucy's sister, Bridget.<sup>102</sup> In 1566, Sir Richard Knightley, alongside Clement Throckmorton and Sir Thomas Lucy, had been appointed to the body set up by the earl of Leicester to support the preaching of the gospel.<sup>103</sup> That local justices supported the prophesyings is clear, although not all were identified.<sup>104</sup> Knightley was definitely involved while Clement

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<sup>99</sup> Collinson, *Godly People*, 53. Collinson, *Letters of Thomas Wood*, xvi-xl.

<sup>100</sup> Adams, 'A Godly Peer? Leicester and the Puritans', 225-234.

<sup>101</sup> Collinson, *Godly People*, 69.

<sup>102</sup> C. H. Garrett, *The Marian Exiles: a Study in the Origins of English Puritanism* (Cambridge, 1938), 171.

<sup>103</sup> W. J. Sheils, *The Puritans In the Diocese of Peterborough, 1558-1610* (Northants. Rec. Soc., 30, 1979), 33; Adams, 'Because I am of that countrey', 338.

<sup>104</sup> Sheils, *Puritans in the Diocese of Peterborough*, 33; Collinson, *Elizabethan Puritan Movement*, 193.

Throckmorton had acquired a part-share in the manor in the early 1570s, perhaps giving rise to the reference in *Leicester's Commonwealth* to 'his fair pastures foully procured by Southam'.<sup>105</sup> The acquisition is likely to have been related to Oxenbridge's appointment in 1571 as the purchase gave the Throckmortons of Haseley control of the advowson.<sup>106</sup> Collinson's account accepts that given the queen's determination to suppress the prophesyings, Leicester had no choice but to comply, even though it provoked grave censure from those Protestants to whom he was closest.<sup>107</sup> Although he tried to limit the consequences for the justices involved, it is clear that the earl's ability to offer patronage and protection to the Protestants seeking reform was disrupted. While Collinson noted that Leicester's response to Thomas Wood's reproaches were 'eloquent of the value he placed on his reputation in these circles', the damage to the earl has probably been understated.<sup>108</sup>

The suppression of the prophesyings has been positioned by Lake as part of an emergent ideological struggle to which the reforming Protestants responded by positioning the Catholic threat as both far greater and in need of the kind of opposition that only they could provide.<sup>109</sup> While this framework is particularly relevant to Warwickshire during the 1570s and 1580s, the aftermath of the prophesyings provides one of many examples of how ideological positions could also be strongly affected by personal politics. Lake's 'second survey' refers to the 1577 privy council request to bishops for the names of those who did not go to

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<sup>105</sup> *VCH. Warks.*, VI, 219-226; Peck (ed.), *Leicester's Commonwealth*, 69.

<sup>106</sup> *VCH Warks.*, VI, 219-226; details of Oxenbridge's appointment on <[www.theclergydatabase.org.uk](http://www.theclergydatabase.org.uk)>.

<sup>107</sup> Collinson, *Elizabethan Puritan Movement*, 194, *Letters of Thomas Wood*, 9-24.

<sup>108</sup> Collinson, *Elizabethan Puritan Movement*, 193.

<sup>109</sup> Lake, 'Two Surveys', 136, 138-9, 161.

church in each diocese, a survey directed towards the identification of Catholics.<sup>110</sup> In one of the more interesting letters sent to the council by a Protestant bishop, Thomas Bentham, fed up with interference in his diocese, responded that he did not know of any recusants in Warwickshire and as this was the case, he had not bothered to ask Sir Thomas Lucy and Sir Fulke Greville as the council had directed, thus depriving the Warwickshire gentry of the opportunity to name names while delivering a poke in the eye for Lucy and Greville.<sup>111</sup> If, as Lake argues, this second survey represented the attempt by the council to recalibrate religious policy in favour of the Protestants by playing up the threat from Catholicism, Bentham's reply left them in no doubt that he understood the game but was definitely not playing.<sup>112</sup>

Meanwhile, although over twenty of the gentry on the 1577 commission were re-appointed in 1579, including the usual Dudley associates such as Greville, Lucy, Aglionby, Digby, Boughton and Holte, around ten new appointments were made, taking the number of justices to its highest level since the reign of Mary. This suggests that competition for appointment to the bench was not only intense but that more men were being successful in their quest for the office. Moreover, the new appointments included Sir Christopher Hatton and Lord Berkeley, both of whom were also appointed to the muster commission for the county in the same year.<sup>113</sup> The presence of Hatton and Lord Berkeley, victim of the Dudley revival of the 'Great Berkeley Lawsuit', are suggestive of a shift on the commission borne out

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<sup>110</sup> Ibid., 131.

<sup>111</sup> TNA, SP12/118/17.

<sup>112</sup> Lake, 'Two Surveys', 141.

<sup>113</sup> TNA, SP12/133/14.



by other appointments.<sup>114</sup> Edmund Anderson moved up the commission while a new appointment was Nicholas Buck of Gray's Inn, listed in the returns of recusants in 1577 alongside Arden Waferer, Robert Atkinson and Edmund Plowden.<sup>115</sup> Other appointments included Arthur Gregory, Thomas Knottesford, Thomas Leigh, Edward Fisher and Bartholomew Tate. Bartholomew Tate, who had been MP for Coventry in 1572, was a known client of Sir Christopher Hatton's and also his cousin.<sup>116</sup> Arthur Gregory, one of the few 'gents' who managed to get appointed as a magistrate during this period, almost certainly owed his position to his brother-in-law, Humphrey Ferrers.<sup>117</sup> Gregory did not manage to keep either his magisterial or social position and his career illustrates the lack of mobility between the ordinary gentry and the elite. These men were an intriguing selection and point to an atmosphere of heightened tension in the county that reflected that at court, where the quarrel between Philip Sidney and the earl of Oxford and the publication of *The discoverie of a gaping gulfe* were symptomatic of clashes over policy and the Anjou match.<sup>118</sup> The new justices were keen to make their mark, and Nicholas Buck was listed in the pipe rolls as attending eight days at sessions during 1579/80, while Arthur Gregory was paid for two. Nevertheless, the pipe rolls for the crucial years from 1579 to 1584 show that the majority of justices listed were those

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<sup>114</sup> Adams, 'Because I am of that countrye', 324, 339, 340.

<sup>115</sup> *Miscellanea XII* (CRS, 22, 1921), 103-6.

<sup>116</sup> Hasler (ed.), 'Bartholomew Tate', *House of Commons, 1558-1603*, III, 478-9; SCLA, DR10/823, 12 April 1579, showing Hatton sold Tate lands and tithes in Stivichall (Coventry) that had been granted to Hatton by the Queen the day before, suggesting Tate was the intended recipient.

<sup>117</sup> R. Bearman, *The Gregorys of Stivichall in the Sixteenth Century*, Coventry and Warwickshire History Pamphlets, 8 (Cov. Hist. Assoc., 1972).

<sup>118</sup> Collinson, *Elizabethan Puritan Movement*, 198-99; Doran, *Monarchy and matrimony*, 164-74; N. Mears, 'Counsel, Public Debate and Queenship: John Stubbs's "Discovery of a Gaping Gulf", 1579', *Hist. Journal*, 44, 3 (2001), 629-650. Although these accounts differ in emphasis and historiographical focus, it is clear that 1579 was a year of political turmoil.

appointed in the early 1570s and who were still strongly identified with the Dudleys. In 1578 this group had been joined by Clement Fisher, whose father had worked for both Northumberland and Ambrose Dudley and who was apparently working for Leicester by the mid-1570s.<sup>119</sup>

By 1579 it is clear that even the best-connected patron could not help the Throckmorton kinship network gain any position in Warwickshire and none were appointed to further office in the county. However, this was not a blanket exclusion based on guilt by association but seems to have been specific to their position in Warwickshire. Sir John Goodwin and later, Ralph Sheldon, were appointed in other counties.<sup>120</sup> It is also not possible to blame the omission of the Warwickshire men simply on religion. Neither Arden nor Catesby are known to have refused to take the oaths necessary on assumption of the offices they did gain and although Sir William was on the 1577 lists of recusants in suspect company, he was not accused outright, unlike Sir Robert and Thomas Throckmorton.<sup>121</sup> Nevertheless, although conservatives such as Nicholas Buck and Richard Middlemore managed to maintain their positions for a couple of years, the balance of power in the county had been fatally undermined. The pre-eminence of the Throckmorton kinship network was over and without it there were simply no gentry families with the wealth, status and connections necessary to counter-balance the influence of the

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<sup>119</sup> Adams, 'Because I am of that countrye', 333; Univ. Nott., Middleton MSS, MiDa 80/1.

<sup>120</sup> Hasler (ed.), 'Ralph Sheldon', *House of Commons*, III, 374-5; TNA, SP12/93, fo. 5; although Sir John's career suggests outward conformity he may have sympathised with his father-in-law and appeared with his brothers-in-law Tresham and Catesby on the list of people potentially sympathetic to Mary, Queen of Scots. The footnote related to this entry refers to his marriage to Katherine Spencer, who became his second wife after the death of Elizabeth Throckmorton, see Hasler (ed.), *sub* 'Francis Goodwin', *House of Commons, 1558-1603*, II, 204-5.

<sup>121</sup> *Miscellanea XII* (CRS, 22, 1921), 101.

Dudleys, underpinned as it was by the loyalty of the most powerful gentry such as Sir Fulke Greville and Sir Thomas Lucy.

In 1583, Edward Arden and John Somerville were pursued for treason. While the intricacies of this case cannot be explored here, it would seem that the aftermath saw Hatton at least temporarily compromised.<sup>122</sup> The Dudleys now had the upper hand in Warwickshire and the two *libri* that exist for the year 1584 are very similar and suggest that the Warwickshire magistracy now became even more strongly Protestant. Omissions by 1584 included Nicholas Buck, Sir John Conway, Leonard Dannett, Arthur Gregory and Thomas Knottesford. The ill-fated Edward Fisher had become subject to prosecution for fraud regarding the sale of his estate in Warwick to John Puckering.<sup>123</sup> Puckering's attempt to buy Fisher's estate is interesting and supports the case that the legal establishment proved part of the solution to concerns about the strength of the Puritan movement in Warwickshire. Certainly, it is clear that Puckering worked closely with Christopher Hatton in opposing Puritan actions in parliament in both 1584/85 and 1586/87 and after Ambrose Dudley's death Puckering took a more active role in the county while his son made it his permanent home.<sup>124</sup> Also appointed in 1584 were William Purefoy and Robert Burgoyne, both advanced Protestants.<sup>125</sup> Richard Verney, grandson to Sir Richard and nephew to Sir Thomas Lucy, was appointed for the first time, re-

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<sup>122</sup> Pollen (ed.), *English Martyrs*, 305.

<sup>123</sup> *Oxf. DNB.*, A. Dyer, sub 'Fisher, Thomas' (2004).

<sup>124</sup> Hasler (ed.), 'John Puckering', *House of Commons, 1558-1603*, III, 256-8; Collinson, *Elizabethan Puritan Movement*, 303, 311-14; A. Thrush & J. P. Ferris (eds.), 'Thomas Puckering', *House of Commons, 1604-1629* (London: 2010), III.

<sup>125</sup> TNA, PROB11/121, fos. 344r-346r, will of Robert Burgoyne. Burgoyne left a bequest to the minister Hercules Cleveley, connected to those ministers prosecuted in Star Chamber, see Collinson, *Elizabethan Puritan Movement*, 426. William Purefoy was the grandfather of the Civil War leader.

establishing the Verney family as a significant presence in the county. However, the Warwickshire commission never became completely unbalanced and the recognition that lawyers could not entirely compensate for the disappearance of established gentry is probably the reason for the increased visibility of Sir Thomas Leigh and Sir John Harington. It is likely that Leigh and Harington, neither of whom was reform-minded, were an attempt to reassure the more conservative elements in the county.<sup>126</sup> Sir Thomas Leigh, who appeared on all the pipe rolls from 1578 to 1590, became much more active in the county during the 1580s, while Sir John Harington was the most significant new appointment during this time and he appeared on the pipe rolls from 1584 to at least 1590. In 1587 he was appointed as deputy lieutenant with Sir Thomas Lucy and Sir Fulke Greville.<sup>127</sup> Although Sir John had estates in Warwickshire and Rutland, his career suggests a preference for life as a courtier.<sup>128</sup> His appearance on the political landscape of the county was reminiscent of that of Sir Fulke Greville, nearly two decades earlier, in that it may have been driven by the court rather than the county. Episcopal nervousness over the Warwickshire bench can be seen in the appointment of Bishop Freake, recently moved to Worcester from Norwich where his activities saw him labeled as the scourge of the Puritans.<sup>129</sup> Freake's appointment to the Warwickshire commission in 1584 was the first time in Elizabeth's reign that the bishop of Worcester had been appointed.

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<sup>126</sup> G. Kilroy, *Edmund Campion: Memory and Transcription* (Ashgate, 2005), 91, notes that Harington was one of the fictional jury empanelled by Sir John Harington the poet to judge *A new discourse on a stale subject*. It was a decidedly conservative bunch, led by the earl of Northumberland, Viscount Montague and Lord Lumley and included Ralph Sheldon.

<sup>127</sup> *Cal. Pat. Rolls*, Elizabeth I, 1586–87, 1278.

<sup>128</sup> *Oxf. DNB.*, J. Broadway, 'Harington, John, first Baron Harington of Exton (1539/40–1613)', (Oct 2005).

<sup>129</sup> *Oxf. DNB.*, C. S. Knighton, 'Freake, Edmund (c.1516–1591)', (Jan 2008).

The changing nature of the Warwickshire commission illustrates a conflict over the confessional identity of the Elizabethan state which acknowledged that the support for further religious reform of some of Elizabeth's leading councillors was capable of producing unwelcome levels of division. While it is clear that any political differences that existed between Leicester and Hatton were about a lot more than who got to be a magistrate in Warwickshire, it also shows how useful analysis of the commissions can be in the attempt to link events at court with those in the localities. Used carefully, the pipe rolls can be a useful source and the increase in days claimed for may represent more than the extension of sessions from one to two days. While the number of those attending remained broadly stable, years including 1573/4, 1581/2 and 1583/4 show spikes in frequency of attendance that may have been connected to political conflict. While firm conclusions require further analysis, such spikes could represent either a show of force by a particular group of magistrates or division between them, meaning more magistrates attending the same sessions. Moreover, the eventual balancing of the reforming Protestants on the Warwickshire bench with moderates such as Leigh and Harington and lawyers such as Anderson rather than the powerful Catholic Throckmorton network was clever and sophisticated politics. This reflected the situation at court, where Elizabeth's attempts to safeguard the stability of her state through the drive for conformity led by Hatton and Whitgift need not preclude her acknowledgement of the absolute loyalty of the Dudleys or her personal approval of their activities.

It would be a mistake to see the Dudleys' marginalisation of the Throckmorton kinship network as proof of the desire for power so successfully

spun by *Leicester's Commonwealth*. It is likely that it was essential not just to the earls' own political dominance in the county but also to national political stability. The Dudleys' conviction that it could not be trusted may well have been correct. As Michael Questier has pointed out, if English Catholics were largely firm loyalists, then 'it is difficult to explain exactly why the regime associated loyal, quiescent, largely gentrified Catholicism with the spectre of a rampant fifth column waiting only until they saw the Spaniards coming ashore to rise up in revolt'.<sup>130</sup> The explanation, as Questier implies, is that men such as Arden, Tresham, Catesby and Sheldon were really, underneath it all, able to contemplate being spectacularly disloyal. Robert Southwell described Edward Arden as 'a friend of Father Parsons, in whose house he used generally to hide' while the involvement of Tresham and Catesby with Campion has been referred to earlier.<sup>131</sup> When it came to Arden's pursuit for treason in 1583, the priest at the heart of the matter, Hugh Hall, was also found to be a close associate of Sheldon and Tresham.<sup>132</sup> Sir Thomas Tresham's famous claims of loyalty might have owed more to political necessity than personal conviction.<sup>133</sup> In 1553, Robert and Ambrose Dudley had seen how crucial the Catholic gentry in East Anglia had been to the success of Mary I in staking her claim to the throne and defeating the short-lived attempt of their father to maintain the queenship of Jane Grey.<sup>134</sup> The Dudleys were not likely to allow such a scenario to arise in Warwickshire, where Mary, Queen of Scots was imprisoned only a few hours' away. Nevertheless, suspect loyalties in the event of

<sup>130</sup> M. Questier, 'Elizabeth and the Catholics', in E. Shagan (ed.), *Catholics and the 'Protestant nation'* (Manchester, 2005), 70.

<sup>131</sup> Pollen (ed.), *English Martyrs*, 305.

<sup>132</sup> TNA, SP12/164/77; Brooks, *Sir Christopher Hatton*, 215.

<sup>133</sup> *Oxf. DNB.*, Lock, 'Tresham, Sir Thomas'.

<sup>134</sup> E. Ives, *Lady Jane Grey, A Tudor Mystery* (Chichester, 2009) 227-231.

a potentially successful challenge to Elizabeth's monarchy are not at all the same as plotting to achieve this. The activities of the Throckmorton kinship network as they sought to maintain their estates and keep their friends were inherently contradictory. Personal relationships, especially those marked by kinship ties, mattered enormously yet the strain caused by the politicisation of religious belief must have stretched some ties to breaking point. The acquisition of office by men such as Arden and Catesby shows their desire to participate in the roles usual for their families even though their religion and their associates placed them in an increasingly precarious position.

The marginalisation of Warwickshire's leading Catholic gentry in the 1570s and the substantial presence of Puritan ministers from the county in the Star Chamber proceedings initiated by Hatton and Whitgift after the deaths of the Dudleys are two aspects of the same struggle.<sup>135</sup> The fact that one was led by the Dudleys and the other by Hatton might be the closest indication we have of their respective political viewpoints. Patrick Collinson's suggestion that Hatton 'may have chosen his church policy as a means of outpointing his principal rival, Leicester', ignores the conservatism of Hatton's personal circle and suggests an ability to manipulate Elizabeth for which there is little evidence.<sup>136</sup> Rather, Sir Christopher was not just the right man in the right place for a queen that could not afford a power struggle among the nobility, he was the right sort of man. The dangers voiced by Sir Francis Knollys in January 1578 in a letter to Thomas Wilson: 'But if the bishop of Canterbury [Grindal] shall be deprived, then up starts

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<sup>135</sup> Collinson, *Elizabethan Puritan Movement*, 409. Of the nine defendants, four were from Warwickshire and three from Northamptonshire, with one each from Staffordshire and Devon.

<sup>136</sup> *Ibid.*, 194. This is also the line taken by MacCaffrey, *Making of Policy*, 452.

the pride and practice of the papists. And then King Richard the Second's men will flock into Court apace and will show themselves in their colours', were clearly recognised by the Queen.<sup>137</sup> While Collinson noted that these men might include Sir James Croft, the earl of Sussex, Lord Henry Howard, Lord Paget, Charles Arundel and Sir Edward Stafford, concluding that the 'inclusion of Hatton in this list must remain open question', of all of these men Hatton was probably the least controversial.<sup>138</sup> While it is clear that between 1578 and 1581 differences at court ran deep, it is sometimes difficult to assess just how deep these divisions went without reinstating old chestnuts about faction, a retrospective step in our understanding of just how complex Elizabethan politics had become by this point. Hatton's activities were to provide a counterweight to the Dudley ascendancy, not open opposition. As Simon Adams has pointed out in rejecting factional interpretations of the Anjou marriage, 'whatever her motives [for pursuing the match], the overthrow of Leicester was not one of them'.<sup>139</sup> Instead from the mid-1570s onwards Elizabeth chose to develop a second political strategy by relying on a politician whose background was closer to that of a Cecil than a Howard.

The political career of Sir Christopher Hatton needs further assessment. While acknowledged as 'a great political figure', the verdict remains 'a baffling career to understand'.<sup>140</sup> In the immediate aftermath of the Arden Somerville treason affair he seems to have stepped back from Warwickshire but a few years later he became Lord Chancellor. Hatton's depiction as a lone operator, clever and

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<sup>137</sup> Collinson, *Godly People*, 381.

<sup>138</sup> *Ibid.*, 386.

<sup>139</sup> Adams, *Leicester and the Court*, 6.

<sup>140</sup> MacCaffrey, *Making of Policy*, 448.



flexible but entirely dependent on the queen is too simplistic. While he may have been financially dependent on Elizabeth, it was his broad political backing that allowed him to survive. As Brooks has noted of his appointment as chancellor, this was 'not a legal, but a political appointment'.<sup>141</sup> While MacCaffrey accepts the historiography that 'The legal profession was much affronted by this appointment', it would be interesting to know the extent of this reaction, and whether this might be attributed to the overt political nature of the appointment rather than the traditional attribution to Hatton's lack of legal knowledge.<sup>142</sup> Moreover, Camden's 'extraordinary' claim that the appointment was a ruse by his political enemies bears some similarities to the claim made in *Leicester's Commonwealth* that the earl of Leicester sought Hatton's marginalisation.<sup>143</sup> Although his importance as manager of Elizabeth's relationship with parliament is generally acknowledged, it is possible that Hatton was more of a leader than previously thought.<sup>144</sup> With Whitgift and Aylmer and men such as John Puckering, Edmund Anderson and Francis Gawdy he repeatedly thwarted parliamentary attempts to gain further Protestant reform and relentlessly pursued the Puritan preachers patronised by the Dudleys. If he did not have a clientele in the traditional sense in which the earl of Leicester did, then he certainly had what might be termed close associates working towards similar goals.

The career of Sir Christopher Hatton can be seen as an acknowledgement that political stability would elude a state that failed to secure broader support and

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<sup>141</sup> Brooks, *Sir Christopher Hatton*, 332.

<sup>142</sup> *Oxf. DNB.*, MacCaffrey, 'Hatton, Christopher'.

<sup>143</sup> Brooks, *Sir Christopher Hatton*, 335.

<sup>144</sup> *Oxf. DNB.*, MacCaffrey, 'Hatton, Christopher'. MacCaffrey suggests Hatton's activities in the 1572 parliament provide the first clue to explaining 'the metamorphosis from courtier-in-chief to senior councillor of state.'

suggests more of a political vision than he has been allowed. His career is certainly best seen as the possession of a different outlook to the 'Protestant worldview' of the Dudleys.<sup>145</sup> This does not mean that Hatton was either a *politique* or a prototype ecumenical. The issue of Hatton's inner religious belief remains a mystery and has served as a distraction, for it was the careful conformity he outwardly professed that probably informed his politics. As Ethan Shagan has pointed out in his consideration of the 'moderation' that informed the policy of Archbishop Whitgift, this was not conformity without control.<sup>146</sup> Hatton and Whitgift were not so much interested in creating a church to which all could belong as a political environment in which no other church could function. Given that Elizabethan politicians needed not look far to see the unholy strife and bloodshed that differences in religion could unleash, the *via media* of Hatton and Whitgift was less about benign dictatorship and more about outright authoritarianism. If, as Shagan writes, 'moderation was something you did to keep the passions under control', then such moderation could be brought to bear on an alliance between Hatton, probably a man with Catholic sympathies, and Whitgift, who was, after all, a Protestant bishop, and through them on the question of religion in England.<sup>147</sup> If men like Burghley and Leicester thought they lived in 'perilous times' then so did Hatton and Whitgift.<sup>148</sup> Their differences are to be found in the way these fears should be combated and the conviction of Hatton and Whitgift that further Protestant reform represented a problem and not a solution. Given that the rule of

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<sup>145</sup> Collinson, *Elizabethan Puritan Movement*, 166.

<sup>146</sup> E. H. Shagan, *The Rule of Moderation* (Cambridge, 2011), 113-120.

<sup>147</sup> *Ibid.*, 36.

<sup>148</sup> S. Alford, *Burghley, William Cecil at the Court of Elizabeth I* (Yale, 2008), 125.

law as essential to civic society was not just widely accepted but also a key part of the arguments of the conformists, it is unsurprising that many of Hatton's associates were found in the legal establishment.<sup>149</sup> Leicester's complaint in 1582 that 'pelturs at the lawe' were being appointed to the county commissions is a complaint resonant of both personal frustration and the success of such a strategy.<sup>150</sup> While the possibility of a number of breakdowns in the political relationship between Sir Christopher Hatton and the earl of Leicester needs further consideration, Hatton's political aim – the securing of Elizabeth and her state – was the same as that of Leicester. Moreover, their ability to work together is also clear.<sup>151</sup> Their political activities are therefore best seen as lines running in the same direction that could converge or diverge at specific points. Sir Christopher's changing position on the Anjou match might be one of these while Leicester's use of Hatton as a mediator with the queen in 1585 and his appointment of 'mine old dear friend' Hatton as his overseer were his acknowledgement of Hatton's position.<sup>152</sup>

Moreover, the changes to the Warwickshire bench and the marginalisation of the Throckmorton kinship network fit into a number of other historical narratives. Firstly, the experiences of men such as Thomas Throckmorton, Edward Arden and William Catesby were representative of the challenges faced by English Catholics, particularly after 1569. It is also clear that their responses to the politicisation of being a Catholic were by no means uniform. Moreover, while it is potentially very

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<sup>149</sup> G. Burgess, *British Political Thought 1500-1660* (London, 2009), 96-100; Shagan, *Moderation*, 117.

<sup>150</sup> Wall, 'The Greatest Disgrace', 320.

<sup>151</sup> MacCaffrey, *Making of Policy*, 453.

<sup>152</sup> Brookes, *Sir Christopher Hatton*, 169, 178-79; Doran, *Monarchy and Matrimony*, 173; TNA, PROB11/73, fos. 2r-4r, will of Robert Dudley, earl of Leicester.

difficult to investigate how far these responses would have been different had the men assumed their grandfathers' political dominance in the county, that they were unable to do so was clearly closely related to the Dudley ascendancy in Warwickshire. The history of the county during this period is therefore best considered through a more detailed exploration of what the ascendancy meant. Territorially, Warwickshire may have been 'one of a range of concerns' identified by Simon Adams.<sup>153</sup> Politically, it appears to have been something more.

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<sup>153</sup> Adams, 'Because I am of that countrye', 310.

## Appendix 1

### Warwickshire justices, 1547-1590

Year	Source
May 1547	CPR, Edward VI, I, 1547– 48, 90.
Feb 1554	CPR, Philip and Mary, I, 1554– 55, 25.
1555	TNA, SP11/5, a <i>liber pacis</i>
Dec 58/Jan 59	BL Lansdowne 1218, a <i>liber pacis</i>
1562a	CPR, Elizabeth I, II, 1560–63, 444.
1562b	BL Lansdowne 1218, a <i>liber pacis</i>
1564	CPR, Elizabeth I, III, 1563–66, 28.
1573	TNA, SP12/93, a <i>liber pacis</i>
Dec 73/Jan 74	BL Egerton, 2345, a <i>liber pacis</i>
1577	TNA, SP12/121, a <i>liber pacis</i>
1579	TNA, SP12/145, a <i>liber pacis</i>
1584a	BL Lansdowne 737, a <i>liber pacis</i>
1584b	TNA, E163/14/8, a <i>liber pacis</i>
1588	WRO, CR162/680, a commission
1590	BL Egerton, 3788, a <i>liber pacis</i>
1548 - 1590	<p>TNA, E372/393 – 435, Pipe Rolls</p> <p>Pipe rolls for the years 1548 to 1590 have also been used to identify broad patterns of appointment and attendance at quarter sessions. The main findings from this source have been presented in the text and entries for selected years are given in Appendix 2.</p>

#### Description and key:

The table below gives the names of all those appointed to the commission for the peace in Warwickshire according to the sources listed above, as well as names given in the pipe rolls where the person in question can also be identified through other sources. The number in the box refers to position on the list in each source and is a useful indicator of social and/or political status. One of the best examples can be seen in 1590, where the de facto county leaders, Sir Thomas Lucy and Sir Fulke Greville, were listed below Edward Devereux, a recent appointment who was nevertheless the son of a viscount.

Key: (1) – first person with that name listed  
 BC – Baddesley Clinton, CB – Cock Bevington  
 \*name found only on pipe rolls

	Year (15..)	47	54	55	58 /9	62 a	62 b	64	73	73 /4	77	79	84 a	84 b	88	90
Name	First name															
Aglionby	Edward					23	21	28	25	25	23	23	21	24	17	19
Anderson	Edmund										24	18	10	11	9	7
Arden	Edward										28					
Arden	Simon				19	17	15	21	20	20	21	21	19	22		
Arden	Thomas	19	12	14												
Bacon	Nicholas				1	1	1	1	1	1	1					
Bareham	Nicholas								10	10						
Bendlowes	William				8	10	9	11								
Bentham	Thomas							6		6	6					
Berkeley	Henry										7	6	7	8	7	6
Boughton	William								26	26	25	24	22	25	21	20
Boughton	Edward								32	32	34	32	25	29	18	
Bradshaw	Henry	9														
Brome	Ralph			34	30											
Bromley	Thomas											1	1	1		
Bromley	George												13	15		
Buck	Nicholas											40				
Burdett	Robert	34														
Burgoyne	Robert												36	41	30	34
Cameswell	Michael		34													
Carey	Henry								7							
Catesby	Richard	11														
Cave	Ambrose		6	8	5	7	6	8								
Cecil	William								2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Chambers*	Gabriel															
Cockayne	Thomas		8	10												
Compton	Henry								6	7	8	7	8	9	8	
Constable	Marmaduke		5	7	13											
Conway	John										17	16				
Cooke	Anthony							12	11	11						
Cordell	Edward															21
Dabridgecourt	Thomas								33	33	31	29	28	31	22	25
Dannett	Leonard								29	29	29	27				
Devereux	Edward															10
Devereux	Walter	6														
Devereux	William				14	15	13	18	16	16	15	14				
Digby	Reynold	16														
Digby	George								23	23	22	22	20	23		
Digby	John		23	26												
Dudley	John	5														
Dudley	Ambrose					5		5	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	
Dudley	Robert					6	5	7	5	5	5	5	5	5		
Dyer	James															35
Dyer (1)	James		2	3	7	8	7	9	8	8	9	9				
Dymock	Humphrey	21	13	15												
Feilding	Edward											36				
Feilding	William												35	39	28	32
Feilding	Basil		14	16	18	16	14	19	18	18	19	19	18	21		
Feilding (1)	William	13														
Ferrers	Humphrey								28		32	30	29	32		18

	Year (15..)	47	54	55	58 /9	62 a	62 b	64	73	73 /4	77	79	84 a	84 b	88	90
Ferrers (BC)	Edward			20												
Ferrers (CB)	Edward			18												
Ferrers*	John															
Fisher	Clement											37	33	36	25	30
Fisher	John		20	24	25	18	16									
Fisher	Thomas		25	28	24											
Fisher*	Edward															
Fitzalan	Henry				3	3	3	3								
Foster	Giles	27														
Fowler	Thomas	32	31													
Freake	Edmund													6	5	4
Fyndern	William		33													
Gawdy	Francis										10			14	11	9
Goodere	Henry							27							15	14
Gregory	Arthur											35				
Greville	John	14														
Greville	Fulke								15	15	14	13	15	17	13	12
Greville	Edward		9	11												
Greville (1)	Fulke	12	4	6	10											
Grey	Henry	3														
Hales	John	18														
Harington	John												17	19	14	13
Hastings	Henry					4	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Hastings	Francis		1	1	4											
Hatton	Christopher											8	9	10	1	1
Higford	John											39	37	38	29	33
Higford (1)	John		21	25												
Holte	Edward								30	30	30	28		27	20	24
Hubaud	John							20	17	17	16	15				
Hubaud	Ralph												34	37	27	31
Ingram	Richard					24										
Knevet	Richard				33											
Knollys	Henry								19	19	20	20				
Knottesford	Thomas											38				
Leigh	William															15
Leigh	Thomas											33	31	34	24	26
Leigh (1)	William	17														
Lisle	Thomas		29	32	29	25	22	29								
Lucy	William	15														
Lucy	Thomas				17	14		17	14	14	13	12	14	16	12	11
Marrow	Samuel												27			29
Marrow	Thomas	29	24	27	26											
Massey	John*															
Meade	Thomas											10	11	12		
Middlemore	Richard												26	30		28
Middlemore	Robert	31	27	30	28	22	20	26	24	24						
Montagu	Edward	7														
Newenham	Thomas		10	12												
Newport	Richard	26	17	21	22											
Overton	William												6	7	6	5
Paulet	William	2			2	2	2	2								
Peyto	Humphrey									28	27	26	24	28		

	Year (15..)	47	54	55	58 /9	62 a	62 b	64	73	73 /4	77	79	84 a	84 b	88	90
Porter	Baldwin	33														
Porter	Robert		32													
Puckering	John															16
Purefoy	Michael					20	18	23								
Purefoy	William												38	40	31	36
Pye	Edward	28	19	23												
Rawley	Simon				32	21	19	25								
Rokeby	Ralph		3	4												
Russell	John	4														
Saunders	Edward		11	2	6	9	8	10	9	9						
Seymour	Edward	1														
Sheldon	William		15	17	20											
Shelley	William	8														
Shuckburgh	Anthony								27	27	26	25	23	26	19	22
Shuckburgh	John								31	31	33	31	30	33	23	23
Shuckburgh	Thomas	25	16	19	21											
Shute	Robert												12	13	10	8
Simonds	William		28	31	16											
Skinner	Anthony		30	33												
Somerville	John		18	22	23											
Tate	Bart.											34	32	35	26	27
Temple	Peter				31											
Throckmorton	George	10														
Throckmorton	Thomas							24								
Throckmorton	Robert	24		5	9	11	10	13								
Throckmorton	John		22	13	15			16	12	12	11	11				
Throckmorton	Clement	30	26	29	27	19	17	22	22	22						
Underhill*	Thomas															
Verney	Richard													20	16	17
Verney (1)	Richard				12	13	12	15								
Wigston	William	22	7	9	11	12	11	14	13	13	12					
Willington	William	20														
Willoughby	George	23														
Willoughby	Francis								21	21	18	17	16	18		
Wright	Christopher												39	42	32	37