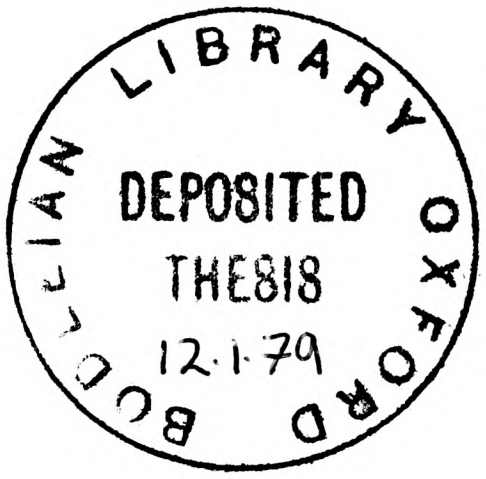
A BIOGRAPHY OF ARCHBISHOP RICHARD NEILE (1562 - 1640)

A D.Phil. Thesis submitted to the Board
of the Faculty of Modern History



Andrew W. Foster
Balliol College

January 1978

A BIOGRAPHY OF ARCHBISHOP RICHARD NEILE (1562-1640).

Andrew W. Foster, Balliol College, Oxford.
D. Phil. thesis - Hilary Term 1978.

This thesis provides a biography of a man whose importance in Church and State in the first half of the seventeenth century has never been fully appreciated. It is divided into eight sections, the first of which considers Neile's humble origins, education at Westminster and Cambridge, and patronage at the hands of the Cecil family and Archbishop Bancroft.

It was as Dean of Westminster that Neile's exceptional talents as an administrator first became generally apparent. It was also at this time that he won the affection of King James I - the decisive factor in Neile's elevation to the episcopate and rapid advancement through the dioceses of Rochester, Lichfield and Coventry, Lincoln and Durham. Attention is focused on Neile's role as a bishop and on factors behind his administrative success, such as his ability to select and train able subordinates - clergymen and civil lawyers alike.

Other chapters highlight more unusual facets of his career, such as his role as Lord Lieutenant of Durham County Palatine. Even his work in the House of Lords reveals wider interests than those normally expected of a bishop.

Discussion of Neile's religious beliefs contributes to our knowledge of English Arminianism. Neile emerges as the great patron of this party and the practical effects of his views can be seen in his work as a Privy Councillor and as a judge in the courts of Star Chamber and High Commission. The implementation of Arminian policies at Winchester and after his final appointment as Archbishop of York was one of the major causes of the English Civil War.

For information:

This thesis is 55 pages shorter than the previous one. A change in layout and type spacing has also entailed a loss of approximately 30 words per page.

THESIS ABSTRACT:

The bare outline of Richard Neile's career is already known, but his importance in Church and State in the first half of the seventeenth century has never been fully appreciated. This thesis seeks to remedy the deficiency by producing the necessary biography.

There are so many aspects to Neile's career that scholars in several fields have a fleeting awareness of the man. Yet the printed sources available for this study have never before been properly assembled. As for original sources, nobody has ever combed the many record offices necessary to give a complete picture of his life. The quantity, quality and range of source material thus discovered has presented problems, not least being the task of keeping this thesis to a manageable size. The adoption of a broadly analytical framework has helped in the organisation and control of this wide-ranging mass of material.

It was not easy, because of Neile's humble origins, to reconstruct his early life. Educated at Westminster and Cambridge, his abilities are difficult to evaluate at this formative stage in his career. Early friendships are considered, as are important sources of patronage such as the Cecil family and Richard Bancroft. Having decided to enter the Church, Neile made reasonable progress in his calling and it was not long before his first major appointment.

It was when Neile was Dean of Westminster that his exceptional abilities as an administrator first became generally apparent. He lacked the intellectual and spiritual charisma of his predecessor Lancelot Andrewes, but he proved to be an extremely practical and highly successful dean. Neile demonstrated continuing loyalty towards Cecil and Bancroft, but more important, he won the affection of King James I.

The friendship of the King is seen to be the decisive factor in Neile's elevation to the episcopate and rapid advancement through

the dioceses of Rochester, Lichfield and Coventry, Lincoln and Durham. It is also necessary, however, to see these translations against a background of faction fighting at court during the reign of James I. The growing importance of an English Arminian party within the Church is detected in Neile's later appointments to Winchester and York.

Although material related to his first five sees is often patchy, it does reveal dominant interests and strands of continuity, as well as changes in Neile's work. One major reason for Neile's success is shown to be his ability to select and train able subordinates - clergymen and civil lawyers alike - and to mould their efforts into teamwork.

Neile's approach to diocesan problems could be very flexible, but he showed great steadfastness of purpose throughout his career on what he held to be basic issues. As a loyal disciple of Archbishop Bancroft he constantly opposed Puritan nonconformity. A practical man, he shared Bancroft's concern for the Church as an institution. This is evident in his unceasing attention to the problems of decay in churches and episcopal residences.

Aspects of Neile's life are open to criticism. It is undeniably true that, in common with other bishops of his time, he enjoyed an exceptionally comfortable living. Moreover, he constantly sought to extend his sphere of influence beyond the commonly accepted limits of his office. Even so, this thesis puts forward considerable evidence for the conclusion that in many respects Neile was a model bishop.

At times he appears to have undertaken unusual duties. As Lord Lieutenant of Durham County Palatine his administrative abilities were harnessed to the development of an improved security system in the north. Success as a civil servant led to his selection as a Privy Councillor, an appointment in which political factors related to the rise of the Arminian party are seen to have played a part.

Neile's work on the Council and in the related Court of Star Chamber reveals a harsh side to his character. It also illustrates the development of repressive policies in general in the 1630s. The Court of High Commission, together with the two other bodies mentioned, became an organ of Arminian policy and effectively alienated the court from public opinion.

Analysis of Neile's role in the House of Lords highlights other unusual features in his work as a bishop. He was interested and involved in all aspects of government, not simply issues related to religious or social legislation. He would staunchly defend his Church in Parliament, but spent most of his time discussing worldly bills about security, the economy, parliamentary procedure, legal reforms, and other contemporary issues. Sometimes his outspoken defence of royal privilege and policies would get him into deep trouble, as in 1614. The thesis shows the slow process by which the Commons became aware of the threat posed to their religion by English Arminianism, and reveals Neile's considerable involvement in that threat.

When arraigned before Parliament in 1628 as a leader of the Arminian party in England, Neile drew up a spirited defence. In the event it was not used, because the King settled for an attempt to rule without Parliament. The thesis examines Neile's religious opinions closely, and this entails some definition of terms like 'Arminian'.

There is no doubt that Neile's patronage of young clergymen and lawyers was partisan. His most famous protégé was the hated William Laud. Thus all Neile's administrative reforms are seen as tainted with a particular theological imprint, which opponents labelled 'Arminianism'. Neile emerges as the great patron of the party, so well acknowledged that his house became known as 'Durham College'.

The culmination of Neile's career came in 1632 when he was

appointed Archbishop of York. With Laud becoming Archbishop of Canterbury a year later, these Arminians reigned supreme in the Church. Policies developed in the past could now be enforced on a new scale. A massive church restoration campaign was instituted at York. Episcopal palaces were repaired. Puritans were obliged to conform or leave the country. It seemed as if the bishops had recovered the power they had lost at the Reformation.

Opposition to Arminian policies has been noted throughout the thesis. In spite of Neile's considerable administrative success at York, the last stage of his life saw the failure of the Arminians either to win the support of the people or effectively to stamp out opposition.

It is felt that the thesis provides a necessary biography of a leading member of the Arminian party, and records much which explains the rise and limited success of that group within the Church. In revealing the limitations and eventual failure of Neile's life-work, it offers insights into the religious causes of the English Civil War, which was to shatter the country so soon after Neile's death in 1640.

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ABBREVIATIONS

B.M.	British Museum
D.N.B.	Dictionary of National Biography
Dept. P.&D., Durham:	Department of Palaeography & Diplomatic, University of Durham
Hist. MSS. Comm.	Historical Manuscripts Commission
K.A.O. Maidstone:	Kent Archives Office, Maidstone
Lincoln:	Lincolnshire Archives Office
P.K. Durham:	Prior's Kitchen, Durham
P.R.O.	Public Record Office
U.L. Cambridge:	University Library, Cambridge
U.L. Durham:	University Library, Durham
V.C.H.	Victoria County History
W.A.M.	Westminster Abbey Muniments
Winchester:	Hampshire Record Office
York:	Borthwick Institute of Historical Research, St. Anthony's Hall, York

PREFACE:

Richard Neile served as a bishop of six dioceses, acted as William Laud's patron, was Archbishop of York in the critical years before the outbreak of the English Civil War and was an acknowledged leader of the English Arminian party. Yet knowledge of his career is slight. Historians familiar with his conduct as a judge in the infamous Essex Divorce case and his unfortunate part in the Addled Parliament of 1614 have tended otherwise to ignore the man whose stature clearly warrants the biographical treatment which is the purpose of this thesis.

One reason why such a study has not been forthcoming is that the Civil War has dominated the pattern of historical research. It has been fashionable to study aspects of change and 'revolution' in this society, and this has focused attention upon Parliament and Puritans, rather than the court and Arminians. Neile has been too easily dismissed as a typical 'time-serving' bishop of the early seventeenth century.

Problems of source material have proved another effective bar to more detailed research into Neile's life. Manuscripts vital to this project lie scattered throughout the record offices of the six dioceses of his long career. The process of collection has been a long and often difficult task. The survival of records has been very uneven and the type of material found has differed from one diocese to another. Many unpublished letters were located amongst the state papers, at Cambridge and at Durham; few elsewhere. Visitation records at York are voluminous, but little comparable material has survived elsewhere. Evidence is thin for Neile's diocesan work at Rochester, Lichfield and Coventry and Winchester. Yet much more material was discovered than was anticipated at the start of this project and a

large part of this thesis is based on previously unpublished material. The very drawing together of a wide range of printed sources has shed new light on Neile's career.

Due reference has been made to all previous work on Neile's activities. Ronald Marchant has shown something of Neile's sterling administrative achievements in his studies of the diocese of York.[1] J.T. Cliffe's study of Yorkshire society, together with works by R.C. Richardson on the diocese of Chester, M. James on Durham society and S.J. and S. Watts on Northumberland, have greatly assisted appreciation of Neile's work in the north.[2] Historians of Westminster Abbey have for some time been praising Neile's brief contribution as dean early in his career, but their appreciation of the man and his achievements has not penetrated into general history books.[3] Wherever such works have been found useful I have acknowledged them in the text.

I have referred to several theses during the course of my research. Some of these are worthy of special comment here. Ian Hogg carried out rather limited research into the careers of Samuel Harsnet and Richard Neile as Archbishops of York. His chief interest lay in diocesan administration and the work did not progress beyond M.A. stage.[4] John Newton produced a more substantial thesis on Puritanism in the diocese of York, which has proved a useful corrective to my

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1. R. Marchant, The Puritans and the Church Courts in the Diocese of York, 1560-1642, Lond. 1960;
   ——— The Church Under the Law. Justice Administration and Discipline in the Diocese of York, 1560-1640, Cambridge 1969.
2. J.T. Cliffe, The Yorkshire Gentry from the Reformation to the Civil War, Lond. 1969;
   R.C. Richardson, Puritanism in north-west England: A regional study of the diocese of Chester to 1642, Manchester 1972;
   M. James, Family, Lineage and Civil Society - A Study of Society, Politics, and Mentality in the Durham Region, 1500-1640, Lond. 1974.
   S.J. and S. Watts, From Border to Middle Shire: Northumberland 1586-1625, Leicester University Press, 1975.
3. J. Armitage Robinson, The Abbot's House at Westminster, Lond. 1911.
   E. Carpenter, A House of Kings, Lond. 1966.
4. I. Hogg, 'A Survey of the Diocese of York under Archbishops Harsnet and Neile, 1628-1640', (Nottingham University M.A. thesis 1961).

own limited statistics and the works of Ronald Marchant.[1] An American thesis on Neile came to my attention after the bulk of my research was completed. I have since seen this study, which is marred by the fact that the author, William Stockdale, never came to England to use original sources. The thesis is of limited value and has not been used in this present biography.[2]

Another thesis which I have only recently seen is that of Dr. Nicholas Tyacke on the subject of Arminianism in England.[3] Dr. Tyacke is responsible for resurrecting interest in this topic and has provided a great spur to further research into the nature of the English Arminian party, its leadership, composition, policies and success. The strength of his thesis lies in the establishment of the validity of the concept in an English setting, discussion of the intellectual origins of the movement and description of its early growth and contact with the United Provinces, most particularly at the time of the Synod of Dort. In concentrating on these general issues Dr. Tyacke left himself little time or space to consider the impact of Arminianism in the dioceses. How did Arminian bishops enforce their ideas and with what success is a question which is scarcely touched upon because of its impossibly wide ramifications. More research is needed to complete the picture so ably outlined by Dr. Tyacke. During the course of my research he afforded me the courtesy of several illuminating conversations. In many respects my thesis complements his work by providing full treatment of a long neglected figure whose importance as an Arminian Dr. Tyacke was one of the first to proclaim.

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1. J. Newton, 'Puritanism in the Diocese of York (Excluding Nottinghamshire), 1603-1640', (London University Ph.D. thesis 1956); see Appendix 1, pp. 303-4.
2. W. Stockdale, 'Richard Neile: A Brief Inquiry into his Historical Significance, 1562-1640', (New York University Ph.D. thesis 1958).
3. N. Tyacke, 'Arminianism in England in Religion and Politics, 1604-1640', (Oxford University D.Phil. thesis 1968); see also:
   ——— 'Puritanism, Arminianism, and Counter-Revolution', The Origins of the English Civil War, ed. C. Russell, Lond. 1973.

I have adopted a broadly analytical approach. Although a narrative form originally seemed the best format for a biography, particularly because it maintained a sense of chronology and context in what was a very long life, such a style does not make best use of the material available in the short space of a thesis. The present approach allows more direct treatment of the key areas of Neile's life and the lengths of the sections accurately reflect the relative significance of the topics and quality of source material available. The key facts of Neile's life are readily available from the standard biography presented in the Dictionary of National Biography.[1] New information has been used in an effort to answer general questions such as: what do we know of Neile's family, early life, and religious views, of his work as Dean of Westminster, as a bishop, Lord Lieutenant of County Durham, a Privy Councillor, and most important, as Archbishop of York? This thesis explores the career of one important clergyman while examining a whole host of wider issues on the nature of theological ideas at that date, the work of bishops in various guises, and the inter-relationship of these themes with the causes of the English Civil War.

Certain types of material have been retained in appendices.[2] Statistics have been separated from the text, except in the case of those dealing with Neile's attendance in the House of Lords where the figures form a more integral part of the chapter in question.[3] Thus general statistics on Neile's work at York, his income and his attendance at Privy Council meetings are placed in appendices. A genealogical table also seems most appropriate in an appendix. Limitations of space prevented the inclusion of appendices discussing minor aspects of my research such as heraldic problems and considera-

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1. D.N.B., sub nomine, contribution by Rev. W. Hutton.
2. See pp. 302-10.
3. See p. 111.

tion of existing portraits of Neile.

Too many people have given me kind assistance to be acknowledged here. Several deserve particular mention however, not least, my supervisor Christopher Hill thanks to whose support and encouragement I have completed this work. Gerald Aylmer, Claire Cross, John Addy, Bernard Barr and David Smith all proffered me friendship and advice when I worked in York. John Creedy, Roger Norris and Pat Mussett did likewise when I stayed at Durham. I have found friendly and helpful archivists wherever I have worked. I would like to thank my examiners, Professor H. Trevor-Roper and Dr. Claire Cross for their criticism and advice in the production of this revised version of my thesis. My family has been a source of strength to me throughout the years of my research. My wife Liz has read countless pages as this work was being assembled and my sister Theresa has faithfully typed this result. Any errors remain mine alone.

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Chapter 1: A Matter of Apprenticeship. (1562-1605)

The central problem of any biography of Richard Neile lies in the tantalising gaps in our knowledge of his seventy-eight year life. This is a factor inherent in all biography, but rarely is so little known about someone as important as Archbishop Richard Neile.

According to the parish records, Richard Neile was baptised into the Church of England at St. Margaret's, Westminster on 11 March 1561/2.[1] In later life he was fond of saying that he had been born in the same year in which the 39 Articles had been ratified in Convocation,[2] but this was not strictly true. Richard was the second son of Paul Neile, a tallow-chandler of King Street, Westminster, and his wife Sybil. His elder brother, William, had been born in July 1560. Richard eventually belonged to a large family with four brothers, three sisters, and two half-brothers.[3] Little is known of the family, other than that Richard maintained close ties with them throughout his life. When a bishop he aided his brother William, his eldest half-brother Robert Newell, and various nephews in their clerical careers. One brother Walter died while abroad in France in 1601.[4] His sister Dorothy, who married William Holmes, lived with Neile for a while at Durham House. Given the high mortality of the times, his other brothers and sisters may not have survived to maturity.

The Reverend W. Hutton claimed that Richard's grandfather may

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1. Memorials of St. Margaret's Church, Westminster, ed. A.M. Burke, Lond. 1914, p.20.
2. He mentioned this in his draft speech for Parliament in 1628/9 - Prior's Kitchen, Durham: Hunter MS. 67, Item 14, p.3; It appears in his will of June 1640 - York: Neile's Register, 32, ff.4-5.
3. See Appendix 4
4. P.K. Durham: Hunter MS. 44, Item 17, William Neile's Diary, p.1.

have been a man of substance under Henry VIII, but that he had been deprived of his fortune for refusing to subscribe to the Six Articles.[1] Le Neve first mooted this story in 1720.[2] My research has revealed nothing to substantiate this tale. It can only be assumed that Neile lived the life of a humble lad with few prospects in the streets of Westminster in the 1560s.

Neile was fortunate in his education. As a local boy he could attend Westminster School as an 'Oppidan' or 'Town boy'. That is probably how he came to be admitted to that famous school, although his precise date of entry is unknown. He was certainly there in time to benefit from the teaching of those eminent scholars Edward Grant and William Camden.

There is evidence that Neile was a slow learner. According to Alexander Leighton he was a veritable 'Dunce' and the 'Schoolmaster was never off his breach'.[3] Neile's infamous school-fellow Peter Smart was probably the source of this slander. Smart himself claimed that Neile had confessed his weakness at Latin at a visitation in Durham in 1627 and maintained that Neile had been 'counted an heavy-headed lubber' at school.[4] Yet Smart and Leighton had good reason to exaggerate such tales of Neile; both men suffered because of their opposition to his clerical rule in later life and both wrote to satisfy a popular craving for stories which slandered bishops.

Nevertheless, Neile himself seems to have confessed that he did not meet Grant's exacting standards of scholarship. Neile's father died in June 1574 and although his mother remarried Robert Newell in

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1. D.N.B., sub nomine.
2. J. Le Neve, Lives & Characters of the Bishops since the Reformation, Lond. 1720, Vol. I, part I, p.137.
3. A. Leighton, Epitome, 1646, p.66 - as quoted in The Record of Old Westminsters, ed. G. Russell Barker & A. Stenning, Lond. 1928, Vol. II, p.685.
4. P. Smart, A Short Treatise of Altars, Edinburgh 1629, Preface, p.3.

April 1575 there was no likelihood of Neile's education being financed further when he became eighteen in 1580.[1] As Neile later wrote:

> '..I should never have bin sent to the Universitie, but that the best of my Fortunes, would have bin to have become some Booksellers apprentice in Paules Churcheyard; to w[hi]ch trade of life, Mr. Grante then Schoolemaster here perswaded my Mother to have disposed of mee.'[2]

At this stage in his career Neile was fortunate in gaining influential local patronage.

William Cecil, Lord Burghley, was Lord High Steward of Westminster and he and his wife Lady Mildred had a residence in the Abbey Close. The Dean of Westminster Abbey, Gabriel Goodman, acted as a chaplain and trusted friend to the Cecil family. In her biography of Sir Robert Cecil, Miss P. Handover suggested that Lady Mildred may have actually arranged for Neile to attend Westminster school as one of a group of playmates for Robert Cecil, one year his junior.[3] This seems a little far-fetched, but it may well be true that once within the Close, Neile struck up a friendship with Robert Cecil. This may have extended to some extra tuition at the hands of two Puritan tutors in the Cecil entourage - Richard Howland and Walter Travers.

Closed scholarships existed for boys wishing to attend either Christ Church College, Oxford or Trinity College, Cambridge, but only three boys were elected annually to each college and 'Oppidans' were not eligible for selection.[4] Neile was extremely fortunate because it was at this stage that, for reasons unknown, Dean Goodman recommended him for a private scholarship to St. John's College, Cambridge on 16 April 1580.[5] The foundation was in Goodman's name but it was financed

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1. For details of the death and remarriage see Memorials of St. Margaret's Church, Westminster, ed. A. Burke, pp.427 & 290.
2. Westminster Abbey Muniments: Book 7, 'A Memoriall of Sundrie thing[s] performed in Five yeares..', R. Neile, p.13. Hereafter known as 'Dean's Bk. 7'.
3. P. Handover, The Second Cecil, 1563-1612, Lond. 1959, p.14.
4. J. Sargeaunt, Annals of Westminster School, Lond. 1898, p.25.
5. J. Le Neve, Lives & Characters of the Bishops.., Vol. I, part I, pp.137-8.

by Lady Burghley. Goodman simply recommended Neile 'as a poor and a fatherless child, of good hope to be learned' and he was admitted to the college on 22 April to matriculate as a member of the university on 18 May 1580.[1] He did not become, and never pretended to be, a great intellectual, but his subsequent career justified Goodman's faith.

Little is known of Neile at Cambridge. St. John's College had a Puritan reputation at that time; the master was Burghley's protégé, Richard Howland. Many later famous people were amongst Neile's contemporaries at the college: William Barlow, Thomas Morton and Robert Cecil were there in the 1580s; Valentine Carey, Francis Dee, and John Williams were present in the 1590s. From what is known, Neile's associates were less notable. His tutor was William Bayley and he seems to have become friendly with an older pupil, George Benson, who later became a fellow of the college.[2] Neile appears to have gravitated towards a moderate group in the college and to have held aloof from Puritan 'exercises' held by such dons as Henry Alvey.[3] When there was a clash between royal and Puritan candidates in the election of a new master in December 1595, Neile supported the compromise choice, Dr. Clayton, 'who is the only man w[i]thout exception, most indifferently desired'.[4] There is no evidence of Neile attending the Puritan conferences at St. John's allowed by William Whitaker in 1589, which had indirectly led to the royal interference in the 1595 election.

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1. Ibid., pp.137-8.
2. Both friendships are revealed by letters later in his life. Neile gave Bayley the rectory of Wappenham, Northants. in 1615 because he had been his tutor at Cambridge. (P.R.O. SP/39/5). When Neile recommended Ralph Gittens for a job at Shrewsbury in 1612 it was because 'he was a pupill to my very deare freind, whilest he lived, George Benson..'. (St. John's College, Cambridge: MS. MR. 69/6).
3. From a letter written in May 1612 it is clear that Neile did not hold Alvey in high esteem. He felt that the college had not 'recovered itself of that preiudice which Alveis government in Dr. Whittaker's tyme brought upon it'. St. John's, Cambridge: MS.105/1.
4. B.M: Lansdowne MS. 108, f.17.

Neile studied Divinity at Cambridge and seems to have done sufficiently well to progress from his B.A., conferred in January 1583/4, to his M.A., conferred in March 1586/7, and on to further studies to gain his B.D. in 1595 and finally his Doctorate of Divinity in 1600.[1] There are some doubts about ownership, but a collection of books survive at York which have the name 'Richard Neile' on the frontespieces and the intriguing motto: '<u>Vivit Redemptor, quid desperem</u>'.[2] They suggest that Neile covered a fairly orthodox course of classical and standard theological texts. He owned, even if he had not fully read and digested, works by Cicero, Homer, Ovid and Terence.[3] Of theology, he possessed works by Calvin, Mercator, Aretio, Haymo, Titelmannus and St. John Chrysostomus.[4] In view of conflicting theories about the religious significance of various philosophers during this period, it is perhaps of greater note that Neile possessed copies of a work of Fregius and a curious book on the logic of Ramus by one William Scribonius printed in 1583.[5] A medical textbook by one J. Veuckerus and <u>Political Observations</u> by John Lenccius might reflect a more personal taste.[6] The latter was apparently purchased by Neile in February 1602/3.

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1. Information on the degrees comes from F.P. White's typescript of details of Neile's life at St. John's, Cambridge.
2. I am grateful to Mr. Bernard Barr, the Librarian at the Minster Library, York, for locating these books for me.
3. Cicero, <u>Opera Omnia</u>, 2 Vols., ed. J. de Planches, Geneva 1584.
   Homer, <u>The Iliad & the Odyssey</u>, Basil 1541.
   Ovid, <u>Pastorum Libri VI</u>, Antwerp 1575.
   Terence, <u>Comaediae</u>, ed. P. Antesignanus, Lugdon 1560.
4. J. Calvin, <u>Rudimenta Fidei Christianae</u>, trans. H. Estienne, 1551.
   G. Mercator, <u>Evangelicae Historiae quadripartita moras, sive Harmonia</u>, 1592.
   B. Aretio, <u>Isagoge ad Lectionem Epistolarum Divi Pauli Apostoli</u>, Lausanne 1574.
   D. Haymo, <u>A Book of Homilies</u>, 1537-40.
   F. Titelmannus, <u>Mysterri Missae Expositio</u>, Lugdon 1558.
   St. John Chrysostomus, <u>De Orando Deum</u>, Lauvanne 1531.
5. J.T. Fregius, <u>Questions of Logic & Ethics</u>, Basil 1576.
   W.A. Scribonius, <u>Triumphus Logicae Rameae</u>, ed. T. Vautrollerius, London 1583.
6. J. Veuckerus, <u>Antidotarium Speciale</u>, Basil 1574;
   J. Lenccius, <u>Observationes Politicae</u>, 1601.

It would be dangerous to attach too much significance to this collection. There are doubts about the ownership of the books. They are part of a collection given to York Minster Library by Fernando Fairfax. They contain Neile's name and a motto, but little else. Only a manuscript edition of some poems dedicated to Neile as Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry in 1611 by one Theophilus Cangiserum[1] can be said to have belonged to him without too much doubt. This work contains neither Neile's name nor the motto. One book was apparently presented to 'Neile' by his son Thomas Cooke.[2] The use of the term 'son' could be figurative, but unfortunately nothing is known of Thomas Cooke. This whole problem of identification is compounded by the fact that Neile had a grandson and a nephew with the name Richard.[3] The case of the nephew who followed a career in the Church has confused all previous ecclesiastical historians.[4]

It is probably a fair assumption that these books did belong to the archbishop. As far as I can judge, they represent a fairly orthodox selection of books which any student of that age might be expected to read. Greater significance can perhaps be attached to the presence of particular texts, but at least the inclusion of a medical work fits in with Neile's known interests.[5]

The time of Neile's studies at Cambridge was one of transition for the Church of England. The Elizabethan Settlement of 1559-62 was constantly under attack from those who sought 'further reformation', but now the composition of the episcopate changed to include more outspoken defendants of the system. New theological theories came under

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1. T. Cangiserum, Davidis Regii Prophetae Votum.., Eton 1611.
2. J. Calvin, op. cit.
3. See Appendix 4.
4. See p.68.
5. Neile is known to have advised friends over ailments and was consulted when the fraudulent Dr. Lambe was exposed in Dec. 1627. (C. Goodall, The Royal College of Physicians of London, Lond. 1684, pp. 398-401). He later patronised William Rouswell because he was a pupil of his old friend Sir William Paddy. (P.R.O: SP/16/430/24).

discussion in the universities even if Calvinism still reigned supreme.[1] Unfortunately, there is little evidence of where Neile stood on the important issues of the day, because there are large gaps in our knowledge of his life at Cambridge.

What Neile did after gaining his M.A. in 1586/7 is something of a mystery. All his early biographers maintained that he became a schoolteacher. Heylin and Le Neve considered this as a phase in his clerical career; Cassan dismissed that view as 'perfectly absurd', but failed to provide an alternative assessment of this period.[2] We do not know where or if Neile taught at all. Once he had left the confines of the university, Neile needed a patron again if he was to succeed in any profession. Mindful of that, he may have entered the service of the Cecils as a private tutor. His patroness Lady Burghley died in April 1589. If Burghley had entertained doubts before, he was resigned now to Archbishop Whitgift's policies. Perhaps encouraged by Burghley, Goodman and the reformed Puritan, Bishop Howland, Neile eventually decided to pursue a clerical career and was ordained deacon and priest on the same day at Peterborough by Howland on 6 July 1589.[3] He immediately became Lord Burghley's household chaplain, a post he was also to fill for Sir Robert Cecil.

Ordination probably precipitated further studies on Neile's part. Increasingly, toward the end of the sixteenth century, clergymen were expected to be graduates and Neile needed higher qualifications if he had any hopes of great preferment.[4] Although he lacked great intellectual ability, Neile was ambitious and he persevered with his studies for another eleven years in order to gain his Doctorate.

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1. See Chpt. 7.
2. S. Cassan, Lives of the Bishops of Winchester, Lond. 1827, 2 Vols., Vol. II, p.132.
3. J. & J.A. Venn, Alumni Cantabrigensis, Lond. 1922-7, 4 Vols., sub nomine.
4. See: R. O'Day, 'The reformation of the ministry, 1558-1642', Continuity & Change, ed. R. O'Day & T. Heal, Leicester 1976, pp.55-76.

Neile was encouraged in his studies by the support of the Cecil family. In November 1590 he was formally presented by Lord Burghley with what is thought to have been his first living - the vicarage of Cheshunt in Hertfordshire,[1] nominally part of the diocese of Rochester. The Cecil's country residence of Theobalds lay within the parish, so his new role did not conflict with that of family chaplain. Neile's work at Cheshunt expanded in July 1593 when he was appointed by the Master and Fellows of St. John's College, Cambridge, to give four sermons a year in honour of Lady Burghley, who had instituted a series of sermons there in 1583.[2]

There is evidence that Neile rose steadily in importance at Cambridge as a spokesman and representative for the Cecils. When the election of a new master of St. John's took place in December 1595 Neile was quite forthright in writing to Burghley's chief secretary, Michael Hickes to recommend Dr. Clayton above the official candidates Drs. Alvey and Stanton. To ensure Burghley's support for Clayton, Neile exploited his dislike of Bancroft, fast rising as Whitgift's heir apparent, by claiming that the Bishop was energetically behind Stanton.[3] When the election of Dr. Alvey caused a great furore, Burghley, as Chancellor of the University, was forced to intervene and declare Richard Clayton the new master. Clayton was a man of 'energetic temperament, with considerable aptitude for business'.[4] He supervised the construction of the second court for the expanding college. A firm friend of Neile, Clayton was a business-like moderate who brought order and peace to the college.

The St. John's election illustrates Burghley's willingness to

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1. Hist. MSS. Comm. Hatfield MSS., Vol. XIII, 1915, p.436.
2. Ibid., Vol. IV, 1892, p.334.
3. B.M: Lansdowne MS. 108, f.17.
4. J.B. Mullinger, The University of Cambridge, Camb. 1884, p.470.

accept Neile's advice on Cambridge affairs. It also presented the Puritan heads, Goade, Barwell and Chaderton with the opportunity to recommend the election of Neile to replace Clayton as Master of Magdalene. They wrote of him to Burghley as:

> '..a man partly knowen unto your lordship, and in our opinions not onely religious learned and of a sober and honest conversacion, but also of that temperate moderacion and discreet carriage of himself, as wee thinke him in that respect also the meeter for this small preferment.'[1]

In the event, another Johnian, John Palmer gained the post.

Why Burghley did not take this opportunity to secure the promotion of his own chaplain is one of the mysteries of Neile's life. Perhaps Neile himself baulked at the job and thought it beyond his intellectual capabilities. The college electors may have also felt him to be unsuitable on these grounds. It may be that Burghley preferred to use Neile as a free agent in Cambridge not shackled by college responsibilities. We shall never know. It was tactful of the Heads to recommend Burghley's chaplain, especially as Neile had saved them from Stanton, but they may not have seriously expected him to be elected. Despite their recommendation and Neile's support for Burghley's policy of moderation, he was still something of an unknown quantity at Cambridge. As late as 1605 it was said of him that he was 'a man of no great note, more than he is the Earl of Salisbury's chaplain'.[2] Tact and moderation seem to have been the hallmarks of Neile's early life, but then he had much need of Cecil's patronage.

Neile was nominated for academic preferment in Cambridge on two more occasions in his life. When John Jegon the Vice-Chancellor wrote

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1. T. Baker, History of the College of St. John the Evangelist, Cambridge, Camb. 1869, 2 Vols., Vol. II, p.609.
2. Memorials of the Affairs of State in the reigns of Q. Elizabeth and K. James I collected (chiefly) from the Original Papers of the Right Honourable Sir Ralph Winwood, ed. E. Sawyer, 3 Vols., Lond. 1725, Vol. II, p.141.

to congratulate Sir Robert Cecil upon becoming the new Chancellor in February 1600/1, he recommended Neile for the Mastership of Clare Hall. Once again reference was made to 'sound religion and learning', but again Neile was passed over.[1] He seems to have been distinctly unlucky in his Cambridge career, never even achieving the position of College fellow at St. John's - the place he loved so much. Yet there is reason to presume that only the offer of Magdalene was ever a realistic one from Neile's point of view.

By 1601 Sir Robert Cecil had surmounted initial problems in the take-over of power from his father. More crucial, Cecil's great rival, the Earl of Essex, committed political suicide in the closing years of Elizabeth's reign and was executed for treason in March 1600/1. Neile was apparently loth to leave London until he had personally witnessed the Earl's grizzly end.[2] He may have felt that he would get greater preferment at Cecil's hands elsewhere now that the latter was supreme counsellor to the Queen. This idea is borne out by a letter of June 1601. Neile's old patron Dean Gabriel Goodman died in that month and was succeeded at the deanery of Westminster by Lancelot Andrewes. Neile wrote to Cecil to enquire if Andrewes would be willing to exchange a benefice he held in London (St. Giles, Cripplegate), for Toddington in Bedfordshire, which Neile had recently acquired.[3] In his capacity as High Steward of Westminster, Cecil had nominally presented Andrewes with the deanery, but nothing came of Neile's suggestion.

Nevertheless, Neile was kept very busy in Cambridge over the next year and seems to have been one of Cecil's chief agents in enforcing new orders concerning discipline in the colleges. By the time

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1. P.R.O: SP/12/278/131.
2. B.M: Lansdowne MS. 88, Item 5, f.10.
3. Hatfield MSS., Vol. XI, 1906, p.241.

he was next considered for a mastership, that of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge in March 1602/3,[1] he had already gained one rich reward for his efforts, in the mastership of the Savoy.[2] Less than three years later, he was given his first major preferment of the deanery of Westminster.

Thanks to the Cecils, Neile gained advancement in the Church whilst at Cambridge. In January 1597/8 Neile requested that he might accompany Sir Robert Cecil on a mission to France.[3] There is no evidence that this was granted or that Neile ever went abroad in his life. Perhaps as a consolation he was presented with the rectory of Toddington in Bedfordshire in 1598.[4] This was bettered in July 1598 when he was presented with the treasurership of Chichester Cathedral, which carried with it the rectory of Eastbourne.[5] It is reported that he preached before the Queen in the 1590s and that she was 'much taken with him'.[6] Neile had become quite a pluralist by 1598; perhaps this was permitted because of royal favour. The death of Lord Burghley in that year brought a halt to this rapid advancement. However, it has just been noted that Sir Robert Cecil was able to do more for Neile after 1600.

Throughout his career at Cambridge Neile seems to have avoided controversy. This was wise from the point of view of maintaining Cecil's patronage. When Peter Baro spoke out against some of the Lambeth Articles in January 1595/6, Neile furnished Burghley with a 'sheet' of entirely orthodox views on the subject.[7] Unfortunately, we only possess Neile's account of his views at that date and that

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1. P.R.O: SP/12/287/44.
2. See p. 15.
3. Hatfield MSS., Vol. VIII, 1899, p.35.
4. J. & J.A. Venn, Alumni Cantabrigensis, sub nomine.
5. 'The Acts of the Dean and Chapter of the Cathedral Church of Chichester 1545-1642', ed. W. Peckham, Sussex Record Soc., 1959, Chpt. Act Bk. 1, Item 962.
6. D.N.B., sub nomine.
7. P.K., Durham: Hunter MS. 67, Item 14, pp.12-13.

account was couched in the form of a 'defence' prepared for the 1628/9 session of Parliament.[1] Neile simply stated that he had opposed Baro's views on predestination and reprobation, but he also slyly added:

> 'I have ever carefully avoyded the reading into these Questions, w[hi]ch I confesse I am not able to master.'[2]

In 1628/9 Neile claimed that he still held to the views on predestination expressed in Article 17 of the Articles of Religion. But this was a notoriously vague article which allowed of Lutheran views more than Calvinist and left its readers content not to pry into the will of God.[3] That was exactly Neile's attitude. He was a practical theologian who left others to argue about the finer points of theology behind his actions. The Cecils' policy of seeking some form of modus vivendi with the Church of Rome suited his disposition and may have influenced his views on the role of ceremonial in the Church of England.[4] On practical matters like his concern for church fabric, the use of ceremonial, emphasis on the sacraments as opposed to preaching, strict adherence to the Book of Common Prayer, Neile would have found encouragement in the example set by Whitgift and Bancroft. Neile was of a conservative and authoritarian disposition; he was not the sort of man who would make a stand for religious views held by a minority in the 1590s.

Neile's caution and orthodoxy are doubly apparent in the matter of his Doctorate of Divinity. In the reaction against the Puritan William Whitaker, John Overall gained the post of Regius Professor of Divinity in 1595. In the summer of 1599 he brought controversy to the university by maintaining, like a Dutch theologian named Jacobus

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1. Ibid., Item 14.
2. Ibid., p.12.
3. See: W.P. Haugaard, Elizabeth and the English Reformation, Camb. 1968, pp.261-2.
4. See: J. Hurstfield, 'Church and State, 1558-1612: the task of the Cecils', Studies in Church History, Vol. II, ed. G. Cuming, Lond. 1965, pp.119-40.

Arminius from Leyden University, that it was possible for the 'elect' to fall from grace.[1] Faced with a potentially critical parliamentary audience in 1628/9, Neile was wary of this point and claimed that he had never taken upon himself 'to determine of fallinge either finally, or totallye'.[2] Yet at the Commencement ceremonies which took place at the end of June 1600, Neile was forced to debate two other controversial topics arising out of the Overall debate in a very tense atmosphere in Cambridge. The notion of purgatory and the efficacy of the Roman practice of private confession formed the subject matter for discussion when Neile took his Doctor of Divinity degree in June 1600. He argued the following statements:

> '1. Auricularis Confessio Papistica non nititur Verbo Dei.
> 2. Animae piorum erant in Coelo ante Christi Ascensum.'[3]

In later life Neile relaxed his views on the practice of confession, but still maintained that 'their phantasie of Purgatorie I holde to be no better than an olde wyves dreame, & a Platonicall conceit'.[4] When this was upheld at the Commencement of June - July 1600 it drew an angry response from Overall, who had to be commanded to silence.

One historian has claimed that 'the Commencement ceremonies of 1600 had been the most bad-tempered within living memory'.[5] With that in mind it would be unwise to read too much into the apparently conflicting views of Overall and Neile who were later to become friends. Neile reiterated standard Calvinist views and gained his Doctorate. Yet there is no hard evidence that these were his personal views. Neile's friends and actions of that date suggest that he was not a doctrinaire Calvinist and that he was quite prepared to side with those who held new views on less demanding occasions than his degree day.

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1. H.C. Porter, Reformation and Reaction in Tudor Cambridge, Camb. 1958, p.399.
2. P.K., Durham: Hunter MS. 67, Item 14, p.14.
3. Ibid., p.9.
4. Ibid., p.6.
5. H.C. Porter, op. cit., p.404.

Neile's work in Cambridge for the Cecils was fairly varied. In the matter of the St. John's election in 1595 he acted as a source of intelligence. At a later date, particularly after Sir Robert Cecil had become Chancellor of the university in February 1600/1, he seems to have acted as a sort of business agent for the family. Between December 1600 and August 1601 Neile corresponded with Sir Robert Cecil about some leases for land in Ruislip which the latter wished to 'impark'. Pressure was brought to bear upon some tenants to give up their leases and Neile was careful at all stages to advise that the matter should be handled as if the 'College good is chiefly regarded'.[1]

Soon after Cecil became Chancellor, a campaign was initiated to improve order amongst the students. Friction between town and gown had led to the arrest of one Crayford, an innholder, and several others in October 1601 for various offences against the university, including slandering the Vice-Chancellor.[2] Crayford was 'flattered' by Neile into confessing the offence and was eventually released early in the new year.[3] Cecil was worried by the hostility of the townspeople and ordered that greater care should be taken over the behaviour and dress of students in order not to cause further offence. In the following June, the instructions were reissued and publicly posted in Cambridge.[4] All aspects of student behaviour were covered, but the 'soundness of Religion' was taken as the main point; and the 'strange opinions & doctrines, of late yeres sprong up'[5] were to be avoided, as if they were the cause of the disturbances. Neile was active as Cecil's chief agent in this business throughout the autumn of 1601 and into the following year.

Another function which Neile seems to have performed at about

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1. Hatfield MSS., Vol. XI, 1906, p.358.
2. Cambridge University Library: Baker MSS., Mm. 1.38, pp.27-8.
3. C.H. Cooper, Annals of Cambridge, 5 Vols., Lond. 1842-1908, Vol. II, p.615.
4. U.L., Cambridge: Baker MSS., Mm.1.38, pp.28-30.
5. Ibid., p.29.

this time was that of one of the overseers of the education of Cecil's son William. A colleague from St. John's, Roger Morrell, was the young boy's tutor. Unfortunately, he was not an able pupil and was thus the cause of a constant stream of reports to Sir Robert.[1] Neile seems to have befriended the boy and often to have interceded with his father on his behalf. In August 1607 he spoke in favour of William being allowed to spend a holiday with some friends.[2] A letter in the following year reveals that Neile encouraged the presence of other boys at William's lessons in order to help his progress.[3] This friendship was clearly remembered for it was to Neile that William turned in June 1616 for the christening of his first-born child.[4]

On the death of Dr. Mount, Master of the Savoy, in December 1602, Neile gained his first major advancement. He was reported as being in residence only days after Mount's death.[5] This preferment brought him to the capital. The Savoy Manor was situated in a highly fashionable residential area of London. Yet as part of the Duchy of Lancaster, it was also a peculiar jurisdiction in London and thus a 'nursery of rogues, thieves, idle and drunken persons',[6] escaping from civil and ecclesiastical obligations. During the sixteenth century, the parish of St. Mary-le-Strand had gradually merged with that of the Hospital Chapel. Apparently 'the living was not by itself very fat, but the Hospital's property could be leased with profit'.[7] Amongst those who boarded there during the seventeenth century were the Earls of Northampton and Rutland, Lord Carew, and

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1. Hatfield MSS., Vol. XII, 1910, pp.194,440; Vol. XVII, 1938, pp. 81, 143.
2. Hatfield MSS., Vol. XIX, 1965, p.204.
3. Hatfield MSS., Vol. XXIV, 1976, pp.140-1.
4. J. Nichols, The Progresses, Processions, and Magnificent Festivities of King James the First, 4 Vols., Lond. 1828, Vol. III, p.175.
5. P.R.O: SP/12/286/13 - Chamberlain to Carleton, 23 Dec. 1602.
6. N.G. Brett-James, The Growth of Stuart London, Lond. 1935, pp. 129-30.
7. R. Somerville, The Savoy, Lond. 1960, p.67.

Sir George Manners.[1] It was perhaps more useful to Neile that the Cecils lived nearby. Neile seems to have regarded the post as a sinecure and there is no evidence that he paid much attention to the administration of the Savoy or made any efforts to increase payments to the poor.

The last few years of Elizabeth's reign must have been a tense time for Neile as his master slowly negotiated the peaceful succession of James VI of Scotland. Neile reported to Hickes in March 1600/1 the Queen's displeasure on seeing the Scottish ambassador at court.[2] The fall of Essex had involved the downfall of countless lesser mortals in his entourage. If Cecil failed in his enterprise, Neile and many others would experience the same fate. The Church was a relatively safe career however, and in the last year of her life the Queen showed some concern for her past misdemeanours. In June 1602 Whitgift was instructed to carry out a survey of churches in the country to check reports that they were in a chronic state of decay.[3] It was probably during this period that Neile drew closer to clerics like Bancroft and Whitgift in search of ecclesiastical patrons. Administrative qualities which had come to the fore and been encouraged and utilized by the Cecils would have made Neile attractive to those clerics. So too would his moderate theological stance over the past years in Cambridge.

It was probably through the mediation of Bishop Bancroft that Neile took up an important new post in July 1603. He was selected to become one of the new royal chaplains to James I, but also more significantly, Clerk of the Closet. Showing great tact, Neile wrote first to Cecil:

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1. W.J. Loftie, Memorials of the Savoy, Lond. 1878, p.130.
2. B.M: Lansdowne MS. 88, Item 5, f.10.
3. 'The State of the Church', Vol. I, ed. C.W. Foster, Lincoln Record Soc., Vol. 23, Horncastle, 1926, p.220.

> '..for that I hold it most beseeming me in duty not to accept anything without your privity and good approbation first had'. [1]

He urged that he be allowed to accept the posts however, for they had been associated with the Savoy since Queen Mary's time and only Dr. Mount had broken that connection. The post of Clerk of the Closet was an honorary one, the value of which lay in being near the King and in having free board and lodging in the city. Presumably, the Savoy filled the latter requirement. One of the chief duties of the Clerk seems to have been to organise the preaching and attendance rotas of the royal chaplains. Hence Neile's simultaneous appointment as a royal chaplain. There is evidence of Neile fulfilling such a function in 1609, 1612 and in the 1620s.[2]

Heylin noted that Bancroft used this post, with those of the Royal Almoner and the deanery of Windsor, as a means of protecting the Church from Scottish Presbyterian influence.[3] The appointment suggests Neile had won Bancroft's favour by 1603. What is more, Neile seems to have completely fulfilled Bancroft's expectations as Clerk of the Closet. Heylin later wrote ecstatically of Neile:

> 'Many good offices he had done to the Church and Churchmen in his attendence at the Court, crossing the Scots in most of their suits, their Ecclesiastical Preferments, which greedily and ambitiously they hunted after..'. [4]

Heylin had good reason to be appreciative, for it was partly through this office that Neile was able to bring his mentor William Laud to the attention of the King in 1609.[5] Laud showed his appreciation of the importance of the office when it was finally relinquished by Neile in 1632. The post was given to William Juxon so that Laud

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1. Hatfield MSS., Vol. XV, 1930, p.199.
2. Hatfield MSS., Vol. XXI, 1970, p.46; St. John's College, Cambridge: 105/337; I. Morgan, Prince Charles's Puritan Chaplain, Lond. 1957, p.190.
3. P. Heylin, Cyprianus Anglicus, Lond. 1668, pp.59-60.
4. Ibid., p.460.
5. The Works of William Laud, ed. W. Scott & J. Bliss, 9 Vols., Oxford 1847-60, Vol. III, p.134.

'might have one that I might trust near to his Majesty, if I grow weak or infirm'.[1]

It may have some connection with these new offices, that Neile now became a member of the Court of High Commission for the first time. Thus he began to gain wider experience of dealing with non-conformity in the ecclesiastical bureaucracy.[2] The accession of James I to the English throne had given hope to Puritans that this Solomon from the north would carry out the much needed reformation of the English Church. Initially it seemed as if their prayers had been answered when James accepted their Millenary Petition on his way south in 1603 and promised to hold a conference to listen to their grievances. Recent research has shown that this promise turned 1603 into a year of crisis for both the episcopal and the Puritan parties. Whitgift and Bancroft worked frantically to persuade Cecil and others that Puritans were a threat to the social order and that their complaints should not be countenanced. In the light of the controversies at Cambridge, Puritans sought the inclusion of the Lambeth Articles amongst official Church statements. What both sides missed was that James' motives in calling the Hampton Court Conference, which met early in 1604, stemmed largely from a desire to demonstrate his intellectual prowess in theological debate. The Puritans soon discredited themselves before a King who was not really interested in what they had to say.[3]

Bancroft went on to preside over the meetings of Convocation in 1604 which saw the ratification of 141 canons of the Church. They represented a far-reaching systemisation of the doctrines and rules of the Church, but they took little account of recent Puritan

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1. Ibid., Vol. III, p.209.
2. Hatfield MSS., Vol. XV, 1930, p.224.
3. M. Curtis, 'Hampton Court Conference and its Aftermath' History, Vol. 46, 1961, pp.1-16.

criticisms. Practices such as kneeling to receive communion, the use of the sign of the cross, of the font in baptism, of the term 'altar' to describe the communion table in time of divine service, would all have been anathema to the Puritans. Moreover, members of Parliament were outraged that Convocation should even consider new canons without their approval. Yet, despite uproar in the Commons, the King accepted the canons in September and showed plainly where his allegiance lay by allowing the passage of an Act 'against the diminution of possessions of Archbishops and Bishops, and for avoiding of Dilapidations of the same'.[1] At last something might be done to stop the 'milking' of church lands which had been such a feature of Elizabeth's reign.

Late in 1604, Richard Bancroft was confirmed as Whitgift's successor as Archbishop of Canterbury. A campaign to gain subscription to the new canons was soon under way. Neile seems to have come into his element in this new wave of suppression of non-conformity. Material success soon followed. During 1604 he gained the prebend of Firle at Chichester, probably another mark of Bancroft's favour.[2] When a new patent for the High Commission was being drawn up in the autumn, Neile was automatically placed on the list for membership.[3] Neile became doubly secure in his patronage in Church and State when Sir Robert Cecil was created Viscount Cranborne as a reward for negotiating peace with Spain in August 1604. Cecil was now clearly the King's chief minister.

For much of the next year, starting in the autumn of 1604, Neile was heavily involved in the subscription campaign. He was subject to visitation himself in various dioceses. Now that he was close to

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1. Commons Journals, Vol. I, p.176.
2. 'Acts of Dean & Chapter, Chichester', ed. W. Peckham, Sussex Record Soc., 1959, Item 1010.
3. Hatfield MSS., Vol. XVI, 1933, p.291.

Bancroft, Neile seems to have become something of a special secretary to Cecil on religious affairs. Much has been written on the work of Cecil's political secretariat, but little has been made of the role of his chaplains in moulding religious opinion - Neile prominent amongst them.[1] In co-operation with John Cowell, Vice-Chancellor of Cambridge between 1603-4, Neile seems to have carried out something of a visitation at Cambridge. In December no less a person than Laurence Chaderton of Emmanuel was writing to Neile to declare that they had 'begun to reduce our College to the statutes of the University and to the order of other Colleges'.[2] Cecil later wrote to Cowell to congratulate him on making 'our famous university so cleare of any inconformity'.[3] Further orders were left in Neile's hands and he was delegated to preside over talks on the improvement of preferment prospects for Cambridge graduates within the Church.

Under Bancroft a new breed of theologians and civil lawyers prospered. Many had been influenced by the new theological ideas circulating in the universities during the 1590s. One historian has noted that Bancroft's own views on predestination held similarities with those expressed by Jacobus Arminius.[4] Another historian has detected a split in the ranks of the clergy at the Hampton Court Conference, where theologians like Overall, Andrewes and Barlow expressed different views from those of their older colleagues.[5]

One such clergyman who had expressed doubts about Calvinism earlier than most was Samuel Harsnet. In October 1584 he had braved strong attack with an unorthodox sermon on the notion of predesti-

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1. See: A.G. Smith, 'Sir Michael Hickes and the Secretariat of the Cecils. c. 1580-1612', (London Univ. Ph.D. thesis 1962).
2. Hatfield MSS., Vol. XVI, 1933, p.381.
3. U.L. Cambridge: Baker MSS., Mm.1.40., p.384.
4. C. Bangs, Arminius, Nashville U.S.A. 1971, p.208.
5. N. Tyacke, 'Arminianism in England, in Religion and Politics, 1604 to 1640', (Oxford Univ. D.Phil. thesis 1968), pp.18-24.

nation. In the reign of James he became a royal chaplain. He and Neile became fairly close associates and Harsnet was later referred to as:

> '..an Agent, Spy or Informer resident in the University [Cambridge] to give B[isho]p Bancroft and B[isho]p Neile etc. an account of occurences there'.[1]

The first real evidence of Neile and Harsnet working closely together comes from an investigation into a witchcraft case conducted by the two men in October 1605. The case involved one Anne Gunter who had become the subject of Puritan attempts to rid her of the Devil.[2] The question of possession had become significant in the late 1590s when Harsnet had been directly involved in exposing the Puritan exorcist John Darrell as a fraud. It was significant because, as Keith Thomas has noted:

> 'The initiative in hounding down Darrell seems to have been taken by the leaders of the Arminian party, newly emerging within the Church of England, and it was they who made the issue of possession a political shibboleth'.[3]

The emphasis on fasting and prayer which went with exorcisms was taken as a sign of Puritanism and unauthorised exorcism was banned by Canon 72 of the new canons. The Gunter case was one of several which soon emerged to test the resolve of the authorities. The woman was duly exposed as a fraud and Neile received investigation expenses in December 1605.[4]

Lawyers and academics were also coming forward prepared to help Bancroft and his bishops crush Puritan nonconformity and revive the administration of the Church of England. John Cowell was one such figure. Another was John Lambe who wrote to Neile to report the activities of Puritans in Northampton in February 1604/5.[5] He was to rise to become Dean of Arches in 1633. Lambe and Neile appear to

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1. Dr. Williams's Library, London: Morrice MSS., Vol. 3, R.M./J.1630(2).
2. Hatfield MSS., Vol. XVII, 1938, p.471; Vol. XVIII, p.423.
3. K. Thomas, Religion and the Decline of Magic, Lond. 1971, p.577.
4. P.R.O: S.O./3/3 Dec. 1605.
5. P.R.O: SP/14/12/96.

have been firm friends and their paths were to cross frequently in their later careers.

It had to be only a matter of time before Neile gained further promotion in the Church through his friendship with Bancroft. The opportunity came in September 1605 on the death of Anthony Watson, Bishop of Chichester. Lancelot Andrewes was nominated to succeed Watson and Neile was named in turn to take over the deanery of Westminster from Andrewes.[1] It was probably because of his handling of the Gunter affair that Neile came immediately to Bancroft's mind, for Samuel Harsnet also benefitted from this situation by being elected to succeed Andrewes as Master of Pembroke Hall, Cambridge. At the age of forty-three Neile became Dean of Westminster, and according to Fuller in 1662:

> '..the first and last native of this city who became the dean, and so the supreme magistrate thereof'.[2]

His long apprenticeship was over.

Promotion to a deanery came just at the right time for Neile and must have justified his taking Orders sixteen years before. Neile lacked the impressive academic background usually necessary for such a post. That he ever rose from the backstreets of Westminster must be attributed to fortune and the patronage of the Cecil family and Richard Bancroft. It was patronage which he always acknowledged and strove to emulate throughout his own career. He compensated for his own intellectual shortcomings by having 'more able men about him from time to time than any other of that age'.[3]

One can surely assume that Neile learnt a lot from the Cecils about the nature of kingship, power, government and administration. In later life Neile was extremely shrewd in his employment of chaplains

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1. Winwood's Memorials, ed. E. Sawyer, Lond. 1725, Vol. II, p.141, Chamberlain to Winwood, 12 Oct. 1605.
2. T. Fuller, The Worthies of England, ed. J. Freeman, Lond. 1952, sub nomine.
3. P. Heylin, Cyprianus Anglicus, p.59.

and lawyers in his diocesan administrations. A brusque business efficiency is to be detected in the tone and style of many of his early letters and reports to Sir Robert Cecil. When Cranfield was under attack for corruption in 1624, Neile was quick to remind the Lords of the efficient business methods of Lord Burghley as Lord Treasurer.[1] Sir Robert Cecil's struggle to gain power and keep it under James must surely have influenced Neile's own ability to further the cause of the so-called Arminian party later in his life.

When Neile arrived at Westminster he was a fairly experienced administrator with good connections at court. His personal theological views were still unclear, but he had maintained an orthodox Calvinist stance at Cambridge long enough to gain his degrees before joining a more suspect group of theologians who gathered round Bancroft in his fight against Puritanism.

Neile's arrival at Westminster poses a new problem for the historian, for it is only then that we have any reference to the fact that he was a married man. Unfortunately it is impossible to say whom he married, or when and where the marriage took place. The Dean's House at Westminster had to be altered to make provision for Mrs. Neile.[2] Evidence gleaned from early genealogists reveals that her name was Dorothy, but her surname is unknown.[3] Material relating to the Essex Divorce of 1613 indicates that she was a cousin of Catherine, Lady Suffolk.[4] She thus provides an important link which partly explains Neile's alliance with the Howard family after the death of Cecil in 1612. It is tempting to say that the couple met in King Street, for Sir Thomas Knyvett, Lady Suffolk's uncle, was one of

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1. 'Notes of the Debates in the House of Lords, 1624 and 1626', ed. S.R. Gardiner, Camden Soc. New Ser., Vol. 24, Lond. 1879, p.84.
2. W.A.M: Dean's Bk. 7, p.2.
3. S. Cassan, Lives of the Bishops of Winchester, Vol. II, p.116.
4. W. Cobbett, A Complete Collection of State Trials, Lond. 1809, Vol. II, p.806.

Neile's neighbours.[1] These families were obviously friends, for the deaths of Sir Thomas and his wife in 1622 were recorded in William Neile's diary.[2] Unfortunately their wills do not reveal any family link with the Neiles. Lady Suffolk's parents were Sir Henry Knyvett and Elizabeth Stamp.[3] Research so far suggests that Dorothy came from the more obscure Stamp side of the family.

There is even less evidence relating to the date and venue of the wedding. From the absence of comment upon Richard's wedding in William Neile's diary, it would appear to have taken place before the diary was started in 1593. Age and Cambridge regulations would presumably have prevented Neile from marrying before 1587 when he gained his M.A. They may possibly have precluded his marriage before 1600. Thus the evidence is confusing. All that can be concluded is that although she seems to have been a humble woman, whom Neile sought to protect from worldly cares in his will,[4] Dorothy Neile played her part in creating the 'family unit' from which so many young Arminians later emerged. The wills of Buckeridge and Lindsell denote the respect with which she was regarded by Neile's friends.[5] Neile may have come from a happy family, honoured the ties this involved, and married happily himself, but unfortunately there is no evidence that his only son Paul, born in 1613, held either of his parents in great esteem in later life.

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1. D.N.B., sub nomine.
2. P.K. Durham: Hunter MS. 44, Item 17, p.13.
3. Bodleian Library, Oxford: Rawlinson MS. B.144, p.34 family pedigree.
4. York: Neile's Register, No. 32, ff.4-5.
5. P.R.O: PCC St. John 70 - Buckeridge; PCC Seager 111 - Lindsell.

Chapter 2: The Model Dean of Westminster. (1605-1610)

On 5 November 1605, an auspicious date for several Catholic conspirators in the area, Richard Neile was installed Dean of Westminster.[1] Archbishop Bancroft probably sponsored the appointment, but the formal recommendation to the crown was made by Sir Robert Cecil in his role as Lord High Steward of Westminster. The post entailed extensive duties: control of the affairs of the Collegiate Cathedral; a leading role in state ceremonies associated with the Abbey; supervision of the famous Abbey School and finally, certain judicial functions within the City of Westminster. The dean's official income in respect of these responsibilities was £232.10s. p.a.[2] This was no mean income when one considers that it was worth more than many of the poorer bishoprics - a fact which was taken into account when Neile was allowed to keep the deanery in commendam to supplement the income of the see of Rochester in 1608. It is a sign that Neile was in good favour at court in 1605 that he was allowed to keep all his old livings, except that of the vicarage of Cheshunt on his appointment to Westminster.[3]

It is at Westminster that Neile's gifts as an administrator were first given full rein. The main sources of information on the Abbey at this period come from the voluminous inventories and accounts which he caused to be drawn up, chief amongst them being the 'Dean's Book'.[4] This was a memorial book written in 1610 to commemorate Neile's departure from Westminster with an account of all his good works. In anticipation of scepticism, the book was carefully witnessed by seven

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1. J. Le Neve, Lives and Characters of the Bishops, p.140
2. W.A.M: 33659. Treasurer's Account Bk., 1606, f.1.
3. Cheshunt passed to Neile's half-brother, Robert Newell.
4. W.A.M: Dean's Bk. 7.

prebendaries who vouched for the veracity of the reports. Moreover, the bills, receipts and separate inventories at Westminster all seem to corroborate the dean's remarkable account. It is interesting to note the sections into which the book falls. They are in order: building and repair work, increase of revenues, increase of goods and furniture, improvement of charters and registers, and charitable works. It is quite apparent that Neile saw his achievements in very practical terms. This is the key to a proper understanding of the man. It is true to say that he was not a preacher like Andrewes, nor had he the intellectual scope of Cosin and Montague, nor was he as single-minded as Laud in pursuit of a dream; but Neile was probably greater than any of these in the attention he gave to the practical problems of the administration of their Church.

From the opening Chapter meeting held on 4 December 1605, Neile made it clear that he was going to be an active dean. Although Andrewes apparently took care that his own house was in order, 'what he does not appear to have done is to have dealt with the grave decay of the Abbey Church'.[1] Some commentators feel that Neile was the first dean to organise any major structural changes or repairs since the foundation of the Collegiate Cathedral in 1560.[2] Over the five years in which Neile was at Westminster, a total of £1,128 was spent on construction work for the Abbey, the school, and the school extension at Chiswick. The bulk of this expenditure was accrued in the financial year of 1606 when £197.6s.4½d was spent on 'necessary repairs'; a staggering figure which was double that spent in the immediately preceding or succeeding years.[3]

During 1606 major extension work was completed upon the dean's

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1. P. Welsby, Lancelot Andrewes 1552-1626, Lond. 1958, p.76.
2. J. Armitage Robinson, The Abbot's House at Westminster, Cambridge 1911, p.14.
3. W.A.M: Dean's Bk. 7, f.1v; 33658 - Treasurer's Accounts 1604-5.

lodgings to the value of nearly £200. This included the building of a study with 'a presse and a great nest of great boxes for writinge and papers' for the new energetic dean.[1] Work was carried out on the bedrooms and the parlour was enlarged - a sure sign that the deanery now had a mistress.[2]

One historian of the Abbey feels that these improvements were brought about because Neile entertained on a lavish scale.[3] This fits in with Neile's generous, extrovert character and later behaviour at Durham House.[4] Large scale building operations in the Abbey grounds during 1606 completes this picture with the construction of;

> '..a large stable sufficient to receave 14 or 16 Geldings with a haie loft over yt, a Coachhouse, a Saddlehouse, and a Chamber for the Groomes and Coachman, and a Gate-house neere to the Stable.'[5]

Much of this work seems to have been paid for by Neile himself or by generous donors at court.

Within the Abbey itself, Neile's changes reveal his personal taste for ceremonial, order and reverence for the sacraments which were later to be such hallmarks of the Arminian theologians of the 1620s and 1630s.[6]

Much of the discussion at his first two Chapter meetings concerned the erection of new prebendal stalls uniformly placed facing each other down the sides of the choir to give an uncluttered view of the altar.[7] Neile significantly donated communion plate worth over £40 to the Abbey soon after becoming dean and work was quickly undertaken to beautify the high altar. It was restored to the east end of the Abbey; an indication of Neile's views on the subject long before

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1. Ibid., f.1v.
2. Ibid., see pp. 23-4 for a discussion of Neile's marriage.
3. E. Carpenter, A House of Kings, Lond. 1966, p.145.
4. See pp. 213-18.
5. W.A.M: Dean's Bk. 7, f.1v.
6. See pp. 207-10.
7. W.A.M: Acts of the Dean & Chapter of Westminster 1542-1609 (transcription of original MSS. made by A. Rogers in 1904), f.308r.

the altar controversy of the 1620s.[1] Care was taken to decorate it as never before. £58 was spent in providing the communion table with '..a large backeffront of Cloath of gould and blue velvett'.[2] Yet another £22 was spent on 'one other Pall of Cloth of gould for the Com[m]union table for dailie use'.[3] This work was mostly carried out during 1606 when Parliament was debating the problems of the Church in terms of the Catholic threat, pluralities, adequate preaching, and the sufferings of deprived 'godly' ministers.

Also in 1606, work began on the provision of an organ for Henry VII's Chapel and the singing of anthems was introduced into regular morning services there.[4] Neile's career shows a strong interest in the development of Church music. He seems to have been instrumental in the provision of at least three organs for Westminster, Durham and York.[5] In all his dioceses there is evidence of his interest in matters relating to the choir and he must bear considerable responsibility for the anthems sung at Durham which caused such an uproar in 1628/9.[6] In an effort to better attendance and improve the quality of the singing at Westminster, Neile increased the choir's pay by £18 p.a. The parsonage of St. Martin-in-the-Fields was leased out specifically to secure this money.[7] Neile was no doubt encouraged in these efforts when the king expressed a few words about 'the singing and organ service in Cathedrals' before the Convocation held in 1606.[8]

Neile's initiatives placed a severe strain on the Abbey's financial resources. Attempts were made to increase revenues, but on the whole such action was limited to negotiating new leases as and

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1. E. Carpenter, A House of Kings, p.145; see pp. 155-7, 184-5.
2. W.A.M: Dean's Bk. 7, f.5.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
5. See pp. 209 & 262.
6. See pp. 209-10.
7. W.A.M: Dean's Bk. 7, f.7 - Neile even improved the choir's food as an inducement to raise standards (f.6v).
8. A Constitutional History of the Convocations of the Clergy, ed. J. Joyce, Lond. 1855, (Gregg Press Reprint 1967), p.642.

when they lapsed. Over Neile's five years at Westminster the revenue was increased by approximately £96 p.a. in this way.[1] This was barely enough to keep pace with Neile's demands and thus he was forced to exploit his influence at court and all his natural business aptitude.

James I proved to be a generous friend and patron. On one occasion he donated over £66 for repair work to statues of royalty buried in Westminster Abbey.[2] It was not until Neile was dean that the tomb of Queen Anne of Cleves was eventually completed.[3] Prior to the state visit of the King of Denmark to the Abbey in the autumn of 1606, Neile secured £50 from James towards hasty renovations.[4]

Often Neile collaborated with tenants to raise funds for the Abbey. In the spring of 1609 Neile entered into a shrewd business transaction with a tenant at Chiswick to move the farmhouse there away from the grounds of the school house. This facilitated a degree of modernisation and moved the farm centre to a more convenient place in the manor. The crucial point is that it was financed by the tenant of the property under a small financial inducement from Neile. The Dean and Chapter agreed to pay the tenant £260 over a period of twenty years. Thus, as Neile pointed out in his memorial book, in return for relinquishing a rent increase of £13 p.a. negotiated in Goodman's time, the college was off-setting work to the value of £866.13s.4d.[5] Neile and the tenant were obviously accomplished entrepreneurs, both interested in more than short-term gains. The Church stood in dire need of such men.

In September 1606, Neile shared the costs of 'a perfect and exact Survey of the Manor of Lawnton in Oxfordshire' with the Earl of

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1. W.A.M: Dean's Bk. 7, f.1.
2. Ibid., f.5.
3. Ibid., f.2v.
4. W.A.M: 33237 f.126 - Payments to the Treasurer 1606.
5. W.A.M: Dean's Bk. 7, f.2.

Salisbury, 'for the settling of the College inheritance there'.[1] Edward Wright was employed to draw up maps to end 'divers controversies and Suite[s]' and provide the basis of all future land transactions.[2] The very nature of the survey is typical of Neile's business efficiency, but it is also interesting that the Abbey was not the sole bearer of the costs.

As the work at Chiswick shows, money was not solely spent on the Abbey. No doubt drawing upon memories of his own school meals, Neile later noted that:

> '..at my first being deane I obtained that the Schollers Com[m]ons might be mended by a Chapter decree, so that they now have 6d. meat in a messe at everie meale throughout the weeke, saving ffish meales..'[3]

Price rises had eroded the amount of meat being given to the boys, but naturally this improvement proved costly. Over the next five years the Dean and Chapter paid out nearly £1,300 above what the original foundation permitted for food.[4] During the same period the cost of providing meals for the dean, prebendaries and all servants also rose considerably. It was not until 1609 that the pupils were eventually charged an increase of 10s. per quarter to pay for this improved diet.[5] At about that time the prebendaries themselves were also ordered to take fewer suppers in an effort to cut costs.[6] Neile's care for the college may not have involved intellectual inspiration for the pupils, as it had done under Andrewes, but it certainly led to an improvement in their physical well-being.

The fact that Neile did not exude the learning of his illustrious predecessor does not seem to have harmed the school. Numbers increased during this period and many of the pupils were later to become quite famous. In 1606 George Herbert was 'commended to the

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1. Ibid., f.6; W.A.M: 15218 - Wright to Neile, 24 Sept. 1606.
2. Ibid., f.6.
3. Ibid., f. 6v.
4. Ibid.
5. W.A.M: 41290.
6. W.A.M: Dean & Chpt. Act Book, f.296v.

care of Dr. Neale' and the teaching of Mr. Ireland, then headmaster of the school.[1] One can only speculate about Neile's influence upon this future poet and divine.

Neile showed considerable concern for the future of his scholars. In 1610 he was able to write that:

> 'Myselfe have yearlie sent of this Schoole to the Universitie besides those 6 that have bin elected, whome I have gotten placed in Schollerships in other Collidges besides Trinitie Colledge Christ Church, some yeares twoe, some yeares three, and with some charge to mee..'[2]

This he did in remembrance of the patronage of Dean Goodman and the Cecil family. Confirmation of the idea that Neile himself was an 'Oppidan' at the school comes from the fact that he was careful to provide scholarships for pupils ineligible for election to Trinity or Christ Church.

Dean Goodman had negotiated a special relationship with the latter colleges in July 1572, but it must not be thought that Neile neglected these traditional connections. £30 was spent in July 1607 upon gaining royal confirmation of the Letters Patent of the arrangement with the two colleges.[3] Moreover, new terms were negotiated whereby Westminster scholars gained rights to occupy certain fellowships at Trinity College, Cambridge.[4] One local boy who benefited from Neile's patronage was Samuel Harding who went up to St. John's College, Cambridge in the Trinity term of 1607.[5] Neile seems to have been a friend of the family, for it was Samuel's brother Thomas whom he appointed second-master of Westminster School in 1610.[6]

Despite rising costs and the Abbey's lack of resources, inven-

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1. I. Walton, The Lives of Dr. John Donne, Sir Henry Weston, Mr. Richard Hooker, and Mr. George Herbert, 4th ed. Lond. 1675, pp. 264-5.
2. W.A.M: Dean's Bk. 7, f.7.
3. W.A.M: 41258.
4. W.A.M: Dean's Bk. 7, f.5v.
5. J. & J.A. Venn, Alumni Cantabrigensis, sub nomine.
6. W.A.M: 32450.

tories and surveys for new work were constantly being drawn up during Neile's time at Westminster. No sooner had the first major building programme begun than Neile called for a complete survey of all moveable goods at Westminster in the Chapter meeting of December 1606.[1] This naturally led to new expenditure as deficiencies were discovered. Neile had realised that the stock of communion plate was inadequate soon after his arrival at Westminster.[2] He even went so far as to draw up a list of defects relating to the Crown Jewels handed into his care by Andrewes on 7 December 1605.[3] Now silver pots and dishes, carefully stamped with the college coat of arms, were acquired for everyday use. Suitably blazoned service books were also ordered for the choir.[4] The paper work involved in keeping track of these operations necessitated an honest and reliable registrar; at the next Chapter meeting in May 1607, Neile's brother William took on that role.[5]

As late as 1610 when Neile was deeply involved in the affairs of Parliament, he was still committed to a building project, financed by himself and his brother William, to construct a porter's lodge at Westminster.[6] Furthermore, it was at that date that he authorised and supervised the expenditure of large sums of money upon St. Margaret's Church, Westminster. At a cost of £120 the sanctuary yard was extended 'for that in regard of the late infec[t]ion there was not ground sufficient for the buriall of the dead'.[7] He was also still preoccupied with the supply of ornaments and cloth for the communion table. St. Margaret's was furnished with altar cloths and cushions

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1. W.A.M: Dean & Chpt. Act Book, f.289v.
2. W.A.M: Dean's Bk. 7, f.5v.
3. Bodleian Library, Oxford: Ashmolean MS. 837, f.243 - Neile's receipt for the Crown Jewels handed into his custody on 7 Dec. 1605.
4. W.A.M: Dean's Bk. 7, f.5.
5. W.A.M: Dean & Chpt. Act Book, f.292v.
6. W.A.M: Dean's Bk. 7, f.2v.
7. Ibid., f.7v.

to the value of over £33.[1] Even while he was drafting his memorial book on his five years at Westminster, Neile's mind still dwelt on projects such as the expenditure of £50 on the external appearance of the church and school.[2]

It is apparent from one section of the 'Dean's Book' that Neile regarded public charity as one of the prime duties of the Dean and Chapter. In December 1607 the leases of two tenements in Tutle Street were allocated to provision for the poor of St. Margaret's parish.[3] By 1610 over £50 had been raised from this source.[4] In his memorial book Neile also recorded that £20 had been spent on emergency relief in 1607 'being the winter of the great ffrost'.[5] As always with charity, private initiative was as important as official action. Frequently the part played by the Dean and Chapter was only to supervise suggested schemes. Thus Thomas Bellot the elder's plan to use the proceeds of a local market for the relief of the poor was approved in December 1607.[6]

Plague was frequently a cause of concern in Westminster. During 1608 and 1609, £35 was spent on relief for the families of plague victims.[7] Neile's reaction to this outbreak affords an interesting contrast to that of his predecessor Andrewes in May 1603. On that occasion Andrewes apparently deserted his parishioners for the relative safety of Chiswick.[8] He was strongly criticised for this at the time by Henoch Clapham and his biographer Paul Welsby has since compared him unfavourably with Thomas Morton who tended the sick in a similar situation at York.[9] It might have raised Welsby's opinion of Neile had he chosen to make the comparison nearer home. In April 1609

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1. Ibid.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid., f.7.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid., f.6v.
6. Ibid., f.7.
7. Ibid., f.6v.
8. P. Welsby, Lancelot Andrewes, p.78.
9. Ibid.

Westminster was again stricken by plague, but Neile remained at the centre of events and was eventually trapped there by the deaths of members of the college staff. Neile merely apologised to Cecil for his absence from court and said he was remaining where he was for fear of spreading the infection.[1] His understanding of their plight led him to give generously to households stricken by the sickness, both by way of personal gifts and by donations from the Abbey funds. He did not neglect his duty to the school however, for the boarders were sent to Chiswick for the summer.[2]

It would be foolish to claim that Neile's initiative alone was responsible for the radical changes at Westminster. Moreover it would overlook his ability, evident throughout his career, to employ and exploit the talents of others. George Bellot, Receiver-General for the first two years of this period, seems to have supplied consistently accurate accounts and inventories. Neile came to rely greatly upon William Man, the Abbey Surveyor, who acted as general supervisor of building work; they were still co-operating in various ventures ten years later.[3] William Cooke acted as an administrative secretary to the Abbey, responsible for drawing up agreements, charters and registers. The list could continue; Neile seems to have had the capacity to draw the best from these people and unite them as a team. All were rewarded for their efforts, either with favourable leases or direct payment and promotion.

Neile's team was drawn not only from the ranks of established Abbey officials, but also from a growing group of friends and relations. The Holmes family was already represented at Westminster

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1. Hatfield MSS., Vol. XXI, 1970, p.46 - Neile to Cecil, 29 April 1609.
2. Ibid., p.50 - Neile to Cecil, 6 May 1609.
3. William Man was granted several leases by Neile at Lincoln in March 1617; See p. 92.

by Matthew Holmes the choir-master and soon he was joined by William Holmes as bell-ringer; this was almost certainly the man who married Neile's sister Dorothy.[1] William Neile was appointed to several posts at the Abbey; bell-ringer, Keeper of the Monuments and college porter. Perhaps the most important post he held was that already mentioned of registrar.[2] It was William who gained more than others in the family while Neile was at Westminster. Yet the reversion to a Westminster prebend which Neile gained from the King for his half-brother Robert Newell in July 1607 was of greater significance in the long term.[3] Robert had followed Neile to Cambridge in the 1590s and then into the Church. His first appointment was as Rector of Wormley in 1599, and later he was permitted to succeed Neile at Cheshunt in 1605. When Neile finally vacated his Chichester treasurership in 1610, it went to Robert Newell.[4] He was one of the most able members of Neile's immediate family gaining his Doctorate of Divinity from Cambridge in 1615. Yet this nepotism must be kept in perspective, for several members of the families of Gabriel Goodman and Lancelot Andrewes were also at Westminster during this period. Nicholas Andrewes preceded William Neile as registrar; Godfrey Goodman was a prebendary at Westminster.

It was at Westminster that Neile started to gain the reputation of a generous and loyal patron of younger theologians which became so remarkable in later life. A close inspection of some of the people he patronised gives an indication of the development of his theological views since Cambridge. Only a few months after his promotion to Westminster Neile licensed two sermons by Richard

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1. See Appendix 4.
2. See p.32.
3. P.R.O: SO/3/3/June 1607.
4. 'Dean & Chpt. Acts, Chichester', ed. W. Peckham, Sussex Record Soc., Item 1076.

Meredith for publication.[1] Meredith was a fellow royal chaplain but his relationship with Neile may have begun when they were at Westminster School together for a time. Meredith's sermons suggest that he was one of those who had come to doubt strict Calvinist theology. His first sermon moderately proclaimed the good fortune of England that her 'Solomon' had survived the Gunpowder Plot. Bancroft was hailed as another 'Moses', but apart from that it was not really controversial.[2] The second sermon however, extolled the virtues of prayer and was deliberately written:

> '..to diminish and abate the credit, of a certaine new fangled, and over-licentious opinion, which is of late conceived amongst men, to wit, that all the chiefe parts, and points of the christian religion, consisteth in the reading of scriptures, frequenting of Lectures and hearing of sermons'.[3]

It later became a standard 'Arminian' argument that Puritans undervalued prayer and ceremonial in relation to sermons.

Neile may well have had a say in Meredith's appointment as Dean of Wells in November 1607. As Clerk of the Closet Neile was on hand to aid Bancroft in his selection of theologians for the over-crowded clerical job-market. It has even been suggested that Neile was Bancroft's 'clerical Villiers' at court.[4] This epithet, albeit exaggerated, does convey something of Neile's strong position with the king. Only five years older than James, Neile seems to have shared his boisterous sense of humour and capacity for plain and often coarse speaking. Their friendship was certainly not based on mutual enjoyment of intellectual niceties. James valued Neile's company and advice - his appearance as the recipient of £200 in the New Year's

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1. W. Greg, 'Licensers for the Press, etc. to 1640', Oxford Bibliographical Society, Oxford 1962, p.71.
2. R. Meredith, Two Sermons preached before his Majestie, in his Chappell at Whitehall, the one, the xi of Februarie, the other the xxv of the same moneth, Lond. 1606, pp.1-23.
3. Ibid., p.40.
4. A. Kautz, 'The Selection of Jacobean Bishops', Early Stuart Studies, ed. H. Reinmuth Jnr., Univ. Minnesota Press, 1970, p.169.

Gift List of March 1607/8 testifies to that.[1] Yet there is no evidence that Neile played any part in the literary endeavours which were such a feature of James' early years as King. In fact Neile was often employed by Cecil and Bancroft to distract the king from too much writing. When the Apology was attacked in 1608 Neile wrote to Cecil about one critique which had been forwarded to the king:

> 'I told him I conceived it to be a loose, libellous, weak discourse, scant worthy his reading, no way worthy his answering, but a just subject for the Bishop of Bath to labour in, he being somewhat unmannerly used by the author in it'.[2]

James went ahead with his writing regardless and in October 1608 James Montagu informed Cecil that Neile was still trying in vain to dissuade him from too many scholarly activities.[3]

There is evidence that Neile was strongly interested in the deployment of personnel in the Church. When John Still, the Bishop of Bath and Wells died in February 1607/8 Neile quickly wrote to Sir Thomas Lake about the promotion possibilities this created.[4] He knew that James Montagu had been nominated for the see in reward for his services on the Apology, which vacated the deanery of Worcester. Lake's brother had been nominated for the latter, but mindful that George Abbot now had the powerful backing of the king's Scottish favourite, the Earl of Dunbar, Neile shrewdly suggested that if Lake was wise 'his brother should attend Abbot's preferment, to get his Deanery of Winchester'.[5] For Worcester Neile hoped that 'Buckeridge might be so much bound to you as to remember him to his Ma[jes]tie'.[6] Lake ignored the advice and his brother Arthur accepted the deanery of Worcester in April 1608. Neile was clearly more shrewd than many in his calculations of how rapidly George Abbot might rise in the

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1. J. Nichols, The Progresses, Processions, and Magnificent Festivities of King James the First, 4 Vols., Lond. 1828, Vol. II, p.190.
2. Hatfield MSS., Vol. XX, 1968, p.226.
3. Ibid., p.260.
4. P.R.O: SP/14/31/59.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid.

next few years. His attempt to 'plan' promotions was a little too advanced for the Jacobean court where it was unwise to risk deferment of pleasures and proferred posts.

This is one of our first pieces of evidence of Neile's friendship with John Buckeridge. The latter was President of St. John's College Oxford and another of the moderate theologians who lent their support to Bancroft's programme of reforms in the Church. He and Neile may have become friends as fellow royal chaplains; in later non-conformist circles he was referred to as 'Neile's disciple'.[1] This friendship soon led to another, for it was on Buckeridge's advice that, on becoming Bishop of Rochester, Neile employed William Laud as his personal chaplain in August 1608.[2] This was to become a relationship of some significance,for Laud prospered under Neile's patronage and the two men rose to control the Church from the archiepiscopal chairs of York and Canterbury in the 1630s. It was Neile who arranged for Laud to preach at court in September 1609.[3] A royal chaplaincy followed in 1611.[4] Before he left Westminster one of Neile's last acts was to gain the King's signature for a reversion for Laud to the next vacant Westminster prebend.[5] Laud's half-brother William Robinson happened to be a prebendary of Westminster and Neile seems to have also befriended him. Robinson later followed Neile to a post in Lincoln diocese and he finally ended his career in the critically important position of Archdeacon of Nottingham when Neile was Archbishop of York.[6]

In the autumn of 1607 Neile became involved in the affairs of

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1. Dr. Williams's Library, London: Morrice MSS., Vol. 3, R.M./J.1644 (6-38).
2. P. Heylin, Cyprianus Anglicus, p.59.
3. The Works of William Laud, ed. W. Scott & J. Bliss, 9 Vols., Oxford 1847-1860, Vol. III, 1853, p.134.
4. Ibid.
5. P.R.O: SO/3/5/Nov. 1610.
6. See p.240.

Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge. The death of the old master, Dr. Legge, had precipitated an acrimonious election campaign in July. Dr. Gostlin was chosen to succeed Legge, but with undue haste and little regard for the college statutes. The matter was reported to the King at Farnham and Neile, who was in the royal entourage, was ordered to investigate on behalf of Sir Robert Cecil. Neile later reported that the election of Gostlin had been 'a plain conspiracy' and 'a thing long plotted for by them of his faction'.[1] Unfortunately one source at least suggests that Neile was here forced to abandon the scheming of his own 'faction':

> 'When Dr. George Downham was like to have been chosen Master of Caius Colledge, Dr. Harsnet writ to B[isho]p Neile in 1607 to prevent it for saith he while Dr. Barwell is at Christ Colledge, Dr. Chadderton at Emanuel, and Dr. Montague at Sydney Sussex, Puritanisme flourisheth enough in Cambridge'.[2]

Gostlin was a distinguished Doctor of Medicine in Cambridge and he became one of Neile's most important university contacts after his eventual successful election as Master of Gonville and Caius in 1618/19.[3] In December 1607 the post went to a neutral candidate William Branthwaite, so Harsnet's warning did not go entirely unheeded.

It is from this period that we have our first strong evidence of Neile's growing fraternization with lawyers. He may even have acquired some knowledge of the law himself, for in March 1608/9 Neile became one of the few clerics to be admitted as an honorary member of Gray's Inn.[4] The Cecils used this as their 'club' however, and the appointment probably does not carry the usual educational

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1. Hatfield MSS., Vol. XIX, 1965, p.204 - Neile to Salisbury, 3 Aug. 1607.
2. Dr. Williams's Library, London: Morrice MSS., Vol. 2, R.M./I. 663(4).
3. Neile mobilized Gostlin's support in the campaign to elect Buckingham Chancellor of Cambridge University in May 1626. Cambridge University Registry MSS.: XI/23/301, 305.
4. J. Foster, Gray's Inn Admission Registers 1521-1889, Lond. 1889, p.121.

connotations which go with membership of an Inn of Court. Nevertheless it did bring Neile into contact with able lawyers both young and old. At Westminster Neile seems to have established a very good working relationship with his Official, Robert Masters. His move to Rochester must have been made smoother by the fact that this man was co-Chancellor of that diocese.[1]

Neile seems to have encouraged young civil lawyers as well as rely on experienced men. When Masters resigned as Official of Westminster Neile allowed two minor clerks from the major ecclesiastical courts, Simon Thelwall and John Walsall, to gain experience of major office.[2] Of greater significance in the long term, Neile appointed William Easdall as his private secretary at Westminster. Easdall seems to have served an old-fashioned legal apprenticeship with Neile during the course of his studies. He attended Neile as his private secretary until they parted company in 1617.[3]

Neile did not simply cultivate contacts with civil lawyers. When the Abbey was in need of professional advice to sort out a tangle over a prebendal house, Neile turned to none other than the Attorney-General, Sir Henry Hobart.[4] When a new joint steward was required in May 1610, Sir James Whitelocke won the post 'by the favour and friendship of doctor Richard Neel'.[5] This in spite of Whitelocke's attacks on the royal prerogative over impositions made in the Parliament of that year. These are striking examples of Neile's willingness to employ people of ability regardless of faction.

Neile's personal benevolence towards young scholars going to Cambridge has already been referred to, but by far the most intriguing instance of Neile's patronage while at Westminster involves Edward

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1. See pp. 60-1.
2. W.A.M: Dean & Chpt. Act Bk., f.295v.
3. See Chpt. 3, pp. 62-3.
4. W.A.M: Dean & Chpt. Act Bk., f.298.
5. 'Liber Famelicus of Sir James Whitelocke', ed. J. Bruce, Camden Soc., Vol. 70, Lond. 1858, p.19.

Topsell. In September 1606 this man presumed to dedicate The Historie of Adam to Neile because 'you love the Church and every divine thing'.[1] Most of this orthodox theological work had been written by Henry Holland, Vicar of St. Bride's, London, a parish within Westminster jurisdiction. Holland had died in 1603 and Topsell, the Curate of St. Botolph's, Aldersgate, another Westminster living, had completed the work. With due deference to his clerical superior, he dedicated the work to Neile. Although full of formal praise, his short preface reveals little knowledge of his adopted patron. Topsell is famous because he was an early populariser of zoological knowledge. Apparently, 'he was in fact a man of very little originality' whose aim was 'to condemne atheisme, paganisme and papisme - particularly the last named - and to inculcate a solid pedestrian virtue'.[2] We do not know how Neile responded to work of this 'sober exegate'.[3]

Within a year, Topsell had produced a book of his own which he once again dedicated to Neile. It was a comprehensive study of The Historie of Foure-footed Beastes.[4] The dedication was longer and more formal than before, with an abundance of classical references designed to bolster the scientific credibility of the work. Topsell was at pains to defend the study of zoology by divines. His fulsome praise of Neile now included the assertion that the latter was 'a famous preacher'.[5] In one interesting passage however, Topsell wrote plainly of what kind of patronage he desired from Neile:

> '..I have not any accesse of maintenance but by voluntary benevolence for personal pains, receiving no more but a laborious wages, and but for you, that had also been taken from me'.[6]

Topsell signed off as 'your chaplain', but it is not clear whether

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1. H. Holland, The Historie of Adam, Lond. 1606, Dedication p.1.
2. C. Raven, English Naturalists from Neckham to Ray, Cambridge 1947, pp. 218 & 219.
3. Ibid., p.219.
4. E. Topsell, The Historie of Foure-footed Beastes, Lond. 1607.
5. Ibid., Epistle Dedicatory, p.7.
6. Ibid.

Neile had taken him into that position in his household. Yet the passage does suggest that Neile had helped in other ways. Topsell was the perpetual Curate of St. Botolph's, but he seems to have spent much of his time writing in his country home at Syresham. If his parishioners had complained of neglect, Neile may have spoken in his defence.

Neile did more than simply preserve Topsell's livelihood. The lease of the parsonage of St. Botolph's was re-negotiated in May 1607 and Topsell's income was more than doubled.[1] When The Historie of Serpents was published in 1608 it was again dedicated to Neile, but no longer contained allusions to the author's poverty.[2] Alas, we know nothing more of the relationship between Topsell and Neile. We may never know if Neile was genuinely interested in zoology or whether he patronised Topsell simply because he held a Westminster living. This is tantalising when one considers that his son, Sir Paul Neile, was a founder member of the Royal Society, and that his grandson William was a famous mathematician.[3]

Neile was occasionally called upon to conduct special services at the Abbey. The state visit of the King of Denmark has already received mention and it was probably on this occasion that Neile was given a ring by the latter which he later valued so highly in his will.[4] No doubt Neile conducted the services on the less happy occasions of the funerals of the Princesses Sophia and Mary in 1606 and 1607.[5] Nor did his services in this sad ceremonial capacity cease with his departure from Westminster, for in October 1612 the King honoured

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1. W.A.M: Dean's Bk. 7, f.1.
2. E. Topsell, The Historie of Serpents, Lond. 1608.
3. Sir Harold Hartley, The Royal Society. Its Origins and Founders, Lond. 1960, pp. 159-165; D.N.B., sub nomine for William Neile.
4. York: Neile's Register, No. 32, f.4v; T. Birch, The Court and Times of James I, 2 Vols., Lond. 1848, I, p.67. A letter from Pory to Sir Robert Cotton of Aug. 1606 records that the King of Denmark gave a large number of gifts to members of the royal household.
5. Handbook of British Chronology, ed. Sir F.M. Powicke & E. Fryde, 2nd. ed., Lond. 1961, p.40.

Neile by requesting him to collect and escort the body of Mary Queen of Scots from Peterborough Cathedral for interment at Westminster Abbey.[1]

As Dean of Westminster Neile had many civil responsibilities. Westminster gatehouse was frequently used as a prison and on taking office Neile was involved with Lancelot Andrewes in the interrogation of the infamous Father Garnet over the Gunpowder Plot.[2] Such matters increased Neile's contact with his old patron Sir Robert Cecil, for it was he or a member of his family who usually undertook the office of High Steward of Westminster. Sir Robert was confirmed in that post at a Chapter meeting in December 1607.[3] To some extent this was a formality, for Cecil was also the crown-appointed overlord of the liberty of Westminster. Thus Neile had frequent cause to deal with Cecil on matters of local jurisdiction. On one occasion his common-sense prevailed and, after conferring with Cecil, a long-buried body was not exhumed for a legal case.[4] On another occasion certain abuses of justice in relation to one Edmond Keene were referred to Neile by Cecil.[5]

Further afield than London, Neile exercised manorial powers in the name of the Abbey. College lands were scattered throughout the Home Counties and Neile seems to have been diligent in visiting manors to hold courts. He always added a personal touch to these visits, usually by contributions to his servants and the poor. In 1607 he spent two months touring the Midlands at a cost of £80 'of which myselfe paid of mine own purse £46 and Colledge £40'.[6]

There is little evidence that Neile ever paid much attention to

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1. P.K. Durham: Hunter MS. 44, Item 17, p.5.
2. The Works of Lancelot Andrewes, 12 Vols., Lond. 1841-54, Vol. 9, 1851, p.9.
3. W.A.M: Dean & Chpt. Act Bk., f.293v.
4. Hatfield MSS., Vol. XIX, 1965, p.94 - Neile to Salisbury, April 160
5. Ibid., p.513 Letters c.1607.
6. W.A.M: Dean's Bk. 7, f.5v.

the minor livings he held during this period; he happily relinquished the rectory of Toddington on gaining Rochester in 1608. Even though the Chichester livings were quite lucrative, he does not seem to have spared them much time. He rarely attended Chapter meetings and soon appointed the dean to act regularly as his proxy.[1] This did not prevent him from seeking a canon residentiary's position which he first applied for in 1604 but only gained in 1610.[2] In cavalier fashion, he was allowed to pass his treasurership to Robert Newell in 1610 only days after the latter had gained a Chichester prebend.[3] Yet there is evidence that Neile's high-handed approach at Chichester caused resentment locally. When Neile sought to pass his canon residentiary's position to Newell in August 1611, the move was vetoed by Humphrey Booth.[4] It was not until 1614 that Neile was able to effect this transfer without opposition.[5] The Chichester livings were treated with scant respect by others in authority however, for in 1610 they formed an integral part of the notorious block grant made at the time of Neile's appointment to Lichfield and Coventry.[6]

It was the deanery of Westminster which gave Neile most ample scope to demonstrate his talents. These attracted recognition because of his close proximity to court. He soon proved himself worthy to become a bishop and sufficiently established in royal favour to gain Rochester in 1608. Partly because of personal preference, and because he could be so useful to Bancroft and Cecil while living in London, this does not seem to have greatly changed his life style. Only on the move to Lichfield and Coventry in 1610 did Neile cease to be a dean first and a bishop second.

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1. 'Acts of the Dean & Chpt. of Chichester', ed. W. Peckham, Sussex Record Soc., 1959, Item 1075.
2. Ibid., Items 1010 & 1063.
3. Ibid., Items 1076-1077.
4. Ibid., Items 1083 & 1103.
5. Ibid., Item 1103.
6. See p. 50.

Chapter 3: Bishop Neile.

This chapter is chiefly concerned with Neile's work as a bishop between 1608 and 1632. His role as Archbishop of York is considered elsewhere.[1] Neile first became a bishop at the age of 46 and remained one for the next 32 years. His was an average age at which to join the episcopal bench, but few survived so long. By the end of his life he had held six sees in all: Rochester, Lichfield and Coventry, Lincoln, Durham, Winchester and York - more than anyone, even Wolsey, had held before. Why this should be is thus an obvious question and the answer should shed some light on how episcopal appointments were made in the early seventeenth century.

The survival of source material for individual diocesan studies is patchy and uneven. Comparative analysis of what does exist facilitates an overview of Neile's role as a bishop. Attitudes and policies dominant in one diocese can be reviewed in relation to aspects of his work in another. Changes in emphasis may be detected on some issues, while elements of continuity and development may also be apparent. Although he did not stay long in his first three dioceses, Neile gained valuable expertise and experience which stood him in good stead at Durham and Winchester. While the main emphasis of this chapter lies with Neile's role and success as a bishop, it should also provide some useful insights into the problems of his various dioceses and thus of the Church in general at this period.[2]

Neile's promotion to the episcopal bench in 1608 owed much to the patronage of Sir Robert Cecil and Archbishop Bancroft. He was

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1. See Chpt. 8.
2. My article, 'The function of a bishop: the career of Richard Neile, 1562-1640', Continuity and Change, ed. R. O'Day & F. Heal, Leicester 1976, pp. 33-54, provides some thoughts on changing attitudes towards episcopacy during this period.

this 'team's' most successful protégé. His stepping stones to high office - the mastership of the Savoy, clerkship of the Closet and deanery of Westminster - had all been secured by their efforts.[1] The one was the architect of the Stuart succession to the throne in 1603 and the King's pre-eminent minister; the other was the worthy successor to Archbishop Whitgift who sought the revitalization of the Church of England. When James took a great personal liking to Neile, the latter became Cecil's 'eyes' at court and helped Bancroft thwart the plans of more Calvinist-disposed clerics. Because of this role, Neile has been described by one historian as a 'clerical Villiers'.[2] He was the recipient of many royal gifts and favours, conducted the funeral services for two royal children, was trusted with the supervision of the reburial of Mary,Queen of Scots, at Westminster and stayed more frequently at court during the reign of James I than he did in any of his dioceses. His post as Clerk of the Closet guaranteed close access to the King who willingly acquiesced to Neile's requests for Westminster appointments for Robert Newell and William Laud. There is evidence that Neile played his part with Cecil and Bancroft in many of the early clerical appointments of this reign. Once at court, his own success was due largely to his personal friendship with the King and it is this which explains his continued promotion after the early deaths of his two old patrons.

Evidence of the strength of this royal favour is to be found in Neile's very first episcopal appointment, that of Rochester in 1608.[3] Rochester was frequently given to novices on the episcopal bench because it was a small diocese close to Canterbury and London. Well

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1. See Chpts. 1 & 2, pp. 16-17, 25.
2. A. Kautz, 'The Selection of Jacobean Bishops', Early Stuart Studies, ed. H. Reinmuth Jnr., Univ. Minnesota Press, 1970, p.169.
3. Neile was nominated Bishop of Rochester on 28 June 1608, formally elected on 2 July and confirmed on 8 Oct. 1608. J. Le Neve, Lives & Characters of the Bishops, p.141.

provided with educated ministers and easily supervised by a single archdeacon, Rochester provided few problems and was perhaps accordingly poorly paid. According to the King's Book, Rochester was worth just over £358 p.a.[1] The rectory of Southfleet had been annexed to the see in an attempt to bolster this income.[2] Yet when Neile was elected to Rochester in July 1608 he was allowed to retain not only Southfleet, but also the deanery of Westminster and his Chichester livings in commendam with the see. This was necessary to offset a possible fall in his income on relinquishing the mastership of the Savoy. This precedent of linking Westminster with Rochester was followed on a regular basis in the latter half of the seventeenth century.

In Neile's case the link with Westminster enabled him to retain a residence in London close to the King to continue his good work for Cecil and Bancroft. The diocese gave Neile episcopal status as a reward for past service and proven ability as Dean of Westminster. Most important, it gave him a seat in the House of Lords for the first time.[3] Yet it was not an appointment which ever took him far from London or clashed with the demands made upon his time as a royal favourite.

The alliance between Cecil and Bancroft which so dominated secular and clerical policy-making during the early years of this reign came to an end in 1610. It collapsed on the death of Bancroft, but Cecil's personal influence also waned because of the failure of his financial proposals in Parliament that year. The end of this alliance helps to explain illogicalities surrounding Neile's election to the see of Lichfield and Coventry in October 1610.

On the face of it this move was simply one of promotion following a good performance by Neile in Parliament earlier in the year. Once

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1. Appendix 2.
2. Ibid.
3. See Chpt. 5, pp. 112-16.

again Cecil and Bancroft were able to demonstrate their influence at court and trust in their protégé. However, this explanation ignores striking facts and the significance of a whole series of closely inter-related events at the close of 1610. One problem relates to when the decision that Neile should move to Lichfield and Coventry was finally taken. Disease took its toll of the episcopal bench with three deaths in 1609; it was first rumoured that Neile should move on Overton's death in April.[1] Such rumours cropped up again at the beginning of the new year when Abbot was translated to London, but formal election was delayed until October.[2]

A second problem which helps explain the delay relates to why this particular translation was even thought suitable for Neile. Lichfield and Coventry was a much larger diocese than Rochester as its title suggests. But it was scarcely a prestigious or wealthy see. Its vast, rugged terrain provided a welcome home for Catholic missionaries, while its scattered towns afforded outposts for Puritan nonconformists anxious to meet the dreaded papists. After twenty-five years of weak rule under Bishop Overton, the diocese needed a strong hand, but it was hardly an attractive proposition and was certainly no great step up from Rochester.[3]

The most convincing indication that this was an unusual and forced translation as opposed to a simple reward, is provided by evidence that Neile himself opposed the move. In 1609 the inexperienced Abbot was given the post as a favour to his patron the Earl of Dunbar.[4] As the more important posts of Ely and Chichester fell to

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1. S. Clarke, A Generall Martyrologie, Lond. 1660, p.61 of the 'Lives'.
2. T. Birch, The Court & Times of James I, I, p.103; a conge d'élire was actually drawn up for the move: Hist. MSS. Comm. Hatfield MSS., XXI, p.197. Neile was eventually elected in October and confirmed in the post in December 1610. J. Le Neve, Lives & Characters of the Bishops, p.142.
3. W. Beresford, Diocesan Histories: Lichfield, Lond. [1883], pp.228-31.
4. P. Welsby, George Abbot. The Unwanted Archbishop 1562-1633, Lond. 1962, p.32.

Lancelot Andrewes and Samuel Harsnet later that year - both men favoured by Bancroft - Abbot's promotion was probably a sop to the Scottish Calvinist group at court. The unexpected death of Thomas Ravis in December 1609 revived debates about the episcopal bench and the rumours that Neile might have to move. No sooner had Neile aided in the joint consecration service for Harsnet and Abbot at Lambeth in December, than it was announced that the latter was to gain London.[1] Abbot's dramatic rise to fame demonstrated the futility of long-term planning in a court of favourites and that Cecil and Bancroft did not control all avenues of advancement.

Understandably reluctant to leave London and the King, Neile was forced to reconsider the idea of moving to Lichfield and Coventry. His main arguments against such a translation concerned lack of money. He was being asked to give up an income of at least £550 p.a., drawn from Rochester and his deanery, in return for a diocese worth £560 p.a. according to the King's Book, but for which only £503 was ever paid in practice.[2] Neile did not see such a move as promotion and indeed sought compensation if it was ever to come about. Chamberlain informed Carleton at the end of January that:

> 'The Bishop of Rochester should go to Litchfield but they say he will not remove unless he may retain Rochester or Westminster'.[3]

Neile's negotiations with Bancroft and Cecil on this issue may reveal why he spoke so passionately on the subject of clerical incomes in Parliament that year.[4]

The end of the Cecil-Bancroft alliance explains why Neile eventually accepted Lichfield and Coventry. As Bancroft's health deteriorated during 1610, it became obvious that it was wiser to

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1. J. Le Neve, Lives & Characters of the Bishops, p.142; P. Welsby, op. cit., p.33.
2. Appendix 2.
3. T. Birch, The Court & Times of James I, I, p.103.
4. See Chpt. 5, p.114.

accept such a move than risk staying at Rochester in the uncertain political climate which lay ahead. Abbot's translations added a sense of urgency to the situation. Neile's 'promotion' at the close of 1610 is one of several moves which bear the hallmarks of a last effort made by Bancroft and Cecil to preserve the power of a group of like-minded clerics in the Church in the face of growing opposition. When Neile was eventually translated, his disciple John Buckeridge and George Mountain, fellow chaplain to the Cecil family, were nominated for Rochester and Westminster respectively. Furthermore, Neile was allowed to pass his profitable treasurership at Chichester to his half brother Robert Newell only one month after Newell was granted a Chichester prebend.[1] Buckeridge's own elevation to the episcopal bench signalled the start of a determined and successful campaign to elect Neile's chaplain, and their mutual friend, William Laud President in his stead at St. John's College, Oxford.[2]

It is a measure of Neile's influence with the King that not only were these political changes effected, but Neile's financial position was maintained after all. On 26 November 1610 Neile was issued with a grant by the Dean and Chapter of Canterbury, acting clearly on the wishes of the dead Archbishop. The grant recognised that the revenue from Lichfield and Coventry was small and thus ordered:

> '..that you may retain Southfleete Rectory in Rochester diocese and Firles prebend and the place of a residentiary in Chichester Cathedral in commendam so long as you hold the Bishopric'.[3]

He was further permitted to exchange these livings and acquire others to the value of 200 marks so long as 'the cure of souls in them is not neglected'.[4] Royal confirmation of this grant appears to have been a

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1. 'Dean & Chapter Acts, Chichester', ed. W. Peckham, Sussex Record Soc., 1959, Items 1076-7.
2. P. Heylin, Cyprianus Anglicus, pp. 60-1.
3. 'Dean & Chapter Acts, Chichester', ed. W. Peckham, Sussex Record Soc., Item 1043.
4. Ibid.

formality. The scope of these concessions was such that Neile's case became an obvious example when the practice of holding livings in commendam was exposed to legal discussion in the cause célèbre of 1613.[1]

Soon after Neile's confirmation as Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry, George Abbot was selected to succeed Bancroft as Archbishop of Canterbury. His had been a meteoric rise thanks largely to the now dead Earl of Dunbar. It was now the turn of moderate Calvinists like Abbot and James Montagu to control the ear of the King with regard to most clerical appointments. Neile had moved in the nick of time. When Arthur Kautz criticizes the 'Court bishops' as he calls them, and 'particularly Neile' for ignoring the 'king's propensity for listening to the last importunist', he completely over-estimates Neile's power at that date.[2] Although much had been salvaged from Neile's move to Lichfield and Coventry, it was still not the promotion he would have wished for. Neile's absence from court in the early months of 1611 did not arise from negligence, but out of a recognition of the change in the Church which had been untimely brought about by Bancroft's death.

In the period before the rise of George Villiers as a royal favourite in 1616, Neile's influence at court was heavily circumscribed. He did his best to protect theologians like William Laud and John Howson from pressure from the Abbot brothers and to advance friends to minor livings within his gift whenever possible.[3] But there was little he could do in practice and he personally found himself grateful that his wife was distantly related to the Countess of Suffolk, so that he could conveniently attach himself to the Howard party at court.[4] His service to that family and the King as one of

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1. See pp.88-9.
2. A. Kautz, op. cit., p.175.
3. See Chpt. 7, p.212.
4. See Chpt. 1, p.23.

the commissioners in the notorious Essex Divorce Case of 1613 probably accounts for his election to the see of Lincoln in January 1613/14.[1]

Abbot's stand against this divorce, although morally correct and publicly popular earned him a short period of royal disfavour. It was in this unexpected interlude when Abbot had 'no more to do with naming any to church livings' that Neile was translated to Lincoln, elected in January 1613/14 and confirmed only one month later.[2] It was the largest of Neile's dioceses. His responsibilities at York may have spanned a greater area, but Lincoln possessed 1,255 parishes in 1603 and was split into two difficult administrative sections by the diocese of Peterborough.[3] Perhaps because of its past prestige and proximity to Cambridge and London, it was well served with qualified preachers, three quarters of whom were graduates in the 1603 survey.[4] Such a vast diocese, split into six archdeaconries, afforded great scope for the exercise of episcopal patronage, which must have pleased Neile after Lichfield and Coventry.

Nevertheless, Lincoln was hardly the prize it had once been in the days of its medieval splendour.[5] Its revenues were greater than those of Lichfield and Coventry, but it was scarcely an easier diocese to administer.[6] Several dilapidated palaces awaited Neile at Lincoln ready to swallow up available funds. He would be free of many of the livings which had been previously necessary to supplement his income, but these would be exchanged for the cares of a diocese dominated by its Puritan clergy. Nevertheless, Lincoln did represent promotion for Neile. The diocese carried far greater prestige than Lichfield and

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1. See Chpt. 6, pp. 169-70.
2. W. Cobbett, A Complete Collection of State Trials, Lond. 1809, p. 829; J. Le Neve, Lives & Characters of the Bishops, p.143.
3. B.M: Harleian MS. 280, f.169.
4. Ibid.
5. E. Venables & G. Perry, Diocesan Histories: Lincoln, Lond. 1897, Chpt. XII; V.C.H. Lincolnshire, Lond. 1906, II, p.59.
6. Appendix 2.

Coventry and as before in 1610, his move gave him the opportunity to speak up for old friends. Despite a chequered past, John Overall was nominated to succeed Neile at Lichfield and Coventry and Valentine Carey was appointed to Overall's deanery of St. Paul's. It was probably in recognition of Neile's role in these affairs that Carey placed the disposal of his own archdeaconry of Shrewsbury entirely in Neile's hands in November 1613.[1]

These moves surrounding his translation to Lincoln represent a rare moment of triumph for Neile in this bleak period of Abbot's primacy. The latter's power was eventually broken in the winter of 1616-17, when it became apparent that George Villiers, created Earl of Buckingham in January, had broken free from his Protestant masters and was testing his power as the new royal favourite on the fall of Somerset. In January 1616/17 Chamberlain wrote with obvious disgust that Villiers had failed to get a kinsman appointed to the see of Worcester simply because:

> '..the conferring of Carlisle and Bangor upon Snowden and Bailey, so unworthy men, was generally so distasted, that he could not prevail'.[2]

Abbot had openly opposed the appointment of Bayley in October. Buckingham's triumphs and excesses opened the way to more general access to the King for other favourites.

In this changed atmosphere at court, both Neile and Laud were selected to accompany King James on a progress to Scotland in 1617.[3] What followed was perhaps the most straightforward episcopal appointment of Neile's career. Soon after the royal party had passed through his diocese, Bishop James of Durham died suddenly on 12 May 1617. What was more natural than that the King should think of one of the bishops in his entourage for the appointment. He had witnessed

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1. St. John's College, Cambridge: 80/497 - Neile to Gwyn, 29 Nov. 1613.
2. T. Birch, The Court & Times of James I, I, pp. 385-7.
3. Ibid., pp. 457-60; P. Heylin, Cyprianus Anglicus, p.73.

Neile's pecuniary problems at Lincoln on the way north, thus it was hardly surprising when only five days after the old bishop's death, Chamberlain reported that Neile had been nominated for Durham.[1] The appointment was confirmed on 30 June 1617.[2]

Durham was the richest and most prestigious prize Neile ever gained from James I. In simple economic terms it was worth more than double Neile's income at Lincoln and more than his previous three dioceses put together.[3] It stood on a financial par with York and was often regarded as a stepping stone towards that office. Neile's voice in Parliament and Convocation was now second only to the two archbishops and on a par with the bishops of Winchester and London. Neile was the 'Prince Bishop' of the County Palatine whose civil authority was large even before he was appointed Lord Lieutenant of the Palatinate in November 1617.[4]

In some respects Neile's civil responsibilities were more onerous than those of his diocese. Durham was small by comparison with Lichfield and Coventry or Lincoln. It consisted of only 135 rural parishes in 1603, most of which were impropriated.[5] Catholicism was still a strong force in the region, except in the urban outposts of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Berwick-upon-Tweed and Durham itself.[6] Even in these centres however, large groups of influential Catholics survived as Neile discovered when seeking information on the activities of Sir Robert Hodgson and Mrs. Lawson near Newcastle, only to meet a wall of silence from civic officials.[7] However, Neile had developed a casual approach towards Catholics and would have appreciated that he had less to fear from Puritans in Durham than in the diocese of Lincoln. Most

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1. T. Birch, The Court & Times of James I, II, pp. 18-22.
2. J. Le Neve, Lives & Characters of the Bishops, p.144.
3. Appendix 2.
4. See Chpt. 4.
5. B.M: Harleian MS. 280, f.171.
6. M. James, Family, Lineage, and Civil Society, Oxford 1974, pp. 137-146.
7. Ibid., p.144.

important, Durham yielded a magnificent London residence on the Strand and ample scope for episcopal patronage as virtually all the Chapter appointments were in his hands. It was this translation which helped to forge a coherent Arminian party in England.[1]

This appointment marks the end of an era for Neile. He received no more sees from his friend James I who died in 1625. Although each of his past appointments reveal the operation of unusual factors and need to be seen in certain contexts of court faction-fighting, they were all due in large measure to the King's personal friendship for Neile. Later appointments to Winchester and York were more clearly promotions than some of Neile's past moves, but they were due to the favour of Neile's old protégé William Laud rather than royal friendship.

Both of these moves are discussed in other chapters and only the appointment to Winchester requires comment here.[2] Neile was nominated for the post on 18 November 1627 after a vacancy of fourteen months.[3] As far as one can see, he was only too happy to move to this rich and comfortable diocese in the south. Earlier in the year he had been appointed to the Privy Council, so a see nearer to London held obvious advantages.[4] These factors were clearly taken into account when the decision was finally made, but this translation was complicated on several counts. Although Andrewes had been ill for some time, proper thought does not seem to have been given to his successor until his actual death in September 1626. Heylin's suggestion that Neile had been selected for the post as early as June 1626 is not convincing in the light of other evidence.[5] If this was correct, why should Laud write to Lord Scudamore in September bitterly regretting that his

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1. See Chpt. 7, p.213. 2. See Chpts. 6 & 8, pp.173-5, 230-2.
3. J. Le Neve, Lives & Characters of the Bishops, p.147.
4. See Chpt. 6, p.173.
5. P. Heylin, Cyprianus Anglicus, pp. 174-5.

recent move to Bath and Wells left him temporarily ineligible for further promotion?[1] Laud seems to have miscalculated.

The debate over the promotion was no doubt swiftly settled despite this annoyance for Laud. Edward Liveley, Neile's secretary, resigned various posts at Durham in anticipation of a move in October 1627.[2] Rumours that Neile had been selected for Winchester were abroad by January 1627/8.[3] This is where a second unusual feature of this appointment has to be taken into account. Neile was an obvious candidate for Winchester, but his move was delayed till 1627 basically because the King needed money. The Church was forced to do without several bishops for just over a year so that Charles could take the revenues of the sees. This expediency was forced upon the normally upright King because the country was at war with Spain and Parliament had refused to grant him any money that year. Out of the four sees left vacant for over a year between 1603-1640, a superb record in relation to the days of Queen Elizabeth, three vacancies spanned the critical year of 1627 when Charles also attempted to raise 'forced loans'. Laud countenanced these moves with regret, but they led to open confrontation with Archbishop Abbot.[4]

Winchester was probably the appointment which gave Neile most pleasure. It was a prestigious and prosperous see in the south of England within easy reach of London. There is strong evidence that Neile was loth to leave it for the technically greater prize of York in 1632.[5] A man of 65 when he was finally confirmed as Bishop of Winchester in February 1627/8, he must have felt that this would be his last resting place. Comfortable palaces awaited him in London,

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1. H. Trevor-Roper, Archbishop Laud, pp. 448-9.
2. Dept. P.&D., Durham: Neile's Register, pp. 93-4.
3. T. Birch, The Court & Times of Charles I, I, pp. 179-80. A letter to Mead of 3 Dec. 1626 contained the assertion that Neile was sure of Winchester; at that date it was thought that Laud would succeed him at Durham.
4. H. Trevor-Roper, Archbishop Laud, pp. 78-80.
5. See Chpt. 8, pp. 230-1.

Winchester and Farnham. Although close to London, the diocese was not noted for its Puritan extremists and indeed it contained the largest concentration of Catholics in the southern province, apart perhaps from Lichfield and Coventry.[1]

Administrative success as Dean of Westminster had set the seal on Neile's rise to the episcopal bench; it is also the hallmark of his career as a bishop and a significant factor in his frequent promotions. His ability to produce accurate reports and carry out orders effectively had been well used by the Cecils, whose business methods Neile praised in later life. The 'Dean's Book' at Westminster is a lasting testament to his efficiency and was used as a model for similar reports at Durham.[2] Before Neile ever went to Lichfield and Coventry he had the see surveyed by his secretary William Easdall.[3] The report drawn up for Neile's inspection following his primary visitation at Lincoln has long been famous for its detailed layout on the issue of lecturers active in the diocese.[4] Similarly, Neile's zeal in personally annotating Lincoln clerical subsidy accounts, just as he had once personally marked treasurers' reports at Westminster, has caused one commentator to praise him as a 'diligent and adroit tax collector'.[5]

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1. B.M: Harleian MS. 280, f.168; W. Benham, Diocesan Histories: Winchester, Lond. 1884, pp. 185-93, makes the point that the Channel Islands were technically part of this diocese and were centres of Puritanism. This is borne out by A.J. Eagleston, The Channel Islands under Tudor Government, 1585-1642, Cambridge 1949. Apart from demonstrating his faith in David Bardinell, Dean of Jersey, by appointing him Official on the island in March 1631/2, Neile apparently did little about this problem. Winchester: Ledger Bk. 13, f.142.
2. See Chpt. 2, pp. 25-6; A Copy of the 'Dean's Book' survives at Durham. P.K. Durham: Hunter MS. 25, Item 7.
3. Lichfield Joint Record Office: CC 124100, pp. 16-17. Copy of a survey of episcopal property at Eccleshall carried out by Easdall in June 1610. I owe this reference to the kindness of Dr. Rosemary O'Day.
4. 'The Primary Visitation of the Diocese of Lincoln by Bishop Neile, A.D. 1614', ed. Rev. Precentor Venables, Associated Architectural Societies' Reports & Papers, 16, 1881-2, pp. 31-54.
5. A. Moore, 'Subsidies of the Clergy in the Archdeaconry of Leicester in the Seventeenth Century', Associated Architectural Societies' Reports & Papers, 27, Part II, 1903-4, p.448.

Neile was a great believer in the value of up-to-date inventories and surveys. He took an interest in the minutiae of administration and was quite likely to harry even the ablest of his subordinates. In 1621 he wrote to his Receiver General, Timothy Comyn, about some poor rent returns in Durham and referred to the fact that he had ordered the compilation of more detailed rent books some time before. He candidly informed Comyn that the new books were:

> '..to be lefte amongst the records of the Chancery for my successours to see how carefull I have beene, and with how great charge to make the howses of the Bishopricke usefull'. [1]

Such records tended to reveal the inadequacies of less able colleagues, but they show that Neile, like his patron Bancroft, was concerned about the state of the Church in the long term. At the same time however, this desire to leave carefully witnessed accounts of one's deeds bears all the hallmarks of the social climber and self-made man.

Another measure of Neile's long-term concern for his dioceses is to be found in his interest in the construction and repair of episcopal palaces. Peter Heylin praised Neile for spending considerable amounts of money on the restoration of Rochester's residence at Bromley and on Buckden in the diocese of Lincoln.[2] Little detail is available on this early work, but Neile was clearly just as active at Lichfield, where in February 1611/12 he obtained permission from Archbishop Abbot to pull down part of the decayed palace.[3] Neile did not remain in his first three sees long enough to make much impact in this respect. Ten years at Westminster produced major changes to the dean's lodgings and other property.[4] London continued to be his chief centre of

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1. 'Four Unpublished Letters of Dr. Richard Neile, Bishop of Durham', ed. J.C. Hodgson, Archaelogia Aeliana, 3rd Series, 16, 1919, pp. 124-5. This is one of the few references to the building work for which Neile is justly famous which comes from the period when the work was carried out.
2. P. Heylin, Cyprianus Anglicus, pp. 74-5.
3. B.M: Lansdowne MS. 984, f.279.
4. See Chpt. 2, pp.26-7.

residence until the 1630s. He kept up his family home at King Street until 1615 when he moved into Westminster Abbey Close. After 1617 he was resident at the splendid quarters at Durham House. Translation to Winchester simply involved a move to Winchester House in Southwark, a residence which seems to have remained available to him even after 1632, when York provided a base at Battersea. All of these properties benefited from Neile's careful eye for maintenance and improvement.[1]

The major evidence of Neile's work in this field relates to the palaces of Durham and York dioceses. As a great socialite many of Neile's measures seem to have involved the extension of houses to cater for more guests as at Durham Castle and Bishop Auckland. It is claimed that he was the first bishop to order restoration work on the palaces and cathedral since Tunstall.[2] In a funeral sermon on the death of John Cosin in 1672, Isaac Basire praised that man's rebuilding efforts at Durham after the Restoration. But he felt constrained to add that:

> '..in this he was a good imitator of his great Patron Bishop Neile, who in less than ten years did bestow upon the same ... about seven thousand pounds, for indeed he was "Vir Architectonicus".'[3]

Cosin was not the only chaplain whom Neile may have influenced in this matter; Laud too showed great interest in episcopal palaces in the 1630s.

Administrative efficiency was not achieved solely through the efforts of one man. Neile's success stemmed from his ability to mobilize others into concerted action. It was important for a

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1. Evidence of Neile's early movements comes from William Neile's diary. P.K. Durham: Hunter MS. 44, Item 17, pp. 1-16 (1593-1624); Appendix 3 gives some indication of Neile's presence in London between 1627-36.
2. R.S. Rait, English Episcopal Palaces - Province of York, Lond. 1911, p.174.
3. I. Basire, A Funeral Sermon preached on the death of John Cosin, Lond. 1673, p.77.

bishop to get on well with his diocesan officials, many of whom would have local family connections and a long tradition of serving the Church. Few such posts would be available for the bishop to appoint his own men. Equipped with a mind capable of absorbing administrative detail and of grasping a modicum of legal knowledge, Neile seems to have got on well with the host of civil lawyers who worked for the Church.

While still at Cambridge, Neile became friendly with John Cowell, author of the controversial Interpreter. Together they organised a campaign against nonconformity in Cambridge in 1604-5.[1] In the same period he received reports from an old college compatriot, John Lambe - later to become Master in Chancery and Dean of Arches - on the progress of a similar campaign in Peterborough diocese.[2] When Neile was at Lincoln, Lambe was Official of the archdeaconries of Buckingham and Leicester and a tower of strength to his old friend.

From such posts as those of Chancellors and Officials, civil lawyers effectively controlled diocesan administrations. It was they who ran the church courts, drew up the leases, compiled the surveys and frequently controlled policy in the absence of strong clerical directives from above. Their power was recognized by Puritan critics who viewed civil lawyers as the perpetrators of an evil Roman tradition.[3] The success of a bishop depended upon how far he could control and command the support of these men and in Neile's case he invariably won their respect and loyalty.

At Westminster Neile seems to have become friendly with Robert Masters, Official of the deanery and co-Chancellor with Daniel Dun of the diocese of Rochester. In December 1607 Neile renewed Master's patent as Official of the Dean and Chapter and was happy to retain

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1. See Chpt. 1, p.21.
2. Ibid.
3. B. Levack, The Civil Lawyers in England 1603-1641, Oxford 1973, pp. 157-60.

the partnership at Rochester.[1] Masters had family connections in the diocese of Lichfield and Coventry and when the old Chancellor there died in 1613, Neile eagerly appointed him as a locally acceptable and highly competent successor.[2] He cultivated other members of the family and gave Thomas Masters a Lichfield prebend followed by the important post of Archdeacon of Shrewsbury.[3]

Neile also appears to have got on well with the lawyers he encountered at Lincoln. With the aid of Christopher Wyvell, sole Vicar-General after 1616, Neile seems to have carried through administrative reforms designed to remove some of the ambiguities inherent in a large diocese where the superior office of Chancellor was still held separately by a clergyman and where so many archdeaconries caused jurisdictional problems in the courts.[4] Local consent was eventually gained to a clearer code of practice, but the issue was still under debate in 1625 when 'the compositio[n] made by my Lo[rd] of Durham, betwixt Do[cto]r Wivell and the Com[m]issaries of his diocess' was referred to in a letter to Bishop Williams.[5]

Even when he did have the opportunity however, Neile did not always appoint men on the criterion of efficiency. On the death of Clement Colemore in 1619, Neile selected the clergyman John Craddock as Chancellor of Durham, partly to appease a certain local faction and partly in order to gain the latter's post as Archdeacon of Northumberland for Gabriel Clarke.[6] It proved to be a controversial choice for Craddock's corrupt use of the position was noted in Parliament in

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1. W.A.M: Dean & Chpt. Act Book, f.293v.
2. York: Sub. Bk. 2, f.19.
3. Ibid., f.20.
4. Lincoln: Dean & Chpt. Miscellaneous Papers - Ciii/31/2. Settlement dated Feb. 1614/15.
5. Lincoln: Dean & Chpt. Miscellaneous Correspondence - Cor/M/2/No.51, f.72.
6. Dept. P.& D., Durham: Neile's Register, pp. 13-14. Craddock's appointment may have been on a trial basis initially as he was only confirmed in the post in May 1620.

1621 and 1624.[1] Yet the appointment did allow Neile to give high office to an honest member of his own family circle. On Craddock's death in 1627, William Easdall, now co-Chancellor of York, was brought to Durham to erase the taint of corruption from the office and restore order.[2]

Political factors prevailed in the appointment of a new Chancellor at Winchester on the retirement of Sir Thomas Ridley in April 1628. A younger man was needed for this tough post and Neile's appointee, Robert Mason, certainly fitted the bill.[3] His main qualification for the office however, was that he was Buckingham's private secretary. The appointment coincided with Buckingham's own selection as High Steward of the diocese in April 1628.[4] Mason was already well known to Neile for it was he who had written to Cambridge to procure Mason his L.L.D. as a favour to Buckingham in 1627.[5] The fact that Mason became Official of the archdeaconry of Surrey as well as Chancellor of the diocese is perhaps an indication that Neile was not worried about his suitability for the work.[6] This could be because this same Mason was the son of an old servant of the Cecil family, whom Neile supported unsuccessfully for a fellowship at St. John's College, Cambridge in March 1622.[7]

The career of William Easdall best epitomises the close bonds which Neile established with his civil lawyers. Easdall served his apprenticeship with Neile at the start of his career at Westminster and pursued his legal education while serving as Neile's private

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1. See Chpt. 5, p.130.
2. P.K. Durham: Dean & Chpt. Act Bk. 2, (1619-38), f.63.
3. B. Levack, The Civil Lawyers in England, pp. 253-4; Winchester: Dean & Chpt. Ledger Bk. 13, (1624-45), f.10.
4. Ibid., f.9; the right of nomination to this office was frequently open to royal interference. Neile was compelled to admit Thomas Carey as High Steward on 23 Feb. 1631/2. Winchester: Patent Book, Eccles. II, 155655, f.62.
5. St. John's College, Cambridge: 94/406 - Neile to Gwyn, 27 June 1627.
6. Winchester: Dean & Chpt. Ledger Bk. 13, f.10.
7. St. John's College, Cambridge: 94/405 - Neile to Gwyn, 28 March 1622.

secretary at Rochester, Lichfield and Coventry and Lincoln.[1] He gained his L.L.B. from Trinity Hall, Cambridge in 1614 and his Doctorate in 1620.[2] In June 1616 Neile presented him with his first major legal position as Official to the Archdeacons of Lincoln and Stow.[3] Neile's half-brother, Robert Newell, then made him joint Official with John Lambe for the archdeaconry of Buckingham.[4] The two men appear to have parted company on Neile's move to Durham, but the latter may have been instrumental in Easdall's appointment as Commissary of the Exchequer and Prerogative Court at York in 1624.[5] From that date Easdall acted as co-Chancellor of York with the senile Matthew Dodsworth.[6] It was to Easdall that Neile turned when he sought an honest lawyer at Durham after Craddock, but the real measure of this partnership was not gained until these two men came together again at York.[7]

An honorary member of Gray's Inn and of Doctors' Commons, Neile mixed with the best lawyers of his day and maintained these vital contacts till the end of his life.[8] Just as Neile has been praised for an unerring ability to spot able young clergymen, so he seems to have recruited equally gifted young lawyers to his diocesan administrations. Moreover, he seems to have been capable of bringing a sense of teamwork to the efforts of clergymen and lawyers alike as he strove to effect Bancroft's dream of a revitalized Church of England. When Neile's skill in placing clergymen in key positions in the land

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1. K.A.O. Maidstone: Dean & Chpt. Lease Bk. (1575-1627). DRC.E1b.1, ff. 227-9 reveals Easdall's presence at Rochester involved in Neile's granting of leases; Reference has already been made to his responsibility for a survey at Lichfield when referred to as Neile's 'private secretary', (see p.57); A letter from Easdall to Lambe reveals that he still served Neile in that capacity as late as March 1616/17. P.R.O: SP/16/90/114.
2. B. Levack, The Civil Lawyers in England, p.227.
3. Lincoln: Register of Grants (1609-40), Bii/2/6, ff. 61-2.
4. Ibid., ff. 63-4.
5. B. Levack, op. cit.
6. Ibid.
7. See Chpt. 8.
8. See Chpt. 2, p.39 ; B. Levack, op. cit., p.169 notes Neile's membership of Doctors' Commons; See Chpt. 8, p.240.

is coupled with his selection of able legal subordinates, William Prynne's nightmare comparison of the movement of bishops with the machinations of the Devil and his brood becomes explicable. Neile's translations can be seen to fit Prynne's gloomy statement that on moving, bishops:

> '..commonly take with them "seaven other spirits" as bad, or more wicked themselves, (to wit Archdeacons, Chancellors, Registers, Apparitors, howsehold Chaplaines, Secretaries, and private informers against good men) who reside either neere or with them in their Diocesse..'.[1]

Neile's success in harnessing the abilities of his diocesan lawyers to his own policies provided fuel for those who criticized the bureaucracy of the Church. It also worried many that this revival of the church as an institution was inter-related to the growing trend towards centralisation of government in Caroline England. The advancement of bishops like Neile and Laud to the Privy Council was an unwelcome development which seemed to prove the truth of this relationship.[2]

Although Neile became an unpopular national figure in the 1630s, when he was so clearly associated with Laud and 'thorough' government, his local reforms were nearly always engineered with tact and sensitivity to local opinion. Whenever possible he recruited local men of proven ability as members of his team. Such was the case with Masters at Lichfield. At Durham he appointed William Smith as his local attorney in 1622 and once he had proved his worth, Attorney-General for the Palatinate.[3] The Durham region has been well studied recently and provides a good illustration of how Neile dealt with a complex provincial society. Mervyn James has painted a picture of a jostling for power between 'Church families', the older gentry and a rising

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1. W. Prynne, A Looking Glasse for all Lordly Prelates, Lond. 1636, p.9.
2. See Chpt. 6, p.188.
3. Dept. P.& D., Durham: Enrolment Book 184959, p.375; Rentals and Patents M.64, p.169 notes appointment as Attorney-General in May 1623.

group of coal-owners from Newcastle.[1] When one considers the vast changes which Neile inaugurated at Durham Cathedral, the influx of new men as eight out of the twelve prebendal stalls changed hands by 1628, and Neile's activities as Lord Lieutenant of the County Palatine, one can only marvel at his skilful handling of these local interest groups. Apart from minor problems in Parliament with Craddock and complaints about clerical domination on the bench of the Justices of the Peace, there are few signs of great unrest in Durham actually during Neile's episcopate.[2] Parliamentary debates over a Durham franchise bill lack any sign of the bitterness which marked those of 1614.[3] All the evidence of Neile's work as Lord Lieutenant suggests that he successfully placated all factions of Durham society and even went out of his way to defend older families from excessive taxation in 1626.[4]

One reason for this success lies in Neile's willingness to employ men of ability regardless of their views. Sir Richard Hutton, the famous Chief Justice, was reconfirmed as Neile's Chancellor of the Palatinate in 1626/7.[5] He was one of the judges who voted for Hampden in 1638. At Westminster Neile employed Sir Henry Hobart as a legal adviser for the deanery.[6] He also appointed Sir James Whitelocke as his Chief Steward.[7] Whitelocke and Sir Henry Yelverton later found employment in the Durham courts, even after both men had spoken against the crown over impositions.[8]

Important though good lawyers were for bureaucratic support, without which many of Neile's reform programmes would have been doomed

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1. M. James, Family, Lineage, & Civil Society, p.164.
2. See Chpt. 5, p.133 ; There was trouble later thanks to Peter Smart, but only Robert Hutton of the prebendaries spoke out earlier and was suspended in 1620. M. James, Family, Lineage & Civil Society, p.119.
3. See Chpt. 5, p.118.
4. See Chpt. 4, p.100.
5. P.K. Durham; Dean & Chpt. Act Bk. 2, f.48.
6. See Chpt. 2, p.40.
7. Ibid.
8. 'Liber Famelicus of Sir James Whitelocke', ed. J. Bruce, Camden Society, 70, 1858, p.59.

to failure, a bishop stood or fell on the quality of the many clerical appointments at his disposal. Here Neile is famous for selecting the most able chaplains of his time and for mobilizing a distinct party within the Church.[1] In this role as patron Neile fulfilled one of the prime duties of a bishop, that of selection of the most able people to continue the good work of the Church. For loyal day to day support from less career-orientated clergymen, Neile did what so many other bishops did and relied upon members of his own family. What was good enough for Richard Bancroft, George Abbot and Lancelot Andrewes, was good enough for Richard Neile.

At the core of Neile's entourage from the outset of his career was his half-brother Robert Newell. They both went to St. John's College, Cambridge and for a long time Newell followed in Neile's footsteps in various livings - Cheshunt, Treasurer of Chichester and eventually canon residentiary.[2] One of the two Westminster reversions Neile gained from James I was for Newell; it fell vacant in April 1620.[3] As Neile progressed as a bishop so Newell's career blossomed. A prebend at Lichfield in 1611 was followed by a better one in 1613 and a sinecure as Master of St. John's Hospital, Lichfield.[4] On the same day that Neile was confirmed Bishop of Lincoln, Newell was appointed Sub-Dean.[5] Two months later and he held a prebend and was Archdeacon of Buckingham.[6] This was to be his major role for the rest of his career, although Neile did grant him a Durham prebend in 1620.[7] When Laud eventually conducted his much disputed visitation of Lincoln in 1634, he found a willing and able ally in Newell.[8] With Heylin, Newell took control at Westminster on William's suspension in 1637.[9]

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1. See Chpt. 7, pp. 210-20.
2. J. & J.A. Venn, Alumni Cantabrigensis, Lond. 1922-7, 4 Vols., sub nomine.
3. See Chpt. 2, p. 35.
4. York: Sub. Bk. 2, ff. 13 & 20.
5. Ibid., f.22 - 18 Feb. 1613/14.
6. Ibid., ff. 22 & 23.
7. Ibid., f.75.
8. E. Brinkworth, 'The Laudian Church in Buckinghamshire', University of Birmingham Historical Journal, V, 1955-6, pp. 31-59.
9. W.A.M: 57156.

Newell was the only member of Neile's large immediate family who enjoyed a fairly distinguished career in the Church. Much of his success was clearly due to their relationship, but Newell acted as Neile's chief confidant and gave him great support in his early career before 1617. Neile had an older brother who was less well educated, but whom he eventually persuaded to enter the Church. William Neile was dominated by his younger brother and Richard even complained when he married Katherine Stopes in February 1600/1 without his knowledge or consent.[1] Richard gained William a yeoman-waiter's place at the Tower of London in 1604 and when Dean of Westminster gave him several minor posts, but also the important role of registrar.[2] In April 1612, William went to live with Richard as his Household Steward in King Street.[3]

It is unlikely that William served as Neile's steward at Durham House. In September 1616 he was admitted to the order of deacon by John Buckeridge, Bishop of Rochester.[4] William still lacked any formal education, yet within a month his brother had given him the Lincoln prebend of Sutton in the Marsh.[5] This was a rather crass case of nepotism for it was not until a month later that William was even ordained as a priest.[6] Other posts soon followed and in two months he was Master of Meere Hospital in Lincoln and Vicar of Puttenham.[7] The favours stopped for a while, but in 1619 Neile went to the trouble of gaining a special crown dispensation for William to hold the mastership of Greatham College, Durham, despite his lack of qualifications.[8] It is a mark of royal favour that this request was granted. As the clerical profession was now dominated by university

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1. B.M: Lansdowne MS. 88, Item 5, f.10 - Neile to Hickes 17 March 1600/1.
2. See Chpt. 2, p.35.
3. P.K. Durham: Hunter MS. 67, Item 14, p.4.
4. Ibid., p.7.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid.
7. York: Sub. Bk. 2, ff. 58 & 60.
8. P.R.O: SO/3/6/June 1619.

graduates, William's prospects would have been slim without his brother's aid. His last prize was the rectory of Radmarshall in January 1619/20 for he died in 1624.[1] Such was Richard's respect for his brother that he copied and preserved William's diary for posterity.[2] This little studied document is a mine of information on the family.

Richard's regard for his brother William spilled over into the care he took of the latter's children. In honour of his brother, William had christened his first son, Richard.[3] It has proved a source of confusion to Neile's past biographers. This lad went to St. John's College, Cambridge and on gaining his M.A. in 1627 went to join his uncle at Winchester. He took holy orders and was presented with the rectory of Droxford in Hampshire in April 1628.[4] In October 1629 he became one of Neile's personal chaplains.[5] This nephew stayed in the diocese on Neile's departure in 1632, by which time he held the vicarage of Hambledon and the rectory of Bishop Waltham.[6] Standard biographers of Neile err in recording that the above livings were held by the archbishop.[7] He may have been a rank pluralist earlier in his career, but he hardly needed to be in the 1630s.

Marriage into Neile's family proved to be one means of securing his patronage for some clerics. Gabriel Clarke married William's daughter Mildred in May 1618.[8] He had probably become acquainted with the family on the marriage of Robert Newell to his sister Elizabeth in 1612.[9] Gabriel was a capable young man who had gained

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1. York: Sub. Bk. 2, f.72.
2. P.K. Durham: Hunter MS. 67, Item 14.
3. Ibid., p.2; see also the career of John Neile, Chpt. 8, pp. 237-8
4. York: Sub. Bk. 2, f.96.
5. York: Precedent Bk. 2, p.422.
6. York: Sub. Bk. 2, ff. 101 & 109. He also became one of the few ministers Neile licensed to preach throughout the diocese in Feb. 1628, f.98.
7. D.N.B., sub nomine; J. & J.A. Venn, Alumni Cantabrigensis, sub nomine.
8. P.K. Durham: Hunter MS. 67, Item 14, p.9.
9. Ibid., p.5.

his M.A. from Christ Church College, Oxford in 1612 and Heylin goes so far as to speak of him as one of the alumni of Durham College.[1] Like so many others, he became one of Neile's personal chaplains and never looked back. Prebends at Lincoln in 1615 and 1616 were replaced by progress through two stalls at Durham in the 1620s.[2] More important, Clarke was admitted as Archdeacon of Northumberland in August 1619 before moving up rapidly to the archdeaconry of Durham in September 1620.[3] Deprived of his livings during the Interregnum, Clarke survived to see the Restoration.

Another able recruit to the family team was Edward Burby. He was a graduate of Lincoln College, Oxford who settled as Rector of East Woodhay in Hampshire in 1629.[4] Burby met the sixteen year old Frances Neile through her uncle and the couple were married in January 1629/30.[5] They presumably had Neile's blessing, for within a matter of months Burby possessed a Winchester prebend and in 1631 he became Archdeacon of Winchester.[6] Like the younger Richard Neile, Burby stayed in Winchester when Neile departed in 1632. He was still thought of however, for in 1636 Neile wrote with gratitude that Laud and Newell had succeeded in gaining Burby a Cambridge doctorate.[7] Moreover, when a Southwell prebend fell vacant in 1638, it was granted to Edward Burby as a sinecure.[8]

Unfair though this might seem, it was practical politics for a bishop to make such appointments if he hoped to make any impact on a diocese. Members of one's own family did as they were told and in key positions could be very effective. Although some of the posts

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1. P. Heylin, Cyprianus Anglicus, p.60.
2. York: Sub. Bk. 2, ff. 35, 42, 74 & 83.
3. Ibid., ff. 69 & 74.
4. Ibid., f.100.
5. Memorials of St. Margaret's Church Westminster, ed. A.M. Burke, Lond. 1914, p.338.
6. York: Sub. Bk. 2, ff. 103 & 108.
7. P.R.O: SP/16/331/71 - Neile to Laud, 18 Sept. 1636.
8. York: Sub. Bk. 2, f.145.

Neile gave were sinecures, such as the Southwell prebends or masterships of hospitals, he rarely gave something for nothing. Newell took up a key position as Archdeacon of Buckingham and was also an important prebendary at Westminster under Williams. Gabriel Clarke's positions at Durham were likewise of no mean significance.

There are few signs that Neile's family promotions caused friction in his dioceses. A rare example occurs at Winchester when William Lewis complained in September 1630 that various livings had recently fallen into the Bishops's gift which 'hee hath bestowed uppon his chaplaynes and kinred, some of noe great merit'.[1] Yet Lewis's complaint was really about the dominance of Neile's chaplains in general and not about his family. Neile never over-promoted members of his own family, not even his brother William. Those to whom he gave positions of importance like Newell, Clarke, Burby and John Neile were men of ability. Yet even these appointments are overshadowed by what Neile did for all his chaplains and friends regardless of family connections. Four chaplains rose to become bishops either before or after the Restoration, three of whom, plus Thomas Jackson, became heads of Oxbridge colleges.[2]

In his careful use of members of his family and shrewd selection of clergymen and lawyers, Neile greatly enhanced his effectiveness as a bishop. Good teamwork, tactful handling of local people and a steady growth in experience also contributed to the development of a fairly standard approach to the problems of his dioceses. Thorough surveys were of the essence to Neile. Episcopal visitations provided the most complete picture of a diocese and it is possible to gain a good indication of Neile's priorities from examples of his visitation articles which have survived for various dioceses. A practical man, Neile was well aware that the success of visitations depended entirely

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1. P.R.O: SP/16/173/17 - Lewis to Secretary Dorchester, 10 Sept. 1630.
2. See Chpt. 7, pp. 210-20.

upon the co-operation of court officials and the local churchwardens. He could do something about gaining the lawyers' co-operation, but as far as churchwardens were concerned it was a question of lulling them into a sense of security in order to gain reasonably full replies to his articles. The alternative was to attempt to overawe them with visions of the authority of the bishop and stern reminders of their responsibilities.

At Lincoln in 1614, Neile was confident in the co-operation of his lawyers and adopted the latter approach. Aware that his diocese was a breeding-ground for Puritan nonconformity and that too many lecturers spread a radical version of the gospel, he opted for frank questions about the clergy and their obedience to the rules laid down in the Book of Common Prayer.[1] Neile showed the same concern for nonconformity in his questions about the parishioners. Article eight of this section enquired:

> 'Whether any within your Parish hath separated themselves from the Communion of Saints, as it is approved by the Apostles rules in the Church of England, and combined themselves together in a new brotherhood, conventicles or unlawful assemblies'.[2]

Several other articles strongly defended the claims of the Church of England to be the true Church.[3] Even in a third section given over to comments upon the physical state of the churches, half of the sixteen questions really concerned the duty of the churchwardens to report misdemeanours.[4]

Neile's Lincoln visitation seems to have been reasonably successful because of the work of his court officials. But it is possible that on this occasion Neile allowed himself to be distracted from a more complete general survey by the problem of nonconformity in this

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1. Lincoln College, Oxford: N.1.24(4) - R. Neile, Articles to be Enquired of within the Diocese of Lincoln, Lond. 1614, 19ff., Section 1, articles 1-37.
2. Ibid., Section 2, article 8. 3. Ibid., Section 2, articles 1-7.
4. Ibid., Section 3, articles 7-16.

diocese. The report on the visitation which was drawn up for Neile reveals this same preoccupation.[1] In response to specific enquiries, Neile was told that measures were being taken to cut down non-residence, ensure a proper supply of preachers in every parish, and increase the number of children taking confirmation classes, but the bulk of the report was taken up with detailed comments on approximately sixty ministers and lecturers in the diocese.[2] The author of this report was probably either Neile's secretary William Easdall or Edward Liveley, the deputy-registrar. Whoever wrote the report knew Neile well and shared his assumptions about what constituted proper reform.

Visitation articles do not survive for Rochester and I have not seen those kept in the Marsh Library, Dublin relating to Lichfield and Coventry.[3] It is probable that Neile used similar forms in his first three dioceses. Books of articles relating to Durham, Winchester and York reveal that Neile changed his emphasis slightly as he became more experienced. Little evidence has survived of Neile's first two visitations at Durham in 1618 and 1621, but a set of articles for 1624 yields 95 questions divided into seven clear sections.[4] The articles reveal an interesting logical order which reflects Neile's wider concerns as a bishop. The first section now involved nine articles 'touching the Church, Church-yard, Parsonage, and Vicarage-house'.[5] The questions progressed from external to internal problems with the physical church, to the duties of ministers and officials

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1. 'The Primary Visitation of the Diocese of Lincoln', ed. Rev. Precentor Venables, Associated Architectural Socs' Reports, pp.31-54.
2. Ibid., p.43.
3. I am grateful to Dr. D.M. Barratt for the information that these articles survive.
4. P.K. Durham: Hunter MS. 67, Item 7 - R. Neile, Articles to be Enquired of within the Diocese of Durham, Lond. 1624; Dean & Chpt. Lease Registers, 8, 9 & 10 provide the evidence that visitations did actually take place in 1618, 1621, 1624 & 1627.
5. P.K. Durham: Hunter MS. 67, Item 7, Section 1, pp. 3-4.

and spiritual well-being of the parishioners. The book concluded with a section on the duties of the all-important churchwardens. Neile kept to this simple format for the rest of his life.

Neile's Durham articles stand in marked contrast to those used by his predecessor Bishop James in 1613. The latter opted for only 54 questions divided solely into two sections dealing with the clergy and the laity.[1] Even Neile's Lincoln articles had contained 94 questions and had been subdivided under six sections.[2] The Durham articles do not represent a radical shift in Neile's interests, but they place his approach to his dioceses in better perspective. It was necessary to worry about the activities of Puritan nonconformists and Catholic recusants, but it was equally vital to care about administrative matters such as the physical repair of churches. Neile showed great interest in this practical problem throughout his life and a church restoration programme was an outstanding feature of his rule as Archbishop of York.[3]

Not only did Neile's new articles show a broader approach to diocesan problems, but they were probably more efficient because of their less biased format. As he got older Neile seems to have become more aware than ever of the difficulties a bishop experienced in gaining an accurate picture of his diocese. It was not enough to rely on expert lawyers and key clergymen if one hoped to effect real and lasting reforms. He was not like the confident and assertive Richard Mountague who prefaced his articles with apposite and yet controversial biblical texts announcing his aims to the world.[4] It was necessary to be more tactful if one hoped for even a modicum of co-operation from the churchwardens.

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1. W. James, Articles to be Enquired of in the Visitation of the reverend Father in God, William Bishop of Durham, Lond. 1613.
2. Lincoln College, Oxford: N.1.24(4).
3. See Chpt. 8, pp. 246-8, 266.
4. R. Mountague, Articles of Enquiry and Direction for the Diocese of Norwich, Cambridge 1638, 18pp.

If Neile was a little slow to adopt moderate and unassuming visitation articles, it was because he had enjoyed some success with the policy of overawing would-be dissidents and had established a reputation for himself as a strong disciplinarian. When it was rumoured that Neile was being considered for the diocese of Lichfield and Coventry in 1608 William Bradshaw offered prayers for their delivery because:

> 'Bishop Neal was the man, whom all the pious as well private men as Ministers in these parts mis-doubted would do the most mischief'.[1]

It has been seen that Neile concentrated almost exclusively on this issue of Puritan nonconformity at Lincoln. It was a matter of some concern to him that older ministers were held in greater esteem than better qualified younger parsons 'after the Germaine fashion'.[2] Moreover, he disliked people like David Allen lecturing widely abroad simply because he had 'won to himself the name of an Apostolike man'.[3] Allowing people to freely expound their ideas on the scriptures was not acceptable to Neile. The author of the report thought that:

> '..lecturing hath brought many of God's holy and good ordinances into contempt, as publicke prayer, Reading of the Scriptures and receiving of the blessed sacraments'.[4]

Neile regarded it as his solemn duty to cut down the number of unlicensed lectures because, after all, they only gave satisfaction 'to factious spirits'.[5]

Puritan complaints of Neile's work at Lincoln were voiced in Parliament in 1614 when members heard that:

> '..he hath discouraged Ministers, in his Diocese, from preaching twice in one day; for that the contrary would hinder their preferment; and hath put down divers Lectures'.[6]

Neile had first made such a reputation for himself working for

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1. S. Clarke, A Generall Martyrologie, p.61 of the 'Lives'.
2. 'The Primary Visitation of the Diocese of Lincoln', ed. Rev. Precentor Venables, Associated Architectural Socs.' Reports, p.46.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid., p.47.
6. Commons Journals, I, p.499.

Bancroft in the subscription campaign of 1604-5.[1] In a diary entry relating to February 1612/13, Richard Rogers thought Neile was attempting to continue Bancroft's work elsewhere:

> 'The Church hath had rest ever since Archb[ishop] Bancroft's death ... But in Northamptonshire and in Coventry many were troubled by B[isho]p Neil, etc.'[2]

It was while he was at Lichfield and Coventry that Neile hounded Arthur Hildersham and John Dod to suspension for holding conventicles at Repton and Burton-upon-Trent.[3]

Although stories of Neile's harsh treatment of Puritans abound in collections of 'martyrologies' for this period, when one looks closely at the evidence there seems to be a lot of smoke without fire. Some of this confusion stems from the methods Neile employed to combat nonconformity. In the earlier part of his career as a bishop he frequently tried to overawe known dissidents in an effort to gain conformity. Thus William Bradshaw found that on Neile's arrival at Lichfield and Coventry 'that boisterous Prelate began in so fierce and furious sort to bestir himself and kept such a busseling and blustering among them', that Bradshaw feared that those parts 'would be too hot for him'.[4] Yet in the event, few prosecutions arose from this impression of great activity. Even the case of the heretic Edward Wightman might have been played down following his presentation in Neile's primary visitation, had not that man foolishly brought himself to the notice of the King.[5] A lengthy report on the famous John Cotton of Boston in Lincolnshire was submitted to Neile in 1614. Cotton stood guilty of arguing against the principal that bishops 'hath the very same extent of co[m]mission with the Apostles' - a

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1. See Chpt. 1, pp.19-20.
2. Dr. Williams' Library, London: Morrice MSS., Vol. II, 589 (10-12).
3. S. Clarke, op. cit., pp. 147 & 201 of the 'Lives'.
4. Ibid., p.61.
5. D.N.B., sub nomine: 'Wightman, however, rushed on destruction by presenting a petition to James I at Royston.'

belief firmly held by Neile - and of giving excessively long sermons in which he naturally overstated the case for a preaching ministry.[1] There is no evidence that he suffered anything worse than a reprimand from Neile, but he did eventually flee from persecution to America in the 1630s.

Part of the explanation for this apparent discrepancy between myth and reality in Neile's handling of Puritan nonconformists may lie in the fact that four of his dioceses, including York, contained comparatively large numbers of Catholic recusants and were areas where Puritan activists were encouraged within reason. Thus Neile kept a wary eye on people like Robert Jenison in Newcastle, who always felt under pressure, but did not actually prosecute him until 1639.[2] Samuel Clarke felt that Richard Rothwell, 'the Apostle of the North', continued his work in Durham with such impunity that 'the Bishop, I dare say, was more afraid of him, than he was of the Bishop'.[3]

Another clue to the leniency which Prynne found so puzzling when searching for evidence against Neile, is to be found in his character. Neile seems to have possessed a remarkable talent for gaining the respect of opponents, often their working co-operation, and occasionally of winning them over to his point of view. This gift is evident in his eclectic use of lawyers of all shades of opinion and in his work as Lord Lieutenant in Durham. Despite the great ceremonial changes which he presided over in that diocese, Neile's presence as bishop seems to have held off the critical outburst of Peter Smart

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1. 'The Primary Visitation of the Diocese of Lincoln', ed. Rev. Precentor Venables, Associated Architectural Socs.' Reports, p.50.
2. In a letter to Ward in Aug. 1624 Jenison revealed his fraught state of mind in his comment that Neile knew 'that I am every waie conformable (els I knowe what wo[u]ld followe: yet I vowe such feare formes not my conformitie)..'. Jenison felt menaced by Jackson's presence in Newcastle because the latter was the Bishop's 'creature'. Bodleian Library, Oxford: Tanner MS. 73, f.475; see Chpt. 8, p.284.
3. S. Clarke, op. cit., p.88 of the 'Lives'.

for some years.[1] While at Durham, Neile is said to have converted Thomas Jackson from rigid Calvinist beliefs to the Arminian cause.[2] Despite vilification from Dr. Moor in Parliament in 1628/9, Neile seems to have eventually won that man's trust. After a sermon at Winchester Neile 'complained that he had often been unworthily abused by Dr. Moor, and was resolved to carry away a most Christian victory over him'.[3] On the resignation of his Winchester prebend in January 1631/2, Neile allowed Moor to pass the post to his son-in-law Dr. Metkirke.[4]

At court and in the universities Neile fought harder against Puritan influences. When he was consulted in December 1615 about a controversial sermon delivered at Cambridge by Walter Whitgrave, Neile expostulated:

> 'It were to bee wished than men of his sorte had more use of their Logicke and less of their Rhetoricke, or rather loose discourse without the rules either of Logicke or Rhetoricke'.[5]

Whitgrave had dared to criticize the Court of High Commission and since he was 'soo void of good Manners' he was suspended.[6] At a later stage in his career Neile was instrumental in the election of the Cambridge Chancellor and of several heads of colleges who would suffer no nonsense.[7] Heylin claimed that Neile was originally placed at court to combat Scottish and Puritan influences and there is no evidence that he ever slacked in that duty.[8] As Clerk of the Closet he had influence

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1. V.C.H. Durham, ed. W. Page, II, Lond. 1907, pp. 42-5 moots the suggestion that this was because of their common school background.
2. See Chpt. 7, p.215.
3. S. Clarke, Lives of Eminent Divines, Lond. 1683, p.15.
4. The Diary of John Young S.T.P., ed. F.R. Goodman, Lond. 1928, p.97. When Young resisted Neile's lease plans in November 1631, Dr. Moor was conspicuous in his support for the bishop. (p.96).
5. St. John's College, Cambridge: 105/289.
6. Ibid.
7. See Chpt. 7, p.223.
8. P. Heylin, Cyprianus Anglicus, pp. 59-60; Apparently, John Dod was only silenced on Neile's personal intervention with the King. S. Clarke, A Generall Martyrologie, p.201 of the 'Lives'; William Gouge encountered a stormy reception when he republished Sergeant Finch's World's Great Restauration in 1621. James was outraged and 'Bishop Neal also with others, provoked him against the Publisher of the Book, which so incensed him, that he would admit of no Apology'. S. Clarke, A Generall Martyrologie, Lond. 1677, p.239 of the 'Lives'.

over which preachers had access to the court. In February 1626/7, Mead wrote to Stuteville from Cambridge that 'our doctors (they may thank the Bishop of Durham) are to preach at court'.[1] When Puritans like John Preston did find occasion to preach before the King, Neile was heard to remark scornfully 'that he talked like one that was familiar with God Almighty'.[2]

Thus there is a slight disparity between Neile's attitude towards Puritans nationally and locally. This was fairly sensible. Nonconformity was not to be permitted in places of importance like universities or tolerated when authority was too violently flouted. When cases came before the Courts of High Commission or Star Chamber, Neile could be the harshest of judges. Once Wightman's course was set, Neile had no compunction about the justice of the death sentence, although he tried to the last to get the man to repent. He also had no qualms about advocating similar punishment many years later for John Trendall.[3] In the provinces, however, Neile seems to have worked hard to avoid cases being taken to such a level. At the end of his career he maintained that he had never deprived a single minister of his living despite his reputation as the 'great adversary of the puritane faction'.[4]

Fact and reputation seem more in tune with regard to Neile's attitude towards Catholics. In 1614 a member of Parliament noted that Neile's 'disposition to Rome is not well knowen', but by 1621 he was reviled as the Papists' friend.[5] Once again, Neile's diocesan experiences may help to explain his position. In Durham a substantial section of the gentry were still followers of the old religion, to the extent that several of Neile's deputy-lieutenants had Catholic family connections. When the country lay under threat of invasion in

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1. T. Birch, The Court & Times of Charles I, I, pp. 199-200.
2. S. Clarke, A Generall Martyrologie, 1677, p.110 of the 'Lives'.
3. See Chpt. 8, p.285.
4. Ibid., p.264.
5. See Chpt. 5, p.132.

1625, Sir Thomas Riddell, Recorder of Newcastle, was deprived of weapons because his wife and son were Catholics.[1] Neile's response to this situation was to persuade the son to have talks with Lindsell and Jackson and the young man's 'conversion' was confirmed in November.[2] Neile seems to have possessed endless patience in his proselytizing work. Lady Kennett was persuaded to have talks with Francis Burgoyne in 1620, but it was not until 1627 that her husband Sir William finally agreed to similar sessions.[3]

The dioceses of Lichfield and Coventry and Winchester contained the largest concentrations of Catholic recusants in the southern province.[4] The Marquis of Winchester himself was a Catholic. When information was sought about Neile in 1614, he was accused of recording fraudulent conversions, but the charge was soon proved false.[5] Nevertheless, members of Parliament always suspected Neile's beliefs and one of the charges he decided to answer in 1629 was that he was a secret Catholic.[6] That he was clearly able to disprove, but Neile's conduct was never likely to endear him to Puritans who sought a more positive crusade against the Papists. His was a soft approach akin to that which Queen Elizabeth had tried so hard to maintain. Jesuit missionaries were the real culprits and Neile always showed himself anxious to catch such people. Meanwhile, he tried to protect the Catholic laity and to distinguish between Jesuits and secular priests as his own master Cecil had once tried to do. When he realized that the houses of Sir Robert Hodgson at Hebburn and Mrs. Lawson at St. Anthony's in Heaton had become 'important lynch-points for the passage of priests between the north and south banks of the Tyne', Neile was

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1. U.L. Durham: Mickleton & Spearman MS. 2, f.372 - A note on arms taken from recusants.
2. York: Sub. Bk. 2, f.159v.
3. Ibid., ff. 159v & 162.
4. B.M: Harleian MS. 280 - Survey of 1603 revealed 398 known recusants in Winchester diocese & 650 in Lichfield & Coventry.
5. See Chpt. 5, p.126.
6. Ibid., p.158-9.

not slow to put pressure on the Newcastle civic authorities for greater watchfulness.[1] Likewise he was not slow to act when the apprehension of William Singleton at Durham in January 1625/6 revealed the existence of one missionary route.[2]

Neile's moderate line with Catholics was always open to misinterpretation. It proved impossible to suppress rumours that he, Laud and others were plotting to return to Rome. Yet he never flinched from his duty or relaxed his efficient manner when he applied orders relating to the seizure of weapons or payment of fines. What counted for Puritans however, was his support for such manoeuvres as the publication of a Book of Sports in 1618 and again in 1633.[3] Anything designed to placate Catholics was not permitted in the Puritan contest with Antichrist.

One problem for Neile was that it was always easier to point to his work in disciplining ministers rather than converting Catholic laity. From his point of view it was extremely difficult to discipline or convert the laity whatever the situation - Catholic or nonconformist. Virtually no evidence exists to show how Neile coped with Puritan gentry or town councillors before scattered examples from the 1630s.[4] If his moderate approach towards Catholics is anything to go by, one can only assume that Neile made a similar division between ministers and laity with regard to Puritans. The ministers were his chief concern in the full report we possess on Lincoln. Various studies of provincial society, particularly in the north, shed light on lay attitudes towards religion.[5] Rarely do they suggest that a

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1. M. James, Family, Lineage, & Civil Society, p.139.
2. U.L. Durham: Mickleton & Spearman MS. 2, ff. 380-3 - Details of capture and examination of Singleton.
3. W. Prynne, The Antipathie of the English Lordly Prelacie, Lond. 1641, p.290.
4. See Chpt. 8, pp. 269-70.
5. Of particular relevance to this study are: J.T. Cliffe, The Yorkshire Gentry, Lond. 1969; M. James, op. cit.; R.C. Richardson, Puritanism in north-west England, Manchester 1972.

particular bishop's policies had much impact on the independent actions of convinced lay patrons, Catholic or Puritan.

Neile's role as a bishop has to be seen in the context of changing attitudes towards episcopacy. He was frequently criticized because he 'seldome or never preached himself, and therefore could not endure frequent preaching in others'.[1] Neile was not, and did not consider himself, a good preacher. A non-intellectual, he once stopped a teacher from flogging a boy on the grounds that it had done him no good.[2] Yet to say that Neile was neither an intellectual nor an eloquent preacher is not to accept the scurrilous stories of Alexander Leighton or Arthur Wilson that Neile entertained the King with dirty jokes during sermons to keep him from concentrating on theology.[3] Such stories scarcely match what is known of James I's interest in theology.

Nevertheless, it does seem as if Neile recognized his limitations. None of his sermons survive and there is no evidence of controversy on occasions when he is known to have preached, as before James I at Lincoln in 1617.[4] Members of his cathedral congregations would have had no real cause to complain. Not only did he probably preach more often than his critics suggest, but as Heylin noted, 'what he wanted in himself he made good in the choice of his servants'.[5] His chaplains were amongst the best preachers in the land. Yet even though Neile made ample provision for preaching in his cathedrals, it is true that he placed less emphasis on his preaching function than did his critics. A 'vital rage for utterance' was not a hallmark of

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1. W. Prynne, The Antipathie of the English Lordly Prelacie, pp.222-3.
2. In his introduction to A Short Treatise of Altars, Durham 1629, p.2, Peter Smart wrote scathingly of Neile's cheerful admission of his own intellectual shortcomings.
3. A. Wilson, The Life & Reign of James I, Lond. ed. of 1706, p.729.
4. J. Nichols, The Progresses, Processions, and Magnificent Festivities of King James the First, 4 Vols., Lond. 1828, III, pp. 260-5 - gives details of the visit to Lincoln.
5. P. Heylin, Cyprianus Anglicus, p.59.

Arminian theology, which stressed the importance of the sacraments.[1] When Neile's chaplain, John Cosin, preached at Francis White's consecration service as Bishop of Carlisle in 1626, he confidently compared the work of bishops with that of Christ's role on earth.[2] This was in striking contrast to the attitude of those who had accepted bishoprics under Elizabeth with grave misgivings. As was Cosin's frank attack on the notion that 'preaching now-a-days should be counted our only office, as if we had nothing else to do'.[3]

The type of services for which we do possess good evidence of his participation further underline the gulf between Neile and the average Puritan preacher. During his career he officiated at the consecration or confirmation services of at least a dozen English bishops, apart from Francis White.[4] On 21 October 1610 Neile was one of four bishops who conducted the highly symbolic ceremony when John Spottiswood, Gavin Hamilton and Andrew Lamb were consecrated Scottish bishops in the chapel at London House.[5] The bishops of London, Ely and Worcester were the other Englishmen involved in this service which formally marked the return of episcopacy to Scotland. Neile held a more exalted view of the role of a bishop than did his predecessors. He totally accepted ideas of the apostolic succession first put forward by his patron Bancroft in controversial sermons in 1589. It was quite natural to him that bishops should sit in Parliament and even on the Privy Council.

We know of many services in which Neile participated simply because they were important state occasions. He conducted several

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1. W. Haller, The Rise of Puritanism, New York 1938; See Chpt. 7, pp. 207-9.
2. P.E. More & F.L. Cross, (eds.), Anglicanism, Lond. 1962, pp. 360-5. Copy of John Cosin's sermon.
3. Ibid., p.361.
4. J. Le Neve, Lives & Characters of the Bishops, passim.
5. Rev. T. Hannan, 'The Scottish Consecrations in London in 1610', Church Quarterly Review, 71, 1911, p.389.

funeral services for members of the royal family and was certainly present for those of Prince Henry in 1612 and King James in 1625.[1] Sad functions might have been counterbalanced by such services as the christening of Prince James, Duke of York, which Neile conducted with Laud at Whitehall in November 1633.[2] No doubt Neile revelled in the pageantry of the coronation of Charles I on 2 February 1625/6, when he and Laud were the only clerics privileged to receive communion with their new King.[3] These state services highlight the close relationship which existed between the monarchy and the episcopate.

More mundane services are interesting for the light they shed on how Neile retained a foothold at court in the critical years between the death of Cecil in 1612 and the security of Durham in 1617. On the one hand he maintained contact with the Cecil family and in May 1615 consecrated a new chapel at Hatfield for the second Earl of Salisbury, the lad whose education he had supervised.[4] On the other hand he cultivated his wife's connections with the Howard family.[5] Luckily, there was no conflict here as a marriage alliance between the Cecil and Howard families had been arranged in 1608. On 22 June 1616 Neile christened the fruit of that union at Hatfield.[6] Despite having the King as a godfather as well as the Earl of Suffolk, Salisbury's son James did not live long. Neile kept up his good offices for the Howards and in February 1616/17 was one of three bishops who consecrated a new chapel built at East Greenwich according to the wishes of the late Earl of Northampton.[7] The consecration of

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1. See Chpt. 2, p.42. 2. P.R.O: SP/16/251/23.
3. C. Wordsworth, Coronation of King Charles I, Henry Bradshaw Society, 1892, pp. 43-5 - as quoted in G. Soden, Godfrey Goodman, Bishop of Gloucester 1583-1656, Lond. 1953, p.159.
4. P.K. Durham: Hunter MS. 44, Item 17, p.6; See Chpt. 1, p.15.
5. See Chpt. 1, p.23.
6. J. Nichols, The Progressess of James I, III, p.175; There was apparently also no conflict of loyalties when Neile befriended the Scottish favourite Lord Haddington whose children he christened in 1617 and 1618. P.R.O: SP/14/90/114 refers to 1617 & Nichols, op. cit., III, p.481, May 1618.
7. York: Precedent Book 2, pp. 349-53 - Copy of the service.

chapels for the nobility was clearly a special case, for Neile did not countenance the spread of private chapels easily. It was a practice to which many Puritans objected for different reasons because it attributed 'a sanctity to the very walls and stones of the church'.[1]

For Neile, a bishop was not simply primus inter pares with his clergy, but was their clear leader. This involved the role of protector as well, typified by Neile's attempt to shield his clergy from muster payments at Lincoln.[2] When collections were made for the Palatinate or the King in the 1620s he again took personal care that wherever possible the poorer clergy went untaxed.[3] Neile collected benevolences traditionally payable to a new bishop in his dioceses of Rochester, Lichfield and Coventry and Lincoln.[4] Yet this was apparently made easier at Lincoln because the clergy 'saw your fatherly care over the poore ministers', refusing to accept their payments and also because Neile left payments on a voluntary basis and did not 'presse the richer sort'.[5] There is no evidence that Neile collected such benevolences at Durham and Winchester and he courteously waived his right to do so at York in 1632.[6] If Neile did not regard his clergy as his equals, he certainly enjoyed the role of the indulgent father.

Critics attacked the increasing part which bishops came to play in state government. As Lord Lieutenant at Durham Neile roused some local hostility because he increased the number of clergymen who sat

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1. See Chpt. 8, p.260. 2. See Chpt. 6, p.172.
3. When money was required rather quickly by orders sent to the Country in Jan. 1621/2, Neile wrote a long letter of explanation to the Dean and Chapter of Durham and left the organisation of collections entirely in local hands 'according to the p[ro]portion of our abilities'. U.L. Durham: Original Letters to Durham 1593-1662, MSS. collection compiled by C. Hunter, Item 14.
4. Noted with scorn in Parliament in 1614. Commons Journal, I, p.499.
5. 'The Primary Visitation of the Diocese of Lincoln', ed. Rev. Precentor Venables, Associated Architectural Socs.' Reports, p.43.
6. See Chpt. 8, p.230

on the Commission of the Peace in July 1620.[1] The gentry still dominated that body with nineteen representatives to nine, but by claiming places for prebendaries Neile created a precedent which was brought to Parliament's attention in 1621.[2] Complaints grew louder after Neile and Laud became Privy Councillors in 1627.

Town corporations found themselves the object of Neile's attention as a bishop. Towns were frequently sanctuaries for Puritan nonconformists and their very independence often threatened a bishop's control of his diocese. In 1613 the town Corporation of Stafford encountered Neile's opposition to new charter proposals because of economic and jurisdictional factors. The town sought the right to nominate a minister for St. Mary's in Stafford and also wanted to hold a fair which would clash with other markets from which the bishop gained some revenue.[3] Civic officials were forced to make provisions for Neile's objections in July 1613.[4] The new charter was eventually granted in April 1614 when the delays were said to have cost the town '£300 extraordinarie'.[5] Some of that money went to Neile as a bribe, but the rights of the see were protected all the same. Neile showed similar concern that a charter for Farnham in 1632 might prove 'prejudicial to the inheritance of the Bishopric'.[6] Later in the 1630s he advocated more aggressive policies with regard to town corporations.

In some respects Neile showed interests outside those normally expected of a bishop. Necessity required him to become knowledgeable about the nation's defences when he served as Lord Lieutenant.

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1. M. James, Family, Lineage, & Civil Society, p.163.
2. See Chpt. 5, p.130.
3. Staffordshire Record Office: D.(W).1721/1/4, ff. 13v-86 - a detailed account of the process by which Stafford gained a new charter. I owe this reference to the kindness of Martin Greenslade, Ed. V.C.H. Staffs.
4. Ibid., f.25.
5. Ibid., ff. 13v & 51.
6. Hist. MSS. Comm. Cowper MSS., 3 Vols., Lond. 1888, I, p.466 - Neile to Laud, 28 July 1632.

Practical administrative abilities led naturally to his service as a Privy Councillor. Such work left Neile little time for the more traditional concerns of a bishop: such matters as education and poor relief. Yet although no schools or scholarships were founded in his name, his patronage was decisive in the careers of many young men. He knew full well the value of education to a poor boy and at Westminster had deliberately given scholarships to boys who would otherwise not have gone to college.[1] Moreover, his interest did not cease on a boy's departure to college. In January 1611/12 Neile wrote to the Master of St. John's College, Cambridge in support of an old Westminster boy, Samuel Harding, for a fellowship.[2]

Neile also took his occasional responsibility for schools seriously. While at Lichfield and Coventry he took charge of the financial affairs of Shrewsbury School, which had a special relationship with St. John's College, Cambridge. A new building was being erected at the school, but a clause in their charter allocated money left over from that work to the endowment of two closed fellowships and scholarships at St. John's. Neile mediated between the school and the college about when sufficient funds would be available to meet all requirements and within a year of his taking the matter in hand the scholarships were in use.[3] He also took strong action in a dispute concerning the fitness of Ralph Gittings to serve as second master at Shrewsbury School in 1612. Gittings claimed that complaints had only arisen because 'I have somewhat differed from these hotter spirits called puritans'.[4] That was easily sufficient to command Neile's support, although in his final recommendation to the school he revealed that another influencing factor was that 'he was a pupill

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1. See Chpt. 2, p.31.
2. St. John's College, Cambridge: 105/337.
3. The matter was referred to Neile in Nov. 1611. P.R.O: SP/38/10; He was satisfied there were sufficient funds for the project in May 1612. St. John's College, Cambridge: M.R. 69/6.
4. Lincoln: Dean & Chpt. Miscellaneous Papers - Ciii/31/2.

to my very deare freind ... George Benson'.[1] Teachers were as important as preachers in Neile's eyes and on the whole licences were hard to come by when he was involved.

From what can be seen of Neile's patronage of boys or attitude towards projected fellowships and scholarships at Cambridge, he observed no fixed partisan principles. He recommended boys like John Woods, John Rand and others for scholarships usually on appeal from friends.[2] Thus he supported Robert Allot, the distinguished physician and fellow of Neile's college, when the latter sought a fellowship for a nephew in 1619.[3] Yet when the Puritan Herbert Palmer was refused his M.A., except on certain harsh conditions, by that same college in 1623, Neile was amongst those who protested about the action of the fellows.[4] Palmer went on to enjoy a distinguished career at Queen's College, Cambridge where he was elected President in 1644. Also in 1623, Neile aligned himself rather unusually with John Williams, who proposed the creation of new fellowships at St. John's. In typical forthright manner, Neile urged the fellows not to look a gift horse in the mouth.[5] In the final analysis, however, Prynne and others were correct to suspect Neile's motives for his interest in Cambridge affairs; he did not oppose the extension of educational opportunities, but he held strong views about who should control the colleges and what should be taught.[6]

As in the field of education, no almshouses or charities were founded in Neile's name, and yet here too there is evidence that he was concerned about such issues. Westminster records provide a host of detailed information on his part in making regular poor relief

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1. St. John's College, Cambridge: M.R.69/6.
2. Ibid., 80/110 - Letter concerning Wood in Oct. 1615; 105/128 - Letter concerning Rand in Oct. 1616.
3. Ibid., 94/404 - Neile to Gwyn, 14 March 1618/19.
4. Ibid., M.R.57/36 - Neile to Gwyn, 24 Feb. 1622/3.
5. Ibid., 105/235 - Neile to Gwyn, 9 Nov. 1623.
6. See Chpt. 7, pp. 216, 218-9, 223.

payments and contributions to expenses in times of plague or famine.[1] Evidence elsewhere is less clearcut, but there is one well known story told about Neile which is characteristic of the man and has survived despite the obliquy which is so frequently heaped upon his name. It is simply that on an occasion when:

> '..his coachman hurried apace through a town where there were many poor people, as if he had meant to save his master's purse harmless, he called him knave for his labour, and made him stand still till such time as he had with his own hand freely distributed to them all'.[2]

That coachman was clearly unacquainted with the Neile who always spent more of his own money on Westminster progresses than he did from Abbey funds.[3] The only formal memorial to Neile's interest in these social questions is his presence on the Poor Law Commission of 1631.[4]

Whatever degree of concern Neile had shown for those in poverty and even if he had been more tolerant of Puritans, there was one group of critics he could never answer. Some still opposed episcopacy on principle and, as efforts were made to improve the economic position of the Church, pointed to the inordinate wealth of its bishops. It was useless to point to the decline in the value of the Church's estate since the Reformation. As a modern critic has pointed out 'bishops were still rich and powerful enough to be envied and criticized'.[5] Frequently a bishop's income was supplemented from several livings which he was allowed to hold in commendam with his see. In 1616 Neile was selected as a prime example of the prevalence of this abuse. Following criticism in Parliament in 1614 a test case was drawn up which eventually came before Sir Francis Bacon, the Attorney-General in January 1615/16. The case involved the rights

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1. See Chpt. 2, p.33.
2. T. Birch, The Court & Times of Charles I, II, p.177 - Pory to Puckering, 20 Sept. 1632.
3. See Chpt. 2, p.33.
4. See Chpt. 6, p.180.
5. C. Hill, Economic Problems of the Church, 4th ed. Lond. 1971, p.39.

of presentation to the living of Clifton Campville which Neile held in commendam with the see of Lichfield and Coventry after 1612. As Neile had held the living under the terms of a royal dispensation the case involved the crown's rights to issue such grants, hence Bacon's interest in the case which was officially due to come before the Court of Exchequer. The issue led indirectly to the dismissal of Chief Justice Coke from the bench when he failed to obey royal orders concerning its legal conduct.

There is no evidence that Neile was deeply involved in this legal wrangle, despite the frequent use of his name. He submitted a formal deposition simply pointing to the grant of November 1610; as it all rested on a matter of principle, there was little to be gained from cross-examination.[1] The judges appreciated the complexities of the case and acknowledged that 'B[isho]pps should have ho[noura]ble mayntenance', but generally found against the practice of granting livings in commendam.[2] Even when judges like Warberton found against Neile they frequently referred to 'the moderac[i]on of the def[en]d[an]te' in not taking more than two livings in commendam as the grant allowed.[3] This probably ensured that the debate remained centred upon principles rather than personalities.

Although Neile escaped severe criticism in the courts, there is no denying that at various stages in his career he was a rank pluralist. Between 1598 and 1614 he usually derived his income from more than 5 sources.[4] Yet it was only on Neile's move to Lincoln in 1614 that he gained an income of more than £800 p.a. for his see alone.[5] It was a substantial income, but a bishop had many expenses. Palaces had to be maintained, a certain social life was expected, travel

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1. Bodleian Library, Oxford: MS. Eng. Hist. C. 494, 'Sir Francis Bacon - Holt & Glover v R. Neale', 1616, 32ff.
2. Ibid., f.5v.
3. Ibid., f.23v.
4. Appendix 2.
5. Ibid.

expenses would be heavy as would the cost of living in London - and there was always one's family to keep and the ever-present poor at the door. Several of the livings Neile came to hold in commendam during this phase in his career were already tied to other posts. Thus the rectory of Eastbourne was tied to the treasurership of Chichester which he held between 1598 and 1610. The rectory of Southfleet in Kent was likewise attached to the see of Rochester, although by the grant of November 1610 Neile was allowed to keep it with Lichfield and Coventry until 1614.[1]

Yet there is no denying that Neile gained a more lucrative living than many at the start of his career thanks chiefly to royal favour. In 1605 he was allowed to keep the mastership of the Savoy on his appointment as Dean of Westminster. No firm value can be given to that post, but it was used as a major bargaining counter when Neile eventually gave it up on his move to Rochester in 1608. On that occasion he was allowed to keep the deanery of Westminster. In 1610 he was the recipient of the notorious grant made by the Dean and Chapter of Canterbury and ratified by the King. It was under the terms of this dispensation that he was allowed to retain Southfleet and acquire the rectories of Clifton Campville and Stoke-on-Trent in 1612.[2] Throughout this period he managed to retain some income from Chichester diocese, for although he gave up his treasurership and Eastbourne in 1610, he became a canon residentiary in that year and retained his prebend of Firle.[3] Indeed it is not exactly clear when he gave up the latter, for Chichester sources reveal no record of his

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1. See p.50.
2. Ibid.; Neile was granted the rectory of Clifton Campville in March 1611/12. P.R.O: SO/3/5; The evidence over Stoke-upon-Trent is confusing. According to central sources he was presented with the living in April 1612. P.R.O: SO/3/5. Yet sources at Lichfield cast doubt about whether he ever replaced John Weston as the incumbent. Lichfield Joint Record Office: B/V/1/28 Liber Cleri for 1614.
3. 'Dean & Chapter Acts, Chichester', ed. W. Peckham, Sussex Record Soc., Items 1063, 1077 & 1143.

resignation. As it was retained under the terms of the 1610 grant it should have been relinquished in 1614. Yet Neile was amongst the list of prebendaries cited to appear on the occasion of Carleton's election as bishop in September 1619.[1] It is thus possible that Neile retained the prebend until as late as 1624 when Robert Johnson's appointment is noted.[2]

If one leaves aside this problem of Firle prebend, which was technically only worth ten shillings per annum anyway, Neile 'lived of his own' after 1614. Once his salary was more than doubled on his move to Durham in 1617, he never needed to hold livings in commendam again.[3] Moreover, now that the confusion surrounding his nephew's appointments at Winchester has been clarified, his career does not seem more tainted with the charge of pluralism than many other bishops of his generation.[4]

This assessment of income is necessarily crude and inaccurate. The figures in Appendix 2 reveal the disparity between valuations given in the King's Book and what was actually paid in first fruits and tenths by Neile. But that is only one side of the coin. These figures probably bear scant resemblance to what Neile really earned throughout his long career. They take no account of property he may have bought and sold, leases he took for himself and his family, improvements he made in his income by administrative reforms, or the many perquisites of the job which must have been available to him.

From the outset of his career at Westminster, Neile had taken care to give favourable leases of property to his family. He enjoyed cheap lodgings at Westminster Close for many years after leaving the

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1. Ibid., Item 1153.
2. J. Le Neve, Fasti Ecclesiae Anglicanae 1541-1857 - Chichester, ed. J. Horn, Lond. 1971, p.29.
3. Appendix 2
4. See p.68.

deanery.[1] Many of the leases granted to William Man in 1609 were probably held in trust for members of Neile's family.[2] Much later in 1617, this same William Man and Edward Ellis took a series of leases at Lincoln, some of which were clearly held in the names of Dorothy and Paul Neile.[3] The latter lived in a house in the Close for a while in 1641, but most of the property consisted of areas of land such as the manor of Bishop's Norton in Lincolnshire, various rectories and some water mills at Buckden.

The pickings improved as Neile moved on to better sees. Edward Liveley seems to have acted as the family solicitor at Durham and he took out leases to lands, tenements and most profitably coal-mines, for the younger members of Neile's family in the 1620s.[4] Land at Burnhope, Auckland, Wolsingham, and a third of a colliery at Bickborne worth £106.10s. p.a. were mentioned in Sir Paul Neile's Royalist composition papers in December 1646.[5] Neile sometimes adopted a rather cavalier approach with regard to church property and thought nothing of giving Liveley nine concurrent leases in September 1622.[6] Dean Hunt later queried two of these leases, but concluded that 'if it be no dishonour to the Church, (for I know them not) I am content'.[7] Neile encountered a less co-operative Dean and Chapter at Winchester. Dean Young had the courage to cross Neile in November 1630 when he felt that 'to be souden in confirming 4 leases at once might prejudice our reputation'.[8] A year later Young resisted Neile's attempts to

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1. P.K. Durham: Hunter MS. 67, Item 14, pp. 2-3, 6-7; He appealed to Dr. Clayton, master of his old college to help him gain a favourable lease to some property in Westminster Close in Jan. 1611/12. St. John's College, Cambridge: 105/337.
2. W.A.M: Dean & Chpt. Act Book, f.296v.
3. Lincoln: Register of Grants, Bii/2/6, ff. 70-4, 79-81, 87-93.
4. Dept. P.& D. Durham: Enrolment Book 184959, pp. 679-82, 806-9; Enrolment Book 184960, pp. 399-425.
5. 'Royalist Composition Papers', part II, ed. J. Clay, Yorkshire Archaeological Society, 18, Lond. 1895, pp. 132-3.
6. P.K. Durham: Dean & Chpt. Act Book 2, f.23v.
7. Ibid., Box 32 Miscellaneous papers - Hunt to Craddock, 13 Jan. 1622/3.
8. The Diary of John Young, ed. F. Goodman, p.88.

grant leases for lives on the grounds that to do so would have flouted the recent royal orders of December 1629.[1] Guilty of granting many leases for lives earlier in his career, Neile seems to have complied with the tighter regulations in the 1630s.[2]

The real perquisites of Neile's role were derived from more intangible and informal contacts. When the weight of recusancy fines forced Robert Conyers to part with estates at Hutton Bonville in Northallertonshire, Neile stepped in to acquire the property for his son.[3] In September 1637 he solicited Wentworth's aid for a scheme whereby he and his son paid off Conyer's debts to the crown, to safeguard their title to the land.[4] That Sir Paul was in arrears for such payments was noted in his Royalist composition papers of December 1646.[5] Neile had obviously forged a good bargain with the crown however, for the estate was worth £487 p.a. and yet was only charged with payments of £20 p.a. to the crown while Conyers lived.[6] It is probable that Neile helped his son acquire Codnor Castle in Derbyshire in a similar fashion.[7]

It is difficult to judge Neile's behaviour with regard to payment for his work as a bishop. On the one hand he clearly gained immensely from royal favour at the start of his career and thus did well while others suffered. Moreover, he was shrewd in using all the means at his disposal to increase his family's wealth and influence. On the other hand, Neile did carry out much constructive work with the interests of his sees at heart. He was careful to raise rents and improve church property wherever he went. Stanhope Park at

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1. Ibid., pp. 95-6. 2. See Chpt. 8, p.262.
3. V.C.H. Yorkshire North Riding, ed. W. Page, 2 Vols., Lond. 1914, I, pp. 401-2.
4. Sheffield Central Library: Wentworth Woodhouse Muniments P.H.7.A. - Strafford Correspondence XVII, Neile to Wentworth, 18 Sept. 1637.
5. 'Royalist Composition Papers', Part II, ed. J. Clay, Yorks. Arch. Soc., 18, p.133.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid., p.132 when Codnor was stated to be worth £340 p.a.

Durham underwent what looks like a modern conservation programme and was restocked with animals in 1623.[1] Neile's expenditure on his episcopal residences has already been noted.[2] Furthermore, demands on royal servants could be as frequent as royal favours. Neile lent Charles £200 in 1628 and a further £2,000 in 1640, by which date this large sum was more like a gift.[3]

Opponents could argue that Neile was overpaid at the expense of the lesser clergy and that he curtailed the preaching activities of Puritans. What cannot be denied however, is that Neile was an extremely able bishop, who according to his lights organised highly efficient teams of clerics and lawyers in a bid to revitalize the Church of England as an institution. He patronised the most able men of his day and played a big part in changing the emphasis of later Anglican worship. While immersed in this work he sought to do what any father of the time hoped to do - improve the lot of his family. His success in that regard is to be measured by the fact that his son was knighted in 1633 and lived to serve as a courtier to Charles II.[4] Neile's grandson Richard was in turn knighted in 1686 having become an important landowner in Northumberland. No mean achievement for a bishop who was the son of a tallow-chandler.

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1. Dept. P.& D. Durham: Enrolment Book 184959, pp. 151-2.
2. See pp.58-9.
3. See Chpt. 6, p.174 & Chpt. 8, p.290.
4. Sir. H. Hartley, The Royal Society. Its Origins and Founders, Lond. 1960, biography of Sir Paul Neile, pp. 159-165.

Chapter 4: Lord Lieutenant of the County Palatine.

In October 1617 Neile was confirmed as Bishop of Durham by the Archbishop of York at Durham House.[1] It was a most prestigious appointment, not merely because Durham was a wealthy and important see, but also because the bishop exercised power jure regalia within the territory bounded by the Tyne and the Tees known as the Palatinate.[2] This power had been modified considerably since the middle ages, particularly since the growth in importance of the county lieutenancies in the sixteenth century. Yet bishops of this later period frequently undertook the role of lieutenants even when they were not legally entitled to act as such.

Matters were simplified in 1617 when Neile became the first bishop since Cuthbert Tunstall officially to hold the post of Lord Lieutenant of the County Palatine.[3] The appointment demonstrated the King's faith in his old friend, for there was now no doubt that Neile was in supreme command in the diocese. Through his new title he controlled the appointment of deputy lieutenants, captains of the trained bands, muster-masters and other military officials in the region. This control complemented that which he already exercised as bishop over the personnel of the almost autonomous palatine courts - from the chancellor and sheriff down. With due deference to the royal prerogative, Neile could change the composition of the Commissions of the Peace, levy taxes and even grant town charters. As Bishop of Durham he controlled over 10,000 acres of land, which

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1. J. Le Neve, Lives and Characters of the Bishops .., p.144.
2. M. Giuseppi, Guide to the Manuscripts preserved in the Public Record Office, 2 Vols., Lond. 1923-4, Vol. I, pp. 303-10.
3. M. James, Family, Lineage & Civil Society, p.156.

thus made him one of the richest landowners in the north.[1] Immense patronage lay at his disposal through the allocation of a whole range of posts like stewardships and the granting of favourable leases. Despite recent attempts to gain parliamentary representation for Durham, Neile remained the county's only representative in Parliament through his seat in the House of Lords.

The importance of these powers has been recognised in recent studies of northern society by Mr. M. James and S.J. & S. Watts.[2] Both studies note the trend towards greater centralisation of government, particularly after the abolition of the 'Borders' on the accession of James I. Mr. James in particular, has much to say of Neile's role as a government agent in this process. His work is most impressive where it deals with the complex social changes which took place during this period and the impact of Neile's religious and economic policies.

While much valuable work has thus been done on the county and region, some of which is illuminating about the career of Richard Neile, there is one area of study which rightfully claims more attention in this thesis. As Lord Lieutenant of the County Palatine, Neile exercised supreme military command of the region - a most unorthodox role for a bishop. Moreover, this situation occurred during a period in which central government groped towards a more national organisation and rationalization of the defences. A process which was quickened by crises brought about by wars with Spain and France after 1624. Neile brought his own peculiar talents as an administrator to bear upon this situation. Nearly 150 letters and

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1. Neile had his estates surveyed in May 1619. Dept. P. & D. Durham: Mickleton & Spearman MS. 23, f.130.
2. M. James, Family, Lineage & Civil Society, 1974.
   S.J. & S. Watts, From Border to Middle Shire: Northumberland 1586-1625, Leicester University Press 1975.

other documents survive at Durham as a testimony of his personal involvement in this work.[1]

Attention was first drawn to this mass of material by F.W. Harding, a librarian at Durham in 1954.[2] No great use has since been made of it. Yet the papers reveal much about changes in military organisation which were taking place during this period and about the many talents and boundless energy of Richard Neile in his execution of this function of his office.

For civil administrative purposes the Palatinate was divided into four wards: Stockton, Chester, Darlington and Easington. Next to the offices of chancellor and high sheriff, those of the deputy lieutenants were of greatest importance. There appear to have been 6 such offices.[3] In 1617 they were held by Sir George and Sir Ralph Conyers, Sir Henry Anderson, Sir William Bellasis, Sir George Freville and Sir Talbot Bowes.[4] They represented a fair mixture of interests. The Conyers were an old established Durham family with leanings towards recusancy. Sir Henry Anderson represented the new coal-owning interests in the area. Bellasis, Bowes and Freville came from what Mr. James has described as recently established 'Church families'.[5] They might be better described as members of the fairly new, staunchly Protestant Durham gentry.

The soubriquet 'Church family' seems inappropriate when it comes to describing factions in the north. If the term is used of families whose wealth was based on church ties a century old, how are we to refer to the Blakistons, James and Craddocks who were all clergymen

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1. U.L. Durham: Mickleton & Spearman MS. 2, ff. 255-430.
2. F.W. Harding, 'Defence and Security Measures in the County Palatine of Durham chiefly in the 17th Century from the Evidence of the Mickleton and Spearman Manuscripts', Durham University Journal, 47, 1954-5.
3. Two for each ward except Chester which was handled by a commission drawn from the others.
4. U.L. Durham: Mickleton & Spearman MS. 2, ff. 258-70.
5. M. James, Family, Lineage & Civil Society, p.163.

with clerical fathers recently settled in the area? James himself concedes that members of his 'Church families' defected like Robert Hutton to become critics of the establishment.[1] Moreover, what is to be made of the 'new' gentry like William Smith, Timothy Comyn and George Martyn, whom Neile made such use of as senior members of his staff? It is also wise to remember 'foreigners' when discussing such a tightly-knit regional society. They too had a role to play and cannot be classified simply as adherents of the particular policies of any given bishop. Neile made use of Sir James Whitelocke and Sir Henry Yelverton as Justices of his Session courts.[2] They scarcely shared his religious beliefs, neither did his choice of Palatine Chancellor in November 1626, Sir Richard Hutton.[3] What mattered to Neile was their efficiency.

Later deputy lieutenants, appointed on deaths and resignations during the period, kept the balance of interest groups much as before. Sir George Selby, also the High Sheriff until his death in 1625, came of the newly wealthy coal-mining gentry of Newcastle. Sir John Calverley and Ralph Fetherstonhaugh came of established gentry who had lived in the area for more than 60 years.[4]

Representatives of this same class held the lesser positions of captains of the trained bands. Initially this was one captain per ward, but in November 1625 this figure was doubled.[5] If older established families like the Conyers are absent from this group it is probably chiefly due to their recusant connections. The first of the notorious lists of people tainted with recusancy holding government office was produced by the Commons in April 1624. Lord Scrope,

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1. Ibid., p.120.
2. 'Liber Famelicus of Sir James Whitelocke', ed. J. Bruce, Camden Soc., Vol. 70, 1858, p.59.
3. P.K. Durham: Dean & Chpt. Act Book, No. 2, (1619-38), f.48.
4. M. James, Family, Lineage & Civil Society, pp. 163-4.
5. U.L. Durham: Mickleton & Spearman MS. 2, ff. 364-5.

Lord Eure, Sir Thomas Riddell and Sir Ralph Conyers were all cited as of suspect loyalty in the County Palatine.[1]

What matters here is that Neile seems to have worked well with the existing office holders and to have selected new men with some care for their social background. It would be quite wrong to talk of a radical disturbance of the fabric of local society being perpetrated by an incoming lowly born bishop with strong court connections.[2] Neile worked hard to keep his team united in the face of mounting pressures. When George Tonge sought to resign his Captain's commission in 1620, following changes in organisation of musters, Neile was quick to pacify him and successful in cajoling him to change his mind.[3] Changes were necessary and Neile pointed out that he personally paid £20 p.a. towards the cost of training the troops.[4] England's military might was firmly rooted in the provinces and Neile did nothing to alienate the crown's natural allies.

At a later date Neile showed compassion in allowing Sir Ralph Conyers and James Lawson leave on account of sickness in their families.[5] This capacity to identify with the problems of his sub-ordinates was the over-riding feature of Neile's ability as a manager of men. When relaying Privy Council orders to his deputies concerning a levy of 100 men for service in Ireland in May 1625, Neile tactfully added that as his commission had recently been renewed as a sign of satisfaction with his services, so he was renewing their patents.[6] When London sent experienced officers from the south to help train the troops in 1626, Neile made and kept a promise to pay those

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1. Commons Journal, Vol. I, p.776.
2. M. James, Family, Lineage & Civil Society, pp. 161-8. James fails to distinguish between unpopular religious policies and successful secular politics.
3. U.L. Durham: Mickleton & Spearman MS. 2, ff.330-1.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid., ff. 378-9 Draft copy of Neile's letter to his Deputy Lieutenants dated 27 Jan. 1625/6.
6. Ibid., f.351.

officers he had already hired for the job out of his own pocket.[1] When urging his deputy lieutenants to treat the new men 'as of better worth than their outside maketh shew of', Neile added with a touch of pride that he was sure that 'our' own training had achieved a high standard.[2]

The Durham gentry quickly came to trust Neile. When new Durham franchise bills were being considered in the Parliaments of 1621 and 1624, there was no sign of the acrimonious relations which had been such a feature of Bishop James's time at Durham.[3] In September 1625, Neile was involved in the difficult task of assessing the gentry for a forced loan. He had been realistic and humane in leaving certain names off the list, and he assured the Privy Council that this arose

> '..not of partialitie, or omission; but upon due consideration of their decayed estates'.[4]

When a loan was raised in April 1626 Sir William Bellasis and Sir John Calverley felt sure that it was based on the ideas of another man 'that hath had little considerac[i]on and lesse knowledge of the state of the countrey'.[5] Sir Henry Anderson appealed to the Privy Council and Neile was probably instrumental in getting the figure demanded reduced by £1,000 on 21 April.[6]

Yet Neile could be firm as well as tactful. When he first enquired about the state of the troops at his command, he was assured by the deputy lieutenants that the muster-master, Thomas Hodson, was an able and reliable man, despite indications to the contrary. When Neile began to order changes such as the provision of lieutenants and to discuss ways of providing a county armoury, it became clear to Hodson that he was dealing with a man who was going to keep a careful

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1. Ibid., ff. 378-9, reveal the promise. Accounts drawn up in 1627 reveal that it was kept - f.424.
2. Ibid., ff. 378-9.
3. See Chpt. 5, p.118.
4. P.R.O: SP/16/7/65.
5. U.L. Durham: Mickleton & Spearman MS. 2, f.387.
6. Acts of the Privy Council, Vol. 40, p.445.

eye on his work. He 'resigned' his post as muster-master in September 1619.[1] Hodson was later foolish enough to complain to the Privy Council that he had been forced out of office by Neile and Sir Henry Anderson.[2] When Neile was asked by the Privy Council to explain why he had withheld Hodson's pay, his reply was quite simply:

> 'I have not yet seene that the petitioners service hath been answerable to that w[hi]ch was to be expected'.[3]

The early reports confirm Neile's judgement: the troops were badly equipped and poorly trained.

Hodson's dismissal was partly a result of gentry feuds which Neile was able to manipulate to his advantage. He carefully ensured however, that he had a ready answer for Privy Council enquiries. Collections of money for Hodson had in his opinion caused some of the gentry to be 'backwarder in th[a]t of his Ma[jes]t[ie]s service of Purveiance'.[4] On top of this sly innuendo, by January 1619/20 Neile was able to report on efforts to raise the number of foot troops from 800 to 1,000 and double the size of the cavalry.[5] As he had also 'drawne the Countrey to compound for his Ma[jes]t[ie]s houshould purvayance, w[hi]ch was not done before my tyme', it is hardly surprising that Hodson's appeal was dismissed.[6]

Initially Neile hoped that the deputy lieutenants could supervise the task of training the troops. An unofficial muster was held in April 1620 followed by 2 to 3 days intensive training.[7] It became clear however, that an expert muster-master was necessary and in April Neile accepted the service of Edward Diggens on the advice of Sir Henry Anderson.[8] Diggens took the post at half the old salary,

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1. U.L. Durham: Mickleton & Spearman MS. 2, f.292.
2. Ibid., ff.302-3.
3. Ibid., ff.304-5.
4. P.R.O: SP/14/112/23.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid.; Acts of the Privy Council, Vol. 37, p.146 - Council to Neile, 29 Feb. 1619/20.
7. U.L. Durham: Mickleton & Spearman MS. 2, f.307.
8. Ibid., f.308.

but asked to be given the patent for life. Cautious as ever, Neile seems to have appointed Diggens for a trial period and only confirmed the patent in September 1620.[1]

What gave the muster orders of this time a greater sense of urgency was the worsening situation on the Continent, where a full scale war was brewing. In August 1619 Frederick, Elector Palatine, accepted the throne offered to him by the rebels of Bohemia. This rash decision involved England because he was a Protestant flying in the face of a Catholic Emperor and, more particularly, because he was James I's son-in-law. After the battle of 'White Mountain' in November 1621, the defeated Frederick retreated to his homeland and the war which he had precipitated moved fronts with him to engulf the rest of Europe. Collections were raised for him in England and when Parliament met in 1621, there were furious cries that James should not desert God's 'Protestant Cause' in the shape of his son-in-law. The poor reports of the muster held in April 1620 and the worsening situation on the Continent probably forced Neile's hand on the appointment of a new muster-master.

The tensions of the latter half of 1620 caused Neile to summon any found responsible for defects in armour and supplies to report to him at Durham Castle.[2] It was during this period that people like Tonge had to be enveigled into working amicably with Diggens. By June 1621, Neile's labours were yielding fruit . The reports satisfied the Privy Council that Neile and his deputy lieutenants could cope with their work and the immediate crisis passed when it became clear that the King did not intend to go to war.

From the outset, the Privy Council had assumed much about Neile's abilities to cope with this particular responsibility. In a muster

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1. Ibid., f.324.

2. Ibid., ff.325-6.

order of 1618 they had confidently written:

> '..yo[u]r L[ordshi]p well knoweth that the moderne use doth altogether exclude the Calivers as unserviceable, and not to be allowed upon any Musters of Arms'.[1]

Neile did not fail them. He brought to the task his boundless dedication, efficiency and energy as an administrator, which was what was necessary at the time. While others had the opportunity to learn new techniques in warfare on the Continent, Neile's role was to ensure that the ramshackle system of trained bands in England gave as much security as humanly possible.

For ten years Neile shouldered much of the responsibility for the defence of the north-east coastline. Frequently he instituted reforms in advance of Privy Council instructions. By 1623 when the Privy Council ordered musters to be held regularly at least once a year, this had already become common practice in Durham. Before the confiscation of arms of recusants in 1625 finally provided a makeshift stock of arms, Neile had been working towards a county armoury.

Neile was always quick to comply with Council orders. Rule books were re-issued by Charles I in August 1625 and Neile had doubled the number of captains and lieutenants in compliance with the guidelines by November of that year.[2] When experienced soldiers were sent north in Jamuary 1625/6 they found that much of their work had already been done by Neile's personal advisers Captain Hilton and Joseph Ward.[3]

It was not easy to extract money and new weapons from the Durham gentry to carry out necessary reforms. Neile pleaded, cajoled, paid as an example and also occasionally bullied them into providing equipment. In the early months of 1626 he arranged the purchase of arms for Durham in London and when delays followed, offered to pay for the shipment himself.[4] Bellasis and Calverley politely refused the offer,

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1. Ibid., f.255.
2. Ibid., f.367.
3. Ibid., ff.377-9.
4. Ibid., f.386.

perhaps realizing that it was better not to place themselves in Neile's debt. They kept to an earlier, less radical agreement which had been thrashed out at Auckland.

During 1626 Neile was one of those responsible for supervising the construction of new defences at Newcastle. Money was forthcoming from the Privy Council and was also to be raised in the area. The war effort against Spain and France had led to some discussion of Newcastle's defences in Parliament. Apparently 500 ships were maintained by the coal trade, which in turn was vital to the country's economy. In future these ships were to travel in convoy. In the debates in the House of Lords, Neile was less alarmist about Newcastle than many. He felt that 'some workes there begun by H. 8. may be fortefyed at small charges to defende the towne'.[1] When the Lord Chamberlain interjected that one engineer had estimated repair costs at approximately £1,200, Neile remained adamant that the work could cost less and artillery be brought from Berwick.[2] Here was a cost conscious civil servant.

Slowly the muster orders of the 1620s became more precise. From being simply a call to review the local troops they began to show signs that central government really wanted certain actions carried out. Beacons were to be set up and tended on the coast, the maritime ports were worthy of special attention, and once the foot troops were revealed to be better trained than before, concern was shown for the size and abilities of the cavalry.[3] Regular reports became obligatory. The decay of large family estates in the north had reduced the size of the cavalry. The burden had to be switched to the new gentry with great tact. As the fears of invasion grew in 1626 this must have

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1. 'Notes of the Debates in the House of Lords, 1624 & 1626', ed. S.R. Gardiner, Camden Soc. New Series, Vol. 24, 1879, p.137. See Chpt. 5, p.147.
2. Ibid.
3. U.L. Durham: Mickleton & Spearman MS. 2, ff.391-2.

become increasingly difficult for the introduction of ship money taxation proved an added burden.[1]

In this particular emergency a massive review of troops was ordered on 10 July 1626. Neile was given the power to conscript able-bodied men and a Provost-Marshall was to be appointed to keep law and order - a sign that the army was on full alert and of greater local sophistication.[2] Because of the recusant threat in the north, Neile's officers had to take the oaths of allegiance and supremacy. In times of crisis Neile was kept extremely busy supervising the movement of troops, arms and supplies. As construction work was still in progress at Newcastle, it is little wonder that he had to apply for special permission to commandeer all available carts as it was also harvest time.[3] Neile usually spent only the summer months in Durham, but in this particular year it was not until October that he was able to appoint Sir Timothy Whittingham as his Provost-Marshall, complete his report for the Privy Council, and prepare to return to London for Christmas.[4]

The emergency of 1626 led to the establishment of a military communications network in the north, and the raising of a troop of 'pioneers', who were really the 'Royal Engineers' of the day.[5] Better still, the Privy Council appreciated at long last the inconvenience of the old muster times and in March 1626/7 ordered that in future they were to be held at Whitsun in order not to clash with the harvest.[6] Slowly a more comprehensive defence system was emerging.

Unlike the Privy Council, Neile's interest in local military

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1. Acts of the Privy Council, Vol. 41, pp.148-9.
2. U.L. Durham: Mickleton & Spearman MS. 2, ff.397-8.
3. Ibid., f.406 - Neile to the Council, 5 Aug. 1626; Permission was granted on 30 Aug., Acts of the Privy Council, Vol. 41, pp.232-3.
4. U.L. Durham: Mickleton & Spearman MS. 2, f.410.
5. Ibid., f.402 - Draft report, July 1626.
6. Ibid., f.415.

reforms did not ebb and flow with times of crisis. Papers at Durham indicate that some restocking of arms took place in 1627 and a memorandum dated July 1627 suggests that Neile personally paid for weapons and supplies as he had offered to do in 1626.[1] The services of a full-time armourer had been engaged in 1626 and his presence may account for some kind of re-equipment of the troops carried out in May 1627.[2]

When crises did occur Neile's cool, bureaucratic mentality stood him in good stead. Early in August 1627 reports emerged that an enemy fleet had been sighted off the coast of Scotland. The town of Berwick appealed to Neile for aid in the event of a landing.[3] Letters from all parts of the county demanded instructions. The 'Prince Bishop', now clearly the 'general' in the north, ordered a close watch to be kept on all beacons and put his troops at readiness to move within an hour's warning.[4] Neile refused to do more however, and was vindicated when the emergency passed without incident. As before in 1626, Neile kept calm when enemy movements were reported and refrained from committing his troops to expensive manoeuvres. Such a feature of generalship in the north had earned the Earl of Shrewsbury praise from Queen Elizabeth more than fifty years before - it applied to any occasion when local militia were involved.[5] Neile, the armchair general, was the man for the occasion in 1627.

Although Neile presided over reforms at Durham and emerged successfully from crises as in 1627, he too, often over-estimated what was possible from the forces at his disposal. Bellasis and Calverley had to tactfully inform Neile in March 1625/6 that his plans

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1. Ibid., ff.416-7.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid., f.418.
4. Ibid., f.421.
5. I owe this point to Mr. G. Bernard who is currently engaged in research into the careers of the fourth and fifth Earls of Shrewsbury.

to create a force of heavy cavalry were not viable. The new government officers felt that there were insufficient men and horses available for such a split of forces and that what cavalry troops existed were insufficiently trained.[1]

Clearly Neile was no military genius. It would be strange to find a bishop described as such. Moreover, his organisation of the forces at Durham did not involve many innovations. His was a bureaucratic mentality whose strength lay in the ability to extract the most from any existing system. The same can be said of Neile's approach to the operation of the Church courts or general diocesan administration.[2] What Neile did bring to the task in hand was his efficiency and concern. There were frictions with the local gentry over other matters, notably religion and the increasing clerical dominance of the Commissions of the Peace, but on the question of defence, Neile worked extremely well with them.[3] His nominees for posts seem to have met local social requirements and to have been able and loyal. Neile seems to have possessed enough natural ability to assess the military situation in Durham and take appropriate action, often in advance of specific government instructions. He played an important part in the development of England's defence system in the north.

This was only one of Neile's responsibilities while he was Bishop of Durham. In all probability he spent more time in London during this period than he did in County Durham. Other chapters reveal his major concerns at this date. This short account highlights one of the more unusual roles Neile was called upon to play in his lifetime and reveals the personal qualities and administrative abilities which enabled him to carry it out most effectively.

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1. U.L. Durham: Mickleton & Spearman MS. 2, f.386.
2. See Chpt. 3.
3. See pp. 64-5.

Chapter 5: A Bishop in the House of Lords.

> '..here we are not called for the church but sit as lords and peers, as appears by the words of our Writ, to councel the King'.
>
> (A speech by Neile in the House of Lords, 12 July 1610).[1]

> '..I take him [Bishop Neile] not to be a noble man but a Lord of Parliament'.
>
> (A speech in the House of Lords, 28 May 1614).[2]

> 'Our Bishops have soe long plaied the Governors, as they have forgotten to play the Preists'.
>
> (A speech in the House of Commons, 9 Feb. 1640/1).[3]

These quotations illustrate certain constant problems in the role of the episcopate in Parliament during this period. Bishops were frequently unpopular, unwanted members of Parliament and their function in the House of Lords was highly ambiguous. Neile thought they were on a par with other lords who gave advice to the crown on all matters of state; they were the 'Lords Spiritual' and Convocation was where they donned their mitres to consider matters of religion. Many of the temporal lords felt differently and made plain their resentment of these inferior 'peers' in times of crisis. The episcopate tended to be a subservient body of crown supporters, ever-present in the Lords to vote down controversial bills. This made them the subject of attacks from the Commons which were most forcefully expressed in the debates concerning the exclusion of bishops from the Lords and the Root and Branch Bill in 1641.

Apart from unpopularity, there was a genuine problem over the

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1. Proceedings in Parliament 1610, ed. E. Foster, 2 Vols., New Haven 1966, Vol. I, p.136.
2. Hist. MSS. Comm. Hastings MSS., Vol. IV, 1947, p.269.
3. The Journal of Sir Symonds D'Ewes, ed. W. Notestein, Yale University Press, Lond. 1923, p.341.

role of the bishops in Parliament. Two archbishops and twenty-four bishops were eligible to sit in the Lords.[1] This was a large group to keep occupied with parliamentary work if they were only to consider certain types of legislation. In practice, as one might anticipate, they predominated on committees dealing with religious, social and private bills. Frequently however, the more senior clerics sat on important committees discussing complex government legislation concerning the defence and prosperity of the realm. Often these same bishops were used on committees primarily involved with the internal workings of Parliament as a legislative and judicial institution. The fact that both James I and Charles I employed senior bishops as privy councillors increased the tendency for them to become more heavily involved in administrative work in Parliament. The career of Richard Neile provides a case study of how one bishop functioned in the House of Lords in the early seventeenth century.

Neile first attended Parliament as the Bishop of Rochester in 1610: he last sat in the troublesome session of 1628/9. He was excused from attending the 'Short Parliament' of April-May 1640 and died a few days before the opening of the 'Long Parliament' in November.[2] Neile was therefore present in seven Parliaments in all.

In an effort to facilitate analysis of Neile's role in the Lords I have constructed a chart which records his attendance and contribution to the committee work of the Upper House, an area often neglected by historians.[3] These statistics were compiled on the basis of evidence derived from the Lords Journals.[4] Private diaries may reveal inaccuracies in the figures, but the Journals are the only consistent, comprehensive source available for this study. Figures have been

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1. The Bishop of Sodor & Man was not eligible to sit in the Lords.
2. P.R.O: SO/3/12/March 1639/40 provides the order dispensing with Neile's services in the 'Short Parliament'.
3. See p.111
4. Journals of the House of Lords, Vols. II, III, & IV.

compiled to show the number and types of committees which Neile attended throughout his parliamentary career. Certain basic constructs have been used in this exercise which are hopefully self-explanatory. These computations are very rough: they do not reveal the flow of work in a session, nor do they take account of the fact that some committees met regularly each week while others met only once or twice in an entire session. The figures do reflect something of the pressure however, and crudely denote that 1624 was possibly the busiest Parliament of Neile's career in terms of committee work.[1]

This chart is limited however: it provides information about Neile, but it lacks comparative material on the attendance and role of other bishops in the House of Lords. To some extent it is work conducted in a vacuum because no complete study of the House of Lords exists for this period. This chapter represents an attempt to say something about the possible role of bishops in the Lords, but it is necessarily restricted to the role of one rather unique man. Even here the evidence of unpublished diaries now becoming available has remained largely untapped because of limitations of time and space.

One final comment about sources concerns the records of meetings of Convocation, those assemblies of bishops and leading members of the clergy which usually met in both provinces during the life of a Parliament. Unfortunately few details of these meetings have survived.[2] It would be interesting to compare Neile's role and attendance in Convocation with his work in the Lords. However, we do not even know for sure when he first attended a meeting of Convocation. There is certainly no comparable source to the often suspect Journals which

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1. See p.111.
2. See: A Constitutional History of the Convocations of the Clergy, ed. J. Joyce, Lond. 1855; E. Cardwell, Synodalia. A Collection of Articles of Religion, Canons, and Proceedings of Convocations in the Province of Canterbury from the year 1547 to the year 1717, 2 Vols., Oxford 1842.

BISHOP NEILE'S ROLE IN THE HOUSE OF LORDS : A TABLE ILLUSTRATING THE NUMBER AND TYPE OF COMMITTEES HE SAT ON IN EACH PARLIAMENT

THE STATISTICS ARE BASED ON THE JOURNALS OF THE HOUSE OF LORDS; NEILE DID NOT SIT IN THE 1640 PARLIAMENT; 1627/8 - THE TOTALS GIVEN IN LINES 8 & 9 ARE ESTIMATES BECAUSE THE JOURNALS FAIL TO RECORD ATTENDANCE COMPREHENSIVELY. 1625 ° IN LINE 8 IS TO REMIND THE READER THAT NEILE WAS NOT PRESENT FOR THE OXFORD SESSION OF THIS PARLIAMENT, HENCE THE LOW ATTENDANCE FIGURE LINE 8 IS A RECORD OF NEILE'S ATTENDANCE IN THE LORDS - DAYS & PERCENTAGES. LINE 9 ATTEMPTS TO CONVEY A VERY ROUGH IDEA OF THE FREQUENCY WITH WHICH NEILE WOULD BE ON COMMITTEE WORK

COMMITTEE GROUPINGS ↓ — PARLIAMENTS

			1610		1614		1621		1624		1625		1626		1627/8		1628/9	
1.	PARLIAMENTARY: COMMS. PRIVILEGE; CONFERENCES; (HQR) PETITIONS; (TO/FROM) INVESTIGATIONS	CONF.	4	5	1	1	2	11	4	15		4	1	8	1	8		3
		REST.	1				9		11		4		7		7		3	
2.	GOVERNMENT: ECONOMIC AFFAIRS	ECON.	4		2		3		8				4		4		1	
	DEFENCE	DEF.	1	7		3	2	13	2	22		1	3	9	1	7	1	2
	LEGAL BILLS	LAW	2		1		8		12		1		2		2			
3.	RELIGION: C. OF E. (+SAB. BILL) RECUSANTS (SOME COUNT: PETS. 1)	C. OF E.	2	3	1	1	2	2					4	4	2	2	1	1
		REC.	1															
4.	SOCIAL LEG: ALMS EDUCATION, HOSPS. ALE MANNERS & APPAREL	HOSP.	1	1			1	1	4	5	1	1	1	2	2	3	1	1
		MAN.							1				1		1			
5.	PRIVATE BILLS		9				6		11		2		3		5			
TOTALS:																		
6.	TOTAL NO. COMMS. NEILE ON:		25		5		33		53		8		26		25		7	
7.	NO. DAYS OF PARLIA.		109		29		93		75		27		76		81		23	
8.	NO. DAYS N. THERE		83	76%	29	100%	79	85%	69	92%	° 15	55%	71	93%	*52	65%	15	65%
9.	1 COMM. EVERY 'X' DAYS		3.3		5.8		2.4		1.3		2		2.7		* 2		2.	

could offer evidence on attendance and possible speeches. There is reason to believe that Neile had a hand in choosing people to represent the archdeaconry of Bedfordshire in Convocation in 1601.[1] It is also highly probable that Neile attended meetings regularly after his appointment as Dean of Westminster in November 1605. It would however, be interesting to know what role he played, if any, in the important meetings of 1604, when new canons were drafted, much to the annoyance of the House of Commons. Some information survives on the meetings of the northern Convocation over which Neile presided at York in 1640.[2] Unfortunately, this coincides with the Parliament from which Neile was excused attendance on grounds of health.[3]

As one might expect, Neile was given few arduous tasks on his first appearance in the House of Lords in 1610. Parliament was summoned to meet in February 1609/10 and the session then lasted until 23 July. Financial problems and the creation of the Prince of Wales were the reasons given for its assembly.[4] The latter was accomplished with few problems, but the former called forth much criticism in the Commons. An attempt was made by Cecil to bargain with Parliament; a 'great Contract' was envisaged whereby the King would abandon many of his more outdated and unpopular sources of revenue in return for a regular parliamentary grant. Hopes of an agreement gave rise to another session later in the year which lasted from 16 October until 6 December. The contract was not struck and Cecil's dominance at court now waned; this failure may have contributed to his death in 1612.

The Commons showed great interest in religious matters, and by

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1. C. Foster (ed.), 'The State of the Church', Vol. I, Lincoln Record Soc., Vol. 23, 1926, p.189.
2. 'The Records of the Northern Convocation', ed. W. Macray, Surtees Soc., Vol. 113, Lond. 1907, pp.298-312.
3. See Chpt. 8, p.288.
4. Lords Journals, Vol. II, p.550.

the end of the session bills incorporating Puritan complaints against subscription, scandalous ministers, lack of preaching and the ecclesiastical courts had proliferated. Stricter measures against recusancy were precipitated by the news of the assassination of King Henry IV of France in May. Despite earlier idealistic attempts to stem attacks on recusants, James issued a proclamation confirming all previous recusancy laws on 2 July 1610.[1]

Archbishop Bancroft was ill for much of this year and this must have placed some strain on those bishops who were able to attend Parliament regularly during 1610. Yet this does not seem to have affected novices like Neile. He was introduced to a wide number of people through several conferences with the Commons,[2] but he was not appointed to any regular standing committees. Neile was automatically appointed to committees dealing with religious legislation in order to utilize his specialist knowledge and break him into committee work gently. Private bills accounted for a large proportion of his time and although he was on several committees dealing with important problems of the day, he was usually on the periphery. He appeared at a solitary conference with the Commons to discuss the 'Great Contract' and merely happened to be present when the Lords turned itself into a Committee of the Whole House to consider the safety of the King following news of the assassination of Henry IV of France.[3]

Neile soon proved to be a forthright defender of Church interests in the House of Lords. When a bill on the ability of Convocation to pass canons without Parliamentary approval came up for discussion on 11 June, Neile spoke vehemently against parliamentary interference

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1. Tudor and Stuart Proclamations 1458-1714, ed. R. Steele, 2 Vols., Oxford 1910, Vol. I, p.129.
2. One such conference involved criticism of his friend Dr. Cowell's recent book The Interpreter, which must have taught Neile much about attitudes in the Commons towards civil lawyers. Lords Journals, Vol. II, p.557.
3. Proceedings in Parliament 1610, ed. E. Foster, Vol. I, p.152.

with ecclesiastical authority. For him, it infringed the royal prerogative; Henry VIII had passed religious legislation on his own authority, so why should James I not be able to do likewise through Convocation?[1] Neile echoed the opinions of Bancroft and Cecil on this occasion. It is interesting to note that George Abbot, another new bishop in the Lords, spoke in favour of the proposed legislation which was, however, lost in committee.

Neile's extrovert nature was not easily overawed by his new surroundings. On 18 June he was quick to claim some rights in a matter relating to a private bill over Durham House:

> 'My Lords, Although it is a saucy point to move to be of a committee, yet seeing this is in Westminster I humbly pray your Lordships I may be suffered to attend the committee.'[2]

He got his way and may have been of some assistance to Cecil in promoting the bill.

On another occasion, Neile drew attention to his own lowly past when he spoke against a bill to disunite the parsonage of Ashe and Dean in Hampshire. The bill was proposed by Puritan idealists who claimed that the living was too large for one man. George Abbot offered the pious hope that they could provide two churches for God where before there had been only one. Neile drew vividly and emotionally from his own experience when he claimed:

> '..I myself when I came from a reader unto a curate, when I had paid all duties forth of my living, my means were so small as if it had not pleased God to send me a good master I could not have told what to have done, for a living of 100 marks per annum a soldier that trails a pike shall eat more hot meat and have contenteder hours than he, and better it were to enjoy an annuity of £20 per annum and diet in a gentleman's house than a benefice of £80. I am sorry to live to hear it said 100 marks is a fitting living for a preacher of God's word'.[3]

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1. Ibid., pp.101-2.
2. Ibid., p.108.
3. Ibid., pp.111-12.

The economic problems of the Church are obvious here, but although Bancroft agreed with Neile in principle, for political reasons the bill was allowed to go forward.

Neile was often too forthright in the language he used to defend his Church. A bill on the rights of bishops to hold London leases came up for a second reading on 29 June. It had met with a favourable reception in the Commons, but as Neile saw it:

> 'This bill deserveth not to be committed, it may be called a squint-eyed bill, it intendeth a benefit to the schismatics and sectaries of the time and taketh from conformable men that which they have..' [1]

Once again Neile spoke in line with Bancroft, but he was perhaps lucky not to be taken to task for use of reckless language in this Parliament as he was in the next.

When a bill on 'Scandalous Ministers' was discussed in July, Neile felt confident enough to expound on the position of bishops in the House of Lords, claiming that 'here we are not called for the Church but sit as lords and peers'.[2] Neile separated the role of bishops in the Lords and in Convocation and in this case promoted the rights of the latter. It is interesting to note that on this occasion he was immediately taken to task for his use of terms by the Lord Admiral, Charles Howard, who wryly pointed out that in cases of felony or treason, bishops stood trial before an ordinary jury and not before peers.[3]

Although Neile spoke mainly on religious matters in this Parliament, he did make revealing statements on several other issues. Sir Stephen Proctor appealed to the Lords over a punishment he had received at the hands of a lower court; strictly speaking the appeal should have gone to Star Chamber. Neile was the only bishop who seems to have spoken on this minor issue when he typically urged adherence to protocol and the letter of the law.[4] Neile's authori-

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1. Ibid., p.243.
2. Ibid., p.136.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid., p.138.

tarian disposition was again noticeable in the debates concerning the King's safety. His voice was for the toughest measures advocated even though both his patrons Cecil and Bancroft urged caution and a certain leniency.[1]

Aged 48 by the time he sat in this Parliament, Neile was an experienced administrator as well as a strict one. When the question of subsidies was being debated on 19 July, Neile offered the cynical remark that he hoped the King's:

> '..officers may not be troubled to trudge for it, which if it be not cared for, this hundred thousand pounds a year may be spent in gathering'.[2]

This may have been Neile's first appearance in Parliament, but his speeches clearly reveal his conservative and authoritarian nature and his willingness to defend the role of bishops in Parliament as general loyal advisers to the King and staunch defenders of their Church. Neile's attendance record for all sessions of this Parliament was relatively good.[3] Indeed, it was far better than the average bishop, but this might be expected of London based clergy. It could well have been higher, but illness caused his absence from the Lords for much of April and May.[4] Neile's performance in his first Parliament shows marked similarities with that of Bancroft and contrasts sharply with the silence of Lancelot Andrewes and the impractical stance of George Abbot.

Neile's appearance in the 1614 Parliament is complicated by the fact that very little business was conducted in that 'Addled Parliament' and Neile himself was under attack for several days of the session. The King needed money and was persuaded by Sir Henry Neville, Sir Francis Bacon and others that Parliament could be 'managed'. This overcame his own fears and the advice of the Howard

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1. Ibid., p.152.
2. Ibid., p.154.
3. See p.111
4. Lords Journals, Vol. II, p.580. Notes that Neile's absence was excused owing to illness on 20 April 1610.

family who were afraid that Protestants would use Parliament to attack their pro-Spanish stance at court. Sir Ralph Winwood's appointment as Secretary of State in March, was an ominous warning that a 'Protestant' faction was becoming more powerful at court.

When Parliament met in April a bill was put forward to naturalise the Elector Palatine and his heirs following his recent marriage to the King's daughter Elizabeth. It was even claimed that the expenses of that popular marriage were one reason for the King's financial difficulties in an effort to offset opposition. Unfortunately for the crown this did not work. Within days there were complaints that 'undertakers' had been at work in the elections. The fractious Commons turned on Sir Francis Bacon and a row developed over his right to sit in their midst as Attorney-General. A compromise was reached whereby Bacon was allowed to remain, but future holders of his office would have to sit in the Lords. Thus one crown representative in the Commons was lost through the King's weakness.

After barely a week Chamberlain wrote to Carleton that 'our Parliament goes on after the wonted manner, with many controversies and altercations'.[1] It became obvious that religion was a major source of grievance when a stream of bills was introduced in the Commons on the church courts, slanderous ministers, pluralities and the old problem of Sabbath day observance. Yet the question of impositions was probably the issue which commanded most attention in the Commons during the short life of this Parliament.

The Lords settled quickly to discuss the crown's financial problems and Neile was appointed to an important committee set up to consider the wastage of gold and silver.[2] He was also involved in an early conference with the Commons over the Palatine Bill.[3] But this

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1. The Chamberlain Letters, ed. E. Thomson, Lond. 1965, p.105.
2. Lords Journals, Vol. II, p.690.
3. Ibid., p.692.

was not a busy Parliament for Neile in terms of committee work.[1] This could be a reflection of his junior status in the Lords, but it is also in keeping with the lack of constructive work which emerged in this Parliament as a whole. The scandal of the 'undertakers' occupied the attention of the Commons even beyond the Easter recess. Sir Thomas Parry was expelled from the House and suspended from the Privy Council in an effort to placate the opposition.

On the trail of any who represented overt royal influence in Parliament, legitimate or not, the Commons gave vent to their hostility towards bishops in the discussion of religious legislation. A second reading of a bill on non-residence was turned into an attack on the rights of bishops to hold livings in commendam.[2] Of interest because of Neile's stance on the issue later in the 1620s, a Durham Franchise Bill focused attention on Bishop James who was known to oppose it. Sir Henry Anderson drew the vivid comparison 'To sit in Rome and strive with the Pope - to strive with the Bishop of Durham'.[3] The House was being given its head on religious bills, so much so, that in May the vexed question of relief for silenced ministers was raised. It has been suggested that councillors in the House allowed this situation to develop to avoid arguments on financial matters.[4] Winwood may even have allied with Southampton in the Lords to highlight religious controversy in the interests of the Protestant faction. A more innocent interpretation would be that the new Secretary was too inexperienced to take a firm line, especially when he was in sympathy with most of the bills. The disturbing feature was that Winwood's speeches in the Commons incensed the bishops. As Chamberlain later wrote:

'Master Secretary hath gotten good reputation by

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1. See p.111.
2. Commons Journals, Vol. I, p.482.
3. Ibid., p.484.
4. T. Moir, The Addled Parliament of 1614, Oxford 1958, p.109.

> speaking against recusants and idle churchmen,
> but what he hath gotten one way is lost
> another, for the bishops have him in conceit
> of a puritan'.[1]

This estrangement between Winwood and his chief allies in the Lords was a major cause of the eventual breakdown of this Parliament and accounts for many heated words in the Lords by bishops.

In this atmosphere Neile's customary defence of his King and Church could be taken as provocation in the Commons. When he was under attack on other matters in May, Neile joined forces with Bishop James Montagu to ensure that the bill on Sabbath day observance was committed in the Lords. Neile voiced the practical objection that exemptions should be made for harvest work.[2] Montagu was more outspoken and claimed 'that dancinge cannot be proved vnlawfull by the scripture nor any such exercise vpon the Sabboath day'.[3] The co-operation of these two clerics, belonging to different theological camps in the Church, gives credence to the intriguing theory put forward later by William Prynne that they were responsible for the Bill of Sports in 1618.[4] Their actions and words cannot have improved relations with the sponsors of the bill in the Commons in 1614.

Although this was an occasion when Neile's religious views were clearly at variance with those held by many in the Commons, it was not on this issue that his became a cause célèbre in this Parliament. Neile's tendency to be a trifle outspoken in defence of the royal prerogative or the privileges of the Lords had been made apparent in his first Parliament in 1610. It was an attribute he was to suppress in later Parliaments but never entirely lose. Speeches which he made, on and after 21 May, technically on the problem of the continued

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1. The Chamberlain Letters, ed. E. Thomson, p.107.
2. Hastings MSS., Vol. IV, p.266.
3. Ibid.
4. W. Prynne, The Antipathie of the English Lordly Prelacie, both to Regall Monarchy and Civil Unity, Part One, Lond. 1641, p.290b.

discussion of impositions in the Lower House, have been seen by historians as a major contribution to the failure of this Parliament. They certainly caused a short cessation of all other business in the Commons and dominated proceedings in that House from 25 May until shortly before Parliament's dissolution on 7 June.[1]

At the time however, although this Parliament witnessed much vilification of Neile's character, few blamed him for its final failure. Sir Ralph Winwood stood in disgrace for his handling of Parliament, but when he summarised the causes of his problems in a letter to William Trumbull on 16 June, he blamed quarrels over impositions and the misinterpretation of several royal messages by the Commons, as well as 'an unpunished impertinent speech by the bishop of Lincoln'.[2] Even this hostile witness merely viewed the speech as 'impertinent'. While Parliament still sat, Chamberlain reported to Carleton on 1 June that:

> '..yesterday a plain man told them that they know who looked over Lincoln, and now Lincoln had looked over them, and hindered their business'.[3]

There is an implication that Neile was in league with the Howards to disrupt this Parliament and indeed he had been seen by many as working for the Earl of Suffolk in the matter of the Essex divorce in 1613.[4] Yet in the same letter, Chamberlain concluded that after much fruitless debate 'it is like to fall out that the bishop's speeches were not so heinous as was first conceived'.[5] Others since have shared his view that the Commons was mistaken to become bogged down in the Neile affair, especially when it led to a clash with the Lords over privileges, with the Commons blatantly in the wrong.[6]

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1. Commons Journals, Vol. I, pp.496-505.
2. Hist. MSS. Comm. Downshire MSS., Vol. IV, 1940, p.426.
3. T. Birch, The Court & Times of James I, Vol. I, p.320.
4. See pp. 167-171.
5. T. Birch, op. cit., p.318.
6. E.g. S.R. Gardiner, A History of England from the Accession of James I to the Outbreak of the Civil War, 1603-1642, 10 Vols., Lond. 1883-4, Vol. II, p.243.

The description of this as an 'Addled Parliament' came into use soon after its dissolution. Contemporaries by and large accepted Chamberlain's final judgement on the matter that:

> '..there was a plot discovered to overthrow all orderly proceedings in this Parliament, and to make it utterly void, by insisting upon dangerous points, as taking away impositions, restoring of silenced ministers, and removing the Scots ..'. [1]

Mr. Hoskyns, who made inflamatory remarks about the Scots at the end of the session was one of several who were imprisoned. Yet some blame was attached to the Earl of Northampton and particularly to his friend Sir Charles Cornwallis, who was charged with inciting Hoskyns to speak out.[2] Certainly the Howards were quick to take advantage of the situation to persuade James to dissolve Parliament.

The Howards had much to gain from the dissolution of Parliament, but there is evidence that their possible disruptive activities were aided by the tactics of the opposition group in the Lords led by the Earl of Southampton. One historian has noted that the Protestant faction in both Houses destroyed good will by their attacks on Bacon, Parry and Neile.

> 'These personal attacks ... reveal a working alliance between disgruntled members of both Houses. Southampton's faction could not command enough support to carry the day on matters of principle and procedure, but it did muster up opposition on grounds of personalities'. [3]

In a letter of 12 June, Sir John Throckmorton reported to William Trumbull that the King was 'very angry with the ld of Southampton, the ld of Essex, Chandos, and divers others'.[4]

Close analysis of events surrounding Neile's case bear out this

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1. The Chamberlain Letters, ed. E. Thomson, p.109.
2. Hist. MSS. Comm. Portland MSS., Vol. IX, 1923, 'A Summary of what was done in the Parliament begun the 5 of April, 1614, gathered by Sir John Holles ..', pp.138-9.
3. V. Snow, Essex the Rebel - the life of Robert Devereux, the third Earl of Essex 1591-1646, Lincoln USA 1970, p.76.
4. Downshire MSS., Vol. IV, p.426.

interpretation. It also fits Chamberlain's sane assessment of the words spoken, for there was little that was really inflamatory about Neile's first speech made on 21 May, when he opposed a conference with the Commons. Neile merely said:

> 'I thinke it a daungerous thinge for us to conferre w[i]th them about the pointe of impositions. For it is a Noli me tangere, and none that have ether taken the Othe of Supremacy or Allegence may doe it w[i]th a good conscience ..'. [1]

While the majority of the Lords was prepared to countenance a meeting with the Commons, Neile's rigid defence of the royal prerogative was accepted as a valid viewpoint with no comment.

The debate was continued however, amidst arguments about procedure and whether or not the Judges ought to be consulted. It was on 23 May that Neile argued more forcefully:

> 'To what purpose will it be to meete w[i]th the lower house? For I am against both the meetinge and conference. If we should conferre we are not provided, and to meete what good will that doe but to gase one vpon an other? Therefore I humbly pray your Lo[rdshi]ps that you would heare the Judges touchinge the kinges right, and not to suffer him to be beaten vntill we heare them speake whoe are the fittest to give us light, and vntill we heare them lett us not condemne the matter'. [2]

All this was perfectly acceptable to loyal crown supporters in the Lords. But Neile added an afterthought which carried more than a hint of exasperation and which he was later to regret:

> 'I doubt if we should meete w[i]th the lower house there would passe from them vndewtyfull and seditious speeches vnfitte for us to heare'. [3]

It was an emotional remark no doubt made in confidence that he spoke in all due secrecy in the confines of the Upper House. Events were to prove that this was not the case.

Baron Spencer, one of Southampton's cronies, sounded the overture for attacks to come:

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1. Hastings MSS., Vol. IV, p.249.
2. Ibid., p.253.
3. Ibid.

> 'It is strange to me and contrary to the rule of charety to condemne men before we heare them, and to think that they would speake ether vndewtyfully or to bread sedition'.[1]

Yet significantly, nobody else took exception to the remark and most peers accepted Neile's general viewpoint. When the debate turned against the idea of a meeting, Southampton, Abbot and Lord Chandos spoke more forcefully of its merits and even went so far as to make veiled threats of disturbances in the Commons if this should not occur.[2] Neile spoke again to offer the positive suggestion that as the Judges could only hear, but not argue the case, those with grievances about impositions should take out individual writs and appeal to the Lords.[3] He was not thanked for this idea by Lord Riche who harked back to his words of seditious speeches, but others defended Neile's position and the Lord Chancellor took up the suggestion of individual writs.[4]

The Lords did not sit on 25 May when news of these events broke in the Commons and gave rise to fierce debate. Initially there was some confusion and one member thought the Earl of Lincoln was being discussed rather than the Bishop.[5] But the peers who had leaked news of the speeches had done their work well, for there was uproar in the Commons and demands for an appeal to the King. Eventually a committee was set up to look into the matter and on the following day it was agreed to send a message to the Lords rather than risk insulting that House on the strength of 'rumours'. In the meantime the Lords had sent a message to the Commons rejecting the call for a conference over impositions and it was probably that impending decision which led to Southampton's group leaking news of speeches to the Commons in order to fulfil earlier threats of disturbances. A further day was spent in discussing the nature of the message to the Lords, to the

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1. Ibid., p.254.
2. Ibid., pp.258-9.
3. Ibid., p.259.
4. Ibid., pp.259-61.
5. Commons Journals, Vol. I, p.497.

detriment of all other parliamentary business. This brought forth an angry message from court that only the King could order a cessation of business, which had little real effect.[1]

All manner of charges were levied at Neile in the Commons during the course of these few days. Most related to activities in his diocese where it was claimed he had discouraged ministers 'from preaching twice in one day ... and hath put down divers Lectures'.[2] He was also accused of levying illegal benevolences in his past two dioceses.[3] No charges could be fabricated from these statements however. Other attacks demonstrated the paucity of evidence against Neile as he was charged with growing wealthy because of his strong position at court. There were many such charges based on envy. It is perhaps indicative of collaboration with peers that one charge noted 'out of the words of a noble Family' that Neile was 'the most unthankful, proud and contesting Prelate, with his Raisers'.[4] This was certainly not true of his relationship with the Cecils, but at the time of the Essex divorce Neile had claimed to be impartial because he had once served as a chaplain to the Earl of Essex at Chartley.[5] It is certain that Essex bore Neile no good will in 1614.

On 28 May Sir Edward Hoby delivered a verbal message to the Lords calling for punishment of Neile if he was truly responsible for slandering the Commons. In Hoby's message the charges were conflated as if they were based on one speech and indeed the statement entered in the Lords Journals is ambiguous.[6] Yet although the Lords spoke of the need for more proof against Neile, there is evidence that the Commons already possessed information precise enough to date and

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1. Ibid., pp.497-505.
2. Ibid., p.499.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
5. W. Cobbett, A Complete Collection of State Trials, Lond. 1809, Vol. II, pp.806-7. I have found no evidence that Neile was ever a household chaplain for the Earl of Essex.
6. Lords Journals, Vol. II, p.709.

distinguish two speeches of note.[1] Their informants had made sure that the charges would carry enough weight not to fall at the first hurdle.

Reaction in the Upper House was one of indignation that the Commons should raise such an issue on the basis of 'common fame'. The Howards were able to rally many to their side on the call of privilege. The Earl of Suffolk in particular spoke up for his 'friend' Neile claiming that he had not heard 'anythinge that had bene vnfittnge'.[2] Lord Chancellor Egerton took this line a stage further when he warned the House not to proceed upon such weak evidence for:

> 'it being spoake theis 4 or 5 daies agoe I see noe reason to call him to accounte for it, for if he spoake seditiously or vndutifullie of his Ma[jes]tie or the State then yo[u]r Lo[rdshi]ps are in as greate faulte as he to let it passe on w[i]thout [notice] of it'.[3]

A message was duly sent to the Commons demanding more evidence.

At this stage Neile seems to have panicked. According to Hoby, Neile singled him out to protest his innocence and quibble over words and their meaning, thus acknowledging that he had something to hide.[4] This was a fatal error which only served to provoke the Commons further. Had Neile appreciated that he was going to be so strongly protected in the Lords he might have found it wiser to maintain silence until the matter blew over for lack of evidence. As it was however, the Commons created a new select committee to draft a reply to the Lords. Although normal business was at last resumed in the Commons, Neile's case still preoccupied all minds and one member noted that his 'disposition to Rome is not well knowen'.[5]

When a new message was delivered to the Lords on 31 May, Neile

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1. Hastings MSS., Vol. IV, pp.267-8.
2. Ibid., p.270.
3. Ibid., p.271.
4. Commons Journals, Vol. I, p.501.
5. Commons Debates 1621, ed. W. Notestein, F. Relf, & H. Simpson, 7 Vols., Yale University Press, 1935, Vol. VII, Appendix C, A Parliamentary Diary for 1614, p.648.

was called upon to speak in his defence as he had already broken his silence. This Neile did: he apologised to the House for the trouble he had caused and tactfully told them to consider their privileges rather than him personally. With an ingenious reference to his own humble origins, he declared that he had meant no offence by his words for 'what wrong should I have done to my self to have spoake against them from whome I am comme'.[1] Neile spoke of the King's favour with appreciation but claimed that, contrary to some reports, he was not a wealthy man. It was a simple speech which did the trick. The Lords did indeed look to their privileges when Neile tactfully threw himself on the mercy of the House. Despite demands for punishment from Southampton and Lord Chandos, the Lords agreed with Suffolk that they had 'bended and yealded' too much to the Commons.[2] Suffolk even declared that he might have spoken in the same vein as Neile had not the latter spoken first.[3] Perhaps because many felt the truth of this remark, Neile was exonerated from further punishment and a statement was sent to the Commons that in future 'noe member of their howse ought to be called in question when there is noe other ground theirof but publique and common fame..'[4]

The Commons did not accept that Neile's apology was genuine and debate was prolonged while a charge that Neile had fraudulently granted a certificate of conformity to a recusant was investigated.[5] The King himself intervened and examined Neile's registers.[6] The matter soon petered out when the man concerned, Francis Lovett, appeared on 3 June and proved he had taken the oaths of allegiance and supremacy in Neile's house before witnesses. This squares with the evidence of Neile's subscription book and the King was obviously

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1. Hastings MSS., Vol. IV, p.275.
2. Ibid., p.276.
3. Ibid., p.277.
4. Ibid., p.278.
5. Commons Journals, Vol. I, p.504.
6. Ibid., p.505.

satisfied that all was in order.[1] Yet when the Commons was instructed to return to normal business the order was not taken seriously. Hostile speeches about the court were the last straw for the King who notified Parliament of its dissolution on 6 June 1614.

The Commons had been allowed too much freedom from the start to campaign so aggressively over impositions and to attack royal advisers and the episcopate. This inexperienced House over-reacted to carefully spread rumours of speeches by the Bishop of Lincoln.[2] The debate was prolonged because of the unscrupulous behaviour of both factions in the Lords. It was over-played in the Commons because it was a way of delaying consideration of supply. What the 1614 Parliament reveals is the relative strengths of the Protestant faction led by the Earl of Southampton and the pro-Spanish faction led by the Howards. The course of this addled Parliament throws light on the failure of any neutral group or body of councillors to control Parliament with any proper regard for royal interests. Gone were the days when a strong monarch was able to ensure that crown interests came before those of factions within the Privy Council or Parliament.

In conclusion, it would seem that Neile's role in this fiasco was incidental. It was an unhappy Parliament for the much-abused bishops and Neile was venting the spleen of many when he made his hasty remarks, supposedly in confidence, in the Upper House. That the matter went further was not his fault, except to say that he was mistaken in speaking with Hoby. What his speeches reveal is his steadfast loyalty to the crown, growing awareness of the privileges of the House of Lords and genuine dislike of the House of Commons. In later Parliaments he did at least treat that body with more caution and respect.

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1. Ibid.; York: Sub. Book 2, f.158v.
2. T. Moir, The Addled Parliament of 1614, Chpt. 4, noted that contemporaries viewed three-quarters of the Commons as inexperienced members.

1621 was a watershed in Neile's parliamentary career. He was now the Bishop of Durham, one of the most powerful clerics in the land: he possessed seniority and experience which ensured that from now on he could sit on important committees as he chose. This was clear at the outset when he was appointed to the newly established standing committee set up to enumerate and maintain the privileges of the House of Lords.[1] This proved to be a regular appointment in each of the succeeding Parliaments in which he sat. This committee spawned others which were basically concerned with the operation and rights of Parliament. A committee on the customs of the House was formed and Neile was a constant member for the rest of his career in the Lords.[2] It was often from these bodies that membership was drawn for sub-committees which looked into allegations of corruption and carried out impeachment proceedings. Such work accounted for much of Neile's time in the Parliaments of 1621 and 1624 when legal proceedings were in progress against people like Sir Giles Mompesson, Sir Francis Bacon and Lionel Cranfield.

Lack of money and war in Europe led James to summon Parliament in January 1620/1. In the Commons it was felt 'not honourable for the king to have his sword in his sheath, when so many drawn'.[3] His son-in-law was at war and James should go to the rescue. Apart from an Easter recess, this session lasted until 4 June and proceeded comparatively amicably. The summer adjournment ended on 20 November when a hectic final session saw furious arguments over foreign policy and a clash between crown and Commons over a 'protestation' of their liberties. Parliament thus occupied Neile's time for much of the year as once again he was in very regular attendance.[4]

Neile had a difficult task to fulfil in both the Lords and in

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1. Lords Journals, Vol. III, p.10.
2. Ibid., p.31.
3. Commons Journals, Vol. I, p.509.
4. See p. 111.

Convocation. Not only was he one of the senior bishops present, but he was also standing proxy for the absent Archbishop of York. Moreover, the Bishop of London, John King died in March and a successor, at one stage rumoured to be Neile, was not appointed until July.[1] Despite the dominant fears about foreign policy and resulting anxiety about the activities of Catholic recusants at home, monopolies, law reform, and corruption in the ecclesiastical courts seem to have been the major preoccupation of this Parliament. What is known of Neile's activities is an illustration of this.

The monopolists Mompesson and Mitchell were successfully impeached, but more important, Sir Francis Bacon also fell victim to this development of parliamentary justice on a bribery charge. Anxious to placate the Commons, Buckingham and James allowed this to happen without heeding the consequences. It was a time which caught all royal representatives on the defensive and Neile was no exception to this rule. He sat on the committees considering the charges against all these men. His attitude to the monopolists was severe, but with regard to Bacon he was clearly worried by the claims the Commons were using to bring down such a prominent councillor. When punishment was being considered, Neile tried to argue that Bacon should not be degraded 'as he may remember from whence he hath fallen'.[2]

The Commons was not afraid to infringe the privileges of the Church in its attacks on personnel suspected of corruption. Neile naturally sat on the committee which looked into allegations against the leading civil lawyer, Sir John Bennett. There was little Neile could say about a layman, but when charges were levied against the

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1. Chamberlain reported the 'alarm' this rumour caused in a letter of 7 April 1621. The Letters of John Chamberlain, ed. N. McClure, Vol. II, p.362.
2. 'Notes of the Debates in the House of Lords...1621', ed. S. Gardiner, Camden Soc. Old Series, Vol. 103, Lond. 1870, p.63.

Bishop of Llandaff, Neile pleaded successfully that the case should be heard by the Archbishop of Canterbury and the matter handled further by Convocation.[1]

Neile did not always choose to defend the Church in public. He had learned some lessons since 1614. The Commons were considering legal reforms in relation to Commissions of the Peace. One proposal was to cut the number of clergy eligible to sit on such commissions. This had obvious relevance for Neile who had recently increased clerical control of the Commission in Durham.[2] Many bishops must have been fearful of the consequences of a bill but they seem to have over-reacted when they informed the King of their fears and he stepped in to bar further discussion of the idea. The Commons had only set up a committee to consider the matter and their plans were not so very radical. It cannot have improved Neile's reputation when rumours began circulating that he was responsible for the King's prompt action.[3]

Feeling against Neile may have added sting to the attack launched on 15 May upon Chancellors Lambe and Craddock, accused of taking bribes, since Lambe was one of Neile's old friends and Craddock was his Chancellor at Durham.[4] The latter was charged in his capacity as Chancellor, High Commissioner and Justice of the Peace. The Commons proceeded cautiously for fear of over-stepping their position with Convocation, but committees went on accumulating evidence even during the summer recess. Durham rivalries were coming into the open as Craddock was accused of accepting bribes from recusants, visitation malpractices and even of conniving in the escape of a Catholic priest. Marmaduke Blakiston, a Durham prebendary was amongst those giving evidence against Craddock. The truth of the charges is not known, but one implicated Neile by claiming that Craddock had 'made his sonne

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1. Lords Journals, Vol. III, pp.143-4.
2. See Chpt. 3, pp. 84-5.
3. Commons Debates 1621, ed. Notestein, Relf, & Simpson, Vol.VI, p.396.
4. Ibid., Vol. II, pp.368-9.

R. Craddock Register, for which he gave my Lord of Durham £500'.[1] No charge ever emerged against Neile.

News of lax handling of the Catholic recusancy problem in the north cannot have endeared Neile to the Commons. His policy was to attempt to convert notable Catholics and not to ride roughshod over their rights. In September 1620 he had persuaded Lady Kennett to take the Oath of Allegiance and agree to a series of theological discussions with his chaplain Francis Burgoyne.[2] It was a member of the Kennett family whom Craddock was accused of allowing to escape when acknowledged to be a priest. Suspicions of Neile's soft approach in the north perhaps explain why his speeches in the Lords early in the session caused some notoriety.

There were few bills on religion in this Parliament, possibly because Puritans could feel confidence in Archbishop Abbot; but there was considerable discussion of the Catholic recusancy problem because of the war abroad. It was in the context of defence that Neile came to discuss the matter. Probably because of his status as Lord Lieutenant in Durham, Neile was included on a Lords' committee discussing the defence of the realm in February.[3] On the 15th he made a celebrated speech concerning treatment of Catholic prisoners and the implications this had for their followers. He urged 'that those popish Priests that are not Jesuits or Jesuitically affected may be allowed better meanes in the prison'.[4] Neile's motives were not simply humanitarian; he wanted a distinction to be made between those who would take the Oath of Allegiance and those who would not, because it was necessary to provide some incentive for loyal Catholics. Nevertheless, Neile called for northern recusants to be disarmed,

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1. Ibid., Vol. IV, p.348.
2. York: Sub. Bk. 2, f.159.
3. Lords Journals, Vol. III, p.13.
4. 'The Hastings Journal of the Parliament of 1621', ed. Lady de Villiers, Camden Soc. 3rd Series, Vol. 20, 1953, pp.18-19.

regardless of licences and no part of his speech called for any change in the recusancy laws. Yet he was vilified in the Commons as 'that irreverend bishop' and Locke wrote that:

> 'The Bishop of Duresme was their friend [the Papists] in the upper house, for which he had as much thancke as for that he did the last Parliament. Their fingers did itch at him in the lower house'.[1]

Suspicions ran deep in the Commons.

For his part, Neile had little love for the Lower House. The attacks on Bacon and the civil lawyers angered him, especially when he was forced to acknowledge the truth of certain charges. It perhaps made him quicker to assert clerical or Upper House privileges at every opportunity. He raised successfully one such issue on 2 May when he pointed out that a servant of the Bishop of Rochester had been arrested and refused bail contrary to regulations concerning such servants.[2] When the Lords came to discuss the Monopolies Bill and whether they should explain their rejection of it to the Commons, Neile spoke in favour of 'fayre correspondency' with them, but in no circumstances were they 'to give accompt hereafter of the rejection of all Bylls generally'.[3] Within the Lords itself Neile was crustily pedantic when he called for correction of a new sumptuary regulation which did not specify whether bishops could wear hats in certain situations, but only referred generally to 'peers'.[4]

Neile's precise administrative mind was regarded as an asset on certain committees however, for he seems to have been involved in the discussion of many bills touching legal reform in 1621. The subjects of such bills ranged over longstanding abuses concerning 'troublesome suits', informers, trespass problems and on to minor felonies

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1. P.R.O: SP/14/119/106.
2. 'Notes of the Debates in the House of Lords...1621', ed. S. Gardiner, Camden Soc., Vol. 103, p.53.
3. Ibid., p.106.
4. 'The Hastings Journal...1621', ed. Lady de Villiers, Camden Soc., Vol. 20, pp.9-10.

committed by women. In fact, in the Parliaments of 1621 and 1624, Neile sat on 20 such committees, which accounted for virtually all the bills on legal reform which passed through these sessions.[1] This reflects the great concern for the law which was shown in these Parliaments, but it is also interesting because it highlights Neile's legal proclivities in a secular sphere. His strong interest in the law did not merely extend to the development of teams of civil lawyers in the Church.[2]

When a bill concerning payment of debts was discussed, Neile was not slow to ask for exceptions to be made to take account of his Durham Palatinate rights.[3] Yet on one local issue he seems to have been prepared to yield some ground. This Parliament saw the re-introduction of a Durham Franchise Bill taken up from 1614. Bishop James had opposed this attempt on the part of the county gentry to gain representation in the Commons. This had caused trouble in 1614.[4] Mervyn James has claimed that Neile likewise defended his prerogative to be the county's sole representative in Parliament, but his evidence seems to rest simply on the fact that the ideas failed to gain royal approval in 1621 and in 1624 and he feels Neile should logically have opposed the bill.[5] Yet the debates of 1621 and 1624 were conducted in a friendly atmosphere and appear to have been largely technical in nature, suggesting that Neile may well have been responding favourably to the groundswell of opinion in County Durham. In a letter to Neile in January 1620/1, George Martyn thought that 'the passage of this busynesse is not only likely by yo[u]r L[ordshi]pp's favourable consent to be much facilitated, but wholly effected'.[6] The only problem

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1. See p.111. 2. See Chpt. 3, pp. 60-4.
3. 'Notes of the Debates in the House of Lords...1621', ed. S. Gardiner, Camden Soc., Vol. 103, p.112.
4. See p.118.
5. M. James, Family, Lineage and Civil Society, 1974, pp.166-7.
6. R. Surtees, The History and Antiquities of the County Palatine of Durham, 4 Vols., Lond. 1816-40, Vol. IV, p.158.

Martyn could envisage was that ways must be found of ensuring that Catholics could not influence elections. Timothy Comyn, at that time Mayor of Durham, was another who seems to have assumed that Neile's aid was a foregone conclusion. He sent Alderman Hall to consult Neile about their strategy at the start of the session.[1] Both Comyn and Martyn were close associates of Neile and there is no reason to suppose that he was deceiving them. He did not even think it necessary to sit on the Lords' committee which passed the bill in 1621. When he was present on an equivalent committee in 1624 there is no evidence that Neile raised any objection to the bill. The real reason for the failure of both bills probably lies in the antipathy of the King towards a Commons which, as far as he was concerned, was already too large to handle.

1621 marks Neile's breakthrough into parliamentary respectability. He sat for the first time upon committees which discussed matters of defence and others which were central to the functioning of Parliament. Neile was unwillingly involved in the hearings against Bacon and others like Bennett, but he was able to contribute towards more positive discussions of law reform. He sat on one committee concerning Sabbath day observance, but religious bills do not seem to have concerned him in this Parliament. Apart from one committee relating to the establishment of 'academies' for idle young gentlemen, Neile did not take an active interest in social legislation either.[2] He was now a 'Parliamentarian' whose time was committed to the consideration of important bills on government, defence and the economy, and to the preservation of the privileges of the House of Lords.

Parliament was called again in 1624 because of the failure to

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1. 'Durham Civic Memorials', ed. C. Whiting, Surtees Soc., Vol. 160, 1952, pp.25-6.
2. See p. III.

gain peace in Europe and the breakdown of negotiations for a 'Spanish Match'. The King was weary of argument and was now prepared to allow some discussion of foreign policy. Prince Charles and Buckingham hoped for reconciliation with Parliament now that their approach to Spain was the same. They were in favour of war as a way of gaining popularity and of covering their embarrassment over the whole episode. Parliament met on 19 February 1623/4 and sat, with an Easter recess, until 29 May. By facilitating the impeachment of Lord Treasurer Cranfield, Buckingham managed to avoid too much personal trouble in this Parliament. War was declared with Spain, for which insufficient money was granted. Legislation over monopolies was tightened and once again concern was shown for general legal reforms.

Neile maintained his customary good attendance throughout this Parliament.[1] He was only absent for eleven out of ninety-two days and four of those can be accounted for by his attendance at the celebrations for St. George's Day at Windsor, where the majority of the Lords was also present.[2] In the early part of the session Neile was in the forefront of the moves to break off relations with Spain.[3] On 5 March he was one of a group appointed to assure the King of parliamentary support should his action lead to hostilities.[4] Neile was a staunch advocate of such a war. When the Palatinate was discussed on 27 February he agreed with the majority of the Lords that 'we shalbe delayed and abused by a treaty. Nowe the Palat[inate] must leade the maryage'.[5] Two days later, Locke reported that:

> 'In the upper howse the cry was generall for warres and especially from the B[isho]ps. And I heares fro[m] a churchman of good rancke that the B[isho]p of Duresme was so much

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1. Ibid.
2. Lords Journals, Vol. III, p.318.
3. Ibid., pp.236 & 244.
4. Ibid., p.246.
5. 'Notes of the Debates in the House of Lords, 1624 and 1626', ed. S. Gardiner, Camden Soc. New Series, Vol. 24, Lond. 1879, p.8.

> transported that he said in the howse that he would lay aside his Rochet & gird a sword about him, (if it pleased his ma[jes]tie to take that course)'. [1]

The bishops had clearly decided that this was a 'just war'.

There was more to it than that. Bishops like Neile, Laud, Mountain and Andrewes had previously kept quiet when their Archbishop of Canterbury and others had called for a Protestant Crusade. Collections had been authorized for Bohemia as early as 21 March 1619/20. But on that occasion Abbot had only gained permission to raise a clerical levy on the condition that Bishops Neile and Andrewes were involved in drafting the circular.[2] Ministers had then been ordered not to make the issue a religious one 'w[hi]ch might draw all Europe into combustion'.[3] Neile maintained this discreet approach in the advice he gave to his clergy on the occasion of another collection in January 1621/2.[4] This changed in 1624 because there was no longer a viable alternative. Buckingham had changed policies and had the support of the Prince, the old King was a broken man. Moreover, the Commons had become restless again over religious affairs and some bishops, like Harsnet, had things to hide. So too did Neile, but his 'failings' only came to light later.

The Commons authorised the drawing up of lists of government officials tainted with recusancy. The report proved to be alarming and embarrassing. Lord Scrope, Lord Eure, Sir Thomas Riddell and Sir Ralph Conyers were all cited as of suspect loyalty while holding office in County Durham.[5] The proselytising activities of the Catholic Bishop of Chalcedon caused concern for that region. To add

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1. P.R.O: SP/14/159/94.
2. P.R.O: SP/14/113/34; See p.173.

3. P.R.O: SP/14/113/34.
4. U.L. Durham: Original Letters to Durham, 1593-1662, MSS. collected by C. Hunter, Item 14.
5. Commons Journals, Vol. I, p.776.

to these fears, grievances were reported against Samuel Harsnet, Bishop of Norwich for inhibiting preaching in Norwich and introducing new ceremonial practices into the cathedral; the use of images and an order to conduct prayers facing east were amongst the charges.[1] This was the first time Parliament had encountered the effects of English Arminianism in such an open form.

A work by Richard Mountague entitled A New Gag for an Old Goose gave the Commons cause for further concern. It came up for discussion on 13 May and was recognized as being 'full fraught with dangerous opinions of Arminius'.[2] Mountague was an ambitious man and one of a new breed of theologians who felt little in common with the strict Calvinists of the early Church of England. He was an intellectual who numbered amongst his friends Neile's chaplains John Cosin and Augustine Lindsell. He may truly be regarded as a member of 'Durham College' for he referred the question of a sequel to this work, an attack on the Calvinist writers John Yates and Samuel Ward, to Neile and Cosin in October.[3] Francis White also helped in the venture and a year later he openly backed Appello Caesarem on Neile's instructions.[4]

The criticism of Mountague sparked off the slow process by which Arminianism was detected and defined in England in the eyes of the opposition. It reveals the extent to which Arminians had become a powerful force within the Church by 1624, but it also reveals how slow Parliament was to detect the threat. Hillel Schwartz has drawn

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1. Ibid., p.784.
2. Ibid., p.788; Dr. Nicholas Tyacke refers to the Parliament of 1624 as the first occasion on which the laity showed any understanding of the Arminian controversy, a subject which until that date had been discussed chiefly in clerical circles. He notes that Pym's words in the Commons on 13 May showed a good grasp of detail and moves on to claim that Pym and others formed an experienced group of members who dominated debates on religion in succeeding Parliaments. N. Tyacke, 'Arminianism in England, in Religion and Politics, 1604 to 1640', (Oxford Univ. D.Phil. thesis 1968), pp.159,164,168-9.
3. 'Cosin's Correspondence', Part I, ed. G. Ornsby, Surtees Soc., Vol. 52, Lond. 1869, pp.34-6.
4. See p.214.

attention to this theme and noted that:

> 'Despite their active concern over papists and recusants (which concern led to a Remonstrance presented to the King), and despite their vigorous prosecution of Samuel Harsnett, Bishop of Norwich, for various liturgical and ceremonial practices, Commons members debated whether they could legitimately discuss the accusations against Richard Mountagu'. [1]

Although Harsnet had made unorthodox pronouncements about predestination in his Cambridge days, the Commons did not associate ceremonial with doctrinal deviations in 1624. That realisation came later. Mountague's case was handed over to the Archbishop of Canterbury and Convocation. Schwartz concluded that:

> 'Arminianism was at first handled as a stock problem in theology. Since it had as yet no specific political referants within England, Commons members deferred the issue to ecclesiastical authorities'. [2]

The matter may have lacked 'political referants', but had the Commons only linked Mountague with Harsnet they would have been less sanguine about leaving the issue to the Church. They pursued Harsnet's case more thoroughly.

Perhaps because of this strong interest in religion from the Commons, Neile did not sit on any committees for such concerns in the Lords. When the various drafts of the recusancy petition were being discussed, Neile is not recorded as having made much comment. When the work of the Bishop of Chalcedon was condemned, there was still silence from the Bishop of Durham. The most he was prepared to argue was that the eventual petition on recusancy should not demand a proclamation and thus infringe the royal prerogative. It was a typically technical point that as 'noe lawe extinguished therefore his Ma[jes]ty may declare himselfe as pleaseth him'. [3] After two

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1. H. Schwartz, 'Arminianism and the English Parliament, 1624-9', The Journal of British Studies, May 1973, p.45.
2. Ibid., p.46.
3. 'Debates in the House of Lords...', ed. S. Gardiner, Camden Soc., Vol. 24, p.69.

Parliaments in which his speeches had attracted criticism in the Commons, Neile was perhaps learning to be more cautious. He knew from experience that no words on the recusancy problem, however sensible, were ever popular if they seemed to favour the Catholics. Moderates looked to the King for sanity and indeed, although James gave way over proclamations to expel Jesuits and disarm recusants, he commented at the time that 'I have ever thought no way more increaseth any Religion than persecution'.[1]

As in 1621, Neile's chief concerns in this Parliament lay with government legislation, committees pursuing specific allegations and those concerned with legal reforms.[2] Yet even here there was a change. Whereas Neile had sympathised with Bacon's downfall in 1621, he was clinically efficient in the few remarks he ventured to make about Cranfield's case. When charges were first delivered to the Lords on 12 April, he was one who called for the drafting of a single charge sheet by an attorney to save the House time.[3] When these were considered in detail, Neile quibbled over the technical matter of whether or not Cranfield should have drawn up accounts for the Wardrobe. Perhaps with some degree of scorn for the latter's business methods, Neile concluded that accounts should now be made 'for a president for the office'.[4] By comparison with Cranfield's efficiency, Neile was moved to remark 'much in commendacion of worthy olde Burleighe, whoe was Lord Treasurer and Master of the Wards'.[5]

Standing committees such as those concerned with the privileges and customs of the Lords must have consumed much of Neile's time. But now that war was actually in the offing his specialist knowledge as a Lord Lieutenant was also in demand. On 1 March he was appointed

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1. Lords Journals, Vol. III, p.317.
2. See p.111.
3. 'Debates in the House of Lords...', ed. S. Gardiner, Camden Soc., Vol. 24, p.69.
4. Ibid., p.76.
5. Ibid., p.84.

to a committee with instructions to inspect the condition of the troops, arms and fortifications of the country. When England's economic position was discussed on 12 March, Neile was not slow to draw attention to Newcastle's problems 'where much money is transported by papistes beyonde seas'.[1] This led to the creation of a committee to investigate security problems at Newcastle. For the moment however, discussion centred rather narrowly on financial matters and only in 1626 did it come to embrace the defence system of the region.[2] Discussion of bills as diverse as ordinances and the wool trade drew on Neile's specialist knowledge and kept him busily employed while the Commons discussed recusancy.

Many legal bills were carried over from 1621 and once again Neile sat on the relevant committees. New bills involved the abolition of trial by battle, problems of writs of prohibition, and abuses in the courts of Westminster. At last Neile made time to concern himself with the legislative needs of the poor. After 1624 he sat regularly on a committee concerned with the erection and maintenance of almshouses.[3] This must have provided an important background to his work on the Poor Law Commission after 1631.[4]

The bill relating to the franchise for Durham and the continued investigations into allegations against Craddock and Lambe no doubt claimed some of Neile's attention. One private bill is of interest for what it shows of Neile's relations with the favourite Buckingham at this date. The latter had persuaded Archbishop Matthew to exchange York House for some other land - a procedure forbidden by the statute of 1604, hence the matter necessitated a private bill. This was duly introduced into the Lords on 13 May and in later discussions Neile sided with Abbot in expressing doubts about the exchange. Although

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1. Ibid., p.28.
2. See pp. 104 & 111.
3. Lords Journals, Vol. III, p.219.
4. See Chpt. 6, p.180.

York House was now virtually a ruin, Neile expressed concern over how the bill would affect the jurisdiction of the see of York.[1] Neile's friend Laud was strongly in favour of the bill and by the time it gained its third reading in the Lords he had gained assurances from Buckingham to satisfy all objections. The favourite promised to provide an alternative London residence for the see and the bill was passed without dissent. Neile's stand, albeit a temporary one, illustrates that he was not one of Buckingham's 'creatures'. In 1639 Neile was to experience legal difficulties stemming from this exchange, when he must have wished he had been even more difficult over the act.[2]

Neile was eventually put in the position of being a member of a committee which conferred with the Commons over Harsnet,[3] but the issue was finally referred to the High Commission. As with Mountague, the Commons allowed the Church to handle its own problems in 1624 and remained preoccupied with the issue of recusancy. This last Parliament of the reign of James I was a successful one for radicals in the Commons. They had impeached another royal minister, discussed foreign policy and voted money for a war with many conditions attached. For Neile it was possibly one of the most hectic Parliaments of his career.[4]

The accession of a new King soon brought a new Parliament in 1625. Old problems had not disappeared, however, and indeed the signs were not propitious for the new reign. London was coming under the grip of a plague epidemic and the country was grappling with the forces of economic depression. The war with Spain was going badly, the King needed money and nothing had abated Protestant fears for true

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1. 'Debates in the House of Lords...', ed. S. Gardiner, Camden Soc., Vol. 24, p.95.
2. See Chpt. 8, p.294.
3. Lords Journals, Vol. III, p.384.
4. See p.111.

religion in the land. In his opening speech Charles anticipated trouble when he promised to maintain faithfully the doctrines of the Church of England.[1] The Commons replied by proposing a general fast, which was to become a standard way of whipping up Protestant fervour at the start of parliamentary sessions.

Knowledgeable theologians were expressing more fears now about the activities of Neile's Arminian associates. When Neile fell ill in April, his friend William Laud temporarily took over his role as Clerk of the Closet, much to the chagrin of Dr. Burton. It had no effect when he warned Charles 'how popishly affected were Dr. Neile and Dr. Laud, his continual attenders'.[2]

Parliament also knew more about religious innovations. Mountague had dared to reply to his critics with Appello Caesarem and once again he drew upon himself the brunt of the attack in Parliament. John Pym and his associates on the Commons Committee for religion had come to a clearer appreciation of the nature of their enemy:

> 'This Committee conceiveth the Fire, kindled in the Low Countries by Arminius, like to be kindled here likewise by this man'.[3]

Mountague was arrested for encouraging Popery, for disrespect to the late King, who they claimed had accepted the decrees of the Synod of Dort and for contempt of the Commons. A petition was presented to Charles calling for stricter enforcement of the recusancy laws. Charles accepted the petition but significantly made Mountague one of his royal chaplains.[4] The Commons now knew that to proceed with their charges would involve infringing the royal prerogative. This link with the crown was a critical feature of English Arminianism.

Owing to the plague, Parliament adjourned to Oxford in August where debates on recusancy and the employment of 'men ill-affected in

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1. Lords Journals, Vol. III, p.436.
2. Laud's Works, ed. W. Scott & J. Bliss, Vol. III, p.161.
3. Commons Journals, Vol. I, p.805.
4. Ibid., p.807.

Religion in places of government' caused stormy scenes.[1] Remedies under discussion even harked back to the restoration of silenced ministers. The Commons dared to moot the issue of impropriations, but to no avail for too many vested interests were at stake. The King finally accepted a long petition from both Houses with a good grace, but when Buckingham was attacked over war expenditure, Parliament was dissolved on 12 August 1625.

It was a quiet Parliament for Richard Neile. Perhaps he was still weak from his recent illness and possibly he felt it wise to avoid the limelight while Parliament discussed religion. In the Lords he sat on one of his usual committees for the privileges and customs of the House.[2] Much of his time seems to have been taken up with the plague: he sat on a committee to draw up city plague regulations and was one of a group who considered a petition about the risk of infection at the Fleet prison.[3] As a senior cleric with a London residence, he sat on a committee which drafted a petition to the King about the problem of Catholic recusants attending services at the private chapels of foreign ambassadors.[4] Durham security matters demanded his attention in the north and Neile was excused attendance at the stormy session held in Oxford.[5]

This Parliament saw many in the Commons crystalise their views on the dangers of Arminianism. Mountague fell sick at the thought of more questioning at Oxford and wrote fearfully to Neile that 'the plott is strong against us'.[6] His letter reveals fears about the loyalty of the King and Buckingham to their cause. He noted:

> 'How unluckily doth it fall out your Lordship wilbe absent this vacation. My hope, next to God, must be in my Lord Duke..'[7]

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1. Lords Journals, Vol. III, p.479.
2. Ibid., p.442.
3. Ibid., p.452.
4. Ibid., p.457.
5. Ibid., p.469.
6. 'Cosin's Correspondence', ed. G. Ornsby, Surtees Soc., Vol. 52, 1869, p.78. Mountague to Neile, 10 July 1625.
7. Ibid.

Mountague was insistent that Neile should burn all his letters; the latter was too experienced to allow these fears to disturb his calm. He was also notably more sensible than Mountague in not drawing attention to himself in Parliament.

Thus far in his parliamentary career Neile had proved his ability to sit on major committees in the Lords and had perhaps even come to neglect the more traditional concerns of a bishop. After 1621 Neile was quite often absent from committees on religious and social legislation which he might have been expected to have joined. The work load provided by other types of business was high and there were more junior bishops who could cope with minor legislation. This pattern was dramatically altered in 1626. Religion had become a tinder-box issue in 1625 and in 1626 Neile was to be found on committees dealing with standard bills on the Sabbath, ecclesiastical courts, a critical bill on the role of senior clergy as Justices of the Peace, and was eventually co-opted to a committee discussing the maintenance of the ministry.[1] Much of his time was also occupied with the charges and counter-charges of Buckingham and Bristol, but Neile's renewed interest in religious bills represents a sudden application of authority on the Lords committees dealing with such legislation.

Parliament commenced on 6 February 1625/6 and during that same month the York House Conference took place. Buckingham acceded to pressure brought to bear on him by the Earls of Pembroke and Warwick for a conference to clarify differences of opinion amongst the English clergy.[2] He hoped to mollify their doubts and thus dampen trouble in Parliament, but the Conference only led to a deepening of differences whilst assuring the Arminians that they now had the total

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1. See p.111.
2. N. Tyacke, Thesis op. cit., p.192.

support of the King and Buckingham.[1] It probably intensified opposition in the Commons as Puritans were forced to abandon hopes in the episcopate despite Abbot's presence as Archbishop of Canterbury.

Pym, who had led the Commons Committee on Religion in 1625, now launched a complete investigation into the growth of recusancy. With organisation akin to that of the great John Field in the 1580s, new lists of Catholics in positions of power were soon under production. The attempted arrest of Catholic recusants attending the French ambassadors temporary chapel at Durham House on 26 February 1625/6 caused a minor diplomatic incident.[2] Neile arrived at the fracas and calmed the mob; he was greatly abused for his pains and the over-zealous pursuivants were imprisoned for three weeks 'to give the ffrench content'.[3] The affair did nothing to abate fears in Parliament.

Popish 'plots' abounded and one such rumour related to the arrest and interrogation of William Singleton in Durham in January. This revealed the existence of a complex Catholic communications network in the north.[4] Archbishop Abbot was so frightened by the revelations that he wrote from his sick-bed condoning any torture necessary to gain the truth.[5] There was fuel for talk nearer home. On Passion Sunday, Bishop Godfrey Goodman preached a sermon at court which incited accusations of popery.[6] It aroused fierce debate in Convocation and was eventually submitted for consideration by Abbot and a group of bishops including Neile and Laud. They met on 12 April and advised the King that they could find no innovations (only areas of misunderstanding) in Goodman's sermon.[7] Parliament witnessed some

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1. See Chpt. 7, p.217.
2. P.R.O: SP/16/21/63.
3. P.R.O: SP/16/535/35.
4. U.L. Durham: Mickleton & Spearman MS. 2, ff.380-2.
5. Ibid., f.383.
6. G. Soden, Godfrey Goodman, Bishop of Gloucester 1583-1656, Lond. 1953, pp.160-2.
7. Laud's Works, ed. W. Scott & J. Bliss, Vol.III, p.187.

debate on this matter, but it represents a triumph for Neile and Laud that Goodman was not really punished for what amounted to a dangerous discussion of the doctrine of transubstantiation.

Before Easter Parliament was preoccupied with the recusancy issue. Afterwards, Pym was quick to present new charges against Richard Mountague. He was accused of disturbing the peace of the Church, writing seditious books and attempting to 'draw the people to Popery'.[1] It was to little avail that the King pointed out that they were infringing the rights of Convocation by discussing the case. When a conference was proposed with the Lords, one member drew an interesting parallel with the procedure which had been adopted in Neile's case in 1614; although the issues were totally dissimilar, the two men were clearly linked together by the Commons.[2]

It was because of such suspicions that so many bills on religion were proposed in this Parliament. They ranged across the board from discussion of church organisation to the fundamentals of preaching. Two days before Parliament was dissolved in June, a bill was introduced into the Commons in the pious hope of maintaining 'Peace and Unity in the Church and Commonwealth'.[3] This upsurge of interest led the King to accuse his bishops of not speaking up for their church.[4] That is why Neile and other senior bishops sat on the committees on religion in the second session of this Parliament.

Neile was always ready to speak up for the rights of the ecclesiastical hierarchy. Even before the King's harsh words on 22 April, he had commented on a bill on scandalous ministers that it was:

> '..straunge that the ecclesiasticall lawes are not sufficient to reforme the ministers without ayde of the seculars. Yt wylbe scandalous to them'.[5]

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1. Commons Journals, Vol. I, p.845.
2. Ibid., p.851.
3. Ibid., p.870.
4. Laud's Works, ed. W. Scott & J. Bliss, Vol.III, p.189.
5. 'Debates in the House of Lords, 1624 & 1626', ed. S. Gardiner, Camden Soc., Vol. 24, p.141.

There is little evidence of what impact Neile and others made on the rest of the committees, but their presence could hardly have encouraged the Commons and none of the bills survived.

Despite this increased concern with religion, England's defences were also a major consideration in this Parliament. In the Commons this was connected with fears of popery; in the Lords the debate was more technical and realistic. Neile's services were once again in demand. He sat on a committee for the provision of adequate weapons in February and a month later was appointed to a more general body discussing the defence of the whole realm.[1] A report from that committee in April led to the establishment of a sub-committee to discuss the cost and supply of weapons in more detail. Neile was the only cleric appointed to that committee, a mark of the respect which was shown for his military experience.[2] He no doubt assured his appointment when he spoke at length of the strategic and economic problems of Newcastle.[3]

After Neile's absence from one session of Parliament in 1625, he put in his customary high attendance during the sessions in 1626.[4] Thus he was involved in such major concerns as the tedious hearings relating to the charges and counter-charges made by Buckingham and Bristol over past diplomacy in Spain. Neile seems to have remained studiously neutral in the affair and the only time he expressed a firm opinion was when he urged that his friend Sir Edward Conway be cleared of all charges relating to Buckingham.[5]

Yet 1626 is the first year which provides concrete evidence that Neile, like Laud, favoured Buckingham. It caused uproar in the Commons on 5 June when it was revealed that the favourite had been

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1. Lords Journals, Vol.III, pp.501 & 517.
2. Ibid., p.547.
3. See Chpt. 4, p.104.
4. See p.111.
5. 'Debates in the House of Lords ..1626', ed. S. Gardiner, Camden Soc., Vol. 24, p.229.

elected as Chancellor of Cambridge University on the death of the Earl of Suffolk. Neile played a major part in this election, writing in May to his friends the Master of St. John's and the Vice-Chancellor.[1] He sent John Cosin to aid Matthew Wren who was electioneering on the spot. The Commons demanded an enquiry into how a person facing grave charges of corruption could be appointed to such an office. The King was forced to intervene when they threatened to hold an investigation in Cambridge and the affair was no doubt a factor in causing the dissolution of Parliament on 15 June. Neile was clearly not unduly perturbed by the commotion for he attended the presentation ceremony for the new Chancellor which was held at York House in July.[2]

The good relations which existed between Arminian bishops and Buckingham ensured that they played an increasingly important role in influencing royal policy. This was reflected in the type of work which was expected of senior bishops in Parliament. Neile's role on defence committees was of long standing. Similarly, his administrative abilities had long been exploited with regard to economic legislation. In the past, however, such committee work had been tied to rather narrow issues such as the export of gold, the cloth trade and purveyances. Although Neile sat regularly on committees concerned with such issues, it was only in 1626 that he came to sit on a body which looked into the whole problem of crown finances.[3] He sat on such a committee again in the next Parliament, but by that date his position as a Privy Councillor had altered his status in Parliament.

The last Parliament which Neile attended was summoned in

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1. Cambridge University Registry: MS. XI/23/301 & 305; also: St. John's College, Cambridge: MS. 105/33.
2. T. Birch, The Court & Times of Charles I, Lond. 1848, 2 Vols., Vol. I, pp.126-9.
3. Lords Journals, Vol. III, p.497.

February 1627/8 and fell into two distinct sessions. The first, which lasted from 17 March until 26 June, saw the production of the Petition of Right and a remonstrance which cited Neile and Laud as responsible for religious innovations. A session held in the new year brought to light concrete evidence of the innovations and led to Neile drafting a lengthy defence which he was never called upon to give. Parliament was dissolved on 10 March 1628/9 and the King and his councillors, including the bishops, did not have to face such parliamentary criticism again until 1640.

Neile had recently been appointed Bishop of Winchester and had also been made a Privy Councillor in 1627. He thus commanded considerable respect in the House of Lords. With Laud and Buckeridge he stood proxy for the absent bishops of Bangor and London and the ailing Archbishop of York.[1] Early in the session he was appointed to an important committee to hear petitions from the British Isles and also the Channel Islands which were in the diocese of Winchester.[2] Committee meetings to hear petitions were scheduled to meet on Tuesdays and Thursdays. He was later appointed to the customary committee on the privileges of the House which tied Neile to work on Mondays as well.[3] As one would expect of a Privy Councillor he sat on important committees dealing with bills for the expansion of trade, the preservation of the King's income and the provision of serviceable arms.

Despite the King's remarks to his bishops in 1626, Neile seems to have tried to avoid controversy over religion in 1628. This was perhaps wise and may even account for his absence from the Lords for much of April and May. The Commons was in an uproar about recusancy yet again. Charges were still under investigation against Richard

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1. Ibid., p.685.
2. Ibid., p.689.
3. Ibid., p.691.

Mountague and new ones were being prepared against Roger Manwaring and Robert Sibthorpe for inflammatory sermons condoning the recent collection of a forced loan. Neile had supported these sermons, but he was even more closely affected by charges under discussion concerning his old chaplain John Cosin. The latter had published a Collection of Private Devotions in 1627. It aroused fierce controversy for the new ceremonial practices it countenanced. When William Prynne's A Brief Survey and Censure of Mr Cozen's his Couzening Devotions was published in 1628, it claimed that the book's aim was 'nothing else but to introduce, and usher Poperie into our Church'.[1] On 29 March, Mead wrote to Stuteville that Cosin was 'a most audacious fellow, and I doubt scarce a sound protestant'.[2] News was starting to filter south of new ceremonial practices in Durham. With what was probably a reference to Neile, Mead concluded that:

> 'a great part, if not most of the evil of our church at the present is supposed to proceed from him [Cosin], and those he wholly ruleth, as my Lord of Durham..'.[3]

While the Petition of Right was being drafted to cover secular grievances, the Commons pressed ahead with reports on Cosin and his associates. The host of bills on impropriations, preaching and the role of the clergy on Commissions of the Peace, illustrate the lack of trust the Commons now felt for the ecclesiastical hierarchy.

Neile was involved in the arrangements for the now customary fast at the start of the session.[4] He and Buckeridge also helped write a petition on idolatry and the enforcement of recusancy laws.[5]

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1. W. Prynne, A Brief Survey and Censure of Mr. Cozen's his Couzening Devotions, Lond. 1628, p.3. Prynne also claimed that the Bishop of London licensed Cosin's work without reading it, acting simply on Neile's instructions. He had the grace to doubt this story but Prynne still cited it as good propaganda. p.93.
2. T. Birch, The Court & Times of Charles I, Vol.I, pp.335-6.
3. Ibid.
4. 'Notes on the Debates in the House of Lords,..1621, 1625, 1628', ed. F.H. Relf, Camden Soc. New Series, Vol. XLII, Lond. 1929, pp. 65n, 80, 86.
5. Lords Journals, Vol. III, p.698.

Their influence was probably not to the liking of the Commons however, for on 26 March Neile called for the statement 'Orders deryved from the Church of Rome to be changed into orders taken by authority of the Sea of Rome'.[1] It was an Arminian belief that there was no conflict of 'Churches' and that the Church of England was descended from a purer primitive church of which they were both sees. Neile was involved in discussions about bills for the better maintenance of the ministry and the enlargement of preaching, but apart from these activities seems to have successfully avoided more controversial bills coming up from the Commons. This perhaps gave him more time for social legislation and two bills on hospitals and almshouses gained Neile's attention along with several legal and private bills.[2] Even though he noted that 'it is a godly worke to provide for Hospitalls',[3] Neile demonstrated conservatism when he spoke for the retention of existing privileges held by the Masters of Hospitals in the County Palatine of Durham.

The King was forced to grant his approval to the Petition of Right in June. Unfortunately, this did not abate fears. A remonstrance was prepared which brought together the 'crimes' of Buckingham and the Arminians under several headings. The first point of a draft of eight presented to the House on 11 June concerned fears of 'Alteration and Innovation' in religion, but Buckingham was the chief object of attack.[4] It was all carefully linked, however, for everyone thought that the Arminians posed a grave moral threat which was as important as any corruption and military ineptitude on Buckingham's part. Five subsidies were held up as a bait while the new remonstrance was debated.

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1. 'Debates in the House of Lords..1628', op. cit., p.66.
2. See p. III.
3. 'Debates in the House of Lords..1628', op. cit., p. 80n.
4. Commons Journals, Vol. I, p.911.

On 14 June the drastic step was taken of naming Neile and Laud in the remonstrance and accusing them of countenancing Arminianism 'that being (as your Majesty well knows) but a cunning way to bring in Popery'.[1] William Prynne was one who advocated that 'principall Agents' of the party be named so that:

> '..it may chance to shake and overturn the very pillars, and foundation stones of the 'Roman' and 'Arminian' Faction, if it be but prosecuted, sifted and ventillated to the full'.[2]

This also satisfied moderates who did not want the whole episcopal bench brought into disrepute.[3] A victory was gained when Manwaring submitted to the House on 21 June, but five days later Charles prorogued Parliament and foolishly tried to qualify his acceptance of the Petition of Right.

Parliament broke up with ill feeling on all sides. The King had failed to get enough money for the war and on 8 June 1628 Neile and Laud had been forced to lend Charles £200 each as the Privy Council raised £9,600 for a new fleet to embark for La Rochelle.[4] During the preparations for that expedition Buckingham was assassinated. In 1626 it had been felt that:

> 'the Duke is a great protector of the Montagutians so that the business of religion is like to follow his standing or downfall'.[5]

No such downfall occurred in 1628. Thus, whilst Buckingham's death removed a major grievance before the next session of Parliament, it perhaps also served to ensure that more attention than ever would be focused on the 'Montagutians' he had aided to power.

By the outset of the next session in January 1628/9, attempts

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1. I owe this reference to Trumbull Add. MS.50, f.201 to Ms. Maija Cole of the Yale Center for Parliamentary History, USA.
2. W. Prynne, A Brief Survey and Censure of Mr. Cozen..., 1628, Epistle, p.16.
3. Thomas Allured expressed this moderate viewpoint in a letter to Sir John Coke in June 1628. Hist. MSS. Comm. Earl Cowper (Coke) MSS., Twelfth Report, Appendix I, II, III (1888-9), Vol.I, pp.350-1.
4. Acts of the Privy Council, Vol. 43, pp.486-7.
5. T. Birch, The Court & Times of Charles I, Vol. I, p.105. Meddus to Mead, 22 May, 1626.

had been made to placate the opposition. Mountague was persuaded to write to Abbot renouncing Arminianism. Rehabilitated in the last Parliament, Abbot was now fully restored to his jurisdiction as Archbishop of Canterbury following sequestration in October 1627.[1] Manwaring's sermons were suppressed as was Mountague's Appello Caesarem. New orders calling for peace and unity in the Church were issued in December 1628, backing up an earlier proclamation which had never been very effective.[2] Barnabas Potter, a known orthodox divine, was nominated as Bishop of Carlisle.

That these efforts were to no avail is hardly surprising. During the long recess Richard Mountague, Manwaring, Sibthorpe and Cosin received royal pardons. Mountague was even appointed Bishop of Chichester and Neile assisted at the consecration ceremony.[3] Other known Arminians like Mawe, Curle, Howson and Buckeridge gained promotion on the episcopal bench.[4] This flurry of appointments illustrated the complete power of the Arminians. Recognition of their political status had been a cause of the remonstrance in June. Despite the concern for images and Cosin's work, over the past few Parliaments Pym and his associates had tended to appreciate only the political connotations of Arminianism, the links with Buckingham and the political sermons of Manwaring. Subserviency to the royal prerogative had been well registered. Now the Commons was to be made aware of other attributes of Arminianism previously subsumed under

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1. P. Welsby, George Abbot, pp.135-6.
2. Tudor & Stuart Proclamations 1485 - 1714, ed. R. Steele, Vol. I, p.173, Proclamation of 14 June 1626; H. Trevor-Roper, Archbishop Laud, Lond. 1940, p.90; Dr. Tyacke feels that it was not until the declaration of 1628 that true censorship of theological works applied to Oxford. N. Tyacke, Thesis, op.cit., p.122; See Chpt. 7, p.219.
3. J. Le Neve, Lives & Characters of the Bishops.., Vol.I, Part I, p.148.
4. Neile attended the double consecration service held for Mawe and Curle on 7 Sept. They were appointed to Bath & Wells and Rochester respectively. J. Le Neve, op.cit., p.148;

the blanket attacks about ushering in Popery. As Hillel Schwartz concluded:

> 'As the 'Arminian Party' achieved positions in the church where they could encourage ceremonial and liturgical renovations on a relatively large scale, it became simpler to identify them as proponents of a new ceremonialism'. [1]

The wheel had turned full circle from the complaints made about Harsnet in 1624.

Encouraged by the attacks on Neile and Laud in Parliament and by the fact that the former was no longer his diocesan bishop, Peter Smart, a Durham prebendary, chose this moment to criticise changes which had taken place at Durham under Neile. News of the use of hundreds of candles and bowing towards the altar was not unfamiliar in the south thanks to letters from Puritans like Robert Jenison in Newcastle.[2] On 27 July 1628, however, Smart read a vitriolic sermon on the text: 'I hate them that holde of superstitious vanities'.[3] It was a comprehensive attack on Arminian ceremonialism which drew attention to the existence of a new stone altar at Durham and swiftly led to Smart's suspension by the Durham High Commission.[4] Smart retaliated by accusing Cosin of claiming independent powers for the Church and thus infringing the royal prerogative. There were frantic appeals to Neile and Laud.[5] Neile placated the Attorney-General over the charges, but Smart had provided his Puritan allies in the south with just the sort of evidence they needed; the Arminians had gained power but at last the Commons had concrete evidence of what their rule would entail.

Within four days of the opening of the new parliamentary session

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1. H. Schwartz, 'Arminianism and the English Parliament, 1624 - 1629', Journal of British Studies, 1973, p.63.
2. T. Birch, The Court & Times of Charles I, Vol. I, pp.335-6 Mead to Stuteville, 29 March 1628 - cites a letter from Jenison.
3. Bodleian Library, Oxford: 4° P44 (10) Th.
4. 'The Acts of the Court of High Commission at Durham', ed. W. Longstaffe, Surtees Soc., Vol.34, 1858, Appendix A, p.198.
5. Ibid., p.199.

in January, three bills on religion had been given their first reading in the Commons. On 27 January there was a full-scale debate on the relationship between Arminianism and Catholicism. The basic issues were quickly stated: the Commons was angry over the suppression of Calvinist works, the pardons for men condemned by Parliament, the ceremonial innovations at Durham and the continued patronage and advancement of known Arminians in the Church.[1] Virtually every day of this session led to discussion of some aspect of the problem. On 3 February it was affirmed that Neile and Laud were the leaders of the Arminians, despite recent denials before King and Council.[2] A petition was prepared against John Cosin, charged with treason, and a full investigation was instituted into the origins of the pardons for Mountague, Manwaring, Sibthorpe and Cosin. The report showed that Neile was responsible for persuading the Attorney-General to issue the pardons and that he had 'interlined and corrected' a rough draft for that purpose.[3] It was later made known that Neile had stopped the proceedings against Cosin on the evidence of that 'baggage-fellow' Smart.[4] A draft of the pardons was produced for the House and Neile's private secretary, Edward Liveley, who represented Berwick-on-Tweed, was forced to acknowledge the authenticity of the handwriting.[5] Here was a case where a government nominee in the House was used to good effect by the opposition.

At this stage the discussion became more personal. Sir Daniel Norton told how Dr. Moor, a Winchester prebendary, had recently clashed with Neile over altar moves at Winchester Cathedral. It was

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1. Commons Journals, Vol. I, pp.922-3.
2. Commons Debates for 1629, ed. W. Notestein & F. Relf, Minnesota 1921, pp.31-4.
3. Ibid., p.39.
4. Ibid., p.45.
5. Ibid., p.50. In the 'True Relation' cited, Liveley is incorrectly named Mr. Lynne; in 'Nicholas's Notes' (pp.107-72) he is noted as Neile's 'sonne' (p.132). The latter could be a metaphorical use of the word as Liveley was very close to the Neile family.

immediately noted that Neile was 'labouring to make Durham and Winchester synonymous'.[1] Mr. Valentine informed the House that Neile's chaplain, Peter Titley, had preached at Grantham that 'they were all damned that refused the loan, and that he hath made a great combustion in placing the Communion Table there'.[2] The Commons clearly had the bit between its teeth. Moor was sent for, but before he came, Oliver Cromwell made his first impact on Parliament by telling of Dr. Beard, his old tutor, who had long ago been refused permission by Neile to reply to the notorious sermons of the crypto-Catholic, Dr. Alabaster.[3] One Dr. Marshall was cited as a cleric who would support Beard and Moor in their stories of Neile's own Catholic leanings.

It was urged that all these men should appear before the House to testify against Neile.

> 'For this Bishop, though he hath leaped through many bishoprics, yet he hath left Popery behind him. That Cosin, frequenting the printing house, hath caused the Book of Common Prayer to be new printed; and hath changed the word minister into the word priest, and hath put out in another place the word elect. Thus Cosin and his Lord go hand in hand'.[4]

William Prynne had warned the Commons to look to the universities in 1628; now they took that advice and called for copies of all 'Recantations, Censures and Submissions, as have been made by or to any in either Universities, for Popery or Arminianism'.[5] Bishop

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1. Ibid., p.51.
2. Ibid., p.52. No name is given in the 'True Relation', but once again there is confusion over names; in 'Nicholas's Notes' Titley is known as 'Tickler'; P. Heylin, Cyprianus Anglicus, p.171, suggested that Williams attacked Titley because he 'had relation to the Bishop of Durham' - no family connection has emerged from my research.
3. Ibid., p.59. Dr. William Alabaster was referred to as 'the double or treble turncoat' by Chamberlain in a letter to Carleton of Jan. 1613/14 after he had given a sermon at Whitehall. This was an allusion to his conversion to Catholicism and later return to the Protestant faith. T. Birch, The Court & Times of James I, Vol.I, p. 291. As Clerk of the Closet, Neile may have played a part in arranging the court sermon in question and it is interesting to note that Alabaster attended Westminster School.
4. Ibid., pp.59-60.
5. Commons Journals, Vol.I, p.928.

Davenant was one of many scholars who worked hard to provide Parliament with evidence of past condemnation of Arminian doctrines. He had good reason to show concern. In a letter of November 1628 he had written to Ward that Dr. Jackson's latest book marked a clear break with the doctrines of the Synod of Dort.[1] Earlier in the year Neile had been instrumental in forbidding the publication of one of Davenant's works.[2]

This concerted effort to rid the Church of Arminians by parliamentary pressure was not to succeed. Even while they spoke, Francis White, one of the 'Durham College' set was confirmed Bishop of Norwich. Dr. Moor corroborated that he had been forbidden to preach against Popery by Neile and that the latter had spoken up for the practice of bowing at the name of Jesus and of bowing towards the high altar:

> '..the Bishop further said that the Communion Tables stand as tables in alehouses, but he would have them set as high altars'.[3]

Neile's position was out in the open and the Commons re-iterated their attacks against he and Laud as the leaders of the 'Arminian Faction'.[4] On 25 February, amidst wild scenes while the Speaker was held in his chair, three resolutions were read to the Commons: the first declared:

> 'Whosoever shall bring in innovation in Religion, or by favour or countenance, seek to extend or introduce Popery or Arminianism or other opinions disagreeing from the true and orthodox Church, shall be reputed a capital enemy to this Kingdom and Commonwealth'.[5]

With that, however, Parliament was adjourned to be finally dissolved

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1. Bodleian Library, Oxford: Tanner MS. 72, f.268.
2. The Whole Works of the Most Rev. James Ussher, DD., ed. C. Elrington, 16 Vols., Dublin 1847, Vol. 15, pp.402-5. A letter from Samuel Ward to Ussher of May 1628 reveals this intervention.
3. Commons Debates for 1629, ed. W. Notestein & F. Relf, p.64.
4. Ibid., p.97.
5. Ibid., pp.101-2.

on 10 March 1628/9. So ended what turned out to be the last chance for Puritans to air their grievances in a representative assembly for the next eleven years.

As he was the subject of so much attention in the Commons, it is not surprising that Neile took little formal interest in religious bills in this session.[1] He remained preoccupied with parliamentary committee work and such matters as royal finance, but when the attack against him was at its height in the early days of February, Neile was absent from the Lords.[2] He returned to join a large committee appointed to draft bills 'to prevent the decay of Churches, Chancels and Chapels', and to secure adequate allowances for curates of impropriated livings.[3] These were practical concerns and representatives of all shades of opinions sat on the committee, but this opportunity for joint action was lost and later Neile and his associates initiated a church restoration campaign with a decidedly Arminian flavour.[4] A committee for the defence of the Kingdom and one or two private bills accounted for the rest of Neile's time; but with so much hostility being generated towards him in the Commons, this cannot have been a very fruitful session for Neile.

Laud wrote a general reply to the remonstrance for Charles I in which he denied stories of the spread of Catholicism due to innovations in the Church of England and referred to past proclamations calling for unity.[5] Neile also seems to have worked on a defence, relating more particularly to accusations made in the second session of this Parliament. In an unfinished manuscript which has survived at Durham, Neile laid out answers under four headings relating to accusations of popery, Arminianism, of the production of four pardons

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1. See p. 111.
2. Neile was absent from 31 Jan. 1628/9 until 10 Feb. 1628/9. Lords Journals, Vol. IV, pp.16-26.
3. Ibid., p.31.
4. See Chpt. 6, pp. 176-7.
5. Laud's Works, ed. W. Scott & J. Bliss, Vol.VI, part 1, pp.8-10.

and of specific charges alleged by Drs. Moor, Marshall and Beard.[1] This manuscript provides invaluable evidence of Neile's theological opinions and is considered in detail in another chapter.[2] Suffice it to say, in this context, that it was a skilful piece of writing which neatly and aggressively dealt with the major charges levelled against him. In the case of the four pardons, for instance, Neile acknowledged that he had been consulted over the documents, declared direct responsibility for only two - those for Cosin and Sibthorpe - but openly maintained that he agreed with all four.[3] With a nasty thrust at his imagined audience, he concluded innocently that he thought the King had the power to give free pardons to whomsoever he chose! Neile was equally firm with his named accusers.

This speech was never completed or given. It would certainly have shocked the Commons. Yet it was also perfectly in line with earlier statements by Arminians when under attack. It was common to disclaim knowledge of Arminius and Laud hid behind the Canons of the Church in his defence in 1628. The draft displays Neile's practical administrative mind, his anti-intellectual approach and his robust sense of humour. These features are to be found in parliamentary statements made by Neile when under attack in 1614, but now he was more confident and assertive.[4] Whereas in 1614, Neile had gone to Lincoln for several months to escape the public eye, in 1629 he faced an equally extreme attack upon his character in the Commons and yet remained in London busying himself with Privy Council, Star Chamber and High Commission affairs.

Apart from this obvious growth in confidence and experience by 1629, coupled with the acquisition of power as a Privy Councillor,

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1. P.K. Durham: Hunter MS. 67, Item 14 (21 pages).
2. See Chpt. 7, pp. 201-6.
3. P.K. Durham: Hunter MS. 67, Item 14, p.16.
4. See pp. 119-127.

what emerges from this survey of Neile's parliamentary career? During his life he sat on at least 182 committees in the Lords, 64 of these, approximately 36%, can be related to governmental legislation.[1] The fact that 28 of those committees dealt with various attempts at legal reforms, illustrates points about the nature of the society in which he lived, but also that Neile's personal legal proclivities were well exploited in the Lords. A small, but significant number of committees in this general category relate to the defence of the realm. Neile was appointed to a committee on the supply of serviceable weapons in 1621 and appeared on such a body for the rest of his parliamentary career. The onset of war increased such work. Neile's experience as Lord Lieutenant of the Durham Palatinate necessitated his presence on such committees.[2] Private diaries reveal that he spoke frequently and with authority on the need for adequate training of troops, stronger fortifications and better supplies of modern weapons. In 1625/6 Neile was the only cleric appointed to a sub-committee to consider weapon supplies in the country. This role continued after his departure from Durham because of his past experience and new importance as a Privy Councillor. This concern with defence represents an unorthodox interest for a bishop, but Neile possessed the administrative talent and expertise necessary for the work and that is what counted.

1621 marks Neile's breakthrough into parliamentary respectability because he sat for the first time upon committees which were crucial to the functioning of Parliament. These various bodies monitored the customs of the Houses, defended privileges, arranged conferences, handled petitions and pursued the judicial investigations involved in the House's capacity as the highest court in the land. Such work

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1. See p. III. 2. See Chpt. 4.

accounted for much of Neile's time in the Parliaments of 1621 and 1624, when legal proceedings were in progress against such people as Sir Giles Mompesson, Sir Francis Bacon and Lionel Cranfield. Probably to cope with such work, a new committee was created in 1625/6 to receive petitions and complaints from the country;[1] Neile was a regular member of this new body. In all, Neile sat on 55 committees, approximately 31% of his total number, which can be said to relate to the internal workings of the Lords and Parliament. He was deeply concerned about the privileges of the Lords and the role of the episcopate within that body, but his views were often in opposition to the interests of the Commons. Neile's contribution to liaison between the two houses was slender: he was only selected for committees to confer with the Lower House 13 times in his career and 5 of those occurred when he was still a junior bishop before 1621.[2] The more important Neile became, the less he liked meeting with the Commons. This lack of respect for the Lower House got him into trouble in 1614; it was a cause of mounting antagonism throughout his career. Neile may have been an active member of the House of Lords, but he was certainly not a 'Parliamentarian' in the wider sense of the word.

The fact that private bills accounted for 19% of Neile's committee work was probably not out of the ordinary for any peer. This type of legislation ranged from small matters such as fishing rights in a minor coastal port, to such matters as the York House Exchange or the repeatedly unsuccessful Durham Franchise Bill.

Neile's work in the Lords as a peer and as a government official seems to have left him little time for the more traditional concerns

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1. 'Debates in the House of Lords,..1621, 1625, 1628', ed. F. Relf, Camden Soc. New Series, Vol. 42, p. XXVII. This was really just an enlargement of an earlier ad hoc committee.
2. See p. III.

of a bishop. Only from 1624 onwards did he find time to sit regularly on a committee concerned with the erection and maintenance of almshouses. Such work accounted for only roughly 7% of his total committee work; religious bills commanded a similarly small proportion of his time. A socially conscious lay peer might have had a better record for interest in such work.

The reason for this situation highlights the general problem of the role of the episcopate in the Lords. Once Neile had demonstrated his considerable administrative skills, acquired seniority and a voice in government, it was only natural that a bishop with his peculiar talents should find his time occupied with other types of legislation. This became apparent in 1621 when Neile failed to appear on committees dealing with subjects like recusancy on which he was well qualified to speak. Junior bishops could cope with such work. This pattern was only altered in 1626 because the King called upon his bishops to defend their Church against attacks in the Commons. Such a trend was bound to appear when senior bishops came to find employment as government servants under the Stuarts in a way which Elizabeth I had never permitted.

This chapter has tried to illustrate the development of Neile's parliamentary career. He was quite clearly a conscientious attender of the House of Lords. Statistics based on his committee work reflect changes in his role as he became more important in the state. They reflect something of his different interests and confirm the picture of Neile as an able administrator. Connections can be seen between his work as a County Lord Lieutenant and Privy Councillor and his interest in certain types of legislation.[1] Neile is seen as a man who distinguished between his role as a bishop and that of a

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1. See Chpts. 4 & 6.

civil servant. Parliamentary work demanded this to some extent. The quotation at the beginning of this chapter indicates that Neile saw Convocation as the proper place for the discussion of religious matters; it was in keeping with his scorn for the Commons in general that he took little part in the discussion of religious controversy provoked by that House.

However, care must be taken not to look at Neile's parliamentary career solely in terms of crude statistics. As pointed out at the beginning of this chapter, we have only a vague idea of how Neile's time was divided in the Lords. Attempts have been made throughout this survey to discuss Neile's general parliamentary speeches, his stance on particular issues, and to assess what others in both Houses thought of his work. On a wider level, this chapter illustrates the rise of the Arminian party and shows how the Commons gradually came to define and recognize the threat to their religion.

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Chapter 6: Privy Councillor and Judge in matters spiritual and temporal.

This chapter is primarily concerned with Neile's work as a Privy Councillor, a judge in the related Court of Star Chamber and a member of the Commission for Causes Ecclesiastical, better known as the Court of High Commission. The Privy Council was the most important administrative organ of central government in the land in the seventeenth century. Its executive decisions were, on the whole, subject to more favourable judicial interpretation in the two prerogative courts than in the ordinary law courts. Neile's roles on these bodies are thus closely intertwined.

Whilst it was usual for a senior clergyman to become a member of the Commission for Causes Ecclesiastical, in one of its areas of jurisdiction at least, it was not common for any but the most influential bishops to aspire to a position on the Privy Council and hence to Star Chamber. Indeed, none of Elizabeth's bishops achieved such eminence and it was a brave innovation when the Stuarts returned to a custom which had once given power to hated personalities such as Cardinal Wolsey.[1] Memories of that man were revived when Archbishops Neile and Laud came to be seen as a threat to the true religion of England in the 1630s.

Sources available for this chapter are scanty and scattered throughout various collections. Privy Council registers survive, but the information they contain is too often of strictly limited value.

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1. G.E. Aylmer, The King's Servants. The Civil Service of Charles I 1625-1642, 2nd ed. Lond. 1974, pp. 19-20 discusses the composition of the Privy Council and concludes that 'the number of churchmen cannot be considered excessive, unless one agrees with those contemporary critics who believed that they should not have been there at all'. The maximum number of clerics on the Council during this period stood at 4 in 1630.

This is particularly obvious when one attempts to assess the role of individual councillors as opposed to the import of directives regularly issued to the Council's representatives in the provinces. Attendance lists are given, but they may well be inaccurate. Not all the meetings were formally recorded by the clerks and no indication is given of voting behaviour or specific speeches.[1] However, some attempt must be made to assess Neile's role as a Privy Councillor and the figures I have compiled on his attendance record provide useful information about Neile's movements and possible impact at certain times of crisis.[2]

Although they present problems, the Privy Council registers represent a voluminous and consistent source for our knowledge of executive government of this period. No such reliable mine of information exists in relation to the Courts of Star Chamber and the High Commission. What little relevant material survives lies scattered in the general collection of state papers at the Public Record Office or has come to light in widely dispersed collections.[3] This survey relies chiefly on printed sources, the material found and edited by S.R. Gardiner as long ago as 1886, and on the collection of state papers.[4] This examination of Neile's work is thus inevitably uneven and may not be truly representative. Nevertheless, it does provide a useful insight into Neile's career, particularly during the 1630s.

Relatively good source material exists on the work of the High Commission in the northern province. Indeed the survival of such

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1. G.R. Elton, England 1200-1640, Lond. 1969, pp. 75-81 provides a solid account of the problems arising from the use of these records; E. Adair, 'The Privy Council Registers', English Historical Review, 30, 1915, pp. 698-704 reveals technical problems relating to these registers.
2. Appendix 3.
3. G.R. Elton, England 1200-1640, pp. 54-66, 108-9.
4. S.R. Gardiner (ed.), 'Reports of Cases in the Courts of Star Chamber and High Commission', Camden Society New Series, 39. 1886.

records has been noticeably better than in the south, but discussion of this material is more appropriate elsewhere.[1] Little use has been made of records at Durham because so little of the material which has survived there relates directly to the work of the bishop.[2]

The powers of the High Commission stemmed directly from the crown. This court gave central support to the diocesan courts, offered swift action to suitors from the entire realm and could inflict punishments not available in the ordinary courts Christian; it could fine and imprison. According to the dictates of the time, it was used by the authorities to handle recusancy matters, but more notoriously, it became the chief instrument used by the bishops in curbing clerical nonconformity. As this latter role developed, its procedures, particularly the use of the ex officio oath, came under steadily mounting criticism. Parliamentary opposition to the court became strikingly evident during Bancroft's primacy, but Abbot too defended the court stoutly. Under new Letters Patent issued in 1611, he gained confirmation of the powers of the High Commission, but as he never authorised such a campaign as that conducted by his predecessor against Puritans, criticism of the court seems to have died down until it was revived by the activities of Neile and Laud in the 1630s.[3]

It was almost inevitable that once Neile achieved any kind of major office in the Church, he should come into contact with one or other branch of the Court of High Commission. His appointment as a member of the Commission in the summer of 1603 was probably actuated by his selection as Master of the Savoy and then Clerk of the Closet

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1. Chpt. 8.
2. W. Longstaffe (ed.), 'The Proceedings of the High Court of Commission for Durham and Northumberland', Surtees Soc., 34, Lond. 1858.
3. G.R. Elton, The Tudor Constitution, Cambridge 1960, pp. 217-221; J.P. Kenyon, The Stuart Constitution, Cambridge 1966, pp. 176-180.

earlier in the year.[1] Neile's name seems to have been automatically on the list when a new patent for the Commission was drawn up in the autumn of 1604.[2] As Dean of Westminster and then a bishop, Neile's place on the Commission was secure.[3]

It is less clear what Neile actually did as a commissioner before the 1630s. Work for this formal body did not preclude his acting on other special commissions. In fact the more famous, or notorious, examples of Neile's work as an ecclesiastical judge stem from such ad hoc commissions. Neile conducted the trial of the heretic Edward Wightman in 1611 and although the High Commission was involved in the case, it was eventually left to Neile to sentence the man in his diocesan court at Lichfield.[4] He thus took responsibility for the last burning to death of a heretic in England in April 1612. This may seem a classic example of Neile's acceptance of the necessity for severe judgements, but he seems to have tried every means at his disposal to get Wightman to recant.[5] He was personally much more worried by the activities of Puritans like Arthur Hildersham, whom he suspected of muddling the mind of this poor heretic. Charges drawn partly from this case led to Hildersham's suspension by the High Commission in April 1613.[6]

Neile is even more notorious for the part he played on the special Essex Divorce Commission of 1613. By voting to allow the

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1. Hist. MSS. Comm. Hatfield MSS., XV, 1930, p.224; Chpt. 1, pp. 16-17.
2. Ibid., XVI, 1933, p.381.
3. Details of the patents concerning the major commissions at Canterbury and York have been most usefully summarised in the major work on this subject: R.G. Usher, The Rise and Fall of the High Commission, Lond. 1913, reprinted in Oxford 1968 with an important introduction by Philip Tyler, Appendix III.
4. Bodleian Library, Oxford: MS. Ashmole 1521 (B) VII - Proceedings at Lichfield in Nov.-Dec. 1611 concerning Edward Wightman, held before Richard Neile in his Consistory Court, ff. 1-9.
5. Chpt. 3, p.78.
6. B. Brook, The Lives of the Puritans, 3 Vols., Lond. 1813, II, pp. 382-3.

divorce of Francis Howard from her young husband the Earl of Essex in order to facilitate her marriage to the King's favourite, Robert Carr, Neile has earned contempt from generations of historians. The decision caused much controversy at the time and was opposed by no less a person than Archbishop Abbot. Apparently, it was only reached because of 'the truckling subserviency of Neile and his supporters' and their willingness to 'wallow in the mire for the sake of court favour'.[1] Largely because of this case, historians have been only too willing to agree with Gardiner that:

> 'Of all the sycophants who sought for power and place during the reigns of James and of his son, Bishop Neile was justly regarded as the worst'.[2]

This judgement is excessively harsh and ill-founded.

What is overlooked in the Essex Divorce case is that all the evidence against Neile comes from the biased account of the proceedings produced by Archbishop Abbot soon after the affair.[3] It is too often assumed that because Abbot took a strong moral stance on the divorce, so his account of the case should be the truth. Yet Abbot and his associates, like Sir Charles Cornwallis and the Earl of Southampton, were members of a court faction who stood to lose much by a marriage alliance between Rochester and the Howards. Bias is openly betrayed when Abbot refers to the appointment of Bishops Bilson and Buckeridge to join the Commission on 18 September 1613. He accused Bilson of bearing a grudge against him for gaining Canterbury, of coveting a Privy Councillor's position and wanting a knighthood for his son. This was probably written with hindsight for these last two events came quickly to pass. Abbot claimed Buckeridge was too openly in favour of the divorce and needed to do 'some such thing' for the King to justify the good reports of Neile, Bancroft, Butler and Carrier,

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1. S.R. Gardiner, History of England, 1603-42, 10 Vols., Lond. 1883-4, II, p.174.
2. Ibid., p.243.
3. Printed in W. Cobbett, A Complete Collection of State Trials, Lond. 1809, II, pp. 805-844.

who had gained him the see of Rochester.[1]

Abbot's account is full of his woes as he wrestled with the King's words and his conscience. He makes great play of the comfort he drew from remembering the sufferings of his illustrious predecessors, Cranmer and Grindal, and the struggle he had already had with King James over marriage plans for Prince Henry.[2] Just as Foxe had once adopted the plight of Wycliffe and the Lollards to establish a long Protestant tradition in England, so Abbot sought to leave his readers with the impression that his stand against the divorce was part of a 'Protestant Cause'. It was inevitable that the character of all who opposed him should be blackened.

Unfortunately, we have no alternative source on which to rely. Contemporary letters point to the obvious political nature of the decision, but rarely suggest that there was any real alternative. Divorce was the only realistic solution in the circumstances and it is hardly surprising that the ever practical Neile should vote as he did, regardless of the pressure which he too was under from the King and the Howards. Furthermore, in no letters of that date does Neile receive more blame than any other member of the Commission for its decision. Bishop Bilson seems to have been the most reviled, but one scurrilous poem actually failed to mention Neile although distinct references were made to Buckeridge, Bilson and Andrewes:

> 'At Rochester she anchor cast,
> Which Canterbury did distast.
> But Winchester, with Ely's help,
> Did hale on shore this lion's whelp.'[3]

However, it is difficult to accommodate the words 'Lichfield and Coventry' in verse!

An anonymous supporter of Abbot claimed that Neile voted as he did to gain promotion to Lincoln.[4] Again this is probably a case of

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1. Ibid., p.817.
2. Ibid., p.821.
3. Bodleian Library, Oxford: MS. Ashmole 38, f.136 - see B. White, Cast of Ravens, Lond. 1965, p.223.
4. W. Cobbett, State Trials, p.829.

attributing motives from a later standpoint. It is highly likely that Neile was considered for Lincoln because of his recent service in the divorce case. However, there is no evidence that he actively sought the move or was seen by others to have done so at the expense of Robert Abbot. Although the archbishop had been warned that his brother's promotion prospects rested on the divorce case, in a letter to William Trumbull in October 1613, John More assumed that Robert Abbot was likely to succeed Neile at Lichfield and Coventry.[1] When Chamberlain wrote to Carleton later that month, it was appreciated that Abbot was no longer being considered for promotion, but neither More nor Chamberlain related Neile's preferment to the divorce case or wrote that he had in any way stolen promotion from Abbot.[2]

In the propaganda surrounding the divorce, Neile is accused of constant acts of treachery in attempting to gain Abbot's approval for the marriage between Rochester and Frances Howard. The archbishop was apparently warned that Neile 'hath made a shift to be taken for a knave generally with us in the court'.[3] Little concrete evidence is ever offered in support of these charges. Abbot attended the notorious marriage, but is reported to have been satisfied solely on the matter:

> '..that the man who had done him all the wrong, was the bishop of Litchfield; from whom he resolved afterward to be very wary how he trusted him'.[4]

Given that Neile and Abbot must have clashed before on issues such as the former's patronage for William Laud, it is hardly likely that the divorce case really marked the beginning of the rift between the two men.

The divorce case ruling was clearly heavily influenced by political factors. The King and the Howard clan fought hard to ensure

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1. Hist. MSS. Comm. Devonshire MSS., IV, p.216.
2. Chamberlain Letters, ed. N. McClure, I, p.478.
3. W. Cobbett, State Trials, p.839.
4. Ibid., p.844.

a favourable verdict. In bowing to this pressure Neile simply acted as a loyal courtier. As a minor royal favourite and distantly related to the Howard family, he was placed in an invidious position.[1] Yet the decision also bears the stamp of realism for which Neile was well known. Neile's blunt approach was laughed to scorn when he questioned the Earl of Essex on his knowledge of sexual matters. He was accused by court wits of giving the court 'a learned discourse in the science of bawdry'.[2] Nevertheless, Neile brought an incisive and practical approach to the case and although Abbot's stand was undoubtedly morally correct on the evidence presented, the eventual judgement was eminently sound in practice.

Neile was first brought regularly into contact with the Privy Council when he became a bishop. Next to the overworked Justices of the Peace, bishops were looked upon as fair game for government work. Initially, Neile's contact remained fairly slight, related exclusively to the collection of clerical subsidies and involvement in local musters of troops. Here Neile usually acted in response to orders passed on to him by the Archbishop of Canterbury.

In this, as in other more usual aspects of the work of a bishop, Neile proved to be scrupulously efficient. When a clerical subsidy was collected from Lincoln diocese in October 1614, Neile scrutinised the returns personally. Not even the agents who collected the money were spared his exhortations to give more generously. David Tuke, collector for Sparkinhoe deanery, received the accolade that Neile held him to be 'a good scholar and an honest gent', but he was still asked to give more money.[3] Neile was not always so polite. When John Savage tried to argue that he had impoverished himself through

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1. Chpt. 1, p.23. 2. W. Cobbett, State Trials, p.816.
3. A. Moore, 'Subsidies of the Clergy in the Archdeaconry of Leicester in the Seventeenth Century', Associated Architectural Societies' Reports and Papers, 27, Part II, 1903-4, p.463.

law suits he encountered the curt response that he was known to be rich and that his money was 'better thus spent than in sutes'.[1] The poorer clergy were protected as Neile dealt severely with the rich. He seems to have obtained fairly precise knowledge of the financial means of his clergy and was not put off by even the most eloquent appeals. A Latin epistle earned William Maddoxe the straight retort: 'more silver and less latin would doe well'.[2]

There is evidence that Neile fought hard during the winter of 1614-15 to gain exemptions from muster payments for his clergy. Successful in gaining a temporary respite, he was eventually forced to instruct John Lambe to hold a clerical survey and compile a new book of rates in June 1615.[3] Neile was careful to order the exclusion of the poorer clergy from assessment, but this typical humanitarian concern was counterbalanced by his instinct for administrative efficiency. Lambe was instructed that bows and arrows were no longer acceptable in the survey of weapons.

Much more business of this kind came Neile's way after he was appointed Lord Lieutenant of the Durham Palatinate in November 1617. Muster orders were now addressed directly to Neile and he became responsible for the total defences of much of the north.[4] Once he had established a reputation as a loyal and efficient administrator, there was no end to the demands which the Privy Council placed upon him. Special commissions came to occupy more and more of his time. Some were regional in nature, as when Neile and the Bishop of Carlisle were appointed to survey the problems of the northern wool trade following a petition from the area in June 1619.[5] Other work related to more sensitive political issues of the day, as when Neile and Andrewes were selected to restrain Archbishop Abbot's fervour in drafting a circular

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1. Ibid., p.462.
2. Ibid., p.470.
3. P.R.O: SP/14/80/123.
4. Chpt. 4.
5. Acts of the Privy Council, 36, pp. 468-70.

addressed to the clergy of England calling for donations to the 'Protestant Cause' on the Continent.[1]

Mundane local commissions predominated, but Neile could always be relied upon whatever the task. The construction of a new bridge at Berwick-upon-Tweed is a typical case in point. Work had started on the project in 1608, but in July 1620 the Council asked Neile to 'take that worke into your speciall care'.[2] Neile had already been consulted about rising costs in April, now he was appalled by the inefficiency and sloth of the builders.[3] He supervised the compilation of more accurate accounts, fixed adequate salaries for the workers and visited Berwick to inspect the situation personally. Yet even Neile reported later that he could see no way of properly accounting for use of funds.[4] Despite the odds, Neile continued to take a strong personal interest in the construction of the bridge, so much so that he apparently damaged his health in the summer of 1624 by insisting on formally laying the last stone himself.[5]

Such work gave Neile added experience of the complexity of local government, while his activities as Lord Lieutenant built up his reputation with both Parliament and the Privy Council as an expert in the problems of local administration. On 29 April 1627 he was awarded the highest accolade for his past diligence and unstinting effort - a place on the Privy Council.[6] While this appointment can be seen as a logical development in Neile's rise to episcopal pre-eminence, it owed much to political factors of the moment. Neile and Laud were appointed

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1. P.R.O: SP/14/113/34 - Circular of 21 March 1619/20; Simon Adams, 'The Protestant Cause: Religious alliance with the European Calvinist Communities as a Political Issue in England, 1585-1603', (Oxford D.Phil. thesis, 1973), p.296 supports this view of Neile's role on the Commission.
2. Acts of the Privy Council, 37, p.254.
3. Ibid., pp. 170-1.
4. P.R.O: SP/14/112/34.
5. Bodleian Library, Oxford: Tanner MS. 73, f.475 - an incidental reference in one of Jenison's letters to Ward dated 25 Aug. 1624.
6. Acts of the Privy Council, 42, p.253.

to the Privy Council together and Heylin is probably correct in maintaining that Neile gained the post because of Laud.[1] The King had fared badly at the hands of Parliament in recent years and in the autumn of 1626 Laud countenanced a scheme to raise money with a forced loan.[2] Clergymen were instructed to preach in favour of the scheme. Although it was unpalatable to both Charles and Laud, it was at this time that three sees were left vacant for over a year out of only four so treated during the period 1603-40.[3] Neile and Laud could be relied upon for loyal support on the Privy Council. One hazard of the appointment revealed itself in June 1628 when Neile, with the rest of the Council, contributed to a loan to finance an expedition to La Rochelle.[4] It was not the last occasion on which Neile gave money to his sovereign.

The need for the appointment of reliable clergymen to the Council in 1627 was illustrated when George Abbot spoke out against the forced loan and refused to licence sermons produced in defence of the scheme by Robert Sibthorpe and Roger Manwaring. Neile was closely involved in the process by which these works were eventually licensed, as was later appreciated in Parliament.[5] One of his own chaplains, Peter Titley, was attacked by the Commons for over-zealously championing the loan.[6] Thus Neile and Laud appeared on the Council not a moment too soon for Charles, to act as a counterbalance to the opinions of the rebellious Archbishop.

The appointments were a triumph for the Arminian party in England, which was now seen to enjoy the total support of Buckingham and the crown. They mark a significant stage in the slow fusion of crown and Arminian policies which was completed to the detriment of both parties

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1. P. Heylin, Cyprianus Anglicus, p.169.
2. H. Trevor-Roper, Archbishop Laud, p.79.
3. The three were: Winchester, Ely and Exeter.
4. Acts of the Privy Council, 43, pp. 486-7.
5. Chpt. 5, p. 155.
6. Ibid., p. 156.

in the 1630s.[1] Neile's appointment confirms that he was still a prominent figure in the party, despite the fact that the leadership had now passed firmly to his old chaplain. Neile brought to the Council far greater experience of government than did his colleague. Only days before his appointment in April, Neile had been selected for a commission to study the nation's defences.[2] He had played his part in the north in establishing something like a co-ordinated national defence system. Regardless of the political factors involved in his preferment, Neile's appearance on the Council was worth more than a rubber stamp.

Attendance records for 1627 reveal that Neile and Laud were indeed conscientious in carrying out their new duties.[3] Their appearance on the Council certainly broadened the rift between the King and his Archbishop. On 9 October 1627 Abbot was sequestered and Neile and Laud headed a commission appointed to exercise his jurisdiction over the Church.[4] It was a thoroughly logical development in the light of the circumstances surrounding their appointment to the Council earlier in the year. These new demands on Neile's time highlight the sense behind his long-expected promotion to Winchester in 1627. On Abbot's sequestration Neile was forced to hurry back from a visitation in Durham. During the following year he was able to attend Council meetings with more ease and did so fairly regularly considering the demands of Parliament and a new diocese.

Response to the new appointments in the Commons was hostile. Just as Pym and his colleagues gained more evidence of the threat presented to their religion by Arminianism, so it seemed that their enemies were advanced to yet further positions of strength in the land. This realization explains the frantic debates in Parliament during

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1. Chpt. 7.
2. Acts of the Privy Council, 42, p.230.
3. Appendix 3.
4. P.R.O: SP/16/80/72.

1628-9 when Neile and Laud were openly arraigned with Buckingham as enemies of the State.[1] Buckingham's assassination looked as if it might remove the major bone of contention and Abbot was restored to the Council and his office, but the peace moves over the winter of 1628 were half-hearted. The elevation of Barnabas Potter to the episcopal bench did not make up for that of the notorious Richard Mountague several months before. Stormy debates in Parliament early in 1629 reveal much about how Neile and Laud were seen by their critics. With the demise of Parliament there is a loss of information on the operation of government. Criticism was no longer tolerated and the press was sharply censored.

It is hard to assess Neile's role as a Privy Councillor except when there are other sources available, usually throwing light on the results of Council action. Parliamentary records provide one such source. The Council rarely met in the summer months and it is almost certain that minutes were never recorded at the kind of meetings when really important decisions were taken. We are left in the realm of conjecture, but matters of state were almost certainly discussed on such occasions as when the King and Queen spent several days with Neile at Farnham in August 1630.[2]

It is a pity for example, that more is not known of the arguments behind the production of a proclamation on 11 October 1629 which called for a campaign to prevent 'the decayes of Churches and Chappels'.[3] Bishops were ordered to inspect their churches and 'not to rely upon the Churchwardens Presentments'.[4] When repairs were found to be necessary, not even common law writs of prohibition were to be permitted to interfere with the consequent actions of the church courts. Here was recognition of the weakness of the visitation

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1. Chpt. 5, pp. 151-2.
2. P.R.O: SP/16/167/25.
3. P.R.O: SP/45/10.
4. Ibid.

procedure and of the threat posed to the ecclesiastical courts by common lawyers. The proclamation was the work of knowledgeable people. The last organised campaign to rebuild and maintain churches had taken place in 1602.[1] The problem had been discussed in Parliament in February 1628/9 by a committee representing all parties, but the opportunity for concerted action was lost with Parliament's dissolution.[2] The proclamation of October 1629 was used by Neile and Laud to justify the movement of altars and fonts, the destruction of pews and 'beautifying' of churches in general. What started out as a universally desirable campaign to restore churches soon became one of the most symbolic and hated platforms of Arminian policy.[3]

Although little is known about the background to this proclamation, the Privy Council was clearly involved in the progress of the campaign. The work of Puritan impropriators and the general problem of lay impropriators was a matter of some concern to Laud and thus became so for the Council. In January 1629/30 Neile was appointed to a sub-committee to look into the proposals of one Richard Daye on the matter.[4] Nothing seems to have come of Daye's ideas, but Laud took a less academic course of action with regard to the famous 'Feoffees of Impropriations', those Puritan trustees based at St. Antholin's in London. Laud's attack was sounded by his chaplain Heylin in a vigorous sermon given in July 1630. Actual charges were laid before the Exchequer court in the Easter term of 1632. Criminal charges were soon dropped, but the group was ordered to disband in February 1632/3.[5] Neile was not directly involved in this campaign as far as one can tell, but he undoubtedly agreed with the decision. Laud maintained pressure on the organisation and Neile sat on a committee

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1. Whitgift had ordered an enquiry in June 1602 - 'The State of the Church', I, ed. C.W. Foster, Lincoln Record Society, 23, 1926, p.220.
2. Chpt. 5, p.158.
3. Chpt. 7, pp.208-10.
4. P.R.O: SP/16/159/23.
5. Laud's Works, III, pp. 216-17.

set up a year later to consider whether the former feoffees should be prosecuted on criminal charges after all.[1] Nothing came of the idea.

Meanwhile, Laud seized on a new symbol for the more positive aspects of the campaign to improve churches in the realm. He revived ideas first mooted by James I in 1620 for the repair of St. Paul's Cathedral. In April 1631 Neile was one of many appointed to a commission to supervise the repair of St. Paul's.[2] Huge subscriptions were raised at court and from the clergy. Fines from the ecclesiastical courts augmented the supply of money and provided new reasons for the unpopularity of the courts in question. It is not known what contribution Neile made at the time, but he was still raising money in Yorkshire for the project in June 1636.[3] This use of court fines created strange ironies. Incest committed by Edward Paler enabled Neile to commission the celebrated Robert Dallam to build a new organ at York in 1633.[4]

The church restoration campaign illustrates how a sensible policy became tarnished because it was put into effect in a partisan fashion. This was all too typical of what happened when Neile and Laud were involved in 'thorough' government in the 1630s. One sad aspect of their work was that more and more time was spent in the prosecution of opponents of their regime. It is unfortunately a dominant theme of the period 1629-40 and mars Neile's achievements in the northern province as well as his constructive work in central government.

No sooner had Parliament's stormy session of 1628-9 ended than Neile was involved in a campaign of reprisals against some of the opposition spokesmen. Sir Robert Cotton was taken into custody and his study ransacked for evidence of seditious correspondence.[5] Many

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1. P.R.O: SP/16/259/2.
2. P.R.O: SP/16/188/37.
3. P.R.O: SP/16/327/47. Neile to Laud, 23 June 1636 - notes the raising of £500 for lead for St. Paul's.
4. Chpt. 8, pp. 248-4.
5. T. Birch, The Court & Times of Charles I, II, p.36. Gresley to Puckering, 15 Nov. 1629.

of his associates were similarly treated and for a while the Earl of Clare was placed under Neile's custody at Winchester.[1] It was no easy confinement; even the Earl's wife was only allowed access to dress her husband's leg wound on condition that some of Neile's servants remained in attendance.[2] Proceedings instituted in Star Chamber dragged on and Simond D'Ewes later claimed that the strain of these months shortened Cotton's life and that:

> 'I understand from himself and others that Dr. Neile and Dr. Laud, two prelates that had been stigmatized in the first session of Parliament in 1628, were his sore enemies'.[3]

At Winchester Neile soundly warned Dr. Moor, the man who had testified against him in Parliament, to proceed with care and demanded copies of his sermons.[4]

The zealous efficiency of Neile and Laud on the Council, like that of Wentworth later in Ireland, angered many almost regardless of the policies involved. During the winter of 1630-1 Neile was responsible for the safe custody of the Countess of Castlehaven while her husband stood trial for sodomy.[5] Laud and Neile were firm adherents of the view that the law should be seen to apply to all sections of society. As Christopher Hill once pointed out:

> 'One reason for the unpopularity of the High Commission with the parliamentary class was its power to impose heavy sentences on the sort of person who might expect to escape from the normal judicial processes'.[6]

Neile had been present at the celebrated trial of Sir Robert Howard and Lady Purbeck for "incontinency" in the autumn of 1627, when the defendants had been ordered to perform public penance at St. Paul's Cross.[7] He was likewise present in 1631 when the High Commission

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1. Ibid., p.37.
2. Acts of the Privy Council, 45, p.486.
3. T. Birch, The Court & Times of Charles I, II, p.37.
4. The Diary of John Young S.T.P., ed. F.R. Goodman, Lond. 1928, p.84.
5. Acts of the Privy Council, 46, p.225.
6. C. Hill, Society and Puritanism in Pre-Revolutionary England, Lond. 1964, p.349.
7. J.S. Burn, The High Commission, Lond. 1865, p.55.

overrode a common law prohibition to fine Sir Giles Alington £12,000 for marrying his niece.[1]

Some would see Neile's humble origins as an explanation for his willingness to apply the law severely to all classes of people.[2] Certainly Neile showed great reverence for the law throughout his life. It may be that, in common with many skilful administrators before him, Neile became blinded to the fact that laws ultimately depend upon society for their validity. That society did not necessarily want the efficiency which Neile and Laud offered and certainly did not like greater control from London. Yet the law was one of Neile's chief yardsticks in life and even when his reports from York grew gloomier, he could only relate his news in terms of lack of efficiency and obedience to sound government.

One expression of the sense of social justice which coloured Arminian policies in the 1630s was the creation of the new Poor Law Commission in January 1630/1.[3] Under this elaborate scheme the country was divided into six circuits and Justices of the Peace were required to report to Privy Councillors responsible for various counties within the circuits. Neile was appointed to the West Country circuit with special reference to Somerset.[4] Unfortunately, no further evidence of Neile's participation in this work exists. It has been cynically pointed out by some commentators that this policy, however vigorously pursued, would hardly win influential supporters for the Crown.

Meanwhile, the vendettas of 1629 were pursued throughout the 1630s. The savagery of the punishments now meted out in the Court of Star Chamber naturally excited further opposition. When Alexander Leighton, the author of Sion's Plea against the Prelacie was captured

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1. T. Birch, The Court & Times of Charles I, II, pp. 119-122. Mead to Stuteville, 20 May 1631.
2. Chpt. 7, p.228.
3. P.R.O: SP/16/182/8.
4. Acts of the Privy Council, 46, pp. 330-31.

in February 1629/30, he was kept in solitary confinement for several months before being sentenced in June. Neile was one who urged that he be fined £10,000, degraded by the High Commission, put to the pillory and the lash, to lose his ears and be branded. Neile also deemed the moment of giving such a sentence appropriate for giving Leighton a lecture on the divine origins of episcopacy![1]

When Walter Long appeared before Star Chamber in the same year, charged with fraudulent election to Parliament, 'my Lord of Winchester was the first man that fined him at £2,000'.[2] This judgement sprang from more than a predilection for harsh sentences: Long had been the first man to call for the inclusion of Neile's name with Laud's in the remonstrance of June 1628.[3]

Repression did not go unopposed. Although suspended at Durham, Peter Smart was not deserted by his allies in the south. In June 1629 Benjamin Laney, a new recruit to Neile's band of illustrious chaplains, informed John Cosin that the Smart affair was being moved to York's jurisdiction in an effort to outwit Burton and Prynne who had obtained a writ of prohibition against proceedings in the south.[4] Laney wrote despairingly that:

> 'The lawyers have pared our ecclesiastical jurisdiction to the quick, and for anything I can see the court hath nothing left but a neck only to be trod upon'.[5]

A month later, Neile was involved in talks with Chief Justice Yelverton in an unsuccessful attempt to find a solution to this case.[6] It was still unresolved in July 1632 when even Neile lamented the weakness of the High Commission at York.[7]

The High Commission was under attack in both provinces. In 1630

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1. A. Leighton, Epitome, 1646, p.77 - as quoted in D.N.B.
2. T. Birch, The Court & Times of Charles I, II, p.55. Pory to Mead, 12 Feb. 1629/30.
3. B.M: Stowe MS. 366, f. 248v.
4. T. Birch, The Court & Times of Charles I, II, pp. 19-21.
5. Ibid.
6. P.R.O: SP/16/147/35 & 42.
7. Chpt. 8, p.256, 278.

commissioners in the south were forced to answer charges for unjust imprisonment of George Huntley before King's Bench.[1] The silencing of Neile's old adversary Arthur Hildersham in March of that year showed that it was necessary to exercise constant vigilance over past cases.[2] Open defiance in the courts was not uncommon. An anonymous oatmeal maker addressed Neile as 'thou tail of the beast' in April 1630.[3] It is hardly surprising that when the opportunity arose to deal with such tormentors in the Court of Star Chamber Neile and Laud favoured harsh penalties.

It is from statements made in the courts during this period when Neile and Laud were at the pinnacle of their power, that one gets clear expression of their policy at last. In November 1631 Neile spoke out angrily against a minister named Vicars from Lincolnshire:

> 'He hath not taken paines to read the book of common prayer, the book of homilyes, and the canons, but taken a pride to runne contrary to the streame of them'.[4]

It was imperative that Vicars be compelled to 'preach a little lesse and study a little more'.[5] Later that month, 'the Bishop of Winton found fault with setting lockes upon pewe dores'.[6] When Dr. Hooke dared to preach against clergymen holding temporal offices, Neile thought the 'assertion fitt for an Anabaptist'.[7] For Neile and Laud the distinctions between the courts of High Commission and of Star Chamber had become blurred. Neile felt Hooke should realize:

> '..that till the priesthood was established in Moses' tyme, the cheife of every tribe and house were princes and priestes, and that afterwards priestes were judges in temporall thinges'.[8]

Neile had no qualms about exercising his position on the Privy Council

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1. B. Brook, The Lives of the Puritans, II, pp. 501-3.
2. Ibid., pp. 376-88.
3. T. Birch, The Court & Times of Charles I, II, pp. 71-74. Mead to Stuteville, 17 April 1630.
4. 'Reports of Cases in the Courts of Star Chamber and High Commission', ed. S. Gardiner, Camden Society New Series, 39, 1886, pp. 233-4.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid., p.239.
7. Ibid., p.257.
8. Ibid., pp. 257-8.

to bolster up the weakness of the High Commission.

Star Chamber began to hear an increasing number of cases similar to those formerly the preserve of the Court of High Commission. In November 1631 Neile was instrumental in gaining further investigation into a case involving parishioners who refused to kneel to receive communion at Sudbury in Suffolk.[1] Laud commented at the time that the matter clearly belonged in the ecclesiastical courts, but William Prynne, acting for the defence, claimed that it had already been dismissed by the High Commission. Well informed and precise as ever, Neile was able to refute this last claim and secure a favourable judgement.[2]

Neile's pronouncements in Star Chamber were just as revealing as those made in the ecclesiastical courts. He was present in February 1631/2 when Robert Carrier and others were before the court charged with making pro-Catholic statements and causing a riot. Suggestions about the possibility of reunion with Rome led Neile to remark:

> 'I confesse a pair of sheeres went between; but all the botchers in England and Europe Shall never make up the rent: when the Church of Rome shall purge herself of detestable idolatry, boudy tenents, superstition, etc., and such like impious opinions, then, and not before, I agree to a reconciliation'.3

Here was a concise statement on the Arminian position vis à vis reunion with Rome; unfortunately, it was not widely believed by either Puritans or Catholic envoys like Panzani.

Cases heard before the prerogative courts in May brought a new issue to the attention of Neile and Laud. On 3 May 1632, Neile, newly translated to York, was present at a meeting of the ecclesiastical commissioners discussing illegal conventicles being held in the Black Friars area of London. When it became apparent that seats had been erected behind the communion table at St. Austins, Neile and

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1. Ibid., p.72.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid., pp. 103-4.

Laud demanded a full enquiry.[1] Six parishioners duly appeared before the court a few days later to hear Laud complain that as their bishop he should have been consulted. When a case involving a riot over seats at Eccleson chapel was heard in Star Chamber on 11 May, Neile remarked with evident exasperation:

> '..that whilest he was Bishop of Winchester noe causes perteyninge to the ecclesiasticall jurisdiccion under him were more frequent than broyles about seates, and because they were an occasion of much discord it were good to restrain them'.[2]

Laud heartily agreed. Several principles were at stake here: one concerned the right of the ordinary to be the sole arbiter of seating arrangements in churches and chapels; another involved the Arminian conception of worship that seats should not surround the communion table.

Weakened though the High Commission was by the constant sniping of critics like Prynne and Burton, it was still the natural court in which to seek to enforce ecclesiastical authority. More test cases involving seats were heard in that court in May and June 1632. It reached a climax on 7 June when a petition was presented by parishioners of St. Leonard's, Foster Lane, London to erect seats in the east end of their church.[3] Laud protested angrily that '3 or 4 Churches at this present are at this ward with me' and demanded an end to such suits.[4] 'Doe you thinke you are worthy to sitt above the Lord's board in his house', Neile enquired indignantly.[5] When the case of St. Austins came to a head on 21 June 1632, churchwardens everywhere were ordered to submit to the authority of their bishops in the matter of seating. Under the seal of the Archbishop of Canterbury, a general directive was issued condemning the practice of placing seats above communion tables.[6]

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1. Ibid., p.278.
2. Ibid., p.140.
3. Ibid., p.302.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid., pp. 312-13.

Thus a campaign to reconstruct churches on Arminian precepts was conducted in the courts in support of the proclamation of 1629. Neile pressed forward with the matter in the north, but Laud encountered more determined opposition in the southern province. In October 1633 another test case, now referring to St. Gregory's near St. Paul's Cathedral, was called to the attention of the Court of Arches following complaints from parishioners about orders concerning the position of the communion table. Newly confirmed as Archbishop of Canterbury, Laud sought a definitive answer to the problem. The case was referred to the Privy Council. Neile was present on 3 November 1632 when their policy was confirmed by royal pronouncement.[1] 'It would be impossible to choose a better symbol of the victory of one set of ideas over another' wrote Samuel Gardiner.[2] The decision marked another pyrrhic victory for Laud as it only hardened the opposition of those who saw that all courts of appeal were now blocked to their entreaties.

The decision over St. Gregory's marks the strength of the influence Neile and Laud exercised on the Privy Council in the 1630s. These old friends alone were responsible for the Council's hardening attitude on religious and social questions. Although Samuel Harsnet could always be counted on for support, a full year was allowed to elapse before his appointment to York was followed by a call to join the Council.[3] Moreover, despite his recall to the Council in the peace moves of autumn 1628, Abbot was still in disgrace and rarely attended meetings. When the staunchly Protestant Earl of Pembroke died in 1630, the field was left clear for Laud and Neile to dominate - at least on religious legislation.

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1. Copies of the royal pronouncement were sent to every diocese. York: High Commission Misc. Papers 2(b).
2. S. Gardiner, History of England, VII, p.313.
3. Harsnet was nominated for York in Nov. 1628 and first sat on the Council in November 1629. Acts of the Privy Council, 45, Item 560.

Historians have shown that Laud never gained a position of supremacy on the Privy Council, even after he became archbishop in 1633.[1] Charles does not seem to have trusted or consistently followed the advice of any man after Buckingham. The Lord Treasurer, Richard Weston and Lord Cottington formed an opposition faction on the Council, which, while there was little doctrinal disagreement over policies, was nonetheless a check to 'thorough' government.[2] For a while Laud had the support of his protégé Francis Windebanke, but this Secretary of State soon betrayed all trust. Thomas Wentworth was a firm ally, but he appeared at meetings far too rarely to be of great use to Laud in England. It was only in his clerical colleagues Neile and Juxon that Laud could place implicit faith.

Richard Neile's supporting role on the Council during the early 1630s has never been properly appreciated.[3] It has been assumed that he was by now simply an old man pensioned off with the archdiocese of York for past loyalty. William Prynne even hinted that Neile's lenient approach with Puritans in the north arose because he was in disgrace at court.[4] Yet between 1632-5 Neile gave Laud unstinting service on the Privy Council and attended approximately 45% of all known meetings.[5] Not bad for a man of over 70 whose main responsibilities lay several hundred miles north of the capital. In 1634 Neile attended more meetings than in any other year of his career as a councillor.[6] Only in 1636 did Neile finally stop attending meetings because of his failing health and take up residence first at Southwell and then at Bishopthorpe. He was then 74. Significantly, it was

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1. K. McElroy, 'Laud and his Struggle for Influence from 1628 to 1640', (Oxford University D.Phil. thesis 1943) is based entirely on proving this point.
2. M. Havran, Caroline Courtier. The Life of Lord Cottington, Lond. 1973 provides useful evidence of faction fighting on the Council during this period.
3. It was certainly ignored in the McElroy thesis, op. cit.
4. W. Prynne, The Antipathie of the English Lordly Prelacie, Lond. 1641, p.222.
5. Appendix 3.
6. Ibid.

only in 1636 that William Juxon, already Bishop of London, was created Lord Treasurer and admitted to the Privy Council to take up Neile's mantle as Laud's second-in-command.[1]

Before 1636 Neile's name is invariably linked with Laud's in his work on the Council. When Laud sought to extend his control to the congregations of the New World, Neile was appointed to the commissions entrusted with this awesome responsibility. In February 1632/3 this simply involved consideration of reprieves for able-bodied criminals to be used in voyages of exploration.[2] But Laud became more ambitious and in April 1634 a Commission for the Plantations was established and given wide theoretical powers over the colonies.[3] These were clarified in 1636 when Neile was appointed to a commission set up specifically to consider new laws for the colonies.[4] Proclamations relating to emigration controls in 1637 and 1638 give a more realistic picture of what level of supervision the authorities were really able to exercise beyond their own shores.[5] There is no evidence that the Commission for Plantations involved much work for Neile or that he shared his partner's fanatical hopes for the project.

There is more evidence that Neile agreed with the decision taken in October 1633 to re-issue the Book of Sports.[6] He had championed the original work issued in 1618 and was aware of its great value in regions like the north.[7] Yet Neile still proceeded with tact and caution when the book was re-issued. Orders went out for ministers to read the work from their pulpits, but in his second visitation of

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1. Laud's Works, III, p.220 notes Juxon's appointment as Lord Treasurer on 6 March 1635/6, on which day he was also sworn in as a member of the Privy Council - P.R.O: P.C./2/46 p.10. Neile's last recorded attendance at a meeting was on 29 May 1636.
2. P.R.O: SP/16/232/97.
3. P.R.O: Colonial 8/12 & P.C./2/44 p.1.
4. P.R.O: P.C./2/46/p.184; SP/16/318/57.
5. Tudor & Stuart Proclamations, ed. R. Steele, I, pp. 210 & 214.
6. Ibid., p.198.
7. See p. 119.

York, Neile gave obdurate clergymen time to reconsider and employed Francis White's book on the Sabbath as useful propaganda. There was no weakening of resolve on his part however, and the last opposition to the book was stifled in 1638.[1]

The presence of Laud and Neile on the Council undoubtedly increased fears that the King's government was in the hands of crypto-Catholic clerics. Since the days of Cardinal Wolsey, rule by clerics had been regarded with the contempt and suspicion per se. Yet here was rule by clerics who had actually been condemned for their unorthodoxy by Parliament. The strong upsurge of criticism of clerics holding temporal office was probably partly responsible for Juxon's appointment to the Council being withheld until it was absolutely necessary in 1636. The close identification of the bishops with unpopular secular policies such as forced loans and the later extension of Ship money only further damaged their public image.

Cases in the Court of Star Chamber reflect the increasing unpopularity of Charles and his ministers in the 1630s. The business of the court was generally increasing during this period and the number of cases involving contempt for government legislation or particular ministers accounted for much of this increase.[2] On the whole these cases were dealt with speedily and fairly, but what sticks in historians' minds now and must have impressed public opinion more at the time, were the exceptional judgements given against people like Leighton and Prynne. The gravest censures seem to have been reserved especially for those cases relating to the clerical hierarchy. Thus Leighton's 'dreadful censure was the price of his scandal of the episcopacy'.[3] Similarly, when Mephistosheth Robyns appeared before

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1. Chpt. 8, p.265.
2. H. Phillips, 'The Last Years of the Court of Star Chamber 1630-41', Trans. Royal Hist. Soc., 4th Series, 21, Lond. 1939, p.117.
3. Ibid., p.121.

the court in 1634 accused of reciting scandalous stories about Neile, he was not only ordered to apologize, but was to be whipped and fined £1,000.[1]

The most famous 'martyr' of the period is undoubtedly William Prynne. Neile was in court in February 1633/4 when Prynne was sentenced to lose his ears and be pilloried because of his book Histriomastix. Neile willingly agreed with the harshest judgement demanded, because like Laud, he could not stomach Prynne's vitriolic humour. He was particularly disturbed by the latter's condemnation of church music and disparaging references to 'the thundring of the bellowes, the roaring of the base, the squeaking of the Treble'.[2] With a display of righteous indignation, Neile concluded that Prynne's 'sect was grown soe stiffe, that it was faine to be stiffled at Tiburne, & Cheapside with a halter'.[3] The notorious judgement given against Prynne, Bastwick and Burton in July 1637 no doubt met with Neile's complete approval. His treatment of Prynne's supporters at Chester illustrates that even when away from London his attitude did not mellow.[4]

Just as their presence on the Privy Council blocked the last court of appeal for opponents of Arminianism, so the presence of Neile and Laud on the Court of Star Chamber brought that body into disrepute. Star Chamber became fatally identified with the work of Neile and Laud on the Privy Council and in the Court of High Commission. It ceased to be seen as a useful, efficient independent court. It is not surprising that once the Long Parliament met, it considered the Court of Star Chamber in the same context as that of High Commission as fit only to be abolished. In the words of H. Phillips, the

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1. Ibid., p.122.
2. Bodleian Library, Oxford: Tanner MS. 299, ff. 123-134 Proceedings in Star Chamber on 15 Feb. 1633/4.
3. Ibid., f.133.
4. Chpt. 8, pp. 275-6.

historian of this court's demise, 'the sudden reaction against the Star Chamber may be considered a phase of the general movement against the episcopacy'.[1]

Thus, as with Neile's work at York during this period, there is a problem of disentangling positive achievements from effective repression. During the period in which Neile was active as a Privy Councillor and as a member of the two prerogative courts, he was responsible with Laud for ensuring the full implementation of Arminian policies throughout the land, despite past condemnation in Parliament. This was accompanied by considerable repression of dissident activities. Here is an unattractive aspect of Neile's personality. He was quite firmly convinced of the need for harsh adherence to law and order and nearly always agreed with the severest judgements given in the two prerogative courts. His approach to the problems of central government contrasts sharply with his work in the provinces, where he was invariably more cautious and flexible. It is tempting to suggest that in matters of central government Neile was swayed by the harsh attitude of his old friend Laud. Certainly Neile felt obliged to give his friend unstinting loyalty and support. Yet Prynne's case reveals that Neile felt deeply on the need to suppress that man's work. When the case of the heretic John Trendall was referred to him in August 1639, he was prepared to consider the case in the light of the execution of Edward Wightman as he feared 'the present times do require like Exemplary punishment'.[2]

It is absolutely typical of Neile that he should give unstinting service to his friend Laud and to his King. His conscientious attendance at Privy Council meetings till the age of 74 testifies to

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1. H. Phillips, 'The Last Years of the Court of Star Chamber 1630-41', Trans. Royal Hist. Soc., 4th Series, 21, p.130.
2. See p. 285.

his devotion to their cause. Attempts to gain proper economic independence for the Church, the restoration of churches, the extension of poor relief and the application of justice for all classes of society, would have commanded more support if the theology of the advocates had not been suspect. Yet Neile and Laud met opposition not only because of their theology. Many laymen felt it was imperative that bishops should not be allowed to regain the position of pre-eminence in the land vouchsafed to them before the Reformation. This anti-clericalism increased when it became apparent that Neile and Laud claimed such power and possessed sufficient ability to make them dangerous. Indeed their efficiency in public office posed a grave threat to the traditional fabric of provincial society. The lethargic and corrupt Cottington was preferred to the zealous and efficient bishop as portrayed by Neile and Laud.

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Chapter 7: Was Richard Neile an Arminian?

> 'For Bishop Neile, he was ever reputed a Popish and Arminian Prelate, a persecutor of all orthodox, godly Ministers, a preferer of Popish Arminian clergymen..'.[1]

Such was Parliament's judgement during the course of Archbishop Laud's trial in 1645 as reported by William Prynne in Canterburies Doome. But what is meant by this concept 'Arminian', at once so broad and yet containing such specifically Dutch connotations? What does Prynne mean by the term and was there really an Arminian movement in England in the early seventeenth century? Did Neile truly belong to such a group of theologians? If so, how and when did he become associated with them and what part did he play within the movement?

These are some of the vexed questions to be considered in this chapter. They are controversial because much time has been devoted, with strikingly little success, to unravelling theological beliefs of this period. Theology was in a state of flux at the time - reflected in the differing pronouncements of modern historians. After much debate, the term 'Puritan' has survived as a viable historical concept referring to those Protestants who remained within the Church of England after the Elizabethan Settlement of 1563, but who sought 'further reformation'.[2] Attention is now focused on their counterparts in the clerical establishment. Until the 1590s at least, it is assumed that all shared a common Calvinist theology, simply choosing to emphasize different tenets. Ex-emigrés who accepted episcopal office embraced the need for hierarchical organisation and cohesion in the fight against Catholicism. Their more scrupulous brethren urged

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1. W. Prynne, Canterburies Doome, Lond. 1646, p.131.
2. B. Hall, 'Puritanism: the Problem of Definition', Studies in Church History, Vol. II, ed. G. Cummings, Lond. 1965, pp. 293-4; P. Collinson, The Elizabethan Puritan Movement, Lond. 1967, pp. 12-14.

the adoption of different priorities which were unacceptable to the crown. By the 1590s the Elizabethan Settlement had come to be accepted in its own right and in Richard Hooker, discovered its greatest publicist. A new generation had inherited the compromise of the old, but no longer necessarily shared the same assumptions.

Scholars agree that traditional Calvinist beliefs were questioned in the universities in the 1590s. Dogmatic acceptance of Calvinist ideas of predestination was rejected to the alarm of Puritans. Theologians like Lancelot Andrewes and John Overall sought new values in the traditions laid down by the Fathers. This questioning of old beliefs did not go unopposed, but the Church itself had altered under the guidance of strong leaders like Whitgift and then Bancroft. Spokesmen had appeared to defend and even exalt the once grudgingly accepted system of episcopacy. Reformation ideals were no longer paramount. Clergymen were no longer united in accepting the primacy of their preaching function. Subscription to rigid articles and ceremonies became the order of the day as the Church developed as an institution.

Many changes passed largely unnoticed until the 1620s when a group of theologians attracted attention by advocating great use of ceremonial and stressing the sacerdotal role of the priesthood. This group allied themselves closely with the crown and seemed to accept theories of the Divine Right of Kings, although they also laid great stress on the independent power of the clerical estate. Laymen in Parliament began to take notice of these changes in religious beliefs. They connected the ideas of these Englishmen with those of the recently condemned group of Arminians in the United Provinces. It was perhaps as erroneous correlation, but the name stuck as a convenient pejorative term for people who were seen as the enemies of true religion in England. Protestant fears seemed well-grounded when William Laud came to power in the Church and enforced changes in ceremonial throughout

the land. Puritan preaching and writings were suppressed. The Arminians were regarded as 'the ushers in of popery' and many fled the country for fear that Antichrist was at hand.

While historians agree that such changes did occur, controversy surrounds the question of whether or not this was a coherent movement dating from the 1590s. More crucial still, if such a movement did exist, what should it be called? Whenever theologians are listed under certain tenets of belief with a view to extracting a common feature, critics point out exceptions to the rule. Calvinists like Morton, Davenant and Hall can be accurately cited in support of the practices of bowing towards the altar, its maintenance in the east end of a church and in support of the divine right of episcopacy respectively.[1] This illustrates the complexity of the problem. Nevertheless the fact that some consensus of opinion exists about the composition of this new group of theologians is evidenced in the popularity of the term 'Laudian' in history textbooks. The word has marked political connotations. It relates to a group of theologians who held power with William Laud in the 1630s. Most users of the term date its inception from the time Laud became Bishop of London in 1628 and was criticized in Parliament with Neile as an initiator of dangerous religious innovations.[2]

Unfortunately, 'Laudianism' is not a theological appelation. Its application is best restricted to the 1630s and a time when theologians were closely identified with the crown in the development of unpopular secular policies. It loses validity the more one tries to examine

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1. Matthew Wren cited Morton's defence of the practice of bowing towards the altar in his reply to articles of impeachment in 1641. Parentalia, ed. Christopher & Stephen Wren, London 1750, pp. 73-114; Laud alluded to Davenant's orders concerning altar moves in his speech at the trial of Prynne, Bastwick & Burton in 1637. Laud's Works, Vol. VI, part I, pp. 65-70; Bishop Hall published Episcopacy by Divine Right Asserted in 1641.
2. W.R. Fryer, 'The "High Churchmen" of the Earlier Seventeenth Century', Renaissance and Modern Studies, IV, 1961, pp. 110-11.

its roots and has led some historians badly astray. In an interesting article on 'Arminiansim and Laudianism in Seventeenth-Century England', T.M. Parker flies in the face of contemporaries like Prynne by claiming that the Laudians were a distinct group from the Arminians.[1] For him the Laudians were solely concerned with such practical matters as 'the relation of Church and nation, the conduct of worship and the development of personal piety'.[2] Parker even went so far as to claim that 'Arminian he may have been in the broad sense', but that 'it was not so much doctrine as discipline which was the distinguishing mark of the Laudian'.[3] This is surely not good enough. One cannot rest content with a term which describes the effects but not the rationale of certain policies.

The search for a term to encompass a broader time span and define theological beliefs has produced several other alternatives. Certain historians have seen fit to suggest that 'Anglicanism' had been born.[4] The survival of the Elizabethan Settlement was a triumph for the values of reason and order accepted by later 'Anglicans', but still threatened by the activities of Puritans. We are presented with the picture of urbane, tolerant, rational Anglicans opposed by anxious, bigoted and bible-shackled Puritans. Unfortunately this label has too many modern connotations and too much conservative bias to be useful. Fundamental objections are summed up in the words of the historian of the Elizabethan Puritan movement:

> '"Anglicanism", which was a term unknown to the sixteenth century, and as an indication of a distinct system of divinity, an invention of the nineteenth, is best avoided altogether'.[5]

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1. T.M. Parker, 'Arminianism and Laudianism in Seventeenth Century England', Studies in Church History, I, ed. C. Dugmore & C. Duggan, Lond. 1964, p.30.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid., pp.33-4.
4. E. Bourne, The Anglicanism of William Laud, Lond. 1947; J. New, Anglican and Puritan: the basis of their opposition, 1558-1640, Lond. 1964.
5. P. Collinson, The Elizabethan Puritan Movement, 1967, p.13.

A term with less specifically modern connotations and which carries less risk of pejorative usage is that of 'High Churchmen'. This certainly fits a wide group of theologians in the seventeenth century who emphasised the authority of the Church as an institution and who advanced sacerdotal claims for the priesthood. Unfortunately, the term is too all-embracing. Moreover, it suggests the description 'Low Church' as its opposite, which would only complicate our picture of the early seventeenth century. These terms strictly belong to the later seventeenth and eighteenth centuries as George Every has demonstrated.[1] When Every attempted to trace the traditions back he was forced to lose sight of his original definitions. This is aptly reflected in his woolly statement on Laud that 'in the wide popular sense he was a High Churchman'.[2] Similar problems are evident in the masterpiece in the cause of this term entitled The High Church Tradition by Canon G. Adleshaw.[3]

The problem of opposites is most easily demonstrated in the use of the word 'conservative'. If one takes a broad view of organised Christianity it is possible to discern a High Church tradition going back to pre-Reformation days. Stress on the study of patristics and the sacerdotal role of the priesthood can be seen as conservative ideas in relation to the radical Puritans who proclaimed the virtues of the Word. The trouble with a term like 'conservative' is that its use depends upon one's historical perspective. Faced with new theories on doctrine and church ceremonial in the 1590s many Puritans felt they were the conservatives and true guardians of the Elizabethan Settlement. This is certainly the view enunciated in Prynne's propa-

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1. G. Every, The High Church Party 1688-1718, Lond. 1956.
2. Ibid., p.3.
3. G. Adleshaw, The High Church Tradition, Lond. 1941.

ganda of the 1630s and '40s.[1] The problem is further compounded if one looks at the work of some bishops from the narrow viewpoint of ecclesiastical administration. When bishops employed their church courts to full effect and strictly enforced canon law, a survival from pre-Reformation days, they could be seen as conservative in an almost independent institutional sense. Hence Ronald Marchant could be led to the strange and confusing conclusion that at York 'Neile's church polity, while ostensibly setting out to re-establish Anglican principles, was in fact ecclesiastical conservatism'.[2]

A term which captures the flavour of both the broad swing of the theological pendulum back towards Rome after the Reformation and the hated novelty of the movement, is that of 'Anglo-Catholicism'. As with the term 'High Churchman', this expression's validity lies more in its broad philosophical applicability than in its use to cover a short period in time or conjure up a distinct group of people. It has been employed with most success by historians discussing the general history of ideas.[3] A basic problem with the label is that although many in the seventeenth century were regarded as the 'ushers in of popery' attacks upon them were usually distinct from those made upon Catholics.[4] True 'Anglo-Catholics', in the sense made familiar in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, were few and far between. If

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1. Eg. W. Prynne, Anti-Arminianisme, 2nd. ed. Lond. 1630; This view is broadly accepted by C.H. & K. George, The Protestant Mind of the English Reformation 1570-1640, Princetown 1961. It has been most succinctly stated by N. Tyacke in 'Puritanism, Arminianism, and Counter-Revolution', The Origins of the English Civil War, ed. C. Russell, Lond. 1973.
2. R. Marchant, The Puritans and the Church Courts in the Diocese of York 1560-1642, Lond. 1960, p.205.
3. W.K. Jordan, The Development of Toleration in England from the accession of James I to the Convention of the Long Parliament (1603-1640), Lond. 1936.
4. R. Clifton, 'Fear of Popery', The Origins of the English Civil War, ed. C. Russell, Lond. 1973, p.152; C.Z. Wiener, 'The Beleaguered Isle. A Study of Elizabethan and Early Jacobean Anti-Catholicism', Past & Present, 51, 1971, pp. 27-62 explains the exaggerated Protestant fears of ceremonialism in the context of the cosmic battle with Antichrist.

Bishop Goodman of Gloucester is accepted as an example he was not a member of the group known as Laudians. Although criticism of the Catholic Church was muted in the early seventeenth century as the period witnessed a revival of sacramental and ceremonial theology, few theologians of the period thought reunion with Rome feasible without substantial reforms to the Papacy and Roman doctrine.

We are left with the title 'Arminian'. The term has one great merit over those previously discussed in that it was used with a fair degree of consistency and precision by people of the time. It was certainly a term of abuse rarely accepted by those cited as such, but this does not deny its currency. Its use as an historical concept was originally championed by A.W. Harrison in 1937. In a work simply entitled Arminianism he noted the career and impact of the Dutch theologian Jacobus Arminius, a Professor of Theology at Leyden University who died in 1609.[1] His chief claim to fame was that he cast doubts upon the traditional Calvinist theories on predestination and free will. Or as Harrison put it:

> 'Arminianism is regarded in these pages as the protest against those tenets in the theology of the Reformed Church that dwelt with God's Election and Reprobation of individuals to eternal life or death'.[2]

Harrison linked this movement with the questioning of Calvinist beliefs already alluded to in England in the 1590s

> 'Hooker at Oxford, Andrewes and Overall at Cambridge, must be regarded as the representatives of the new school of thought that was alive in England before Arminius began to lecture at Leyden'.[3]

T.M. Parker has corroborated this part of the thesis as has H.C. Porter in his masterly work on Cambridge.[4] What Harrison's thesis

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1. A.W. Harrison, Arminianism, Lond. 1937; Harrison had first written on this theme from a more limited approach in The Beginnings of Arminianism to the Synod of Dort, Lond. 1926.
2. A. Harrison, Arminianism, preface. 3. Ibid., p.123.
4. T. Parker, op. cit.; H.C. Porter, Reformation and Reaction in Tudor Cambridge, Cambridge 1958. Porter uses the phrase 'Arminianism avant la lettre' to get round the problem that the term does not gain general currency in England until after the Synod of Dort.

failed to provide was adequate evidence of the links between these thinkers and later theologians like Mountague and Laud. Moreover, as James I sent Calvinist representatives to the Synod of Dort which condemned Arminianism in 1619, it has been hard to assess the relations between Dutch and English Arminians.

New research in this field has been carried out by Nicholas Tyacke.[1] He confirms that strong links did exist between Dutch and English theologians during the first decades of the seventeenth century. While it is true that England developed a movement of its own, basic Arminian ideas were adapted to suit English conditions. Thus 'Arminianism in England emerged with an additional, sacramental dimension to that in the United Provinces'.[2] Factors peculiar to each country explain why English Arminians were not sent to the Synod of Dort to aid their Dutch counterparts. In Tyacke's words they were 'powerless to intervene in the United Provinces, engaged as they were in their own English struggle for survival'.[3] Similar national differences explain why Arminianism became associated with episcopacy and the crown in England, where in the United Provinces disputes were encompassed in republican vis à vis Orange family rivalries. In explaining the links between scholars like Overall and the men who eventually gained power with Laud, Tyacke reveals how the ideas of Arminius affected bishops in power like Bancroft and Neile and were in turn slightly altered by them in application in England.

There are many problems in the use of this term. Despite recent research by historians which supports Tyacke's views, it is still

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1. N. Tyacke, 'Arminianism in England in Religion and Politics, 1604-1640', (Oxford University D.Phil. thesis, 1968);
   ——— 'Puritanism, Arminianism, and Counter-Revolution', The Origins of the English Civil War, ed. C. Russell, Lond. 1973.
2. Ibid., p.129.
3. Ibid., p.131.

hard to discern a continuing tradition from the 1590s to the 1630s.[1] It is also difficult to explain the use of a term in England which has such a different meaning when used about the United Provinces. Many historians prefer to talk of shorter periods when it is possible to be more precise about groups of theologians and general royal policy. It is hard to talk in broad terms about ideas of this time when so little is really understood of the opinions of Kings James I and Charles I. Historians have not really managed to explain why George Abbot was selected to succeed Bancroft as Archbishop of Canterbury in 1611. Apart from one or two isolated studies, little is known about members of the episcopal bench between 1600 and 1640.[2] Some historians prefer to look at the problems from different angles altogether and point to the emergence of ecumenical ideas in this period or concentrate on the administrative work of bishops in the 1630s.

Much more reasearch is needed before we will know the complete story of 'English Arminianism'. But of all the concepts discussed so far it is the one which has most relevance to this thesis. The term was given publicity by the Synod of Dort and used by people of the time. It was employed in Parliament to describe theologians like Richard Mountague and Neile's chaplain, John Cosin. By 1630 its use was sufficiently widespread for William Prynne to publish a tract

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1. F. Shriver, 'The Ecclesiastical Policy of James I. Two Aspects: The Puritans (1603-5) - The Arminians (1611-25)', (Cambridge University Ph.D. 1967) accepts the case for Arminianism in England and discusses its survival under James I. Overall and Bancroft are seen as early supporters of the cause (pp. 79-80); Looking from the continental angle, C. Bangs, Arminius, New York 1971, highlights the similarities and differences between the movements in England and the United Provinces and accepts that the term is valid in England and that Bancroft stands within the English tradition (p.208).
2. Works by P. Welsby on Lancelot Andrewes 1555-1626, Lond. 1958 and George Abbot: The Unwanted Archbishop 1562-1633, Lond. 1962 illustrate the weakness of what studies are at our disposal. The latter work has no real account of Abbot's diocesan or archiepiscopal administration at all.

under the simple title of Anti-Arminianisme.[1] In that very book Prynne portrayed a tradition beginning with Overall and Harsnet, outspoken 'proto-Arminians' under Elizabeth, and culminating in the work of Neile and Laud, condemned as leaders of the party in the Parliament 1628-9. Even if Prynne was deliberately confusing the issue by using the term as an insult, its very use as such is interesting. It was stated in 1628-9 and more recently by Tyacke, that Richard Neile was a leader of the Arminian party. The rest of this chapter will examine this claim and attempt to discover the meaning of the term as it applies to Richard Neile.

It must be made clear from the outset that Neile left no simple exposition of his theological beliefs. The attacks made upon him in Parliament were for his actions rather than his words or writings. Thus assessment of particularly the earlier years of Neile's life is extremely difficult. Perhaps the best way of examining his attitudes would be to look at the criticisms which were made of him in Parliament during 1628-9. Much of the background of proceedings during these sessions is contained elsewhere in the thesis,[2] but what is of use here is a draft of a speech which Neile drew up to give to Parliament in 1629.[3] The speech is unfinished and was never given. It is drawn up under four headings: the accusation of Popery, of Arminianism, of the production of pardons for condemned clergymen, and of specific wrongs cited by Drs. Moor, Marshall and Beard.[4]

Under the first heading Neile simply declared his belief in the

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1. W. Prynne, Anti-Arminianisme, 2nd. ed. Lond. 1630.
2. Chpt. 5, pp. 149-59.
3. P.K. Durham: Hunter MS. 67, Item 14 - Draft speech for Parliament in Neile's hand consisting of 21 pages and dated 1629 by the contents.
4. Section I - pp. 3-11; II - 12-15; III - 16-17; IV - 18-21. Nearly half the paper was thus taken up with the weak charge of Popery and written with constant reference to the 39 Articles. This would fit with Pory's information to Mead in Nov. 1628 that the King was calling upon his bishops to give account of their views in relation to the articles. T. Birch, The Court & Times of Charles I, I, Lond. 1848, pp. 437-40.

39 Articles. For good measure he referred to the Mass as a thing of the stage rather than a church, attacked the power of the Papacy and rejected the doctrine of transubstantiation. Idolatry was wrong and Neile castigated the idea of purgatory as an 'old wyves dreame, & a Platonicall conceit'.[1] He was also quite firm that 'Merit of workes I utterly disclayme'.[2] Here was a thorough rejection of any possible charge that Neile was a secret Catholic. While he admitted that he did see some value in the practice of confession, he concluded that 'in the Church of Rome it is altogether abused'.[3] To combat the argument that his actions 'have bin such as have bin deemed worthy of suspition', Neile proceeded to cite examples of his past anti-Catholic behaviour.[4]

In this section Neile was careful to state that he had preached before the Cecils, his first masters, and many times at court without criticism. He also recalled that he had presented orthodox views on the questions of auricular confession and 'the state of the souls of the faithfull before Christ's Assension', on taking his degree of Doctor of Divinity in 1600.[5] Neile drew attention to the fact that he had edited the report on the conferences held with the Archbishop of Spalato in 1622 prior to the latter's return to the Roman fold and confidently referred his critics to that work. In an appeal to the judges of the northern circuit to come forward and support him, Neile also pointed to his work in bringing Catholics before the courts. As Neile was at pains to point out, the evidence in his favour was incontravertible. His opposition to the Commissions for Recusant compositions may not have been 'well known' as he claimed, but his actions at Durham House in stopping the attendance of recusants at Mass there with the French Ambassador in 1626 would have

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1. P.K. Durham: Hunter MS. 67, Item 14, p.6.
2. Ibid., p.7.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid., p.8.
5. Ibid., p.9.

been a tactful and apposite allusion.[1] In concluding this section of his speech Neile evaded responsibility for the erection of a stone altar at Durham, maintaining that the dean had instituted the change. However, like many of his colleagues when faced with questions about the altar, Neile cited the injunction of Queen Elizabeth that it should stand in the east end while communion was administered. He did add moreover, that he thought it 'no matter of great moment' if it was made of stone or timber.[2]

This section clarifies one matter. Neile should not be regarded as an 'Anglo-Catholic'. Even allowing for an element of over-statement, and there is evidence that his position on Catholics and the courts was not totally as he claimed, it is clear from this speech that Neile was not a Catholic sympathiser.[3] It is also apparent from the style that Neile enjoyed writing this section because he knew he was on very firm ground in his defence. This is less apparent in the shorter more crucial section which followed.

The very fact that there should be a section on Arminianism is a point in favour of the validity of this term during this period. Neile's defence against this attack indicates, however, some of the problems contemporaries suffered, as do historians today, because there was a precise Dutch use of the term available at the time. In answer to the statement that he was an 'Usherer in of Popery', Neile stood on his dignity and humourously replied:

> 'I am no gentleman usher, I meddle not w[i]th th[a]t office. I doe not know th[a]t I ever read 3 lynes of Arminius writinges neither doe I know th[a]t I have a page of any booke of his in my studye'.[4]

Yet curiously enough, Neile felt inclined to point out that apart from the questions of predestination and reprobation Arminius was

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1. Ibid., pp. 10-11.
2. Ibid., p.11.
3. Chpt. 3, pp.78-80.
4. P.K. Durham: Hunter MS. 67, Item 14, p.12.

'held to be in all other poynts, a ridged Calvinist'.[1]

Neile's defence that he had not read the works of Arminius was of course a classic reply which Mountague had given when under similar attack. Neile went perhaps too far, however, when he claimed that he was unable to master the points of theology under dispute, particularly as he made the interesting aside:

> 'I will not take upon me to open the mouth of the claye to dispute w[i]th the potter why hast thou made me thus or to enter into the secrets of gods unreveled counsels'.[2]

Neile claimed to be confident solely on the matter of 'God's goodness & generall promises of mercie to all penitent sinners'.[3] Such statements reveal an attitude which has much in common with the lack of assurance which originally led Arminius to question Calvinist certainties.

When Neile claimed that no man could find evidence that when 'desputing, preaching or writinge I ever medled in those questions' there is almost a sense of pride that he could not be faulted on this issue.[4] It was also of value to him that he was able to claim that he had written a 'sheet' against Baro in Cambridge in the 1590s for his master Burghley.[5] Naturally, he did not point out that he had condoned the recent works of Mountague and Cobin which had broadly accepted the arguments he had once condemned. Neile was quick to refer the rest of his defence to the thirty-nine articles as in the case of predestination and his belief in the complex article seventeen.[6] In generally ascribing 'the whole worke of our salvation soly to God & the powerful operation of the holye spirit of grace', Neile was on solid ground with most theologians bar the Catholics.[7] It was equally possible to be non-controversial on the extent of man's

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1. Ibid.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid., pp. 12-13.
6. Chpt. 1, p. 12.
7. P.K. Durham: Hunter MS. 67, Item 14, p.13.

salvation. Quoting the divines of Dort, no man's case was seen as forlorn if only he possessed faith in Christ.[1]

When Neile came to the question of perseverance he again became more circumspect in his statements. John Overall had caused great controversy in Cambridge in 1599 when he had claimed that it was possible for the 'elect' to fall from 'grace'.[2] All Neile would say on the question of the 'elect' was 'the Lord knoweth who are his'.[3] He was also very firm that 'I never yet tooke upon me to determine of fallinge either finally, or totallye'.[4] It would be equally hard for parliamentary critics to attack Neile's views on reprobation. In a short concluding statement to this section Neile accepted that all mankind was sinful and recited the well-worn phrase that 'the reward of sin is death'. He placed himself entirely under God's wisdom and justice.[5]

In the remaining two sections of this speech Neile dealt quite firmly with his imagined audience.[6] This is particularly true of his remarks about the accusations of Dr. Moor that he had forbidden him to preach against Catholicism. Apparently, the truth of the case was that Neile was simply enforcing the royal proclamation calling for an end to controversial sermons. Moor's position was even worse because he and his brother had dared to meddle in matters of state and criticize the late Duke of Buckingham in their sermons at Winchester.[7] Neile did not leave the matter at that. Abandoning caution, he went on to defend the practice of bowing at the name of Jesus and towards the altar. In the case of the latter, he admitted that he knew of 'no publick Constitution of the Church th[a]t injoineth it. Yet I hold it a dutie well befittinge all Christians'.[8] In a fervent defence of

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1. Ibid., p.14.
2. Chpt. 1, pp. 12-13.
3. P.K. Durham: Hunter MS. 67, Item 14, p.14.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid., pp. 14-15.
6. See Chpt. 5, pp. 158-9.
7. P.K. Durham: Hunter MS. 67, Item 14, pp. 18-19.
8. Ibid., p.20.

the word 'altar' and its position at the east end of churches Neile quoted the standard Elizabethan injunction, ratified under Canon 82 in 1604. According to Neile 'I am sure, said I, St Paul did not boggle at the word Alter'.[1]

Despite this emphatic conclusion, this prime source for Neile's theological beliefs is ambiguous - exactly as it was meant to be for its audience. It is perhaps unwise to expect more of a document which was produced in a time of crisis when Neile faced a very hostile Parliament. It is a mixture of firm statements on generally non-controversial issues and evasions or humourous replies on others. The firmest refutals of Arminian beliefs are made only when Neile refers to his Cambridge past. His possible beliefs at that date have been discussed elsewhere and it is clear that even for that period the evidence for his personal views is inconclusive.[2] On leaving Cambridge, as he claimed in his draft speech, Neile was careful to avoid all occasions when he might have to commit himself in word or print on controversial points of theology. Given his social background, temperament and intellect and the changing environment in which he found himself, this attitude is hardly surprising.

The only occasion on which Neile was drawn into print provides equally inconclusive evidence. In 1624 he edited an account of the conferences which he, George Mountain and John Young held with the Archbishop of Spalato in 1622 to examine the reasons for the latter's request to leave the country.[3] The work consists almost entirely of recorded conversations and letters. Spalato's renewed faith in Roman Catholicism is noted, but firmly rejected by his English interrogators. It was perfectly safe for Neile to refer his parliamentary critics to this work in 1629. What may perhaps be considered

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1. Ibid.
2. Chpt. 1, pp. 11-13.
3. R. Neile, Marc Antonio de Dominis Archbishop of Spalato, his Shiftings in Religion, Lond. 1624.

curious in this work is the way Spalato's views on the English Church are not edited and thus given some publicity. Spalato is often credited with having extended the definition of the word 'Puritan' to include members of the episcopal bench and mean 'anti-Arminian'.[1] Something of the kind appears in this work. Bishop Morton's name is noted when Spalato is asked to substantiate his claim that certain bishops were 'over-strict Calvinists'.[2] When a quarrel developed over the status of the reformed churches Spalato was informed that the English were content to be judged 'by the writings of the Fathers, the first Generall Councils and ancient Liturgies'.[3] Here was an Arminian stress on the English Church's visible links with a purer Catholic tradition. More tantalising still, when Spalato instanced the problem of 'free will' as something he found wrong with the English Church, he was informed 'that he did not seeme truely to understand the tenet of our Church in that point'.[4]

Yet the evidence of Neile's views on paper, in draft or in print, still remains ambiguous. It is impossible to judge how he felt about Spalato's views on the English Church. The book achieves its main task of condemning the man for returning to Rome and clearing the King of any charge of complicity in an attempt to negotiate England's return to Catholicism. It is only on the question of ceremonial that Neile felt at liberty to speak his mind freely, even when his views were not backed by canons or injunctions. Here lies one profitable avenue of investigation, for this was also the keynote of Parliament's attacks on what they called 'Arminianism'. As members of the Commons became more aware of the threat to their religion and as 'Arminians' achieved more positions of power in the Church, it became easier to

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1. T. Fuller, The Church History of Britain, ed. J.S. Brewer, 6 Vols., Oxford 1845, V, p.529.
2. R. Neile, op. cit., pp. 13, 48.
3. Ibid., p.11.
4. Ibid., p.13.

judge them on their actions. Thus, as H. Schwartz has pointed out, 'it became simpler to identify them as proponents of a new ceremonialism'.[1] Reports of great ceremonial innovations at Durham and Winchester sparked off the attacks against Neile in 1629. One of the earliest pieces of evidence which Prynne adduces against William Laud in Canterburies Doome concerns the movement and adornment of the altar at Gloucester Cathedral which took place in 1616/17.[2]

While the evidence of Neile's doctrinal views is unsatisfactory, it is possible to trace his concern for ceremonialism and emphasis on the sacerdotal role of the priesthood back to his departure from Cambridge. It has been noted elsewhere in this thesis that Neile spent lavishly in an attempt to adorn the altar at Westminster. New hangings were acquired and the prebendal stalls in the choir were reconstructed to allow an uncluttered view of the exalted edifice. A supplementary organ was purchased and time and money were spent in improving the standard of music heard in the Abbey.[3] Evidence of such concerns is available from most of Neile's dioceses.

It was not until Parliament became aware that connections existed between theologians who countenanced such views on ceremonial and also favoured the more liberal theological ideas of Arminius, that attention was really focused on this issue. Laud had aroused controversy with his ideas at Gloucester and similarly James I experienced a hostile reaction when he ordered a new organ for Edinburgh in 1617, but these were cathedrals. Elizabethan injunctions could be cited in support of such moves in cathedrals and royal chapels. During the course of Neile's lengthy stay at Durham ceremonial practices were elevated to a new level which commanded more notoriety.

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1. H. Schwartz, 'Arminianism and the English Parliament, 1624-1629', Journal of British Studies, May 1973, p.63.
2. W. Prynne, Canterburies Doome, 1646, pp. 75-8.
3. Chpt. 2, p.28.

Even before his arrival in Durham, one of Neile's first actions was to countenance plans put to him by Francis Burgoyne for the erection of a new wooden altar. Scarcely four years later, a magnificent stone edifice had replaced it at the east end of the Cathedral.[1] Alterations were carried out to the prebendal stalls and a carved screen was erected at the end of the choir.[2] Increased reverence was shown for the font which was moved to the end of the nave, though this was not compatible with Puritan ideas on baptism.[3] Other radical structural changes were undertaken and it is no coincidence that in July 1621 the Cathedral acquired its first official Clerk of Works.[4] In a series of sermons and tracts after his notorious outburst in July 1628, Peter Smart catalogued the changes he found so infamous at Durham. Apparently the order of services was chopped and altered in accordance with new ideas being formulated by John Cosin.[5] Splendid new copes were purchased for the dean and prebendaries at a cost of over £200.[6] The words 'priest', 'altar' and 'sacrifice' began to appear constantly in Cathedral services. Candlesticks and religious paintings adorned the building. Music came to play such a dominant part in the life of the Cathedral that Smart complained it was not possible to receive the sacraments,

> 'without a continuall noise of Musick both instrumentall and vocal, to the great disturbance of those holy actions'.[7]

Finance was made available to commission Robert Dallam to build a new organ in 1622.[8] One estimate of the cost of these improvements as a

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1. Bodleian Library Oxford: Rawlinson MS. D.821 - Smart's Charges against Laud, Cosin et al., f.4.
2. Ibid.
3. P. Smart, A Sermon preached in the Cathedral Church of Durham, July 7, 1628, Lond. 1628, pp. 16-17.
4. P.K. Durham: Dean & Chpt. Act Book 2 (1619-38), f.5.
5. P. Smart, A Catalogue of Superstitious Innovations in the Change of Services and Ceremonies, Lond. 1643, pp. 9-15.
6. Bodleian Library, Oxford: Rawlinson MS. D.821, f.4.
7. P. Smart, op. cit., p.9.
8. P.K. Durham: Dean & Chpt. Memoranda, Box 17 - Chpt. order of 26 March 1622.

whole states a figure more than £2,000.[1]

What is important here is that Neile was quite prepared to defend these changes in Parliament in 1629. Even though he evaded personal responsibility for the Durham altar on a technicality, changes at Winchester were openly acknowledged. In his later work as a Privy Councillor, member of the courts of High Commission and Star Chamber and Archbishop of York, Neile is on record as defending various ceremonial practices condemned in Parliament. Furthermore, it is crucial to our understanding of his career as a whole that evidence is available of similar concerns much earlier in his life. Neile emerged from the Cambridge debates of the 1590s wary of theological disputes, but quite clear about ideas of the 'beauty of holiness' long before such views became fashionable in the 1630s. Such ideas stemmed no doubt from the practical influence of Bancroft on the one hand and the inspiration of scholars like Andrewes and Overall on the other.[2]

While Neile personally refrained from over-commenting on these ceremonial changes, critics like Prynne pointed to the nature of the people who found employment with Neile, who thus shared responsibility for effecting innovations and who were often more outspoken in expressing new theological beliefs. It was noted that Neile was the greatest patron of Arminians. In Heylin's words, Neile attracted 'more able men about him from time to time than any other of that age'.[3] What is more, Neile used his undoubted influence with King James I and position as Clerk of the Closet to ensure that his protégés rose in

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1. Bodleian Library, Oxford: Rawlinson MS. D.821, f.4.
2. N. Tyacke, 'Puritanism, Arminianism and Counter-Revolution', The Origins of the English Civil War, ed. C. Russell, 1973, p.130 suggests that although Neile and his colleagues 'were not allowed to air their Arminian views' in the last years of James's reign, 'they managed to register them in a variety of covert ways'. He instances the case of the altar moves at Gloucester and Durham. Such moves hardly seem 'covert', but what Tyacke presumably means here is that the theology behind the changes was implicit rather than explicitly stated in print.
3. P. Heylin, Cyprianus Anglicus, p.59.

the Church even during a time when the climate was unfavourable to their theological opinions. The classic example of this lies in the career of William Laud. Referred to Neile by Buckeridge, Laud became the first in a line of distinguished chaplains who found Neile steadfastly loyal. It was thanks to Neile that Laud first preached at court in 1609 and later became a royal chaplain.[1] When the Presidency of St. John's College, Oxford fell vacant in 1611 Neile and Buckeridge combined to successfully oppose all opposition to Laud's appointment.[2] According to Heylin, Neile saw Laud through the difficult years ahead when he often felt like giving up his career.[3] He gave him what livings he could at Lichfield and Coventry and Lincoln. And it was not just a simple matter of heaping preferments on a friend. Laud had many enemies at court and King James himself was suspicious of the man. In 1615 it was necessary for Laud to appeal to Neile for support when complaints about his sermons from Robert Abbot reached the court.[4] No doubt thanks to Neile's intervention the Abbot brothers were forced to retract their words.

The highest post Neile personally allocated to Laud was that of Archdeacon of Huntingdon in December 1615,[5] but a year later he was no doubt indirectly involved in Laud's collation as Dean of Gloucester. When Laud ordered altar changes at Gloucester at his first Chapter meeting, he ran headlong into a local row which resulted in his bishop, Miles Smith, not entering the Cathedral again. In this time of crisis one of Laud's first moves was to write to Neile to ask that his case be put fairly at court.[6] Laud's later career depended more upon the Duke of Buckingham than Neile and eventually it became the latter's

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1. Ibid., pp. 64-5.
2. Ibid., p.61.
3. Ibid., p.65.
4. Laud's Works, VII, pp. 3-4.
5. P. Heylin, Cyprianus Anglicus, p.65.
6. P.R.O: SP/14/90/64.

turn to benefit from the association when appointed to Winchester and York.

It was around Neile that those who were attracted by the teachings of Andrewes and Overall and committed opponents of Puritanism, gathered after the death of Bancroft. He offered encouragement and help to people like Richard Meredith, John Buckeridge, John Howson, Valentine Carey, and most especially William Laud, during a period when the Abbot brothers and James Montagu generally reigned supreme in the King's favour. On occasions when George Abbot offended James, as in the case of the Essex divorce in 1613, Neile was invariably on the scene to take advantage of the situation.[1] Such occasions explain some of the illogicalities of clerical appointments during this period. John Overall gained the see of Lichfield and Coventry on Neile's departure in 1614 and Valentine Carey was appointed Dean of St. Paul's. A year later the Abbots were back in favour and Robert was appointed Bishop of Salisbury. Abbot himself appreciated the situation. At the time of the divorce he saw Buckeridge as 'a great dependant of my Lord of Lichfield'.[2] He also noted Neile's association with the late Richard Butler, adversary of non-conformists at Northampton, and the apostate Benjamin Carrier.[3] It was not long after this that Neile apparently forbade Dr. Beard to preach against the notorious sermons of another waverer in religion, Dr. William Alabaster.[4] In his role as Clerk of the Closet during this period Neile no doubt ensured that the King heard a wider variety of sermons than would have been permitted by

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1. W. Cobbett, A Collection of State Trials, Lond. 1809, Vol. II, p. 829 - 'Some Observable things, since September 25, 1613, when the Sentence was given in the Cause of the Earl of Essex, continuing unto the day of the Marriage, Dec. 26, 1613', notes that one short-term consequence of the divorce case was that George Abbot had 'no more to do with naming any to church-livings'.
2. Ibid., - Abbot's account of the trial, p.817.
3. Ibid.
4. Chpt. 5, p.156.

the Abbots.

It was on his appointment to Durham in 1617 that Neile found himself in a position to give more substantial aid to young theologians. Durham House in the Strand immediately became a sort of party headquarters where rooms were permanently available for people like Laud and Buckeridge.[1] Durham was a rich diocese and Neile now exercised control over a large number of good livings including the twelve prebendal stalls of the Cathedral. Between 1619 and 1620 eight of those stalls fell vacant, an amazing piece of good fortune which enabled Neile to build up his 'team' quite rapidly. Gabriel Clarke and Augustine Lindsell soon joined him from Lincoln.[2] Lindsell, dogged by ill-health, had a hand in all the books which emanated from this circle in the 1620s. His great scholarship was recognised and he was appointed Bishop of Peterborough in 1633, which he exchanged for Hereford in 1634. He died much lamented in that same year and his own edition of Theophylact's Commentaries on St. Paul's Epistles was published posthumously in 1636.[3]

Daniel Birkhead, a local man selected for a prebend in 1619, was another who died before he could ever rise to Lindsell's height and fulfil his great promise.[4] Francis Burgoyne, Neile's chaplain who masterminded the early altar moves at Durham in 1617, was soon promoted to Archdeacon of Northumberland in 1620.[5] Burgoyne and Birkhead were in some senses local men. John Cosin who arrived as Neile's chaplain soon after John Overall's death in 1619 was the most distinguished of the 'new men' who joined Neile at Durham. He did

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1. P. Heylin, Cyprianus Anglicus, p.75.
2. York: Sub. Bk. 2, ff. 68-9 - Augustine Lindsell gained a prebend in March 1618/19 and Gabriel Clarke became Archdeacon of Northumberland in Aug. 1619.
3. D.N.B., sub nomine.
4. York: Sub. Bk. 2, f.69; Birkhead died in 1624.
5. Ibid., f.74.

not gain major preferment from Neile until a prebend fell vacant late in 1624,[1] but he was correctly seen by William Prynne as the chief agent in the ceremonial changes which occurred at Durham.[2] It was Cosin, next to Mountague, who drew most fire in Parliament. It was either Cosin or Lindsell who introduced the latter infamous cleric to the Durham House circle in London.

Cosin and Mountague were the intellectual stars of 'Durham College' as Neile's house came to be known at this period. Mountague's writings focused attention on the group in the 1620s when A New Gagg for an Old Goose and Appello Caesarem caused great controversy in succeeding Parliaments.[3] Neile was shown the proofs of the latter work which he also had a hand in licensing.[4] There is no evidence that Mountague ever served as one of Neile's chaplains or gained preferment at his hands, but he certainly displayed great respect for Neile as a patron. It is from Mountague's words that we get a sense of Neile's importance to the party at this stage in its development. Reference to the deaths of Drs. Birkhead and Tilsley led Mountague to write in December 1624:

> 'God blesse and kepe you att Durham House, and especially that worthe Bishop the owner of the house, still like himself in his thorough courses for right, though alone and left alone'.[5]

It will be remembered that Mountague placed a similar emphasis on the importance and singularity of Neile's support when he heard the news that the latter would not be present in Parliament at Oxford in 1625.[6]

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1. Ibid., f.88.
2. Prynne was quick to answer Cosin's Collection of Private Devotions published in 1627 in the form of A Brief Survey and Censure of Mr. Cozen's his Couzening Devotions, Lond. 1628.
3. Chpt. 5.
4. 'Cosin's Correspondence', Part I, ed. G. Ornsby, Surtees Soc., Vol. 52, Lond. 1869, pp. 22, 34-6. Letters from Mountague to Cosin in Oct. & Dec. 1624; Francis White licensed Appello Caesarem on instructions from Neile - Bodleian Library, Oxford: Rawlinson MS. C.573, f.21.
5. 'Cosin's Correspondence', Surtees Soc., 52, pp. 34-5.
6. Chpt. 5, p.143.

He constantly urged Cosin to be guided by Neile's wisdom, adding on one occasion that 'every man is not my Lord of Durham, who is sure and fast and immoveable when he taketh'.[1] Even as late as 1626, when Laud was more secure in the favour of both Buckingham and Charles and Mountague himself was a royal chaplain, it was still possible for him to write of Neile as 'the only man that standeth up to purpose in the gapp' referring to that favourite image of Arminians, the gap between the Scilla of Puritanism and the Charybdis of Catholicism.[2]

Another intellectual who profited from friendship with Neile was Thomas Jackson. Neile appointed Jackson Vicar of Newcastle in November 1623, an important living requiring a firm and loyal hand.[3] Yet according to some sources he was initially well-liked there because of 'his excellent way of preaching, which was then Puritanical'.[4] Apparently, it was after this appointment that Neile 'took him off from his precise way, and made him his chaplain'.[5] This story that Neile was responsible for Jackson's 'conversion' is well known but hard to prove. Dr. Jenison wrote candidly of Jackson in 1624 that 'I should find him much more familiar & friendly, if hee were not so much (or so onely) the B[i]sh[op]s creature.[6] Certainly Neile seems to have appreciated the way to please Jackson. He allowed him to reside in Oxford for much of 1624 and when Christ's Answer unto John's Question was published a year later, it was dedicated to Neile in acknowledgement of this favour.[7] The vicarage of Winston was given to Jackson to hold in commendam with that of Newcastle in 1625.[8] The evidence for a late conversion is compounded by a letter from Jenison

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1. 'Cosin's Correspondence', Surtees Soc., 52, p.61 - Mountague to Cosin, Feb. 1624/5.
2. Ibid., p.97.
3. York: Sub. Bk. 2, f.84.
4. 'Memoirs of the Life of Mr. Ambrose Barnes', Surtees Soc., 50, Lond. 1866, p.308.
5. Ibid.
6. Bodleian Library, Oxford: Tanner MS. 73, f.475.
7. T. Jackson, Christ's Answer unto John's Question, Lond. 1625.
8. York: Sub. Bk. 2, f.85.

to Ward in August 1626, when it is noted that Jackson, with Yeldard Alvey, 'wavers & inclines to Arminianisme, though they seem rather to mediate betweene both, tha[n] to be resolutely for either'.[1]

Jackson, like Cosin, was cut out for university circles and there is evidence that when at Winchester, Neile attempted to use his influence as Visitor of Corpus Christi College, Oxford to have Jackson elected President in 1629. A compromise candidate eventually emerged in Dr. Holt, but only after shrewd bargaining on Neile's part which caused Daniel Featley to comment that Neile had attempted 'to be father first to an Arminian and then a broker for some other.'[2] Neile persisted in Jackson's cause, however, and his influence combined with that of Laud eventually gained the presidency of Corpus Christi College for Jackson in 1631.[3] Jackson's appointment was resisted in 1629 because by that date his name was definitely linked with Arminian views. The two parts of A Treatise of the Divine Essence and Attributes were in circulation in 1628 and John Davenant was angered by the stress which was placed on God's love and mercy, while the notion of a special free grace for the elect was neglected.[4]

Another scholar associated with Neile at Lincoln who joined the Durham College circle was Francis White. He dedicated his Orthodox Faith and Way of the Church to Neile in 1617.[5] He rose to prominence with Laud by taking part in the conferences with John Fisher in 1622 and published a tract on the subject in 1624.[6] Buckingham thanked Laud for his work in the conference by making him his personal chaplain, while the deanery of Carlisle was secured for White. It was White who licensed Appello Caesarem for publication on Neile's

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1. Bodleian Library, Oxford: Tanner MS. 72, f.150.
2. Ibid., Rawlinson MS. D.47, f.16.
3. D.N.B., sub nomine.
4. Bodleian Library, Oxford: Tanner MS. 72, f.298 - Davenant to Ward, Nov. 1628.
5. F. White, Orthodox Faith and Way of the Church, Lond. 1617.
6. D.N.B., sub nomine.

instructions.[1] He and John Buckeridge presented the Arminian case at the important York House Conference held in February 1625/6.[2] In December 1626 it was Neile who conducted the consecration service of Francis White as Bishop of Carlisle, when a libel was apparently posted to the door with the interesting words:

> 'Is an Arminian now made Bishop? and is a consecration translated from Lambeth to Durham House?'[3]

It is an apt reflection of the progress of the party by that date and of the significance of Durham College in that development.

Durham College did not consist of a closed circle of people. Firm bonds were established and a party spirit developed, but thanks to Neile new blood was always being attracted to the group. Eleazor Dunkon, fresh from Cambridge, was ordained as a priest by Neile in September 1626.[4] A Fellow of Pembroke College, Cambridge, he was well able to hold his own in the intellectual milieu of Durham College.[5] He seems to have become Neile's favourite. Although he was given a prebend at Durham in January 1627/8, he followed Neile to Winchester as his chaplain and was given a stall there in November 1629.[6] The subject of his doctoral thesis taken at Cambridge in 1633 resulted in the publication of De Adoratione Dei Versus Altare soon afterwards. According to one biographer, Dunkon 'was one of the most learned as well as ablest promoters of Laud's high Church policy'.[7] His close association with Neile continued and he was given a prebend at York in May 1640.[8]

Although he became one of Richard Neile's chaplains at Winchester, when the Durham House circle had been largely dispersed to various

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1. See p. 214.
2. N. Tyacke, 'Puritanism, Arminianism and Counter-Revolution', The Origins of the English Civil War, ed. C. Russell, 1973, pp. 132-3.
3. T. Birch, The Court & Times of Charles I, I, pp. 179-80.
4. York: Sub. Bk. 2, f.91.
5. D.N.B., sub nomine.
6. York: Sub. Bk. 2, ff. 95, 100.
7. D.N.B., sub nomine - article by G. Goodwin.
8. York: Sub. Bk. 2, f.152.

positions of power in the land, Benjamin Laney deserves special mention here. This impressive scholar was recognized and cultivated as such by Neile who secured him a Winchester prebend in July 1631.[1] This followed a more important appointment, however, in which Neile and Laud exercised great influence. In December 1630 Laney was appointed Master of Pembroke College, Cambridge. Illustrious Arminian clerics like Andrewes and Harsnet had held this post before, but as Cosin beautified the chapel of Peterhouse, so Laney did likewise at Pembroke. He was ejected in March 1643/4, but with Cosin he returned on the Restoration to exercise great influence in the revival of the Church. He became successively Bishop of Peterborough, Lincoln and Ely. As the latter he demonstrated that he was truly one of Neile's chaplains by rebuilding the greater part of Ely palace. On his death he bequeathed £500 to St. Paul's.[2] Cosin and Laney were the only two of Neile's chaplains, outside his family circle, who lived to see the Restoration. Both became bishops and both showed great interest in architectural repair work in their respective dioceses.

Schools of theologians had existed before. Andrewes and Overall had both attracted scholars to their company. John Cosin only joined Neile after Overall's death in 1619. Moreover it was not only anti-Calvinist theologians such as these who formed such groups. Apparently Thomas Morton developed a large following at Lichfield and Coventry and the correspondence of John Davenant and Samuel Ward is indicative of a strong Puritan network. What marks Neile out as different as a patron is the scale of his operations and the large measure of success he achieved in the selection and placement of his protégés. The use of the term 'Durham College' to describe this group illustrates its

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1. York: Sub. Bk. 2, f.108.
2. D.N.B., sub nomine.

cohesion and importance. It was the training ground for the shock-troops who were to take the Church by storm in the 1630s.

Heylin was not coining a phrase when he wrote that Durham House 'passed commonly by the name of Durham College'.[1] In a letter to Ussher in November 1626, Alexander Cook referred to 'Mr. Mountague, Mr. Coosens and the College, as it is called, at Durham-house'.[2] A proclamation 'for the establishing of the Peace and Quiet of the Church of England' was published in June 1626 in the wake of fierce controversy in Parliament.[3] Neile undertook to convey instructions personally to the university authorities at Cambridge to ensure that this proclamation was obeyed.[4] Open debate of controversial matters was curtailed, but William Laud was nominated for the see of Bath and Wells. The Tuscan ambassador missed the point of this promotion when he wrote that the proclamation was 'meant to extinguish Arminianism which has lately been spreading in this country.'[5] The more suspicious John Davenant wrote: 'How far those of Duresme howse will stretch the meaning thereof I know not'.[6]

The close-knit nature of this group is also illustrated by a glance at the will of Augustine Lindsell written in 1624. He began in praise of Neile:

> '..whose bountie hath beene extraordinarie in my preferment, and of whose favour and fatherlike indulgence towarde me from time to time I have had most ample experience..'.[7]

Neile was offered the choice of any two or three works in Lindsell's library. A piece of plate worth £5 was given to Mrs. Dorothy Neile, a tribute to the part she must have played in making these scholars

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1. P. Heylin, Cyprianus Anglicus, p.75.
2. The Whole Works of the Most Rev. James Ussher, D.D., ed. C. Elrington, 16 Vols., Dublin 1847, Vol. XV, p.356.
3. Tudor and Stuart Proclamations 1485-1714, I, p.173.
4. Cambridge University Registry: MS. XI/23/321.
5. H.M.C. Eleventh Report, Appendix, Part I, 1887 - Salvetti Correspondence, p.76.
6. Bodleian Library, Oxford: Tanner MS. 72, f.135.
7. P.R.O: P.C.C. Seager III.

feel at home. It was not the first or the last time that she received such acknowledgement. Richard Butler left her some gold in 1612 and when Buckeridge died in 1631, she was given a share of the furniture from the 'Blue Chamber' at Ely palace.[1] To return to Lindsell's will, Neile's son Paul was left a copy of Speed's Chronicles and Maps. Here was recognition of this young man's intellect, for Paul was apparently already associating with the intellectuals of Gresham College in the 1620s and was later to become a founder member of the Royal Society.[2] The sense that these young Arminians became part of Neile's family is thus conveyed. The 'extended family' is clearly enunciated in the remaining list of legatees. Buckeridge, Laud, Newell, Birkhead, Burgoyne and Cosin were all mentioned. As a reminder of the legal partners who made Neile's team even more impressive and whose influence is considered in Neile's work as a bishop, Edward Liveley was appointed as an overseer of the will.

Neile's time at Durham marks a highpoint of his career, when he must have been greatly encouraged that at last like-minded clergymen were making progress in the Church. There was much to be done to rid the Church of Puritans and restore order, but there was a great will and enthusiasm evident in people like Cosin and Mountague. The picture had not always been so optimistic. It is clear that under Bancroft Neile too entered upon his task with great enthusiasm and energy. He managed to retain this energy till his dying day. But even he must have despaired on occasions, as when Abbot was chosen to succeed Bancroft at Canterbury in 1611. The epithet 'clerical Villiers' may be generally applicable to Neile as a minor royal

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1. For Butler's will see: SP/14/70/66; For Buckeridge - P.R.O: P.C.C. St. John 70.
2. Sir Harold Hartley, The Royal Society. Its Origins and Founders, Lond. 1960, pp. 159-65.

favourite of James I, but this does not mean it was within his power to alter major decisions on such appointments as that of Canterbury.[1] While Bancroft and Cecil were alive, Neile could count on support at court for such schemes as the advancement of Buckeridge which he put forward in 1608.[2] On their demise however, he was forced to use his wife's relationship with the Countess of Suffolk, as his buttress against the changing tides of court fortune.[3] George Abbot and James Montagu exercised far more consistent influence with the King before the rise of Buckingham and the development of a pro-Spanish foreign policy gave Neile and his associates more room to manoeuvre.

In an interesting article on the Vorstius affair, F. Shriver has pointed out the influence which Abbot in particular brought to bear upon the King to ensure that his attitude to the Remonstrants in the United Provinces would be hostile.[4] As calls for an international conference to settle religious controversy increased, the King's conservative fears were aroused to cause him to side with the orthodox counter-Remonstrants at the Synod of Dort. The Dutch Arminians also sent agents to England to try to rally support for their cause. Hugo Grotius, a man of great scholarship who embraced ecumenical ideals prevalent in those years of peace in Europe, arrived in England in 1613. He found John Overall and Lancelot Andrewes particularly sympathetic to his cause, but at a loss as to how they could help the Dutch. Nevertheless, Grotius returned to the Netherlands with the names of English sympathisers and it is interesting that in June 1618 Oldenbarneveldt assured a friend that their party would prosper at

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1. This is despite what is argued by A. Kautz in 'The Selection of Jacobean Bishops', Early Stuart Studies, ed. H. Reinmuth Jnr., Univ. Minnesota Press, 1970, pp. 152-79; See Chpt. 3, pp. 47-51.
2. Chpt. 2, p. 37.
3. Chpt. 1, p. 23; Chpt. 5, pp. 116-27.
4. F. Shriver, 'Orthodoxy and Diplomacy: James I and the Vorstius Affair', English Historical Review, July 1970, pp. 449-74.

the Synod if Overall, Buckeridge and Neile appeared as the English representatives at Dort.[1] It was not to be.

Too much emphasis should not be placed on James's attitude to the Synod of Dort. The English may not have been able to aid their Dutch compatriots, but strong political factors influenced the result of that conference regardless of the merits of theological arguments. What probably mattered more to Neile was that in 1617 he was promoted to Durham while on a trip to Scotland with the King; that trip saw the formulation of the 5 Articles of Perth ratified a year later. These articles scarcely stressed Calvinist beliefs in the matter of ceremonial. Equally favourable to the Arminian cause, Lancelot Andrewes and John Overall gained promotion to the sees of Norwich and Winchester respectively in 1618. The death of James Montagu removed a vital Puritan from Winchester and the Privy Council. The rise of Buckingham brought with it new complications as the strange episcopal appointment of Doctors Snowdon and Bailey indicate, but gradually the atmosphere eased for Arminians in England.

The tight nature of the Arminian leadership and party at this period is illustrated by the story of Matthew Wren's interview with Neile, Laud and Andrewes in 1623, soon after the Prince of Wales' return from the abortive trip to Spain. The question uppermost in the minds of these three was:

> '..how the Prince's heart stands to the Church of England, that when God brings him to the Crown we may know what to hope for'.[2]

Writers in the nineteenth century assumed that this was yet another example of personalities grasping for power, but the significance of the word 'we' is that it undoubtedly refers to the Arminian party in England and not to the personal ambitions of three men, two of whom

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1. John Van Oldenbarneveldt Beshiedon, Vol. III, ed. A. Veenendaal, Gravenhague 1967, pp. 440-1; I owe this reference to the kindness of Dr. Nicholas Tyacke.
2. Parentalia, ed. C. & S. Wren, 1750, p.45.

were too old to care about further advancement.

There is no evidence that Neile ever sought the high office of Canterbury. It was not in his nature to want to assume the front seat. The time when his influence was of greatest importance was in the reign of James I when he was the man all Arminians looked to for encouragement and support. It was left to Laud to cultivate first Buckingham then Charles I. Only after Buckingham had committed himself to the Arminian cause at the York House Conference in 1625/6 did Neile come off the fence with regard to the favourite. When the Chancellorship of Cambridge fell vacant on the death of Suffolk in the summer, Neile used all his influence with the Vice-Chancellor and the Master of St. John's College to ensure the Duke's election.[1] The matter did not go unnoticed in Parliament.[2]

Laud's departure from permanent residence at Durham House in December 1625 is probably symbolic of the changeover in status which now affected Neile and his former chaplain.[3] More and more of the policies pursued after this date bear Laud's stamp. Neile was accused of procuring pardons for Sibthorpe and Mainwaring, those preachers who spoke in favour of the forced loan of 1627, but it was Laud who had given his approval to the policy in 1626.[4] It was largely thanks to Laud that Neile was appointed a Privy Councillor in 1627.[5] His appearance on the commission to administer the province of Canterbury during the sequestration of Archbishop Abbot later that year was of little significance except in revealing his valued seniority in the party.[6] Neile never gained the ear of Charles I in the way he had the father's. His appointments to both Winchester and

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1. Cambridge University Registry: MSS. XI/23/301 & 305; St. John's College, Cambridge: MS. 105/33
2. Chpt. 5, pp. 147-8.
3. Laud's Works, III, p.177.
4. H. Trevor-Roper, Archbishop Laud, p.79.
5. Chpt. 6, pp. 173-4.
6. Ibid., pp. 174-5.

York were entirely in accordance with policy requirements laid down by Laud.[1] That Neile became such a good servant and ally to Laud in later years is a tribute to their great friendship and to Neile's unshakeable belief in the Arminian cause above all else.

Attention has already been drawn to the fact that several leading Arminian writers like White, Jackson and Mountague either dedicated works to Neile or showed him proofs in advance of publication. John Cosin's reliance on Neile is a good example of his immersion in the Arminian literature of the day. George Mountain licensed Cosin's Collection of Private Devotions or Hours of Prayer in 1627, but according to William Prynne he never read the work. The book was licensed thanks to 'nothing but a bare white Paper with a message from the Bishop of Winchester, that now is, to license these'.[2] Prynne was adept at producing such scurrilous stories, but Cosin's close relationship with Neile was well recognized elsewhere. In 1629 the Commons discovered that Neile had protected Cosin from an enquiry following charges made by the notorious Peter Smart.[3] When Cosin's work was attacked in Parliament, he furnished Neile with a set of notes on some of the objections made by his critics. In these notes he defended the ceremonial practices criticized at Durham.[4] When Neile was described as having passed through many bishoprics leaving only 'Popery behind him', his activities were seen as totally related to the intellectual guidance of John Cosin. In his new edition of the Book of Common Prayer Cosin had dared to use the word 'priest' instead of 'minister' and neglected to use the term 'elect'. The Commons had no doubts in concluding that 'Cosin and his Lord go hand

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1. Chpt. 3, pp. 55-6.
2. W. Prynne, A Brief Survey and Censure of Mr. Cozen's his Couzening Devotions, 1628, p.3.
3. Chpt. 5, p. 155.
4. P.R.O: SP/16/65/72.

in hand'.[1]

Neile did not merely use his influence to promote certain theological works. He also collaborated with Laud in the suppression of opposition tracts. When John Davenant was closely involved in the campaign to produce evidence on Arminianism for Parliament in 1628 he found himself the target of a strong counter-attack. Davenant understood the real purpose behind the proclamations of 1626 and 1628 on peace and order in the Church. He cannot have been surprised when he found his own work vetoed. In May 1628 Samuel Ward informed James Ussher that Neile had prevented the publication of Davenant's latest work on Paul's epistle to the Colossians by the University of Cambridge.[2] Several years later Davenant was hauled before the King on complaints made by Harsnet and Neile concerning an allegedly controversial sermon.[3] That great correspondent Samuel Ward grieved that Arminianism was rampant in the universities in 1634 and that good Calvinists like himself were:

> 'checked and disgraced ... as myself was by my Lord of York the last Lent, for favouring Puritans in consistory'.[4]

Outspoken polemicists like William Prynne were hounded, high-ranking critics like Davenant and Ward harassed and writers like Dr. Twiss, in his attack on Jackson's works, forced to seek publishers abroad. Despite the proclamations forbidding the publication of controversial works, Arminians under Laud found easy access to the press. Works defending new ceremonial practices based on Arminian beliefs soon flooded the market. When Francis White produced a work on the Sabbath in 1635, it was quickly adopted by Neile as propaganda

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1. Commons Debates for 1629, ed. W. Notestein & F. Relf, Minnesota 1921, pp. 59-60.
2. Ussher's Works, XV, pp. 402-5.
3. Bodleian Library, Oxford: Tanner MS. 71, Item 41.
4. Ussher's Works, XV, pp. 580-1.

in the north.[1] A work that is perhaps as significant as the attacks which Prynne levied so earnestly upon Laud and his followers, is that of An Apology of English Arminianisme published in 1634. This was dedicated to Neile and Laud by the unknown O.N. because according to 'Common report' they were Arminians.[2] The author chose to remain anonymous because he feared the abuse which he would undoubtedly encounter in some quarters. Nevertheless, the fact that this self-confessed Arminian felt able to dedicate his work to Neile and Laud, and get it published, indicates that these two were regarded as potential allies.

What emerges from this complicated discussion of Arminianism in relation to Richard Neile? Most important, the evidence of his own words and writing is ambiguous. He was not a scholar and he rose to become a bishop in a time when theological controversy within the Church of England was truly frowned upon. Moreover, when questions were asked about his beliefs in Parliament in 1628-9 he could hardly be expected to give a full and frank reply. Neile was successful in persuading James I of his orthodoxy; as a minor royal favourite he was a party to the process whereby Arminians in England became closely associated with the crown. Laud developed this relationship in the reign of Charles I to the extent that Arminianism in England is often mistakenly seen as necessarily linked with the crown. The connection ensured high state office for Arminians, but did not significantly contribute to the theology of the movement. Charles I firmly believed that he stood for the true and well-established principles of the Church of England - not new doctrines. At no stage between 1600 and 1640 was it really politically feasible for Laud and Neile to claim that they were responsible for innovations or necessary reforms.

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1. Chpt. 8, p.261.
2. O.N., An Apology of English Arminianisme, Lond. 1634.

Their clerical pronouncements were always couched in traditional and defensive terms. Hence it is almost impossible to come to a firm conclusion about their beliefs from the works of either man.

The views of their followers - men like Cosin, Mountague and Jackson - are more recognizably influenced by the theological theories of Arminius. What is confusing here is their English application - the fact that these men were ceremonialists who defended episcopacy. Here one returns to the work of Neile and Laud in transforming Arminian beliefs to suit English conditions. The evidence for this is entirely practical. It relates to Neile's role at the court of James I, patronage of scholars and lawyers, espousal of ceremonial reforms and suppression of Puritanism within his dioceses. It was this kind of evidence which first attracted Parliament's attention in the 1620s and which remained as the hallmark of Prynne's later propaganda. The existence of an Arminian movement in the Netherlands at this time, which took a strikingly different outward form, confused the issue greatly and allowed Mountague and Neile to evade the real issues when attacked in Parliament. Eventually, the intellectuals of the movement were discovered to be holding views broadly similar to those held by Arminius. By the time this was apparent, it was too late. Judgement in the popular sense always centred on the more easily comprehended external issues such as ceremonial and the resulting claim that Arminians were 'Ushers in of Popery'.

This nebulous fear took an incredible hold on the popular imagination in the 1630s. It was played upon constantly by Prynne and others. In Canterburies Doome Prynne went so far as to claim that even the Jesuits saw Arminianism as the stepping stone to a Catholic revival in England.[1] As Catholicism seemed to be attracting more and

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1. W. Prynne, Canterburies Doome, 1646, pp. 159-60.

more converts in the 1630s the correlation seemed well proven. It was impossible for Neile and Laud to stem the number of stories about their Catholic leanings or the tide of emigration to America.[1] Association with unpopular 'thorough' policies in general during this period only served to enhance the case against Arminians as bishops who sought to regain power lost to their kind at the Reformation. Once again however, here was a case resting on practical rather than theological grounds.

It is impossible to explain why people became Arminians. The movement was a reaction to the old Calvinist certainties, but its adherents were few in number and always subject to attack. Nicholas Tyacke has noticed that Arminian clerics were on the whole lowly born. He has drawn the conclusion from this that the new doctrine was particularly well-suited to people with 'a sense of social inferiority'.[2] Stress on the sacerdotal role of the priesthood restored a sense of mystery and prestige to the profession. The son of a tallow-chandler, Neile seems to fit this picture. More concrete facts are available, however, supplying clues about Neile's preference for Arminianism without resorting to such speculation. He was educated in Cambridge at a time when the ideas were under full examination. He may not have espoused such beliefs at university, but he prospered under the patronage of Archbishop Bancroft who sought to tackle the problem of Puritanism and strengthen the Church as an institution. As a potentially great administrator himself, Neile must have been attracted by the ideas of this man. On a different level, scholars like Andrewes and Overall and his later chaplains such as Cosin, developed Neile's natural bent towards due reverence,

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1. Chpt. 8, pp. 273-4.
2. N. Tyacke, 'Puritanism, Arminianism and Counter-Revolution', The Origins of the English Civil War, ed. C. Russell, p.140.

ceremony and order in church services. A self-confessed 'poor scholar', Neile was attracted by a theology which appealed to his common sense that it was impossible to be sure of the mind of God.

Simple, practical virtues made this man important in the development of Arminianism in England. He possessed a talent for discovering able young theologians whom he then trusted implicitly and supported steadfastly. His bluff, friendly disposition won him the heart of King James and thus ensured his own rise to prominence in the Church. Once in positions of power his administrative expertise in implementing Arminian policies was unrivalled.

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Chapter 8: Archbishop of York. (1632-1640)

On 16 April 1632 Richard Neile was enthroned by proxy as the sixty-ninth Archbishop of York. It was recorded that he waived his right to a general clerical subsidy due on his translation for 'he was come to benefit, not to charge his clergy'.[1] Although he was not enthroned in person until October 1632, proceedings for his metro-political visitation were already well in hand by the time he arrived in the province.[2] It was typical of the man that his career at York should start thus. He was capable of an act of spontaneous generosity towards his clergy and yet there were to be no illusions about why he had come to York and his intentions. Like his friend Laud, he was 'an old man in a hurry' and he saw no reason for waiting until the spring to hold his primary visitation which would reveal the scope of the problems to be tackled in the north.

Although Neile entered upon his new task with his customary vigour and enthusiasm, there is strong evidence that he did not accept the promotion willingly. He must have thought that his move to the rich and comfortable see of Winchester in 1628 would be his last.[3] As Laud's right-hand man and a member of the Privy Council he was needed near the capital. Such reasoning was confirmed by the appoint-ment of first Mountain and then Harsnet to York in 1628 and 1629. Both men were less senior and less capable than Neile. On Harsnet's

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1. T. Birch, The Court & Times of Charles I, Vol. II, pp.176-9, Pory to Puckering, 20 Sept. 1632; York Minster Library: Dean & Chpt. Act Book H.4 (1565-1634), f.722.
2. Warning of the visitation was given on 20 July 1632. Proceedings commenced with the Deans and Chapters of York and Southwell in September. (York: Neile's Register, No. 32, ff.14-21). The correction courts for York began work in Jan. 1632/3 and remained in operation for Chester between Nov. 1633 and Feb. 1633/4. (York: V1633/CB1, V1633/CB2A & 2B).
3. See Chpt. 3, pp.55-57.

death in May 1631 the problem of what to do about the northern province was viewed in a new light. Buckeridge, old friend to both Neile and Laud, died in May 1631 and his death highlighted how few senior bishops loyal to Laud were left who were eligible and capable to serve at York. 'A man of an unsuspected trust, and one that must be able to direct himself in all emergencies' was required, wrote Heylin years later.[1] Neile's 'known sufficiencies' were obvious, 'but he was warm at Winchester'.[2]

Hopes sprang eternal in some Puritan breasts and one innocent wrote to Lord Fairfax in praise of Dr. Morton 'who for deep learning and true humanity, deserves such elevation'.[3] Thomas Wentworth knew more about the decision makers and the problems involved. He promised his support to John Bridgeman in July 1631, but appreciated that 'the Bishopp of Winchester [Neile] will be desired to remove to Yorke, which I am of the opinion he will not be willing to doe'.[4]

Facts as well as emotions fitted Wentworth's interpretation. Neile had only comparatively recently settled at Winchester and had not even finished paying his installments on first fruits and tenths to the crown. Yet he was now being asked to contemplate an expensive move to a poorer, if more prestigious, diocese. The figures for first fruits and tenths exaggerate the difference between the two sees - Winchester was probably worth rather less than £2,873.18s.1¾d. p.a. and York was probably worth more than £1,610 p.a.[5] Yet even in 1694, York was still only calculated to be worth approximately £2,500 p.a.[6] This factor was clearly taken into account, for when Neile did move

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1. P. Heylin, Cyprianus Anglicus, p.227.
2. Ibid.
3. The Fairfax Correspondence - Memoirs of the Reign of Charles I, ed. G. Johnson, 2 Vols., Lond. 1848, Vol. I, pp.233-5. Letter of June 1631.
4. G. Bridgeman, 'The History of the Church and Manor of Wigan', Part II, Chetham Society New Series, Vol. 16, 1889, p.338.
5. J. Bacon, Liber Regis, pp.917 & 1099.
6. York: Bishopthorpe Papers Dio I, Archbishop Sharp's MSS., pp.185-93.

he was only required to pay £1,448.19s.2d. in first fruits to the crown and payments did not commence until April 1633.[1]

Eventually Neile accepted the appointment. Heylin felt a loyal sense of duty accounted for the decision and wrote of Neile's 'desires to serve his Majesty, and the Church in what place soever, though to his personal trouble and particular loss'.[2] This move is rightly seen as the culmination of an impressive career in the Church, but although it meant increased prestige, Neile accepted the post primarily out of loyalty to Laud, moving to wherever his services were needed. His acceptance of York solved one problem in 1631, but it was some time before changes on the episcopal bench were completed. There was considerable confusion over who should succeed Neile at Winchester. Rumours that Neile would actually be moving to York first circulated at the end of September 1631; at that date Laud was still listed as a possible candidate for Winchester.[3] Francis White was quickly chosen to succeed Buckeridge at Ely, but it was not until the following year that Walter Curle was selected as Neile's successor.

On his arrival at York, Neile would have found that not only had he taken a drop in income, but also that the source of much of his revenues placed him in an embarrassing position. Much has been written about the economic problems of the Church in this period and although the reign of Elizabeth is still classed as one of spoliation, contemporary historians now stress that the decline in wealth was not as dramatic as was once thought. In an article specifically on York, Claire Cross maintains that 'by 1600 the archbishop of York received an income from temporalities nominally equal to the income his predeces-

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1. P.R.O: SO/3/10/May 1632.
2. P. Heylin, Cyprianus Anglicus, p.227.
3. P.R.O: SP/16/200/27 - Mr. Nicholas to Capt. Pennington, 24 Sept. 1631.

sor had enjoyed in 1536'.[1] Unfortunately, the source of much of that income had changed from land to impropriations. In 1603, when James I was seriously considering disgorging crown impropriations and was about to force the universities to do likewise, it was calculated that approximately 58% of the livings of York diocese were impropriated.[2] A large proportion of those livings belonged to the archbishop. This exacerbated the problem of raising clerical incomes and also provided the authorities with extra responsibilities such as the upkeep of all impropriated chancels. Christopher Hill could well write that 'bishops were still rich and powerful enough to be envied and criticized' but they needed to possess considerable financial and administrative skills to hold their heads above water successfully.[3]

Such problems were not new to Neile. What was different from his other dioceses was the scale of his new responsibilities. The diocese of York covered all of Yorkshire, parts of Northumberland and all of Nottinghamshire. It was divided into four unwieldy archdeaconries: York, East Riding, Cleveland, and the almost autonomous Nottingham. The diocese was served by at least 865 churches and chapelries.[4] As archbishop of the northern province, Neile also exercised theoretical control over the dioceses of Chester, Durham, Carlisle and Sodor and Man - the entire north of England. In practice Durham, because of the Palatinate, was largely independent of York's jurisdiction. There is no evidence that Neile ever tried to hold a visitation there or claim any rights other than those relating to Hexham peculiar. Neile's annual report of January 1633/4 shows that his metropolitical visitation extended to the other three dioceses,

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1. C. Cross, 'The Economic Problems of the See of York: Decline and Recovery in the Sixteenth Century', Agricultural History Review, Vol. 18, 1970, Supplement, p.64.
2. B.M: Harleian MS. 280, f.170v.
3. C. Hill, Economic Problems of the Church, 4th ed. Lond. 1971, p.39.
4. See Appendix I, p.306.

but the procedure in Carlisle and Sodor and Man was probably to use the existing machinery - the usual commissioners simply acted on his authority and reported accordingly. No records of these visitations survive apart from Neile's comments in his annual report.[1] Apart from York, Chester was the only other diocese where Neile suspended all inferior jurisdictions prior to a full visitation carried out by his own Chancellor, William Easdall, Henry Wickham and John Cosin. In the interests of efficiency Neile returned to the Elizabethan practice of appointing three commissioners, which must have been quite a shock for the areas concerned after only having to deal with the Chancellor before.[2]

The province was known to provide huge problems of administration and to encompass large groups of Puritan nonconformists and Catholic recusants within its vast territory.[3] A firm hand was required after the relatively ineffectual rule of Toby Matthew, George Mountain and Samuel Harsnet. Matthew, always tolerant of Puritans, had become even weaker with increasing senility until his long expected death in 1628. Mountain was no sooner translated than he died. Samuel Harsnet was, as ever, a troublemaker. Although Harsnet was seen by Puritans as an Arminian, it would be mistaken to see Neile merely as a longer-living successor to his rule at York.[4] As Ronald Marchant

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1. P.R.O: SP/16/259/78; See pp.252-55.
2. R. Marchant, The Puritans and the Church Courts in the Diocese of York, 1560-1642, Lond. 1960, p.54.
3. J.D. Gay, The Geography of Religion in England, Lond. 1971 is a pioneering work in historical geography which provides maps on this area and period, pp. 269, 276 & 286. Unfortunately, these are based on inadequate statistics compiled by R. Usher in 1910. New work in this field is badly needed as even a modern study like R.C. Richardson, Puritanism in north-west England. A regional study of the diocese of Chester to 1642, Manchester 1972, makes questionable assumptions about Catholicism and the Lake District.
4. Unfortunately this premise vitiates much of the thesis of I. Hogg, 'A Survey of the Diocese of York under Archbishops Harsnet and and Neile, 1628-1640', (Nottingham University M.A. thesis 1961).

concluded:

> '..the only changes made by Harsnet concerned the enforcement of greater reverence in Church and a stricter application of the rule that parishioners were to attend their own parish church and no other'. [1]

Harsnet, a man whose inefficiency lost him the Mastership of Pembroke College, Cambridge, was hardly one to inspire confidence. Close analysis of the work of that 'furious Hildebrand' reveals his limited aims and achievements. His clash with Bishop Howson of Durham over visitation rights in March 1630 led to friction rather than a united attack on nonconformity and he seems to have shown little or no concern for broader aspects of Arminian policy such as the church restoration campaign.[2] Although he shared many beliefs with Neile and Laud, Harsnet was certainly not of their inner circle, a fact betokened by his belated appointment to the Privy Council in November 1629.[3]

Efficient government in recent years had not been entirely lacking in the north. Thomas Wentworth had been appointed President of the Council of the North at the end of 1628 and had 'developed the new "recusant service" greatly'.[4] However, the Smart affair had highlighted the problems of the northern High Commission when dealing with nonconformists of a different ilk.[5] Moreover, Wentworth was appointed Lord Deputy of Ireland in January 1631/2 and although C.V. Wedgwood feels the Vice President, Sir Edward Osborne 'proved scrupulously loyal to Wentworth, hard-working capable and conscientious', Neile's appointment to York may have been an attempt to fill some part of the vacuum created by the departure of that strong man of Stuart

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1. R. Marchant, op. cit., p.50.
2. P.R.O: SP/16/162/32 Howson to Laud, 4 March 1629/30; See also the figures for church restoration cases, Appendix I, pp.303,306-7.
3. See Chpt. 6, p.185.
4. H. Aveling, 'Catholic Recusancy in the City of York 1558-1791', Catholic Record Soc. Monegraph Series, Vol. 2, 1970, p.82.
5. See Chpt. 6, p.181.

government.[1]

Neile's suffragen bishops were a mixed group. John Bridgeman of Chester was lax and needed constant supervision. John Philips of Sodor and Man introduced reforms and a new Manx prayer book, but Neile was to prove unimpressed with his work. Barnabas Potter of Carlisle was always complaining of the cold and anxious for preferment. At Durham, Thomas Morton was an isolated Puritan in a diocese bristling with Catholics. His appointment to Durham in July 1632 was in line with the Elizabethan practice of sending prominent Calvinists north to blunt their enthusiasm and decrease their influence. Moreover, the presence of so many of Neile's appointees at Durham Cathedral Chapter probably provided security against unduly radical policies.[2] The evidence of Neile's annual reports on the province suggests that he was constantly having to urge greater efforts on the part of his bishops. None escaped criticism in the major report of 1633/4.

Within York diocese itself Neile encountered old friends and potential allies. His former chaplain John Cosin was Archdeacon of the East Riding.[3] The Archdeacon of York was Henry Wickham, who with Phineas Hodson, Chancellor of the Minster and George Stanhope, the Precentor, was an efficient disciplinarian when given scope to act. Neile relied heavily on these three in the running of Dean and Chapter business as Dean Scott was a wastrel who eventually died in debtors prison in 1644. Richard Bayley, the friendly but ineffectual Archdeacon of Nottingham, was replaced in 1635 by Laud's half-brother William Robinson.[4] Potentially the least helpful member of the administration was Henry Thurscross, Archdeacon of Cleveland who came

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1. C.V. Wedgwood, Thomas Wentworth First Earl of Strafford 1593-1641, A Revaluation, Lond. 1961, p.115.
2. See Chpt. 7, pp. 213-20.
3. Ibid., pp. 213-14.
4. York: Sub. Bk. 2, f.128v.

of a solid Puritan background. Fortunately for Neile he was also a time-server. A blind eye was turned to the simony committed in 1635 when his son Timothy took over as archdeacon. Conscience-stricken, Timothy later resigned his post in 1638 on being converted to religious principles akin to those held by the community led by Nicholas Ferrar at Little Gidding.[1] Neile thus inherited a fairly good administration in 1632 with probably fewer dissident elements than he had encountered in many of his previous dioceses. What transformed this solid base into a dynamic new force was the fact that the Chancellor of the diocese was none other than Neile's old protégé, William Easdall.[2] The fact that Neile's primary visitation got under way so smoothly without his presence in the province is a reflection of the close relationship which existed between these two men.

Neile was not slow to bring in new men to strengthen his administration. As in the past, he relied heavily on his own relations. At York this reliance devolved upon a distinguished nephew John Neile, son of Richard's much-lamented elder brother William - just as in the past Neile had relied on Robert Newell and William.[3] Educated at Pembroke College, Cambridge, becoming a fellow in 1629 and taking his M.A. in 1631, John Neile was ordained deacon at York on 23 September 1632.[4] Thereafter his rise to high office in the diocese was rapid. In August 1633 he was given a rich Southwell prebend more as a sinecure than an active position; this was exchanged for a richer one in 1638.[5] In January of the following year he was first admitted as one of the chosen few licensed to preach throughout the province and then presented with the York prebend of North Newbold in the gift of

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1. R. Marchant, The Church Under the Law. Justice, Administration and Discipline in the Diocese of York 1560-1640, Cambridge 1969, p.251, feels Thurscross may have influenced Paul Glisson's religious leanings as well.
2. See Chpt. 3, pp. 62-3.
3. See Appendix 4.
4. York: Sub. Bk. 2, f.115.
5. Ibid, ff.121 & 143v.

his uncle.[1] One of the richer prebends, this also gained Neile an important vote in the Chapter meetings of his Cathedral. A sign of Neile's good relations with Bishop Morton of Durham was given when the latter collated John Neile to a Durham prebend in August 1635 and also promoted Gabriel Clarke, John's brother-in-law to the first stall.[2] In October 1638 Neile demonstrated his trust in his nephew by appointing him as Timothy Thurscross's replacement as Archdeacon of Cleveland.[3] John served as a chaplain to his uncle and Richard came to rely on him increasingly during the 1630s. By the end of the period he was a very active member of the Court of High Commission and a regular participant at York Dean and Chapter meetings. Such service met with ironic recognition during the Interregnum when John was stripped of his livings and retired to live near Southwell. He survived those difficult times however, to live out his life as Dean of Ripon after the Restoration.[4]

One of Neile's earliest appointments was that of Peter Titley to a Southwell prebend in August 1632.[5] Titley may have been a distant relative of Neile's, but his stand against Bishop Williams in an altar dispute at Grantham and sermons in support of the loan of 1627 would have proved his worthiness for reward regardless.[6] A more distinguished early appointment in which Neile probably played a part was that of John Bramhall to a prebend at York Minster in June 1633, before he was enticed away to become Bishop of Derry in 1634.[7] Bramhall had served as a chaplain to Toby Matthew and received a

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1. Ibid., ff. 123v & 124.
2. For the full careers of both men see: J. & J.A. Venn, Alumni Cantabrigensis, 4 Vols., sub nomine.
3. York: Sub. Bk. 2, f. 146v.
4. A. Rogers (ed.), Southwell Minster after the Civil Wars, Nottingham 1974, p.16.
5. York: Sub. Bk. 2, f.114.
6. See Chpt. 5, p.156 ; also E. Venables,'The Altar Controversy at Grantham in the Seventeenth Century', Associated Architectural Societies' Reports & Papers, Vol. 13, part I, 1875-6, pp.46-61.
7. York: Sub. Bk. 2, f.120.

Ripon prebend from him some time before. Another established Yorkshire cleric whom Neile favoured was Richard Marsh, chaplain to Laud and Charles I and a prebendary of Southwell on Neile's arrival in the diocese in 1632. In the summer of 1634 he was given prebends at York and Ripon and in 1638 was placed as a watchdog in the important living of Halifax with its problematical chapelries. He rose to become Dean of York in 1644 and returned as such in 1660.[1]

Although Neile was now in his seventies and many of his early protégés were comfortably settled in high office in the Church, he does not seem to have lost any of his enthusiasm for guiding the careers of the young. Edward Quarles was given a Southwell prebend in January 1632/3 and on proving his ability was given a more important prebend at York in May 1637.[2] Like Richard's son Paul and nephew John, Quarles was a product of Pembroke College Cambridge. Another distinguished graduate was Barnabas Barlow, fellow of King's College Cambridge, who came to the diocese as Neile's chaplain and received a Southwell prebend for his pains in October 1636.[3] As with Quarles, he was later preferred to a more important stall at York in July 1640.[4] Neile did not neglect old chaplains: in May 1640 Eleazor Duncan became a prebendary at York.[5] Duncan was another Pembroke man and clearly a favourite with Neile for he gained posts from him at Durham, Winchester and York, having originally been ordained as a priest by Neile in September 1626.[6] Neile was fortunate in having so many Southwell prebends at his disposal to encourage and reward loyal friends. Proof that many of them were used simply as sinecures is provided by Neile's presentation of Edward Burby to one in 1638. The latter had won favour on marrying Neile's neice

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1. J. Raine (ed.), 'Memorials of the Church of St. Peter and Wilfred, Ripon', Vol. II, Surtees Soc., No. 78, 1884, p.319.
2. York: Sub. Bk. 2, ff. 124 & 138.
3. Ibid., f.134.
4. Ibid., f.154v.
5. Ibid., f.152v.
6. Ibid., f.91; see Chpt. 7, p.217.

Frances in 1630. He had risen to the key position of Archdeacon of Winchester in 1631 and there is no evidence that he ever figured in York diocese apart from the Southwell appointment.[1]

More important in practical terms than these clerical appointments, was Neile's continued patronage of able young lawyers. Working closely with Easdall and friends in London, Neile drew more southerners into what had once been a closed legal society in the north.[2] Edward Mottershed, son of the Deputy Registrar of the High Commission in London, acquired his D.C.L. from New College, Oxford in 1632 and arrived in York as a Judge of the Admiralty Court soon after.[3] In March 1632/3 he was appointed as Cosin's Official of the East Riding archdeaconry.[4] The office of King's Advocate in the North was created for him in February 1634/5 and involved the prosecution of all causes in the York High Commission, but not official prosecutions in the ordinary courts.[5] This relieved Easdall of the task of supervising advocates and proctors who acted in official prosecutions. Perhaps Mottershed's most noticeable contribution to Neile's policies in the north came after he was appointed Official of the Archdeacon of Nottingham in March 1635, succeeding the corrupt Nicholas Langford who was forced out of office.[6] Mottershed took vigourous personal action in the matter of church restoration work and his lack of use of surrogates broke down local opposition and apathy. Such was the effectiveness of 'the little doctor', that William Robinson's appointment as archdeacon in 1635 is made to appear unnecessary.

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1. See Chpt. 3, p.69.
2. R. Marchant, The Church under the Law, pp. 50-1.
3. B. Levack, The Civil Lawyers in England 1603-1641, Oxford 1973, p.257.
4. York: Institution Act Bk. 6, (1632-68), p.24.
5. R. Marchant, The Church under the Law, p.51.
6. York: Institution Act Bk. 6, p.107; R. Marchant, The Puritans & the Church Courts, pp. 189-203 covers the campaign which followed.

Proctors certificates at York provide evidence that Neile took more than a formal role in the admission of new blood to the courts. The letters of recommendation of Piers Lee a student of Sydney Sussex College, Cambridge, were examined closely in October 1632 before Neile authorised Easdall to admit him as a proctor.[1] When Paul Glisson was recommended for admission as an advocate in July 1637 it was because Neile had 'received from my good friend Mr. Dr. Eden sufficient testimony of his learning and skill in the Lawe'.[2] Neile happily approved the appointment of Glisson as Official of the Cleveland archdeaconry in April 1638.[3] Dr. Thomas Eden, Master in Chancery and Professor of Law at Gresham College was one of many contacts Neile must have had in London through his membership of Doctor's Commons and Gray's Inn.[4]

Neile's judgement was not faultless. His career reveals that a startlingly high percentage of his appointees proved to be loyal and capable clerics or administrators, but there were failures. His first legal appointment at York was that of John Levett as Commissary of the Exchequer and Prerogative Court in October 1632.[5] A local man, Marchant feels that Neile may well have been seeking to appease local gentry interests with this appointment. Levett rarely appeared in York and initially Phineas Hodson acted as his surrogate, thus mitigating some of the problems caused by an absentee judge. When the task of running the court fell upon the very junior Paul Glisson as surrogate after 1637, it caused resentment amongst lawyers and clients alike. Neile was forced to act and in 1639 threatened to take charge of the court personally; Levett responded by appointing George Stanhope as his new chief surrogate. This restored some

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1. York: Proctor's Admissions, P X 28.
2. Ibid., PX 26.
3. York: Institution Act Bk. 6, p.234.
4. See Chpt. 3, p.63.
5. York: Sub. Bk. 2, f.116.

balance to court business and Neile could rest assured that one of his 'henchmen', as Marchant refers to Stanhope, was in charge.[1]

Close friendships ensured continuity of legal advice and smooth administration. With Easdall as Chancellor Neile could be sure of loyal co-operation in the pursuit of his policies. The fact that Edward Liveley, Neile's personal secretary at Durham and Winchester, went with him to York is of no less importance, although the results of the association are less tangible. Liveley's precedent book which survives at York reveals that he ensured that Neile was kept more directly aware of important administrative matters than if he had to consult the Chancery registry. Liveley turned Neile's Institution Act Book into a miniature register, where his predecessor had merely recorded institutions in a pocket book.[2] Neile's reliance on Easdall and Liveley is recorded in a very personal way. These men appear as godparents for his grandchildren Elizabeth and Richard Neile in 1639 and 1640.[3] When Neile drew up his will in June 1640 he left eighty ounces of gilt plate to his 'faithful servant' Edward Liveley and begged him to continue to serve as the 'family solicitor' after his death.[4]

A team of such reliable, efficient lawyers and clerics enabled Neile to continue to devote much of his time to Privy Council and Star Chamber affairs in London. Until illness finally prevented him from leaving York in 1636, he usually spent the winter months and probably more than half of any year in the capital.[5] He relinquished his post of Clerk of the Closet which eventually went to William Juxon in March 1631/2, but it was not until 1636 that Juxon was admitted to the Privy Council to take over as Laud's second-in-command

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1. R. Marchant, The Church under the Law, pp. 101-2.
2. Ibid., p.84; see Chpt. 3, p.92.
3. York: Bishopthorpe parish register transcript, NA 1639 & 1640.
4. York: Neile's Register, 32, ff. 4-5.
5. See Chpt. 6, pp.186-7; Appendix 3.

on Neile's departure.[1]

Neile's primary visitation of the diocese of York, held over the winter of 1632-3, was conducted almost entirely in his absence. He probably accompanied Charles I as far as York in April 1633 on his way to be crowned in Scotland. As a gesture of faith in Neile's services, the King knighted Richard's son Paul at Bishopthorpe in May.[2] Charles was a very particular master however, and whilst in York he expressed disapproval of the condition of York Minster. He gave express orders that houses built against the west end were to be demolished.[3] Fortunately, Neile had also noted the need for changes arising from his visitation of the Dean and Chapter in the autumn. Probably in response to his findings, the Dean and Chapter issued a list of 17 orders to the Vicars Choral calling for an improvement in the conduct of all religious ceremonies.[4] It bears all the hallmarks of Neile's intervention that the choir should be singled out for comment and that one article should relate to the problems of supplying their pay.[5]

Other changes would have been more immediately noticeable. During the first four months of 1633 Neile clearly acted as York's London buyer and spent £223.8s.3d. on furniture, books and communion plate for the Minster; all typically documented by Neile personally.[6] In November 1632 £1,000 had been granted to the Dean and Chapter for 'repairing the ruines of the said Cathedral Church, for setting up a new organ, for furnishing and adorning the Altar, and enhabling them to mainteyne a library keeper'.[7] The source of the money was a fine

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1. P. Heylin, Cyprianus Anglicus, p.227; See Chpt. 6, p.187.
2. J. Keble, History of the Parish and Manor House of Bishopthorpe, (ed. A. Purey-Cust), Leeds 1905, pp.71-2.
3. York Minster Library: Lease Bk. (1624-40), ff.114-5.
4. Ibid., ff. 112-14.
5. Ibid.; see Chpt. 2, p.28.
6. 'The Fabric Rolls of York Minster', ed. J. Raine Jnr., Surtees Soc., 35, 1858, p.322.
7. Ibid., p.319.

levied on Edward Paler, found guilty of committing incest in July 1632 by the Court of High Commission - a classic example of the use of such fines in church restoration work apart from St. Paul's.[1] On 21 March 1632/3 a contract was signed with the celebrated organ builder, Robert Dallam.[2] It was he who had constructed a new organ for Neile at Durham in 1623.[3] By another perhaps related coincidence, John Hutchinson, 'doubtless a relative of Richard Hutchinson, of Durham' was appointed as the new organist in 1633.[4]

Reforms in the diocese as a whole were less easy to organize. The correction courts for York completed their business in March 1633 and Neile was soon on hand to assess the results personally. His visitation articles had consisted of 97 questions and started with a section on the repair of churches, illustrating yet again his blunt, practical approach to diocesan administration.[5] The nine articles of this section placed great stress on the maintenance of fonts and the provision of communion tables 'conveniently placed'. As an opening section this made much more of the matter than did Harsnet's scattered questions of 1629.[6] Questions about the production of registers of strange preachers were included to add depth to the enquiries into the activities of nonconformist preachers. Yet on the whole the articles were moderate, because Neile was an experienced judge of the use of visitations and contented himself with questions which would discover as much as possible by causing least alarm to church-wardens. It was necessary to tread softly for as Neile informed the

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1. See Chpt. 6, p.178.
2. 'The Fabric Rolls of York Minster', Surtees Soc., 35, p.319.
3. See Chpt. 7, p.209.
4. J. West, Cathedral Organists, Lond. 1899, p.93.
5. R. Neile, Articles to be Enquired of In the Metropoliticall Visitation of the most Reverend Father in God, Richard, by the Providence of God, Lord Archbishop of Yorke.., Lond. 1633 (Bodleian Library, Oxford: C.8.22(i) Linc.).
6. S. Harsnet, Articles to be Enquired of, In the Metropoliticall Visitation of the most Reverend Father in God, Samuel.., Lond. 1629 (Bodleian Library, Oxford: Vet.A1.e.123(6)).

King in his annual report of 1633/4:

> 'The B[isho]p can but enquire by the othes of Churchwardens, and Sidesmen, who, make no conscience of dispensing w[i]th their othe, and can hardly be brought to p[re]sent anything, be things never so farr out of order'. [1]

Neile had developed a clear plan of attack over his years as a bishop in an attempt to counter this problem.

The survival of vast quantities of visitation material at York permits close analysis of the work of Neile's visitation courts. This material is of great value in view of the absence of comparable material earlier in his career. Statistics relating to these visitations have been placed in an appendix.[2] The quality of this material has rightfully attracted scholars before and this has helped in the task of keeping Neile firmly in focus. Use has been made of Hugh Aveling's attempts to compile lists of Catholic recusants[3] and the work of various scholars who have struggled with the even more difficult task of assessing the strength of Puritanism in the diocese and province.[4] My own statistics are based on a cruder count of case-entries, the value of which lies in the fact that they permit

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1. P.R.O: SP/16/259/78, f.4. 2. Appendix 1, pp. 303-7.
3. H. Aveling, 'The Catholic Recusants in the West Riding of Yorkshire, 1558-1790', Proceedings of the Leeds Philosophical & Literary Soc., X, part IV, Leeds 1963;
   ——— Northern Catholics. The Catholic Recusants of the North Riding of Yorkshire, 1558-1790, Lond. 1966;
   ——— 'Post Reformation Catholicism in East Yorkshire 1558-1790', East Yorkshire Local History Soc., York 1960;
   ——— 'Some Aspects of Yorkshire Recusant History 1558-1791', Studies in Church History, IV, ed. G. Cumming, Leiden 1967, pp. 98-121 provides a thoughtful analysis of the problems of compiling recusancy statistics in which Hugh Aveling gives his own estimate of the Catholic population of Yorkshire between 1603-40 as approx. 3-4,000.
4. I. Hogg, Thesis, op. cit.;
   J. Newton, 'Puritanism and the Diocese of York (excluding Nottinghamshire) 1603-40', (London University Ph.D. thesis, 1956);
   R. Marchant, The Puritans & the Church Courts, 1960;
   R.C. Richardson, Puritanism in north-west England. A regional study of the diocese of Chester to 1642, Manchester 1972.

comparison with other types of cases between visitations and allow one to see the work of the visitations as a whole.[1]

There are three main areas in which Neile's personal interests in the visitation can be detected. Firstly, he was concerned to survey for the first time in many years the condition of churches under his care, with a view to mounting an effective church restoration programme. Secondly, he hoped to gain an accurate picture of the strength of Puritanism within the province, the numbers of recalcitrant ministers, the size of their gentry support and the areas in which they operated. Finally, visitations provided a check on the work of the High Commission and the Council of the North in the detection of Catholic recusants. Just as Neile exercised care in the value he placed on the results of this survey, so should historians beware of placing too much faith in the mass of statistics which have come out of this visitation material.

What does emerge from the tables in the appendix is that Neile extracted a far clearer picture of his diocese than had been gained in 1627. A tightening of the presentment system is discernible, because large numbers of churchwardens were found under close scrutiny by the visitors to be making false or inadequate presentments. Hence the dramatic leap in the instances of clergy and churchwardens appearing before the correction courts. Problems occur when one tries to delve further into the substance behind these figures and estimate the number of Puritan clergy operating in York diocese in 1632. Ronald Marchant listed 115 ministers found to be in trouble with the ecclesiastical courts during the 1630s.[2] That total covers the entire diocese and includes the archdeaconry of Nottingham. Close analysis of his figures is provided in the appendix, but it is

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1. Appendix 1, p.303.
2. Ibid., p.304.

interesting to note here that 49% of those ministers were cited to appear before the visitation correction courts during 1632-3. However, 29 of the 57 people were simply ministers who neglected to use their surplices for one reason or another. As only 26 ministers were ever suspended during the 1630s, and all of those only temporarily, the implication is that many of those ministers are wrongly classified as Puritans.[1] Nobody was ever deprived of his living, which bears out Neile's comments on his leniency at a later date.

The apparently simple task of establishing the number of churches in need of repairs in the diocese was entangled with the issue of nonconformity.[2] This was because, on his arrival in York, Neile proceeded to use his Chancery Court to handle church cases arising from the work of reliable commissioners appointed to inspect churches. Help for the archdeacons in such duties was long overdue, but the decisions of the Chancery Court rapidly became rather controversial. Orders given to the churchwardens of St. John's, Beverley as early as 29 January 1632/3 included the statement that:

> '..the Communion table shold be placed in the uppermost p[ar]te of the Quior ... and to stand upp Close, at the East end of the Quior of the said Church; and that a decent Rayle shold be made in the same Quior some fitt and competent distance from the Com[m]union table afores[ai]d..'.[3]

While the Chancery Court proceeded to issue orders in specific cases discovered by independent commissioners, Neile's visitation revealed the 'official' figures that some 32% of the churches of York diocese (excluding the Nottingham archdeaconry) stood in need of repairs, alterations, or ornaments to bring them up to the standard required

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1. J. Newton, thesis, op. cit., p.450 thought a figure of 65-95 Puritan ministers erred on the high side. Of his total, 46 were detected in the visitation of 1632-3 and only 10 in 1636 (p.220). The disparity between Newton's figure and Marchant's illustrates the problem of establishing reliable statistics even after very close analysis of this visitation material.
2. Appendix 1, p.303 indicates the dramatic jump in the number of cases relating to church fabric.
3. York: Chanc. A.B.25 (1633 - 34/5), f.10.

by the new Archbishop.[1] Regular reports were to be submitted to the Chancery Court in the worst cases. On the face of it, the worst affected areas seemed to be the predominantly poor and Catholic deaneries of the North and East Riding. What one might expect if the survey was solely concerned with neutral structural defects.

Neile's attack upon Puritan nonconformity was two-pronged. On the one hand he insisted on the restoration of churches in a way which was clearly more conducive to Arminian ceremony than Puritan preaching. On the other hand he strove to enforce royal orders over catechizing, fewer sermons, fewer psalms and regular readings of the Litany on Wednesdays and Fridays. This policy was well in advance of that yet attempted in the southern province, for as Marchant pointed out:

> 'The enforcement of catechizing on Sunday afternoons, and the suppression of afternoon sermons, were among the earliest measures attempted by Neile upon his promotion to the archbishopric, and anticipated the royal orders to Laud to do likewise'.[2]

It was no easy campaign, for bad presentments, reduced though they had been by the vigilance of the visitors, ensured that even the grim picture of his diocese which Neile possessed in 1633 was inaccurate. Puritans were discovered in the rich and populous towns of the West Riding, but many notable cases were detected later only through the operation of other courts.

A case only emerged against William Brearcliffe, Vicar of North Cave near Hull, after Mottershed had conducted the Archdeacon's Easter Visitation of the East Riding in 1633. The matter was passed on to the Chancery Court and Brearcliffe stood accused of not using

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1. Appendix 1, p.306.
2. R. Marchant, The Puritans & the Church Courts, p.65; York: Chanc. A.B.24 (1629 - 1632/3), ff. 321-2 records a strong attack on York city clergymen over these issues on 8 Dec. 1632. It is interesting that this campaign should be recorded in the Chancery Court Act Books as opposed to those of the High Commission.

the sign of the cross in baptism, of owning schismatical books, keeping conventicles in his house and of being a supporter of William Prynne on the question of stage plays.[1] Thanks to the protection of churchwardens like William Elliot and Robert Thirske, prosecuted for neglect of duties in June 1635, Ezekial Rogers of Rowley went undetected in 1632.[2] Rogers appeared before the courts in 1634 and Rowley was revealed to be a prominent Puritan centre of the East Riding: a list of 'strange preachers' came to light and Rogers was charged with not reading prayers properly or wearing a surplice.[3] A similar case led to the suspension of Thomas Toller, Vicar of Sheffield in 1635, but only after the churchwardens there had been found guilty of making false presentments at the Archdeacon's Visitation in 1634, as well as Neile's in 1632.[4]

In Ronald Marchant's opinion 'the failure to detect Sheffield's Puritanism was the one important lapse of Neile's primary visitation'.[5] In fact such failures were widespread and were frequently closely related to cases involving church repairs. When commissioners visited Sheffield in 1635 they discovered the communion table in the centre of the church, no rail, no cover for the font and found it necessary to order the churchwardens 'to putt the organs in tune and p[ro]vide a skilfull organist to play thereon'.[6] Churchwardens of important towns like Barnsley, Pontefract, Bradford and Hull, concealed church defects in Neile's major visitations of 1632-3 and 1636. Chancery Court records reveal that Neile had to start his campaign from the very heart of his diocese - York itself. Eight of the city's parish churches were found to need repairs, although they

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1. York: D/C.R. Cause papers, 2046.
2. Ibid., 2106.
3. Ibid., 2069.
4. Ibid., 2087.
5. R. Marchant, The Puritans & the Church Courts, p.69.
6. York: Chanc. A.B.26 (1634/5 - 1638), f.36.

were never cited for such in the visitations.[1] When the churchwardens of St. Martin's, Micklegate in York were found guilty of making false presentments, the case led to an attack on the incumbent John Birchall which lasted throughout the 1630s.[2] Orders relating to necessary church repairs at St. Martin's were given in October 1633.[3] Birchall's became a classic case because at least three aldermen - Hoyle, Breary and Topham - were members of his congregation. Here was a clash with York's Puritan-dominated corporation. The corporation gained control of the livings of All Saints, Pavement and St. Saviour's in 1632 and it is no simple coincidence that the ministers of both were cited for nonconformity in Neile's primary visitation.[4] Altogether, 15 of the parishes of York had their churchwardens prosecuted during the 1630s for neglect of duty.[5] This indicates the scale of the problem, but also makes it clear that Neile's aim at York, as elsewhere, was not simply one of surveillance.

Compared with the problems so far described, that of detecting Catholic recusants was relatively easy. One of Neile's 'popular' moves on his appointment to York was to inaugurate 'a vigorous persecution of all Papists, but usually, the record shows, in order to extract money from them'.[6] This is totally in line with Hugh Aveling's assessment of Wentworth's plans in 1628, when the idea had been that:

> 'Once he had drawn the bulk of the better-off recusants into contracting to pay recusant fine compositions, he sheltered them from the code and the proceedings of the courts'.[7]

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1. It is hardly surprising that churches not being reported for fabric defects in the visitations were inspected more than once by commissioners acting for the Chancery Court. Appendix 1, pp.306-7.
2. V.C.H. The City of York, ed. P. Tillott, Lond, 1961, pp.201-2.
3. York: Chanc. A.B.25 (1633 - 1634/5), f.137v.
4. V.C.H. The City of York, ed. P. Tillott, pp.201-2.
5. R. Marchant, The Puritans & the Church Courts, p.126.
6. Ibid., p.54.
7. H. Aveling, 'Catholic Recusancy in the City of York 1558-1791', Catholic Record Soc. Monograph Series, Vol. 2, 1970, p.82.

The process of rounding up Catholics and 'rating' them was still in operation for at least the first two years of Neile's archiepiscopate. It was one of the few areas of jurisdiction in which the powers of the High Commission went unchallenged. On 10 December 1632 that court briefly extended its jurisdiction, when the pursuivant John Greene was licensed to act in the diocese of Chester.[1] The discovery of more wealthy recusants to pay composition fines was soon completed, however, and 'for the rest of this period the High Commission worked in very low gear'.[2]

Where problems arose on the Catholic front they usually stemmed from bureaucratic tangles between the civil and ecclesiastical authorities. Thus Sir Edward Osborne complained to Wentworth in September 1633 of:

> 'diverse commissions newly granted by the Archbishop and Bishop of Durham for searchinge Recusants houses for Preists, Reliques and popish ornaments which are daily putt in execution whereby both such as have compounded and are yett to compound are soe molested as I have much feare the service [i.e. the compositions with recusants] will fall to nothing, unless some course be taken to stay them for the present'.[3]

Complaints were made when the ecclesiastical authorities acted with vigour, yet only a month later Neile found it necessary to write to Wentworth refuting rumours that he was not being tough enough with recusants in the Court of High Commission.[4] Wentworth accepted Neile's word and craved pardon for doubting him, adding that:

> 'I have ever professed I held you for an exceeding good Bish[o]p. And I do desire to run a faire and hartly frendly way w[i]th you

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1. York: High Commission Act Bk. 18 (1631 - 34), f.124.
2. H. Aveling, Northern Catholics, p.226; see Appendix 1, p.305.
3. Sheffield Central Library: Wentworth Woodhouse Muniments P.H.7.A. Strafford Correspondence, XIII. Osborne to Wentworth, 26 Sept. 1633.
4. Ibid., XIII, Neile to Wentworth, 3 Oct. 1633.

in all things'.[1]

The problems passed by and the 1630s saw the execution of firm, but mild measures aimed at securing income rather than conversions.

This in turn caused some problems for Neile and his colleagues. His soft approach to the Catholic problem in the past had led to criticism in Parliament. In the draft of a speech which he was prepared to give in 1629, Neile claimed that:

> 'My opposinge of the Commission of Recusants Compositions both in the Co[u]ntrie, & elsewher is well knowen..'.[2]

There is no evidence that this was really the case. Rumours abounded and in the autumn of 1634 Neile had the satisfaction of being present in Star Chamber when two people were fined £1,000 each for spreading stories that on the King's visit to York in 1633, Neile had asked for toleration for Catholics in some areas.[3] Even when Neile did act he could achieve little against the background of prevailing court opinion. In October 1634 Charles pardoned John Hilton, a Catholic whom Neile had reported to the Council for embarrassing remarks about the Queen's religious opinions.[4]

In January 1633/4 Neile made his first full report on the province of York in the light of his metropolitical visitation. The previous year he had merely passed on the reports of the Bishops of Chester and Carlisle:

> '..giving credit to them: But, having this last summer visited those Diocesses, I find things much differing from the said certificates..'.[5]

Following a startlingly successful visitation of Chester by his own

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1. Ibid., XIII, Wentworth to Neile, 5 Nov. 1633; H. Aveling, 'Documents Relating to the Northern Commissions for Compounding with Recusants 1627-1642', 'Miscellaneous Recusant Records', ed. C. Talbot, Catholic Record Society, Vol. 53, 1960, pp.291-307.
2. P.K. Durham: Hunter MS. 67, Item 14, p.11.
3. J. Rushworth, Historical Collections, Vol. II, Abridged ed., Lond. 1706, p.226.
4. Calendar of Clarendon State Papers preserved in the Bodleian Library, ed. O. Ogle & W. Bliss, Oxford 1872, Vol. I, p.51.
5. P.R.O: SP/16/259/78, f.1v.

commissioners, Neile was now able to present a more accurate picture for Laud and the King. It seems apparent that churchwardens in the diocese of Chester were caught unawares by the nature of Neile's articles. They may have felt immune from effective follow up on the grounds that they were in another diocese and Neile could only work through the temporizing Bridgeman. The latter was as much surprised by the efficiency of the visitation as was his diocese. Clearly feeling aggrieved that their own lax approach had entailed loss of profits, Bridgeman and Bishop Potter of Carlisle wrote to Neile in December 1633 complaining about excessive fees and interference on the part of his visitors.[1] Neile dismissed the claim out of hand, displaying great trust in his officials and stating that 'I have not received ffour score pounds upon my visitat[i]on of both the dioceses, Chester & Carlile'.[2]

In some respects Bridgeman's claim that Neile's officers had taken more fees than his own had taken in sixteen years is a comment on the former's past inefficiency. Again, comparison with the preceding visitation reveals a vast increase in the number of misdemeanours detected.[3] Catholicism exercised a strong hold in the diocese, particularly in the northern deaneries of Lancashire. Perhaps more disturbing for the authorities was the prevalence of irreligion and the survival of deep-rooted superstitions in areas like the Lake District. In such parts 'illegal marriages' were common and ceremonies such as rushbearing continued despite the disapproval of the authorities. Yet it was a large diocese of strong contrasts, for in the southern deaneries, particularly on the Wirral

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1. G. Bridgeman, 'History of the Church and Manor of Wigan', Chetham Soc. New Series, Part II, (Vol. 16), 1889, p.377.
2. Ibid., p.378.
3. Appendix 1, p.303.

and around Manchester, Puritanism was rife.[1] People like Peter Sharpe, 'a wandering scholler being suspended, yet doth preach in most Churches in this deanerie [Wirral]', were common.[2] As at York, there is evidence of cross-examination by the visitors, for at Churcholme in the deanery of Middlewich the churchwardens found themselves charged with 'omittinge to p[resen]te many thinges especially their minister'.[3] The latter, John Gregg, turned out to be not reading prayers on Wednesdays and Fridays, rarely wearing his surplice, neglecting to give catechism classes and worse still, liked to sing psalms![4] Large numbers of Brownists were detected around Macclesfield and Manchester. To add to this sorry picture, 69% of the churches of the diocese were found to be in need of some kind of repair.[5]

Neile summarised these points for the King in his report. He noted that because the livings in Carlisle and Chester dioceses were of low value, there was difficulty in getting adequate ministers. The Book of Common Prayer was generally neglected as was the teaching of the catechism. Lecturers were common and according to Neile:

> 'The disrespect, th[a]t the Ministers have shewed of the publick prayers of the Church hath bred such irreverence in the people, that it is a rare thing in many places to see any upon their knees at the reading of prayers, or (almost) at the receiving of the sacraments'.[6]

He mentioned that 'the Churches are very miserable, and ruinous in the fabrick', but he personally placed greater stress on the fact 'it was scarce found in any place, th[a]t the Com[m]union Table was placed in such sort as th[a]t it might appeare, it was any whitt respected'.[7]

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1. R.C. Richardson, Puritanism in north-west England.., 1972 provides a valuable study of the problems of this diocese. In an article on 'Puritanism and the Ecclesiastical Authorities: The Case of the Diocese of Chester', Politics, Religion and the English Civil War, ed. B. Manning, Lond. 1973, pp.3-36, Richardson stresses that Neile was behind the policy changes of the 1630s not Bridgeman. (p.22).
2. York: V 1633/C.B. 2B, f.456v.
3. Ibid., f.482.
4. Ibid.
5. Appendix 1, p.306.
6. P.R.O: SP/16/259/78, f.2.
7. Ibid., f.2v.

It was a damning indictment of Bridgeman and Potter, made worse by the fact that 'the two Cathedrall Churches are not as they ought to be'.[1]

The diocese of Sodor and Man was in no better state. When Bishop John Philips died in August 1633 Laud wrote to Sir John Coke, Secretary of State that:

> '..the last Bishop filled those parts of the Church with many unlearned and unworthy ministers. My Lord's Grace of York complains of this and desires remedy for the future'.[2]

This involved influence being brought to bear upon the Earl of Derby and his son, who held the right of nomination to the see. In his report, Neile felt that a careless leasing policy had aggravated the situation on the island. He also poured scorn on Philips' translation of the Prayer Book into Manx, feeling that 'it were well th[a]t all yo[u]r Ma[jes]ties subjects of that Isle and other places might be brought to the use of the English Tongue'.[3] There is no evidence of how well Neile got on with the short-lived William Forster who was consecrated as the new bishop in March 1633/4. However, he does seem to have struck up a good working relationship with Richard Parr, whom he and Laud consecrated at Winchester House in June 1635.[4] He trusted Parr with the conduct of church consecrations in 1636.[5]

Morton's statements about Durham formed the least informative section of Neile's long report. Morton interpreted the guidelines concerning his annual report very rigidly and only felt it necessary to send a list of 'conformable' lecturers to Neile. Probably because the list contained the name of Robert Jenison of Newcastle, Neile passed on some doubts to the King.[6]

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1. Ibid.
2. Hist. MSS. Comm. Cowper MSS., Vol. II, pp.31-2.
3. P.R.O: SP/16/259/78, f.5v.
4. York: Miscellaneous Papers, Precedent Bk. 2, pp. 478-487.
5. See p.260.
6. P.R.O: SP/16/259/78, f.1v.

The metropolitical visitation had been the most successful within living memory. Such were the stark facts which came to light that Neile felt obliged to defend his bishops: he commented on the weakness of the presentment system, of the fear of encouraging Catholicism by being too severe with Puritans, and finally, he stressed general problems of diocesan administration:

> 'The truth is, if the B[isho]p be not very vigilant, and resolute to have things kept in order, and exact the same of his officers, and an accompt of their doings: things wilbe amisse, be the B[isho]p in his owne person never so well disposed, and affected to government'. [1]

It was also a comment on his own situation vis-à-vis the weak bishops of his province.

Neile's reaction to what was, on the face of it, an appalling situation in his diocese and province was typically pragmatic. Apart from dealing with recusants, the powers of the High Commission at York had been severely curtailed by the activities of Puritan lawyers. Not to be outdone, Neile and Easdall increased the work of the Chancery Court. Neile was not the first archbishop to switch business to other courts and Philip Tyler concluded that 'the importance of the Commission in relation to the other church courts .. dwindled quite rapidly between 1610 and 1635'.[2] An unfortunate gap in the surviving records between October 1634 and June 1638 completely undercuts Marchant's conclusion that Neile and Easdall revived the powers of the High Commission and then held them 'very much in reserve'.[3] Analysis of Marchant's list of Puritans reveals that only 8% of his men ever appeared before the Court of High Commission. On the other hand, 48% of his total appeared before the Chancery Court on at least one occasion in the 1630s. The business of the latter court was being

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1. Ibid., f.4v.
2. P. Tyler, The Ecclesiastical Commission and Catholicism in the North 1562-77, Leeds 1960, Appendix B, p.128.
3. R. Marchant, The Puritans & the Church Courts, p.58.

expanded to take over official prosecutions of nonconformist ministers. That it was extremely successful in this new role is borne out by the fact that approximately 56% of the ministers who appeared in its court were not cited in the visitations of the 1630s.[1]

Meanwhile, the Chancery Court continued to receive church repair cases from roving commissioners, who having caught York by surprise in 1633, moved further afield in 1634.[2] Major towns like Wakefield, Pocklington, Bradford, Pontefract and Leeds were all ordered to carry out repairs and alterations of a kind worthy of reporting in a visitation. At Leeds for example, the churchwardens were ordered to pull down a loft, make the stalls uniform, take away seats from the East end and nail in the communion table 'soe that neither dogges nor any uncle[a n] thinge may nigh the same'.[3] The work of the Chancery Court eventually revealed that many symbolic, rather than major structural, changes were required in Puritan centres in the West Riding where the primary visitation had gained little response to enquiries. 44% of the York diocesan churches dealt with in the Chancery Court during the period 1633-40 were not cited in either of the visitations of 1632-3 or 1636. What is impressive about the work of this court is the way in which its officials harried the church-wardens. Certificates on progress were always demanded and in 1635 the commissioners reinforced or gave new orders in relation to 13 York parish churches in a return inspection of the city.[4]

From Neile's annual report on 1635 it is clear that the arch-deacons too were taking the initiative in his campaign. Figures were unavailable for Cleveland, but expenditure on churches since Neile's primary visitation and the close of 1635 ran as follows:

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1. Appendix 1, p.304.
2. Ibid., p.307.
3. York: Chanc. A.B.25 (1633 - 34/5), f.301v.
4. Appendix 1, p.307.

East Riding: £1,322.11s.7d.
Nottinghamshire: £1,240.4s.
York (West R.): £4,000. [1]

If these figures are correct, it is understandable that the Justices of the Peace for Yorkshire wrote to the Privy Council in December 1635 to explain that large collections for their own churches caused their lack of contributions towards St. Paul's.[2] The figure for York indicates the greater wealth of that archdeaconry, but also highlights the difference between the expenditure which seemed necessary in 1632 and that later revealed by closer examination.

Just as his commissioners harried churchwardens over church repairs, so Neile occasionally adopted such a policy with prominent Puritan ministers. John Birchall was regularly hauled before the courts, despite the lack of permissible evidence against him.[3] When John Shaw first arrived in York in 1636, Neile apparently used 'very terrible threatening language' in an attempt to overawe him - with little effect one might add.[4] Although there is evidence that these tough methods had been typical of Neile's approach to Puritans in the past, it was certainly not so by the time he reached York.[5] Ezekial Rogers of Rowley, already mentioned for his nonconformity, was suspended, but as Cotton Mather later wrote, Neile 'show'd him so much respect, as to let him enjoy the profits of his living, two years after the suspension'.[6] In a later report Neile mentioned 'a poor melancholick, brainsick, unconformable man' whom he was labouring to reform by conferences.[7] When James Roberts, Vicar of North Ferriby, was presented in the visitation of 1636 for not wearing his

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1. P.R.O: SP/16/312/84 f.2; A copy of a report on the archdeaconry of York exists for 1635. York: Bp.C & P. XXVII.
2. P.R.O: SP/16/304/15.
3. R. Marchant, The Puritans & the Church Courts, pp.75-80.
4. 'Yorkshire Diaries and Autobiographies', Surtees Soc., Vol. 65, 1875, 'Life of Master John Shaw', p.129.
5. See Chapter 3, pp.74-8.
6. C. Mather, Magnalia Christi Americana, Lond. 1702, part 3, p.102.
7. P.R.O: SP/16/345/85, f.5v.

surplice and administering communion to people not kneeling, he escaped with a simple admonition to change his ways.[1] It was with considerable truthfulness that Neile later claimed:

> 'I never deprived any man; but have endeavoured their reformat[i]on w[i]th meekness, and patience'.[2]

Another side to this coin was that Neile licensed only 13 carefully selected ministers to preach throughout the province during his time at York; he saw no reason to increase the problems he had to contend with.[3] It is also apparent that Neile exercised great care in his scrutiny of prospective ministers, because he claimed in his report of January 1636/7, that 'there hath not these three yeares last past, any man of worth come to me: And upon unworthy men, I will not lay my hands'.[4]

Neile was equally vigilant about requests for new churches. In November 1633 John Harrison petitioned Neile to consecrate the chapel of St. John the Evangelist at Leeds.[5] The expanding population of that town necessitated a new chapel, but Neile was loth to accept the fact until he was sure that both he and the Vicar of Leeds would have a say in the nomination of a minister. Moreover, it was necessary to scrutinize the documents relating to the provision of the stipend and funds for repairs. Robert Hutton, an old friend and legal adviser from Durham acted on Neile's behalf in this case, inspected the documents concerned and urged acceptance of the plea.[6] Neile eventually relented, but for all his care, his suspicions were proved well-founded - on the day of the consecration performed by Neile and Cosin on 21 September 1634, it was necessary to suspend the new minister

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1. R. Marchant, The Puritans & the Church Courts, List of Puritans pp. 222-318, sub nomine.
2. P.R.O: SP/16/345/85, f.5v.
3. This low figure is often cited against Neile as in: C. Hill, Society and Puritanism in Pre-Revolutionary England, Lond. 1964, p.74. Yet this accords perfectly with Arminian attitudes about preaching and these ministers were only meant to supplement the regular supply of preachers.
4. P.R.O: SP/16/345/85, f.5.
5. P.K. Durham: Hunter MS. 9, Items 7 & 8.
6. Ibid., Items 10,11 & 13.

Robert Todd.[1] The latter had the temerity to reply to Cosin's sermon given on the text: 'Let all things be done decently and in order' - a fairly typical Arminian text.[2] Todd was eventually restored to the living following petitions from Harrison and Sir Arthur Ingram.

Harrison was fortunate in getting his church consecrated. Although the altar stood at the east end of his private chapel at Red House, Sir Henry Slingsby complained:

> 'I once assay'd to get it consecrat'd by our Bishop w[hi]ch is Bishop Neale but he refus'd, having as he saith express command not to consecrate any, least it may be occasion of conventicles..'.[3]

Express command or not, Richard Parr carried out four more consecrations for Neile in October 1636, but they complete the total of new churches Neile allowed during his archiepiscopate.[4] Neile later defended this policy with the statement that he did not want 'to sett up Pulpit against Pulpit, and Altar against Altar'.[5]

Slingsby exemplifies the casual acceptance of nonconformity by the Yorkshire gentry. He did not really hold with consecration of churches because it attributed 'a sanctity to the very walls & stones of the Church'.[6] He simply wanted to keep up appearances for he wrote openly in his diary:

> '..we venture to have sermons in our Chapple now & then, altho' we incur some danger if it were complained off, it being contrary to the orders of the Church'.[7]

Prosecutions against Puritan ministers increased during this period, but this was not matched by any improvement in the detection of their

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1. J. Stocks, 'The Consecration Service of St. John's Church, Leeds', Thoresby Soc. Publications, Vol. 24, Leeds 1919, p.423.
2. Edward Calamy, The Nonconformists' Memorial, 1803 ed., Vol. III, pp. 439-40.
3. The Diary of Henry Slingsby.., ed. Rev. D. Parsons, Lond. 1836, pp. 19-20.
4. York: Institution Act Bk. No. 6 (1632-68), ff. 146-55, 156-70, 170-81, & 182-193 - they were chapels at Harwoodale, Wibsey, Hunslet and Attercliffe. See: G. Lawton, Collections relative to Churches and Chapels within the Diocese of York, Lond. 1842, pp. 91, 96, 116, 223, & 302.
5. P.R.O: SP/16/345/85, f.5v.
6. The Diary of Henry Slingsby, p.20.
7. Ibid.

lay patrons. Cases against Sir Matthew Boynton, Henry Darley and Sir Thomas Hoby represented only the tip of the iceberg.[1] Slingsby's undetected flouting of the law was more common.

Neile still proceeded with caution. In October 1633 he had been present when the Privy Council decided to reissue the Book of Sports first published in 1618.[2] Because the book condoned the pursuit of traditional customs and games, it was useful in the conservative north. From his report on the year 1635, it is apparent that Neile did not make readings of the book a matter for outright confrontation with Puritans as Laud tended to do in the south. Neile claimed he could 'scarcely find a beneficed Minister stiffly unconformable', but swiftly qualified his words by noting that there was 'some reluctancy in a few of the Ministers' to publicly accept the Book of Sports.[3] Nevertheless, he called for time because he had given them the 'libertie to read my Lo[rd] of Elies book lately written on the subject', upon which they would either conform or submit to ecclesiastical censure.[4] The clampdown on recalcitrant ministers did not take place until after Neile's second visitation of 1636.

By 1636 the King was more aware of the problems Neile had to contend with in the northern province. Against comments given in Neile's report on Bridgeman's attempts to improve church attendance in his diocese, the King scribbled cryptically 'is it performed or not?'[5] Barnabas Potter's tirade against churchwardens for poor presentments and justices who never gave adequate punishments, earned the sharp reprimand: 'This I take to be false, for he should call to the Churchwardens to doe their deutie'.[6] Potter's request for a new diocese in which he would be 'carefull to observe these so Religious

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1. R. Marchant, The Puritans & the Church Courts, p. 125.
2. See Chpt. 6, pp. 187-8.
3. P.R.O: SP/16/312/84, f.1.
4. Ibid., f.2.
5. Ibid., f.2v.
6. Ibid., f.3v.

& Royal Instructions' went unheeded.[1] It cut both ways however, for in these remarks the King betrayed his ignorance of the impossibility of the demands he placed upon Neile and his bishops.

Neile's old friend Laud shared the King's faith in rigid pronouncements and blanket policies. In 1634, on Laud's advice, royal orders were sent out concerning the Church's leasing policy. They gave more detailed instructions than the guidelines laid down by the orders governing the production of annual reports issued in December 1629.[2] In June 1634 bishops and deans were asked to give leases for twenty years rather than three lives for 'tyme and experience have made it apparent th[a]t there is a great deale of difference betweene them'.[3] If the old practice was continued, future clergy would not be able 'to lyve and keepe house accordinge to their place and callinge'.[4] A repeat of this order in October 1634 left the clergy in no doubt that it would be dangerous to look for loopholes. Neile seems to have complied with the orders, as one would expect, yet there is evidence that he did not agree with Laud on the need for such a rigid approach. After the Restoration, John Cosin saw advantages in giving leases for lives and remembered that 'for this mind Bishop Neile ever was, though he displeased Archbishop Laud by it'.[5]

In February 1635/6 Neile's second visitation of his diocese got under way at Southwell Minster.[6] His visitation of the Dean and Chapter of York in 1632 had coincided with great changes there, such as the building of a new organ and the purchase of more plate. An inventory of this plate was eventually produced for Neile in January 1633/4 to satisfy his urge for such formal records, clear even in his

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1. Ibid.
2. P. Heylin, Cyprianus Anglicus, pp. 199-200.
3. York: Neile's Register, No. 32, f.64.
4. Ibid.
5. 'Cosin's Correspondence Part II', ed. G. Ornsby, Surtees Soc., Vol. 55, 1870, p.240.
6. York: Institution Act Bk. 6, p.132.

days at Westminster Abbey.[1] Now it was Southwell's turn to be required to carry out improvements. Injunctions were issued calling on the Dean and Chapter to set its statutes in order and raise the value of their leases to provide more money for the fabric fund.[2] The church was reasonably well furnished except that it lacked 'a paire of goode organs'.[3] Complaints about services at the minster, the residentiary canons neglecting their duties, loss of property and the need for repairs had been made as long ago as September 1620 by local gentry.[4] Although Neile called for repairs and ordered the canons to keep up their houses and serve their residence periods, one must doubt whether these orders had much effect. Southwell was a popular residence with Neile and he did much to restore his palace there, but his appointment of prebendaries indicates that he too tended to view the minster chiefly as a source of rich sinecures with which to reward and encourage loyalty.

The results of Neile's visitation conducted during 1636, with the correction courts operating in 1637, seem to suggest that his policies were meeting with considerable success. The geographical pattern of nonconformity and recusancy was confirmed, but the number of Puritan ministers presented in 1636 had fallen to 11 rather than 55 in 1633.[5] Statistics based on case-entries reveal a similar dramatic fall.[6] According to Ian Hogg, Neile had been so successful that 'we can safely say that only the collapse of authority in 1640-1 permitted this movement to revive somewhat in the north'.[7]

The situation is confusing. Some claim that the very rise in figures in the 1630s does not represent a growth in the strength of

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1. York Minster Library: Dean & Chpt. Lease Bk. (1624-40), ff. 121-2.
2. York: Neile's Register, No. 32, ff. 76-9.
3. A. Rogers (ed.), Southwell Minster after the Civil Wars, Nottingham, 1974, p.13.
4. Ibid., pp. 7-8.
5. Appendix 1, p.304.
6. Ibid., p.303.
7. I. Hogg, thesis, op. cit., p.301.

Puritanism, but merely the authorities defining new 'crimes'. This is partly true, but the rise also reflects an improvement in the process of detection and some explanation is still needed of why the figures should fall in 1636, when the same articles of enquiry had been used as in 1632. Ronald Marchant and Ian Hogg happily accepted the figures at face value as a true monitor of Neile's success. John Newton was more cautious and felt that Puritanism was increasing in strength during this period, suggesting that the fall in figures in 1636 simply indicated that the movement had gone 'underground'. Regardless of the case for increasing or decreasing strength, the latter opinion is probably nearer the truth. Hogg noticed, but disregarded, the rise in the incidence of failure to produce registers and ordination papers at the visitation in 1636. This was probably thought permissible on the grounds of a technicality concerning the production of such papers at an ordinary, as opposed to a primary or metropolitical visitation. No prosecutions seem to have stemmed from these cases of churchwardens and ministers effectively blocking the work of the visitation. Without the proper papers little could be done to discover unlicensed ministers and travelling preachers. A glance at the figures reveals that it was partly this problem which had vitiated the work of the visitors in 1627. It does not inspire confidence that the figures for 1636 now fell close to those gained in 1627, which had registered the failure and not the success of that visitation.[1]

In his annual report on 1636 Neile claimed that he was still a 'great adversary of the puritane faction', but that he sought 'their reformac[i]on w[i]th meekness and patience'.[2] This lenient approach may be a factor in the decrease in numbers of Puritans appearing before the courts. James Roberts was simply admonished after being

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1. Appendix 1, p.303.

2. P.R.O: SP/16/345/85, f.6.

presented in the visitation of 1636. Even when he was presented in the Archdeacon's Visitation of 1638 for not reading prayers according to the rubric, he was not suspended for long.[1] He was back to trouble the visitors again in 1640. Mention has already been made of Neile's approach to the Book of Sports issue. It was not until 1638 that a general campaign was carried out to force recalcitrant ministers at Hull, Sheffield, Leeds and York to read set services from the Book of Common Prayer and make public statements on the Book of Sports.[2]

In 1636 there were still grounds for optimism. Barnabas Potter complained as ever, but at least he noted that thanks to Neile's directives 'we have gotten all our Churches (almost) newly seated, and made very fine, and uniforme'.[3] Bridgeman too, felt compelled to add a special note about churches in his report:

> 'In yo[u]r Metropoliticall Visitac[i]on, you began an excellent worke, namely to repayre, and uniforme the churches of yo[u]r Province. In pursuance whereof I have ever since laboured to see it p[er]fected ... and have brought most of the Churches in my Dioces to uniformitie, and decencie'.[4]

Apparently the laity of Cheshire had bestowed many thousand pounds in the restoration work. It seems as if despite earlier criticisms from these two of Easdall's 'vaine braggs' and the bullying to which they were subjected by Neile's commissioners, this policy seems to have had some effect.[5]

There was little mention of the struggle against nonconformity in the reports. Richard Parr of Sodor and Man asserted that his ministers were hardly likely to 'trouble their heads' with nonconformist thoughts 'most of them being of no better abilities, than to

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1. York: E.R.A/Misc., draft report on the East Riding of Dec. 1639 notes James Roberts as the only nonconformist minister in the area.
2. R. Marchant, The Puritans & the Church Courts, p.118.
3. P.R.O: SP/16/345/85, f.3. 4. Ibid., f.4.
5. See p.253 ; In 'A County Community in Peace and War: Sussex 1600 - 1660, Lond. 1976, p.87, Anthony Fletcher makes the interesting comment that in Sussex it was the cost of church restoration work which was the key factor in the resistance shown to Mountague's efforts to set up such a campaign.

read distinctly Divine Service'.[1] Parr had introduced greater reliance on set readings from the Book of Homilies to counter this problem in his diocese. There was no mention of recusancy on the island, but some people had been caught 'in the practise of grosse superstitions (too tedious to relate)'.[2] Bishop Morton, as Neile might have expected, was more concerned with the recusancy problem in his dioceses than with disciplining 'fellow-travellers'. It was a matter of some despair to him that 'to bring in Recusants, or their children to catechising .. is beyond my power'.[3] Events of later years with the Scots were to test his loyalty with regard to Puritans.

Whilst the evidence for the success of Neile's policies vis-à-vis Puritans and Catholics is ambiguous, there is little doubt that his church restoration programme was meeting with a good response. His metropolitical visitation had focused attention on the problem and by 1636 his bishops felt compelled to comment on the matter. That was more than Laud ever achieved with the bishops of the southern province. Neile made it clear in his report that he regarded the royal proclamation of 1629 as providing his authority to act on the matter.[4] Work in the southern province on the other hand relied more on the ruling given in St. Gregory's case of 1633.

For his own part, Neile was not simply concerned with the better maintenance of the cathedral churches in his care. He had developed a reputation for restoring episcopal residences and this interest did not cease on his arrival at York.[5] The houses at Southwell and Bishopthorpe were apparently 'very ruinous' in 1632 but Neile had set about quickly to repair them.[6] In 1636 he agreed to a settlement of a dilapidations suit which he had formally brought against the executors of Samuel Harsnet's will. The episcopal houses at Ripon and

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1. P.R.O: SP/16/345/85, f.2.
2. Ibid., f.2v.
3. Ibid., f.4v.
4. Ibid., f.6v.
5. See Chpt. 3, pp. 58-9.
6. P.R.O: SP/16/345/85, f.5.

Scrooby were demolished without involving Neile in personal expense.[1] Contrary to past opinion, it is clear that these two houses were completely derelict in the 1630s and that Cawood, Bishopthorpe and Southwell were the only diocesan residences still in use in the north.[2] The latter is most interesting because experts once thought that Sandys was the last archbishop to use the palace. Yet it is plain that Neile was devoted to the place and spent much of his time there.[3] The principal house of the see was Cawood Castle and here Neile gained permission to fell large quantities of timber for repair work and boasted in 1639 that he had spent at least £1,000 on the project in the last year.[4]

A rationalisation of episcopal property was taking place throughout the county at this time. Some poor dioceses had no residences at all and Laud favoured bishops who either promised to build them or had already done so. According to some sources, William Piers gained the see of Bath and Wells in 1632 as a reward for providing Peterborough with an episcopal house.[5] John Bancroft provided a new palace for the see of Oxford at Cuddesdon. While new building was taking place in some dioceses, a form of asset-stripping was in hand in others. In large dioceses like Lincoln, there were too many residences and after one particular enquiry in 1629, Neile had joined with Bishop Williams to recommend that the palace at Nettleham in Lincolnshire be demolished.[6]

It was not always a simple process. Dilapidation suits were common and usually very complicated when bishops were involved. In January 1634/5 Neile lost a case involving Durham which had dragged on for years.[7] The suit had been started by John Howson and hotly

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1. Ibid., f.1; a demolition licence was granted in April 1637 (P.R.O: SO/3/11).
2. R. Rait, English Episcopal Palaces - Province of York, Lond.1911,p.4.
3. Ibid.
4. P.R.O: SP/16/412/45, f.3.
5. H. Trevor-Roper, Archbishop Laud, 2nd. ed., Lond. 1965, p.143.
6. P.R.O: SP/16/158/51 i & ii.
7. P.R.O: SP/16/282/125.

contested by Neile, first in the Audience Court at Canterbury and then by way of appeal to the King's Court of Delegates. During the course of the action, Howson died and Morton took up the cause, now with a clause to cover Howson's executors. Archbishop Laud eventually settled the suit in Morton's favour and ordered Neile to pay £550 plus costs; Howson's widow paid £60.[1] The cause of this suit probably lay in the major structural changes which Neile had effected at Durham Castle and at other houses in the diocese. When Charles visited Durham in 1633 he apparently spoke 'with warm approbation' of Neile as he was conducted over the castle and 'room after room was visited and traces of Neile's work were pointed out'.[2] But Neile spent lavishly and was fond of radical improvements. It is probable that he was responsible for having the great kitchen at Auckland Manor house pulled down and part of Morton's eventual claim against Neile was for £330 necessary for rebuilding a kitchen.[3] One cannot help feeling that there is an element of injustice here, that one who did so much to restore episcopal property in the land should lose such a case.

It was in 1636, the year of his second visitation, that Neile apologised for being unwell and unable to attend meetings of the Privy Council in the autumn.[4] His influence on central government would now be limited to letters of advice to his friend Laud and the presentation of his annual reports. Yet he seems to have used his last days in London to good advantage in one particular respect. In July 1632 York had been granted a new charter by the crown which decreased the rights of the Dean and Chapter of York both inside and and outside the city boundaries.[5] Conflict between the corporation and the Dean and Chapter was common in this period. In November 1633

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1. Ibid.
2. R. Rait, op. cit., p.176.
3. U.L. Durham: Mickleton & Spearman MS. 91, Item 51.
4. P.R.O: SP/16/331/71. Neile to Laud, 18 Sept. 1636.
5. V.C.H. The City of York, ed. P. Tillott, p.173.

Neile had played a part in effecting a compromise over a trivial seating arrangement which had got entirely out of hand because it involved precedence rights.[1] Yet Neile naturally aligned himself with the Dean and Chapter. When various townships affected by the charter changes petitioned the Privy Council with grievances, Neile no doubt took this opportunity to speak up and play a part in the eventual order of June 1636 which rescinded the York charter.[2]

The reason for Neile's mistrust of the rights of town corporations is quite clear. In the case against Birchall at St. Martin's, Micklegate he was still trying to implicate members of the council whom he knew to be Puritans. The reason for his strangely severe handling of Shaw in 1636 was because Neile felt that the man had been brought to York 'by the lord mayor of York (Vaux) to head the Puritan party against me'.[3] Neile apparently vowed to 'break Vaux and the Puritan party'.[4] He clearly felt, and with considerable justification, that the major towns of his province were the centres of Puritan nonconformity. Too many civic officials shared such opinions and neglected to co-operate with the ecclesiastical authorities. This had always been Neile's attitude and it had caused trouble in Parliament over Durham, where he increased clerical representation amongst the Justices of the Peace.[5] Even while moving from Winchester to York, Neile had taken the trouble to warn Laud that the town of Farnham sought incorporation which he felt would 'become very prejudicial to the inheritance of the Bishopric'.[6]

An attack on the rights of civic corporations thus became one platform of Neile's policy at York. The rescinding of the town's

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1. York Minster Library: Dean & Chpt. Lease Bk. (1624 - 40), f.116.
2. P.R.O: P.C.2.46., p.247.
3. 'The Life of Master John Shaw', pp. 119-163, 'Yorkshire Diaries & Autobiographies', Surtees Soc., Vol. 65, 1875, p.129.
4. Ibid.
5. See Chpt. 5, p.130.
6. Hist. MSS. Comm. Cowper MSS., 3 Vols., Lond. 1888, Vol. I, p.466.

new charter in 1636 was not enough. Ways had to be sought to coerce the civic authorities to set a better example to their wayward populace. Thus in July 1637 a royal letter was procured which ordered the formal attendance of civic dignitaries at certain Cathedral services, but which restricted their freedom to carry swords, maces and ensigns within the Cathedral precincts.[1] There were no rival jurisdictions in church. Neile seized gratefully upon this decision and swiftly wrote to Bridgeman, for he knew that the Mayor of Chester had abandoned attending services at the Cathedral. He enclosed a copy of the letter to the Mayor of York and assured Bridgeman that he would get a special letter from Laud if the former did not do the trick.[2] Similar orders were given elsewhere in the country.

Still this did not satisfy Neile. In a report to Laud in January 1637/8 he called for the stepping up of the campaign against the power of municipal corporations and pressed for 'Bishops and their Chancellors to be made Justices of the peace in their Cittyes & corporat[i]ons of their Dioces'.[3] York city was seeking a renewal of its charter and this was one of Neile's opening ploys in manoeuvring for a good position from which to compromise. He was quite far-sighted about the issue for he argued that it would 'be a good president for the like to be had in other places'.[4] York's old charter was surrendered for changes in April 1640 but there is no indication that Neile gained the kind of powers he sought for the clergy.

There were other matters on which Neile was prepared to adopt a tough line. In June 1636 Neile wrote to Laud about a problem which

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1. York Minster Library: Dean & Chpt. Lease Bk. (1624 - 40), f.135.
2. G. Bridgeman, 'The History of the Church and Manor of Wigan', Chetham Soc. New Series, part II, Vol. 16, 1889, pp. 301-3 - Neile to Bridgeman, 27 Aug. 1637.
3. Lambeth Palace MSS: MS. 943, pp. 559-62 - Neile to Laud, 22 Jan. 1637/8, p.562.
4. Ibid.

the latter was also encountering in the southern provinces. This was the question of the rights of foreign congregations in England to hold their own services without interference by the local authorities. French and Dutch workers engaged in draining fenland in the Hatfield Chase on the borders of Yorkshire, Nottinghamshire and Lincolnshire were affected when Neile rejected an appeal by their patron Sir Phillibert Vernatty for them to be allowed to build a church for themselves. Consent was promised only if they would conform to the Church of England. They had then gained approval for their original plans from the outcast Bishop Williams and this occasioned Neile's furious letter to Laud.[1] In the south the latter was prepared to allow foreigners to hold services according to the English liturgy in their own language, but this concession was not to apply to any children born in the country. It was a harsh ruling, but Neile proceeded to follow it in the north. By September 1636 he reported that the situation was well under control:

> 'I make no doubt, but they will be easily brought to conformity, when they shall have our Book of Com[m]on Prayer in ffrench and Dutch'.[2]

Later still, in his report of January 1636/7, Neile wrote with satisfaction that the troublesome minister Bontemps had now fled abroad and that all plans to build a chapel had been dropped.[3] This was not true, for later in 1637 permission was given to the foreigners to build a chapel provided they conformed to the Church of England.[4]

Two points are interesting about this isolated case in the northern province. Firstly, Neile encountered far less opposition than Laud experienced in the south. This was partly because the case was almost unique, but it was also due to the fact that Neile did not face 'such powerful sollicitors as the Caetus of the London Churches

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1. P.R.O: SP/16/327/47 - Neile to Laud, 23 June 1636.
2. P.R.O: SP/16/331/71, f.2.
3. P.R.O: SP/16/345/85, f.6v.
4. P.R.O: SP/16/323/6.

to take off his edge'.[1] This is not just a case of special pleading on Laud's behalf by Heylin. Secondly, a degree of xenophobia lay behind Neile's severity for, as he pointed out to Laud in his letter of June 1636:

> '..with what conveniency & safety to this state, such a plantation should be p[er]mitted to be of strangers, men of very mean condition th[a]t upon advantage may become as vipers nourished in o[ur] bosomes th[a]t take the bread out of the mouthes of English subjects'.[2]

Neile showed concern for the local people who were losing land and rights through the drainage scheme, not because he wished to stand in the way of progress - after all he was involved in such schemes himself - but because the use of foreigners took work from local inhabitants who would otherwise have gained some benefit from the project.[3]

Although it was scarcely apparent to the King and Laud in London, their control of events began slipping rapidly after 1636. Laud pressed ahead with plans to bring the Scottish Church into line with that of England. New canons were ratified for Scotland in 1635, but more significantly a new liturgy was prepared in the autumn of 1636. There is no evidence that Neile was involved in these schemes, but he certainly would have approved of them. Meanwhile the Queen at court was seen by many as having a bad influence as the incidence of conversions to Catholicism increased during the decade. She was a 'rallying point' for all Catholics and encouraged papal missions which fanned rumours that Laud was about to negotiate a return to the

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1. P. Heylin, Cyprianus Anglicus, p.280.
2. P.R.O: SP/16/327/47, f.2.
3. Peter Clark, English Provincial Society from the Reformation to the Revolution, 1977, p.366 has shown that the foreign congregations enjoyed great local support at Canterbury and Maidstone. Perhaps Neile was able to stir up more racist reactions in the north with his talk of foreigners taking the bread from English mouths.

Roman fold.[1] Such rumours did not help the standing of bishops like Neile and Laud in the country. Gregorio Panzani's mission to England in 1634 proved singularly catastrophic in this respect. Meetings with Francis Windebanke and Richard Mountague led Panzani to write:

> '..that he was satisfied both the archbishops, with the bishop of London and several others of the episcopal order .. were prepared to fall in with the church of Rome as to supremacy "purely spiritual".'[2]

The story reveals more about Mountague's impetuosity than the real feelings of Laud and Neile, but unfortunately it was what popular opinion believed.

The outcome of such fears was a fresh wave of criticism of government policies and a rise in the number of emigrants who felt they were fleeing from a country possessed by Antichrist. William Prynne's contribution to the controversy about the position of altars in churches appeared in 1637. In this work entitled A Quench-Coale Prynne lamented that the Arminians:

> '..have caused thousands of godly Christians (the best Preservatives against Plagues and Judgements) to flie out to forraigne Countries and Plantations, Hundreds to separate from our Church as now quite Romish and Antichristian'.[3]

For good measure he slipped in one of his scurrilous tales that Neile and Cosin were secret Catholics.[4] The courts were having a hard time keeping track of such stories. For all the work of the High Commission in both provinces and the Court of Star Chamber, there was no

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1. D. Matthew, Catholicism in England 1535 - 1935, Lond. 1936, p.79. In a more recent study Martin Havran feels that George Conn's arrival in England in 1636 stimulated the Queen to act more aggressively on behalf of her co-religionists. M. Havran, The Catholics in Caroline England, Lond. 1962, p.144.
2. The Memoirs of Gregorio Panzani, ed. J. Berington, Birmingham 1793, p.238.
3. W. Prynne, A Quench-Coale, or a Brief Disguisition and Inquirie, in what place of the Church or Chancell the Lords Table ought to be situated, especially when the Sacrament is administered? Lond. 1637, p.36.
4. Ibid., p.41.

effective reply to this kind of attack.[1] Similarly there was no way in which the flood of emigrants could be halted. April 1637 saw a proclamation which theoretically tightened controls over emigration to the colonies, but that, and another proclamation in May 1638 prohibiting the transport of people or goods to the colonies without a licence, was no barrier to people who were convinced that all was lost in England.[2]

Joseph Lister graphically described the situation in the province of York when he wrote:

> '..many good ministers and Christians among the Puritans reflected upon the times with many sad and foreboding thoughts, concluding that Popery was likely to be set up, and the light of the Gospell put out. Many ministers were silenced, and great numbers for three or four years past were posting away to New England'.[3]

When Neile informed the King that Ezekial Rogers had finally fled abroad in 1638 despite his efforts to dissuade him, all his slow-witted master could suggest was that 'an honester man must be put in his place'.[4] It was in vain that Neile warned the King that the apparent peace and order in the north was partly caused by the fact 'that too many of your Ma[jes]ties subjects inhabiting in these east parts of Yorkshire, are gone into New England'.[5]

Even from prison, the indefatigable William Prynne, aided now by Henry Burton and John Bastwick, spoke out against ecclesiastical authority. Prynne argued slyly that bishops usurped the King's authority whenever they held visitations without gaining crown patents to do so first. Laud felt compelled to take the issue before Star

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1. R. Clifton, 'Fear of Popery', The Origins of the English Civil War, ed. C. Russell, Lond. 1973, pp. 144-167 feels that opposition was directed at Arminians as 'ushers in of popery' and that this in turn led to more stories about Catholics - generating a cyclical effect.
2. Tudor and Stuart Proclamations, ed. R. Steele, Vol.I, pp. 210 & 214.
3. J. Lister, Historical Narrative, p.5 - as quoted by J. Miall, Congregationalism in Yorkshire, Lond. 1868, p.36.
4. P.R.O: SP/16/412/45, f.3v.
5. Ibid.

Chamber in May 1637. When judgement was given in his favour he ensured that the decision was copied down in episcopal registers everywhere.[1] Laud was clearly rattled by Prynne's constant attacks; when the latter was sentenced before Star Chamber in June 1637, Laud decided to publish his court pronouncements in the case. A long defence of Arminian practices such as bowing towards an altar set in the east end of a church was not a good idea however.[2] Neither was the proclamation issued in August 1637 setting out the recent defence of the ecclesiastical courts.[3] When harsh punishment was meted out to Prynne and his associates that summer, they were seen by many as members of a new generation of Protestant 'martyrs'.

In April 1637, Laud received a report from a recent visitor to Lancashire, which revealed just how little truth there was in Bridgeman's claims to Neile that his diocese was now free of nonconformists. In that county:

> '..all the orders of the Church doth goe downe the wind for they call the Surpleses the rages of Rome. They doe it in Preston a corporat[i]on and Manchester another. And will suffer noe orgins to stirr nor signe noe children w[i]th the signe of the Cros when they are Christned. And the Alters are pul[l]ed downe'.[4]

Neile had drawn Bridgeman's attention to the problems of the Collegiate Church at Manchester in 1633, when the wardens and fellows had been found 'altogether out of order, scarsley coming to prayers'.[5] Mr. Bourne had been noted as a particular troublemaker, but clearly his influence was not easily eradicated in the town.

Further evidence that all was not well in the diocese of Chester appeared when William Prynne was taken north on his journey toward Caernarvon Castle and eventually the island of Jersey in 1637. Prynne

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1. York: Neile's Register, No. 32, f.79v.
2. Lauds Works, Vol. VI, part I, pp. 35-70.
3. Tudor and Stuart Proclamations, ed. R. Steele, Vol. I, p.211.
4. P.R.O: SP/16/354/91 - Hitchcock to Laud, April 1637.
5. P.R.O: SP/16/259/78, ff. 3v-4.

was taken from London on 17 July and was soon receiving a hero's welcome wherever the party went, despite orders restricting access to him and curtailing his use of writing materials. People flocked to meet the martyr, including Calvin Bruen and several others from Chester, where thanks to the work of Peter Ince, a local stationer, Prynne's works were well known. When Prynne arrived in Chester local dignitaries commissioned five portraits of him from their local artist, Thomas Pulford.[1] Eventually Bridgeman felt compelled to act; he ordered all ministers and lecturers in town to preach sermons denouncing Prynne's works.[2] He also started proceedings against the key people involved, but soon wrote to Neile for help, claiming that he lacked the authority to deal with the case.[3] The High Commission from York took up the matter and the interrogations which followed soon revealed large numbers of disaffected people in Chester. Official reaction to this whole affair reveals more than a slight touch of paranoia. Pulford escaped without a fine, but his five portraits of Prynne were publicly burnt in November 1637.[4] As if to make completely sure that nothing should remain for momento seekers, it was ordered a month later 'that the aforesaid Pictures be not onely spoyled and defaced, but the frames thereof burnt in some publicke place'.[5] Heavy fines were extracted from Bruen, Ince and company. It is hardly surprising that when Prynne came to produce propaganda from this affair, all he chose to do was print copies of the letters between Bridgeman and Neile.

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1. Canon Blomfield, 'Puritanism in Chester in 1637 - Prynne's Reception there', pp. 269-88, Journal of Chester Archaeological Soc., parts 8-11, 1871-6, pp. 286-7.
2. W. Prynne, A New Discovery of the Prelates Tyranny, Lond. 1641, pp. 94-6.
3. R.C. Richardson, 'Puritanism and the Ecclesiastical Authorities. The Case of the Diocese of Chester', pp. 3-36, Politics, Religion and the English Civil War, ed. B. Manning, Lond. 1973, p.25.
4. W. Prynne, op. cit., pp. 103-4.
5. Ibid., p.106.

Despite the evidence of increasing emigration, things did not look quite so black in York diocese. In the matter of the church restoration campaign, the results of the visitation held in 1636 were reasonably encouraging. A total of 181 churches were still cited for repairs; and over half of these had been noted before in 1632.[1] But work was in progress on most of them and the agents of the Chancery Court continued to do sterling work in ensuring that momentum was maintained. After the second visitation of 1636, they moved into the hitherto neglected North and East Ridings, away from the key Puritan centres at last. 1637 witnessed the peak of this campaign as 43 churches were dealt with in the Chancery Court.[2] The dramatic drop in such business after this date suggests that the programme came to a successful end, but the Scottish wars complicate the picture, for they brought a halt to many of Neile's more positive projects towards the end of 1638.

The fact that all was relatively quiet during 1637 may explain why trouble at St. Peter's Nottingham came to be noted in Neile's register. His visitation courts discovered that the vicar was administering communion to many 'sitting or standing and not rev[er]ently kneeling'.[3] It was also found necessary to demand fairly major structural repairs, which culminated in an order to move the altar to the east end and have it railed off.[4] Ronald Marchant feels that this unusual resistance to authority in the archdeaconry of Nottingham accounts for these unique entries in Neile's register.[5] Certainly the trouble was soon cleared up. Mottershed had done his work well in the archdeaconry. Relatively untroubled by Puritans, he experienced a fairly high degree of co-operation from the churchwardens. This

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1. Appendix 1, p.306.
2. Ibid., p.307.
3. York: Neile's Register, No. 32, f.33.
4. York: V1636/CB - York, f.518. Order of 15 Sept. 1637.
5. R. Marchant, The Puritans & the Church Courts, p.195.

was particularly noticeable in the church restoration programme. 180 churches were viewed during this period and 'by 1639 most of the work had been done, about £50 being spent on an average church in five years'.[1] Much of this work was carried out without prompting from Mottershed's agents. It was one of the few archdeaconries where all that seems to have been necessary to satisfy Neile's policies was a different order of administrative efficiency.

Although the Chancery Court was still functioning reasonably successfully, Prynne's reception at Chester provided further evidence of the weakness of the High Commission. At the end of 1637 Bridgeman suggested a raid on the home of a Puritan lawyer named Bostock. The latter was in London on behalf of some of the Chester men before the northern High Commission. It illustrates Bridgeman's mentality that he urged:

> 'I could wish that (whiles he hovers at London) Master Blanchard or some other were sent by authority from Yorke to search his study (but they must have power to break open his doore or no good will be done.)'.[2]

Bridgeman had every reason to lack confidence in their ability to bring Bostock to justice. The latter's work in London was successful and in January 1637/8 Neile wrote despairingly to Laud of the decision of the Barons of the Exchequer to intervene in the case of the Chester men:

> 'I hope my Lo[rd] Chiefe Baron and the Barons doe not thinke themselves to have a sup[er]intendency over the proceedings of the Com[m]ission. If it were soe, I would humbly prostrate the Com[m]ission and my selfe at his Ma[jes]t[ies] feete, and beg a release of my executing of it'.[3]

One is more used to thinking that in doubtful legal cases, crown agents possessed an edge. It is now clear that decisions like that over Hampden and Ship Money were exceptional. In the day to day cases which came before the courts - even the infamous High Commission -

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1. Ibid., p.193.
2. W. Prynne, A New Discovery of the Prelates Tyranny, p.225.
3. Lambeth Palace MSS.: MS. 943, p.559.

opponents of the Establishment were every bit as powerful as its supporters. Perhaps in anticipation of the raid mentioned by Bridgeman, Bostock was even able to procure a general pardon exempting himself from the jurisdiction of the York High Commission. All Neile could do was complain.[1]

It was not only in relation to Puritans that the High Commission seemed to be failing. In January 1637/8 William Stevenson was apprehended and thrown into York castle for refusing to take the Oath of Allegiance. Under interrogation it became clear that Stevenson was:

> '..a man thought to be a great agent for the Recusants of these parts, and for the preists that haunt this country: especially of one Geo[rge] ffenwick, that hath a long time exercised the Popes jurisdiction in this Province'.[2]

The case induced a 'Popish scare'. Stevenson claimed that there were more than a thousand people in Yorkshire who would also refuse the Oath of Allegiance. Although Neile confirmed that 'the eies of the country' were on the case, he remained calm and saw the problem in terms of dealing with agents only.[3] An active few were sowing 'the seeds of treason in the hearts of his Ma[jes]t[ie]s subjects, that the Pope hath power to depose the King'.[4] Fears had been well aroused in the south, however, for in December 1637 a singularly futile proclamation had been published forbidding conversion to Catholicism.[5] Now a specific order was sent to the northern High Commission that all refusals to take the Oath of Allegiance should be treated as signs of guilt and proceeded with accordingly.[6] The search for books and agents was intensified, but despite this flurry of activity few new cases appeared and the issue was soon superseded by matters of greater

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1. Ibid., p.560.
2. P.R.O: SP/16/385/81, f.1v Neile to the Council, 16 March 1637/8.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
5. Tudor and Stuart Proclamations, ed. R. Steele, Vol.I, p.212.
6. York: High Commission Papers, P.L.60. Copy of royal orders dated 4 Feb. 1637/8.

substance relating to Scotland.

The extant High Commission Act Books which commence with June 1638 and cover the rest of Neile's life, reveal that he was now actively involved in the work of that court. Whereas on his first arrival at York he had only attended 25% of the sessions, after 1638 his attendance improved dramatically to cover 75% of all court hearings.[1] Unfortunately, his attendance was not matched by any improvement in the work of that court. It correlates exactly with the number of sessions now held at Bishopthorpe, providing evidence of Neile's declining physical strength and mobility.[2] A campaign was undertaken to force recalcitrant ministers to conform in certain towns, but all the evidence now points to the running down of the effectiveness of Neile's administration.

Ronald Marchant is critical of the fact that although the situation was deteriorating in the country,

> 'The official reports on his diocese which Neile submitted annually to the King were generally optimistic in their account of conformity'.[3]

This is a little unfair. Neile's reports show that he knew only too well that he could not compel obedience from 'the hearts and minds of his clergy and laity'.[4] It was thanks to the efficiency of his team, regarded by Marchant as one of the reasons for his failure, that Neile was able to give the King such a frank survey of his province in 1634. He was always dependent upon his subordinate bishops and it has already been noted how little he could rely on John Bridgeman. Of his bishops in 1638 only Parr was reliable. When the latter claimed in his annual report that 'I have been very urgent with the Clergie to catechise the younger sorte', it was probably true.[5] When Potter and Bridgeman reported <u>omnia bene</u> it was undoubtedy not. Morton chose to speak his mind plainly only on the issue of Catholicism.

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1. Appendix 1, p.305.
2. <u>Ibid.</u>
3. R. Marchant, <u>The Puritans & the Church Courts</u>, p.128.
4. <u>Ibid.</u>, p.129.
5. P.R.O: SP/16/412/45, f.1.

For him the system of composition for fines only led to an increase in the number of Catholics because 'they are freed from the proceedings of the Ecclesiasticall Commissions, whereby to be reduced to order and conformity'.[1] It was in his report on 1638 that Neile mentioned the disturbing facts of emigration to New England from the north and informed the King of the case of Ezekial Rogers.

Events in Scotland occupied all minds at this time and Neile concluded his report on 1638 with a prayer that:

> 'God in his infinite goodness, strengthen your arme, and direct your Counsells, to abate the pride, asswage the malice and confound the devises of all those that disturbe your peaceable and pious government'.[2]

When the new liturgy had been introduced into Scotland in July 1637, there had been riots in Edinburgh. A Solemn League and Covenant had been drawn up organising resistance to attempts to subvert true religion in Scotland. Neile did not need to paint a black picture for his King. The Scottish Assembly which met in November 1638 continued in session illegally and the King prepared for war. A call was sent out for clerical contributions to raise an army in 1637/8.[3] When Neile passed the request to his bishops, he claimed that the King had yielded to all the Scots' religious demands, but:

> '..it is not religion but sedition that stirres in them and fills them with this most irreligious disobedience, w[hi]ch at last breaks forth into a high degree of treason against theire lawfull Soveraigne'.[4]

Whilst the need for money was considered urgent, Neile was typically adamant that demands were not to be made of 'poor curaites, nor such as have scarce wherewith all to live'.[5]

In April 1638 Laud had written that there was in Scotland

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1. Ibid., f.2v.
2. Ibid., f.4.
3. P.R.O: SP/16/410/76 - Royal orders to Neile & Laud, 29 Jan. 1638/9.
4. G. Bridgeman, History of the Church & Manor of Wigan, p.410 - Neile to Bridgeman, 9 Feb. 1638/9.
5. Ibid.

> '..a great concurrence between them and the Puritan party in England. A great aim there to destroy me in the King's opinion'.[1]

Much of Neile's work from this date on was set upon discovering these links between the Scots and their Puritan allies in the north. Positive administrative reforms had now gone by the board. In a covering letter to Bridgeman in February 1638/9, Neile enclosed private information from Laud: a close watch was to be kept for people who might be in touch with the Scots and they were informed that an English army was on the march.[2] More letters passed concerning clerical levies and the provision of men and armour. It was a difficult time for Neile. In a postscript to one routine letter to Bridgeman he asked for the release of Henry Wickham from some duties in the archdeaconry of Richmond, not for Wickham's sake:

> '..but the truth is, by reason of my owne infirmity being unhable to goe my selfe about this his Ma[jes]ties service, I am constrayned to relye upon him for the doeing of it for mee in sundry places of this county'.[3]

Here was a man of 77 caught up in a civil war which was eventually to engulf the whole British Isles.

The King visited York in March on his way north travelling behind his army under the command of the Earl of Arundel. It was hardly a leisurely progress and there is no evidence that he called on the ailing archbishop. The English commanders were in no mood to fight; their army was weak and inexperienced and the Scots were imbued with a sense of the 'just cause'. They were more experienced and ably led by David Leslie. Almost inevitably, soon after the Scots had pushed on to English soil, peace negotiations were begun. The Pacification of Berwick was signed on 17 June 1639. The main issues at stake were not raised in the agreement and neither side kept to its

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1. Laud's Works, Vol. III, p.230.
2. G. Bridgeman, op. cit., p.412.
3. Ibid., p.414 - Neile to Bridgeman, 19 Feb. 1638/9.

promises; both wanted more time to collect men and arms. Sir Paul Neile had accompanied the King to Berwick and apparently played an important part in the truce negotiations. In a rare moment of consideration for the feelings of one of his loyal servants, Charles commanded the Earl of Pembroke:

> '..to return the bishop thanks for the good service that his son, Sir Paul Neile, had done to the King at Berwick, and to tell him that he had done him as good service as any man at Berwick'. [1]

Pembroke sent his chaplain, the notorious John Shaw, to deliver the message. It had a touching effect on Neile:

> 'Immediately the bishop wept for joy, that the tears dropt to the ground, and then said, "Gentlemen, you must excuse an old man, I have but one son, and it cannot but exceedingly rejoyce my heart that his Majesty should take notice of my son".' [2]

Good news or not, Neile did not take kindly to seeing Shaw again and apparently the meeting did not end amicably.

The King returned to London and Wentworth was recalled from Ireland to take command of the army. Like Neile however, he was a sick man. Moreover, Wentworth's historian has noted the 'monstrous irony' of this point in his career:

> 'When his great moment came, it gave him no scope to exercise his genius for administration and finance, but called instead for abilities he did not possess, so that he threw away his future, his fortune and his life in a struggle he could never have won'. [3]

This could apply to many of the King's old and loyal servants. Another irony should be pointed out however, and that is that the very administrative efficiency of people like Wentworth, Laud, Neile and Wren was a major factor in bringing about the war in which they were now involved.

With the Scots camped on English soil, Neile was especially

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1. 'The Life of Master John Shaw', Surtees Soc., Vol. 65, p.130.
2. Ibid., p.131.
3. C.V. Wedgwood, Thomas Wentworth, 1971 ed., p.269.

concerned about the activities of Puritans in Newcastle. It must have come as no real surprise to him when Robert Jenison appeared before the York High Commission in March 1638/9 to answer serious charges. Jenison was at last asked to account for holding unorthodox conventicles and administering communion to people not kneeling, omitting to use the sign of the cross in baptism and various other common Puritan practices.[1] What gave the case topical importance, however, was the fact that Jenison had in recent times engaged in 'sundry conferences w[i]th Divers of the Scotch Covenanters, as they passed by Newcastle'.[2] Neile seems to have known his man. In a letter to Windebanke on 22 March 1638/9, Neile wrote that Jenison would 'acknowledge himselfe not to have exercised his ministery with such conformity as he ought to have done', but doubted whether they would get much evidence of Scottish involvement in the case.[3]

Neile appears to have worked hard on Jenison's behalf. In August 1639 he wrote to Bishop Morton that he had satisfied the King

> 'in the mayne point of the accusation made against him [Jenison] that he neither favoured the Rebellious faction of Scotland; nor had any conference w[i]th any of the Covenanters in their passages by Newcastle'.[4]

Neile hoped that Jenison would now conform, but feared that 'I have promised more for him than he meaneth to performe'.[5] Neile anticipated correctly. Jenison was given the option to conform and return to Newcastle despite fears expressed by Windebanke that 'Dr Jennison's Return thither will too much countenance the factious Party'.[6] In fact, Jenison rejected the terms offered to him after initially agreeing to conform. Neile was forced to suspend him again in September.[7] Exasperated as he must have been by Jenison's behaviour,

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1. P.R.O: SP/16/415/7 - A summary of the interrogation sent to Laud, 21 March 1638/9.
2. Ibid.
3. P.R.O: SP/16/415/9.
4. P.R.O: SP/16/427/46.
5. Ibid.
6. P.R.O: SP/16/428/27 - Windebanke to Neile, 4 Sept. 1639.
7. P.R.O: SP/16/428/35.

Neile still urged Windebanke to allow him to live in Newcastle for the sake of his wife and children. Both Windebanke and Jenison had thought of the possibility of a move to another living in a different town, but Neile poured cold water on that plan, feeling that Jenison would only cause trouble elsewhere.[1] It must have been a relief to all concerned when Jenison announced in January his intention of emigrating to New England as soon as weather conditions permitted.[2]

In August 1639 Neile was consulted by the Privy Council over the case of John Trendall, charged with heresy before the southern High Commission. Neile was asked to supply details of his handling of the Wightman trial which he had presided over at Lichfield in 1611. Neile complied with the request as best he could, claiming that he only did so from memory.[3] He advocated harsh punishment, for Trendall saying that such treatment in the past 'did a great deal of good in this Church' and noting that 'the present times do require like Exemplary punishment'.[4] C.V. Wedgwood noted a certain irony in this compliance with the Council's wishes:

> 'Neile, a frail, kindly old man who disapproved of flogging in schools felt quite differently about heresy and obediently supplied the details'.[5]

In fact, nothing seems to have happened to Trendall as other matters demanded the Council's attention. Yet C.V. Wedgwood was correct in seeing Neile's attitude as strange, for his treatment of Jenison lies closer to his approach towards nonconformists while at York.

It was the King who forced the issue over Jenison. Windebanke wrote to Neile in October instructing him to proceed further with the case. Jenison's lectureship at All Saints was to be filled and Neile was asked to secure the election of Dr. Wishart, recommended by the

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1. Ibid., f.1v.
2. P.R.O: SP/16/442/136 - Alvey to Neile, 27 Jan. 1639/40.
3. P.R.O: SP/16/432/27(iv) - Neile's reply to Carleton, 9 Aug. 1639; See Chpt. 3, p.78.
4. P.R.O: SP/16/427/78 - Neile to Laud, 23 Aug. 1639.
5. C.V. Wedgwood, The King's Peace 1637-1641, 4th ed. 1971, p.264.

Bishop of Ross as a reliable divine.[1] When he had been at Durham, Neile had placed his chaplain Thomas Jackson in the living of St. Nicholas, Newcastle as a reliable agent to keep an eye on trouble-makers.[2] Yeldard Alvey, the incumbent after 1631, ably followed Jackson both in his role at Newcastle and as a chaplain to Neile.[3] He was given the task of defusing the Jenison situation and of keeping Neile informed of any suspicious activities. Thanks to loyal elements on the Common Council, Wishart was elected lecturer with few problems on 19 October 1639.[4] But the Puritans did not concede defeat without a struggle. On 9 December Thomas Stephenson resigned his lectureship of St. Nicholas, Alvey's own living. Alvey suspected a conspiracy and sure enough, when Stephenson was asked to explain his resignation before Bishop Morton, it came to light that he had been virtually compelled to resign by 'insolent & factious Spirits'.[5] Stephenson advised that any successor would need to 'have shoulders & dispositions to bustle in this tumultuous age'.[6] Alvey vetoed the election of Bewick, despite protests from the Common Council and took the lectureship himself. Windebanke confirmed the wisdom of this move and compelled Morton to accept the situation.[7]

Such events in Newcastle naturally occupied Neile's mind when he submitted his annual report in January 1639/40:

> 'I understand that thinges are amisse there, that the faction increaseth, that manie of them abandon the Common prayers of the Church, till the Singing of the Psalme before the Sermon; (of w[hi]ch crime I cannott excuse Dr Jenison) others of them gadding abroad every Sunday, to the place wher Mr Lapthorne preacheth, and to other like places'.[8]

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1. P.R.O: SP/16/430/52.
2. York: Sub. Bk. 2, f.84.
3. In fact Neile had licensed Alvey to preach at Newcastle as early as Aug. 1622. He thus had ample experience in the role which he was to play. York: Sub. Bk. 2, f.80.
4. 'Memoirs of the Life of Mr. Ambrose Barnes', Surtees Soc., Vol. 50, Lond. 1866, p.328.
5. P.R.O: SP/16/442/136 - Alvey to Neile, 27 Jan. 1639/40 with Stephenson's letter of resignation enclosed (Item 136,II).
6. Ibid.
7. P.R.O: SP/16/442/28 - Windebanke to Neile, 17 Jan. 1639/40.
8. P.R.O: SP/16/441/93, f.1v.

Alvey's reports made full, if depressing reading. Later in the month Neile passed on news of the presence of Covenanters in the town and a number of names of people who were in contact with them.[1] Windebanke ordered the speedy arrest of two of the suspects, Sir John Buchannon and Mr. Middleton of Belsey. Alvey had reported that the latter's private chapel was the headquarters of 'the humerous factious people of Newcastle'.[2] Buchannon was one of the Covenanters. The increased tension of the time is illustrated by Alvey's fear that his letters were not getting through to Laud and Windebanke was asked to check on their communications system.[3] It is also indicative of the reliance of Windebanke and the Council on Neile and Alvey that the former was ordered to call upon Morton 'if you find by Mr. Alvery any delay or coldnes in him'.[4]

Morton seems to have complied with all Neile's requests, how willingly is not known. It was not long before Alvey was able to report that Lapthorne, the preacher already mentioned, had been silenced by the High Commission and was now in prison.[5] With the news that Jenison was preparing to leave for Holland, Alvey was confident that 'now the worke of the puritanicall faction is broken'.[6] He did add the rider that this was only so 'if my Lord of Durha[m] will have a vigilant eye, and kepe a strickt hand over them'.[7] He apologised for certain errors in his reports, but on the whole Alvey supplied Neile and the Council with prompt and accurate information at a crucial juncture and helped break some of the contacts the Scots had with Newcastle. Events were to prove this a pyrrhic victory when the Scots marched triumphantly into the city less than eight months later.

Newcastle was not the only town with which Neile experienced

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1. P.R.O: SP/16/441/97(I & II) - Neile to Windebanke, 11 Jan. 1639/40.
2. Ibid.
3. P.R.O: SP/16/442/28 - Windebanke gives reassurance on this point.
4. Ibid.
5. P.R.O: SP/16/442/136.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid.

trouble over the winter of 1639/40. In December he was involved in negotiations with the Corporation of Doncaster concerning a lecturer recently appointed there by royal command.[1] Neile wanted more than the satisfaction of intruding a new man into the office. He held out for a pay rise and on 17 December came the contrite submission from the Mayor and Corporation with an agreement to pay the new lecturer, James Hutchinson, more than their old cleric Mr. Ball.[2] The trouble with Stephenson at Newcastle illustrates that it was not always so easy, but when dealing with town corporations, Neile was inclined to take a tougher line than with individuals. He was the same with other corporate bodies which exercised power and influence. In 1635 he combined forces with Laud quite successfully to force Bradford Grammar School to admit a new headmaster.[3] Neile was just as careful over licensing school teachers as he was the clergy.

In an attempt to raise money to fight the Scots, Wentworth persuaded the King to call Parliament in April 1640. Despite the advice of most royal councillors, including Laud, he was convinced he could manage an English Parliament as he had an Irish one. It was obvious that Neile was too unwell to attend and a letter dispensing with his services in the Lords was dispatched to him in March.[4] It was probably due to his influence however, that his son Sir Paul Neile was elected to represent Ripon in what has come to be known as the 'Short Parliament' of 1640.[5]

'Innovations in religion' became a key phrase in this Parliament

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1. P. Seaver, The Puritan Lectureships. The Politics of Religious Dissent 1560-1662, California 1970, p.107.
2. York: Institution Act Bk. 6, f.279.
3. W. Claridge, Origin and History of the Bradford Grammar School, Bradford 1882, p.20 - The town petitioned the House of Lords about this appointment of Gervase Worrall by Neile in February 1640/1. Hist. MSS. Comm. 4th Report, 1874, Appendix, p.46.
4. P.R.O: SO/3/12/March 1639/40.
5. J. Gruenfelder, 'The Election of the Short Parliament', pp. 180-230, Early Stuart Studies, ed. H. Reinmuth Jnr., University of Minnesota Press 1970, pp. 187-90.

as it had been before. Yet Laud gained the King's approval for Convocation to consider new canons and this naturally led to more uproar in the Commons. They refused to accept the right of Convocation to consider new canons without consulting Parliament. Arguments which had been forcibly put when Bancroft had dared to introduce changes in 1604, now carried extra weight as the Church was thought to be dominated by Arminians and crypto-Catholics.[1] The wave of criticism was so strong that the King did concede ground. One gesture of goodwill involved Roger Manwaring's removal from the Lords where he sat as Bishop of St. David's. This was done to comply with a Parliamentary order of 1628 which had disabled him from ever attaining such office. It was all to no avail and eventually Parliament was dissolved on 5 May 1640.

Convocation took the unusual step of remaining in session after the dismissal of Parliament. Laud was bent on the propagation of 17 new canons, marking the high point of his career with a complete defence of royal and ecclesiastical authority.[2] The first new canon was a simple declaration that bearing arms against the king ran contrary to scriptures and the will of God; a classic statement of the theory of the Divine Right of Kings. Other canons about Catholics and Socinians would not have been controversial had not Puritans been lumped together with these groups as people who 'endeavour the subversion both of the doctrine and discipline of the Church of England'.[3] A defence of the practice of bowing towards the east and of the placing of Communion tables altarwise under the east window was inserted with the call for uniformity in the practice of church rites.

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1. See Chpt. 1, pp. 18-19.
2. A Constitutional History of the Convocations of the Clergy, ed. J. Joyce, Lond. 1855 (Gregg press re-print 1967), pp. 660-76; Laud's Works, Vol. V, part II, 1853, contains details of these new canons, pp. 607-33.
3. Laud's Works, Vol. V, part II, p.622.

Chancellors were forbidden to censure clergy unless they too were in holy orders. Sentences of excommunication and absolution could only be pronounced by clergymen. Such orders took account of past criticisms of the Church, but they did not really run counter to the general theme of these canons which embodied a defence of the autonomy of the Church. The canons and six valuable clerical subsidies were eventually passed by Convocation on 29 May 1640. Neile successfully steered the same measures through the Northern Convocation on 26 June.[1] Four days later the acts of both Convocations were formally ratified by the King - another pyrrhic victory for the Arminians.

Desperate for money, the King naturally appealed to his councillors for aid. So it was that Neile, along with many others, was impelled to commit himself financially to the success of royal policies in 1640. He raised £2,000 in cash for the King and a warrant was drawn up in July to arrange repayment in two instalments by the end of 1641, the money to be raised on an import levy.[2] It is clear from his will, drawn up in June 1640, that Neile went to such pains to raise this considerable sum for the King that his estate would not 'beare the chardge of a solemne funerall'.[3] Moreover, he appreciated that the loan was really a gift - the last he was able to give his royal master. In his will he wrote it off as an amount not really to be considered in his estate for:

> '..the tymes may fall out so hard by his Ma[jes]t[ies] extraordinary expenses that there may be some doubt of obtaynninge due repayment of the two thousand pounds that I have lately lent to his Ma[jes]ty'.[4]

Lack of easily realizable funds probably explains why Sir Paul Neile failed to sponsor a monument for his father in York Minster in 1640. The omission in happier years after the Restoration is a sad comment

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1. 'The Records of the Northern Convocation', ed. W. Macray, Surtees Soc., Vol. 113, 1907, pp. 298-312.
2. P.R.O: SP/3/12/July 1640.
3. York: Neile's Register, No. 32, ff. 4-5.
4. Ibid.

on the relationship between father and son.

Despite the times, Neile attempted to hold his triennial visitation of York due in 1640. The warnings went out in January and February, but it is not clear what sort of response he gained because by the time the correction courts got to work in August and September a Scottish army had entered Newcastle in triumph.[1] Patchy records survive which suggest that the administration was faltering as one would imagine. The correction courts only handled business for seven of the eleven deaneries of the diocese, excluding Nottinghamshire. Coverage of two of the seven is clearly not complete and naturally the volume of business throughout is down on 1636. Sessions of the Courts of High Commission and of Chancery effectively ground to a halt in September and October 1640, although meetings of the former continued until April 1641.[2]

William Prynne thought he discerned divine judgement in the fact that Durham was taken by the Scots early in this new outbreak of war. It was in that diocese that:

> '..the first Popish Innovations and superstitions, which lately over-spread our whole Church, had their Originall from Bishop Neale and his Chaplaine Dr. Cosens..'.[3]

Prynne never found any evidence that Neile had played a part in the Scottish wars, but as this went against his general thesis that 'these unhappie civill warres sprung from the Bishops', he resorted to innuendo.[4] It is on Prynne's word alone that we have the story that Neile:

> 'burnt all his letters concerning Church and State-affairs, as soon as he heard the Scots had entered into England, for feare that they should

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1. York: Neile's Register, No. 32, f.94. Notice given of intended visitation of the Dean & Chapter, etc., 23 Jan. 1639/40.
2. York: High Commission A.B.19 (1638-41) & Chanc. A.B.28 (1638-40).
3. W. Prynne, The Antipathie of the English Lordly Prelacie, Lond. 1641, pp. 305-6.
4. Ibid.

> have been surprized and his fellow-Prelates machinations against the Scots by their surprisall discoverd'.[1]

It is true that religion was a major factor in causing the Scottish wars and that Laud was thus partly to blame for their outbreak. However, Prynne's propaganda of a bishop's 'conspiracy' was nothing more than an elaborate cover for the highly dubious activities of English and Scottish nonconformists.

To the very end Neile worked hard to ensure that the case of the King and his episcopal councillors was fairly put. When new peace negotiations were begun at Ripon in September 1640, he tried to get John Shaw ousted as one of the appointed chaplains because he 'was no great friend to bishops'.[2] He was outvoted by moderate peers who were equally disinclined to defend episcopacy in their meetings with the Scots. The King made his peace with the 'enemy' and called another Parliament. In a letter to Windebanke of 23 October 1640 Secretary Vane noted that Neile was gravely ill and unlikely to live long.[3] News of his death on 31 October reached London a day before the Long Parliament sat on 3 November 1640.[4] Heylin considered this a blessed relief because Neile was thus prevented

> '..from seeing those calamities which afterwards fell upon the King the Church, and all that wish well to either of them; which must have been more grievous to him than a thousand deaths'.[5]

In the style of John Foxe, the martyrologist, when talking of the enemies of the gospel, William Prynne struck a more sinister note:

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1. Ibid., p.223.
2. 'The Life of Master John Shaw', Surtees Soc., Vol. 65, p.132.
3. P.R.O: SP/16/470/45.
4. P. Heylin, Cyprianus Anglicus, p.459; S. Cassan in The Lives of the Bishops of Winchester, p.113, presumed to take issue with Browne Willis and Le Neve for 'confounding the date of the probate of his will with that of his death'. He maintained that Neile died in the house of the prebendary of Stillington in the grounds of York Minster on 5 Oct. 1640. Only the first part of this is true. Cassan was wrong about the will. The date of 31 October is that of Neile's death when Easdall opened the will in the company of 6 prebendaries.
5. P. Heylin, Cyprianus Anglicus, p.460.

> 'This prelate being scarce Parliament proof, to prevent all questioning; at the approach of this present Parliamentary Assembly fell sicke and dyed, being now gone to answer all his episcopal extravagancies before a greater Tribunall'.[1]

At least Prynne acknowledged a sense of timing!

As Archbishop of York Neile had striven to accomplish all that could possibly be expected of him. He carried out thorough visitations and when these revealed that many of his flock were Catholics, Puritans or merely apathetic, he used all the administrative tools available to remedy the situation. His ability to gain a fairly accurate picture of his province was a tribute to his careful selection and encouragement of loyal subordinates. As in the past he showed himself to be an 'indulgent father' with his clergy. He was a firm but tolerant disciplinarian.

In more routine matters, Neile showed a responsible attitude to the maintainance of the privileges of his office and the economic well-being of the see. Statements in his register on the rights of presentation to the rectories of Bulmore and Middleton on the Wolds illustrate his concern for the mundane details of his office.[2] Attention has already been drawn to the important work of his secretary, Edward Liveley, in this field.[3] In one case Neile went so far as to sponsor the writing of a book which would be to the see's advantage. John Slacke, Master of St. Mary Magdalene's Hospital near Scrooby in Nottinghamshire wrote a history of the hospital paying particular attention to disputes over the rights of presentation which had been settled in favour of the see in 1610. Completed in August 1635, the work was naturally dedicated to Neile.[4]

Neile complied with Laud's orders to ensure that leases were

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1. W. Prynne, The Antipathie of the English Lordly Prelacie, p.224.
2. York: Institution Act Bk. 6, pp. 224 & 259.
3. See p.242.
4. T. Hearne, Peter Langtoft's Chronicle, 2 Vols., Oxford 1725, Vol. II, pp. 391-3.

granted carefully and to the see's best advantage. As in the past, he showed he was fond of drawing up inventories as guidelines for action evident at York and Southwell. He certainly left the see better provided with palaces than when he had first entered it. Neile was an entrepreneur. He was not content merely to safeguard existing sources of wealth. In July 1636 he gained approval from the Privy Council to go ahead with a scheme for land drainage in Nottinghamshire. It was an attempt to capitalise on the lands gained from Buckingham in return for York House in 1624.[1] This exchange was a source of problems to Neile. Rival claims to some of the land led him to petition the King in November 1639 and again in June 1640.[2] On the latter occasion Neile went so far as to remind Charles of his father's promise to protect the rights of the see. Neile could be tenacious in the defence of his rights, but he must have wished he had expressed many more doubts on the occasion of the York House exchange bill.

The success of the church restoration campaign represents possibly Neile's greatest achievement as Archbishop of York. Thanks to the work of his Chancery Court he extracted changes in even the most difficult areas of his diocese and received praise for these endeavours from a most unexpected source. In April 1638 Thomas Proctor re-dedicated The Parishioners Clayme for their Vicar's Mayntenance to Neile in the hope that the latter would prove a worthier patron than Proctor's previous parliamentary sponsors.[3] In his dedication Proctor praised Neile's 'pious endeavours & orders .. for the decent & comely

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1. P.R.O: P.C./2/46/p.184; see Chpt. 5, pp. 140-1.
2. P.R.O: Book of Petitions, Vol. 403, p.115 - Neile's petition to the King, 22 Nov. 1639; Neile thanked Windebanke for presenting the petition in a letter of 27 Dec. 1639 - P.R.O: SP/16/436/40; P.R.O: P.C.2.52, p.547 - petition of June 1640.
3. Leeds City Library: S.R. 254.P942. The Parishioners Clayme for their Vicar's Mayntenance, Lond. 1624, f.1 of the new letter of dedication of April 1638 - I owe this reference to the kindness of Dr. J. Addy.

beautifying of the severall churches ... within your dioces.[1]

Yet the book itself highlights the crux of Neile's dilemma as Archbishop of York. At a time of religious extremism, it was impossible to please everyone. Despite this praise Proctor thought Neile could do more to lessen the financial plight of his clergy. He envisaged the archbishop relinquishing the impropriations which formed such a substantial part of his income. This Neile could not do without radically altering the framework of the Church. Thus the Church restoration campaign was not only opposed by Puritans who feared its Arminian bias, but also regarded as inadequate, and perhaps irrelevant to the real needs of the Church, by others like Proctor.

The latter half of the seventeenth century saw the effective shattering of the claims of the Church of England to be the sole representative body of Christianity in the land. From this later standpoint many of Neile's achievements seem to be simply those of effective repression swept aside in the Civil War. Yet much that was good was lost in those years of chaos. Moreover, such a view would overlook Neile's beliefs and intentions. At York he strove to convince Puritans of the need for Christian unity and worked on the premise that it was his duty to consider all people in his province as members of his flock. He carried out these duties conscientiously and with a fair degree of tolerance. Considering the constraints within which he worked - the physical size of his province, the large scope of his task, the lack of understanding from his royal master and the weakness of his clerical subordinates - Neile did remarkably well at York. When the Major-Generals took up similar responsibilities in 1655 they frequently exercised their duties with less tolerance and certainly met with far less success.

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1. Ibid.

CONCLUSION:

What emerges from this study of Richard Neile? What was he like as a man? What does his career show of the nature of Church and society in the seventeenth century? What does knowledge of his life contribute to the theories of historians about the nature of the Arminian movement, the work of bishops, and the problems of the Church in relation to the outbreak of the Civil War?

Neile was an outspoken traditionalist. His loyal defence of the royal prerogative led him into trouble in Parliament in 1614. The patronage of the Cecils had saved him from obscurity and this profoundly marked his attitude to life. Neile was intensely loyal to his superiors, conservative and unthinking in his acceptance of the social mores of his day. Like many social upstarts, once accepted into the ruling establishment, Neile was fiercely authoritarian in his defence of its values. With Laud, he proved to be a harsh judge in the Courts of High Commission and of Star Chamber. A zealous defender of his Church, Neile was prepared to condone the execution of heretics. He was active in the persecution of Puritan nonconformists, but as with Catholics, his methods were not always as severe as they have been painted.

There is a more appealing side to Neile. He seems to have been a friendly extrovert who had the gift of being able to mix with all kinds of people. It was a trait which was useful to him in the recruitment of able young chaplains and lawyers; it was also advantageous in one who moved sees so often, to be able to establish himself quickly with the local gentry. Although no great intellectual, he possessed a shrewd, practical intelligence and a considerable degree of administrative expertise and business acumen. He seems to have shared with King James I, whose favourite he became, a coarse

and boisterous sense of humour. No doubt partly in response to his own background, he was a loyal and generous patron of others. He always showed paternalistic concern for the poor and needy. Throughout his long career he worked diligently and enthusiastically as a bishop and a public servant.

Historians have tended to underline the 'bad' features of Neile's character. Frequently viewed as the 'worst of sycophants', his royalism and outspoken tongue have drawn attention away from more prosaic qualities in his career. Now reassessment is possible. The Essex Divorce is seen to be a complex affair in which the tendency to take sides should be avoided. Neile's statements in Parliament in 1614 are seen to be defensible in context, even if rather tactless. New evidence on Neile's life emphasizes traits of character and aspects of his work which have been hitherto neglected.

As a bishop, Neile is best viewed as one of a traditional breed of 'administrator-clerics'. Throughout his life he fought to maintain the privileges of the Church of England and to place it upon a firm economic footing after a period of inflation and spoliation. The Reformation had seen great stress placed upon the function of clerics as preachers to the detriment of more worldly abilities necessary to maintain the Church as an organisation on earth. Neile's career highlights certain constant problems inherent in any Church as an institution. While it was necessary to preach the word of God, Neile's efforts were directed towards the problems of providing for the clergy and maintaining Church property, particularly the churches themselves and episcopal residences.

Such administrative qualities might have won wider acceptance if only the views of bishops like Neile had not been tainted with a new and alien theology - Arminianism. The fact that Neile rarely preached was an affront to Puritans, but when demands were made on the conformity of all to a new conception of the Church, Arminianism

became a threat to a large number of English people. Necessary administrative reforms became inextricably fused with calls for order and unity in agreement with greater ceremonialism and the suppression of unauthorised sermons and lectures. When the Arminians won the support of the crown and were seen to give advice in favour of unpopular foreign policies, the relaxation of penal laws against Catholics, and the implementation of new theological customs, they played their part in the polarisation of political and religious opinion which provides the background to the English Civil War.

As a leader of the Arminian party, Neile played a prominent part in these developments. He used his position as Clerk of the Closet to promote the fortunes of young Arminians and was influential in gaining preferment for the first generation of Arminian bishops like Andrewes, Overall, Harsnet and Buckeridge at a time when the party was very weak. The favour of King James gave Neile this power and facilitated his own rise to prominence as Bishop of Durham. The Arminians never lost the support of the crown and in time the policies of both became harnessed in a fatal combination. There is no doubt that the alliance aided the rise of the Arminian party, but it was not a necessary connection on either side. That it was made at all was partly because Neile and others of the party's first generation chose to ally themselves with the crown.

Neile's work at Durham was seen to symbolise all that Arminianism represented. His team of chaplains and lawyers dominated the scene. New ceremonial practices became the order of the day and a new stone altar, cnadles and incense conjured up fears of Rome and Antichrist for Puritans. In his capacity as Lord Lieutenant of Durham County Palatine, Neile seemed to extend Arminian control to civil government. Like Wentworth in Ireland, his very efficiency as an agent for central government was feared in the provinces. Parliament was aroused to the danger of Arminianism by reports of these endeavours and other

signs of the growing influence of 'Durham College'. Neile and Laud were cited in Parliament as enemies of the Church and State in 1628.

They were too late. Neile had already gathered around him at Durham a team of chaplains comprised of some of the most able divines of his day. All rose to high office in the Church. While Laud won Buckingham to their cause, Neile gave steadfast support to such controversial figures as John Cosin, Richard Mountague and Thomas Jackson. There was nothing novel in bishops promoting the interests of their chaplains. What made Neile different was the scale and efficiency of his operation. 'Durham College' was the Arminian party headquarters. Moreover, Neile was not simply interested in the careers of his chaplains. What made him such a successful mastermind of his party was his concern for all appointments not only in the Church, but also in the universities.

Within his dioceses, Neile took an active interest in the appointment of the lay officials and lawyers who worked for the Church. He accommodated such people within his 'teams' of clergymen and was thus able to exercise a tighter grip on diocesan affairs than had been possible previously. Careful use of members of his own family, coupled with the efforts of key loyal clergymen and lawyers contributed to Neile's success in diocesan administration and explain how Arminians were able to infiltrate the apparatus of Church and State so effectively. This thesis draws attention to the often shadowy officials who formed the bureaucracy of the Church and whom Neile seems to have been able to mobilise in support of the Arminian cause. More needs to be known of these people, their training, conditions of service, pay and theological outlook.

Neile's effectiveness as a bishop and as a leader of the Arminian party stemmed from his ability to select able subordinates and delegate authority. Tact, diplomacy and sheer force of character inspired others with his vision of the ideal Church and society. Yet

this is not the story of a successful movement. This is one reason why it has not been adequately studied. Neile was efficient, but he was also a realist who could see limitations to what he could achieve. It was one thing to control the bureaucracy of the Church, it was quite another to win the hearts of the people. At the pinnacle of their power, Neile and Laud were accused of giving bad counsel to the King. Their concern for the poor was seen as too paternalistic. They were attacked for their low social origins, their lack of concern for preaching and their personal intellectual shortcomings - the wheel had come full circle since the abuse of Catholic prelates in the 1520s and 1530s. Few carped at Abbot's role on the Privy Council - many worried about the presence of Neile, Laud and Juxon. Arminian bishops placed a great strain upon society by their attempt to reclaim powers lost at the Reformation. Bishops had been unseated as automatic counsellors of state; their return to such a position in the 1630s was unacceptable. This was a major cause of the English Civil War.

The rise of the Arminian party illustrates many unresolved problems of the Elizabethan Church Settlement. What exactly was the function of a bishop? What, for example, was their role in Parliament? Neile's life demonstrates the viewpoint of those who saw bishops as administrators with a role to play in both Church and State. Neile thought bishops sat in Parliament as peers of the realm and saw nothing strange in their presence on the Privy Council. When linked with new theological ideas, such a viewpoint nearly saw the end of the old settlement and episcopacy in England. It is highly ironic that in their attempt to strengthen the Church, the Arminians nearly succeeded in bringing about what Puritans had been seeking for years.

Some may care to argue that the survival of the Anglican Church after the Restoration owes something to the efforts of the Arminians.

This case has been forcefully put by R.S. Bosher in The Making of the Restoration Settlement: The Influence of the Laudians 1649-1662.[1] It has also been carefully debated by writers such as G. Cumming, W. Simon and A. Whiteman.[2] From the point of view of this thesis, three of Neile's chaplains rose to high office in the restored Church: John Cosin, Benjamin Laney and John Neile. It is difficult, however, to assess the intellectual and practical impact of these people on the Restoration Church. Moreover, the central problems and paradoxes raised by this thesis lie in seeing Neile and the Arminian movement at the end of a cycle and not at the beginning of a new one. The Interregnum was a long break. Most of the leading protaganists of the 1630s died during that period. The Church of the Restoration was very different from that which Neile was so fond of saying he had been born into in 1562. His life is bound up with the complexities of a court and society of a different era from that of Restoration England. A study of Neile is intrinsically related to the strange rise of an unpopular theological movement, a great attempt to give bishops power in England, and a curious mixture of success and failure during the rule of Charles I. In these matters, paradoxes, ironies and puzzles still abound.

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1. R.S. Bosher, The Making of the Restoration Settlement: The Influence of the Laudians 1649-1662, Lond. 1951.
2. G. Cumming, A History of Anglican Liturgy, Lond. 1969, Chpt. 7;
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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Statistics relating to the Province of York. (1627-1640).

Table 1: Comparative figures based on analysis of case-entries drawn from visitation court books for 1627, 1630, 1633, and 1636.

Table 2: A Statistical Analysis of the List of Puritan Clergy provided by Ronald Marchant in The Puritans and the Church Courts in the Diocese of York 1560-1642, pp. 222-318.

Table 3: Statistics relating to the activities of the Court of High Commission at York based upon Act Books 18 & 19.

Table 4: Statistics relating to the campaign for the restoration of churches in the Province of York in the 1630s.

Table 5: Diagramatic analysis of the church restoration campaign.

Appendix 2: An Examination of Richard Neile's clerical income.

Appendix 3: Neile's Privy Council Attendance Record.

Appendix 4: The Neile Pedigree.

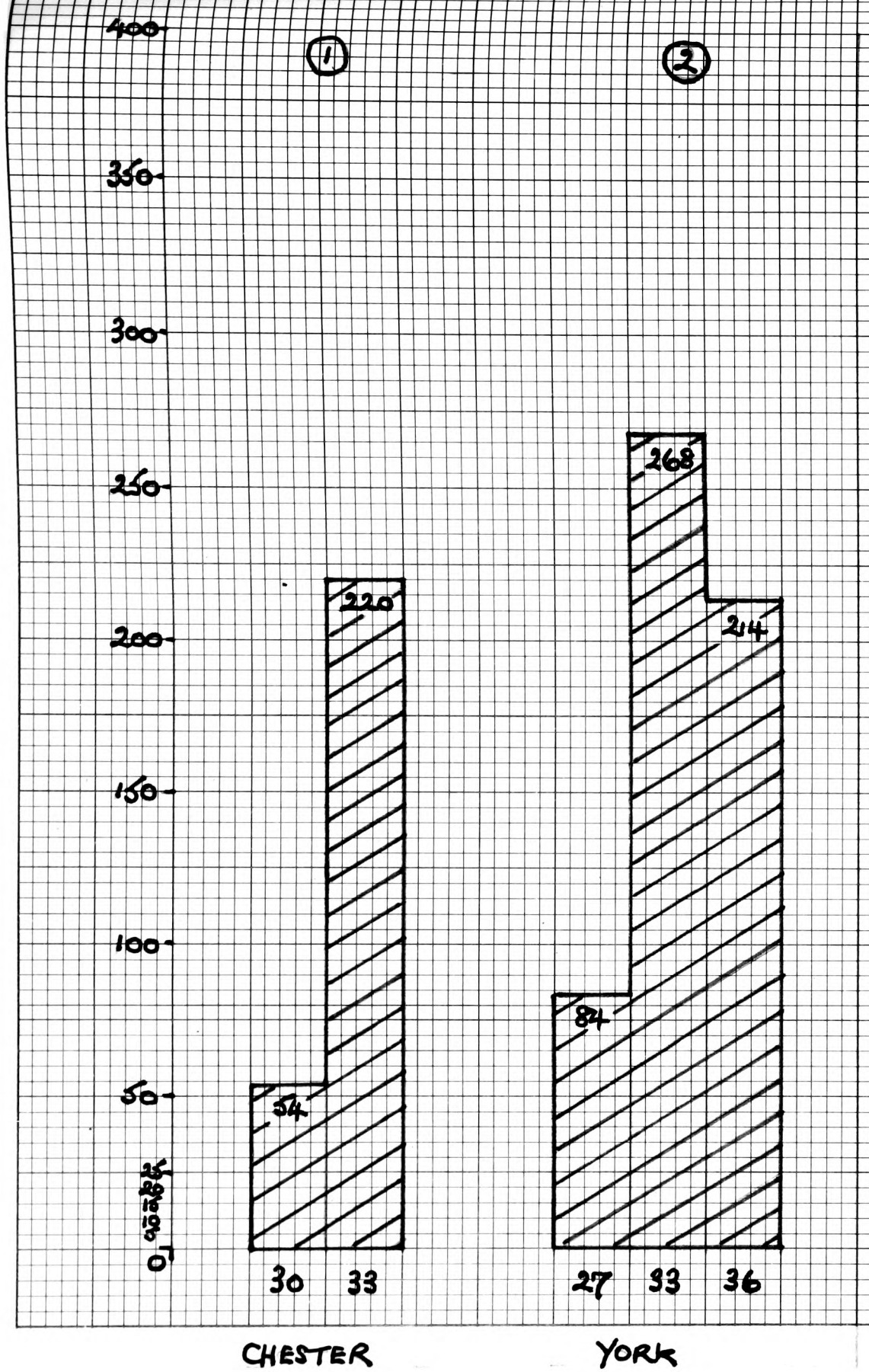

TABLE 1:

THESE HISTOGRAMS ARE BASED ON COMPARATIVE FIGURES TAKEN FROM THE VISITATION COURT BOOKS OF TOBY MATTHEW (1627), SAMUEL HARSNET (1630), AND RICHARD NEILE (1633, 1636)

FIGS. 1 & 2 CONCERN CHURCH CASES

FIGS. 3 & 4 CONCERN CASES INVOLVING MINISTERS AND CHURCHWARDENS

THE EXTRA SHADED AREA IN FIG. 4 DENOTES CASES WHERE NON-CO-OPERATION WITH THE COURTS IS IN EVIDENCE IN THE FORM OF WITH-HOLDING REGISTERS OR ORDINATION PAPERS

THE CHESTER FIGURES ARE ON THE BASIS OF 12 DEANERIES ONLY DUE TO SURVIVAL OF RECORDS.

EXTRA SHADED AREA IN FIG 3. DENOTES NON-CO-OPERATION IN VIS.

Table 2 : A Statistical Analysis of the List of Puritan Clergy provided by Ronald Marchant in The Puritans and the Church Courts in the Diocese of York 1560-1642, pp. 222-318.

	York	Notts.	Totals
Total List of Puritan Clergy:	264	77	341
Number who appeared before Church courts, 1632-1642:	99	16	115 (34% of 341)
Number who appeared more than once before any court, 1632-1642:	31	6	37 (32% of 115)
Number who figured in 1632 vis:	55	2	57 (49% of 115)
Number who figured in 1636 vis:	11	2	13 (11% of 115)
Number who figured in both vis:	5	1	6
Surplice cases in 1632 vis:	27	2	29 (25% of 115)
Number who appeared before Chancery Court on any occasion, 1632-1642:	51	4	55 (48% of 115)
Number who appeared before vis. courts and in Chancery Court:	18	1	19
Number who appeared before High Commission Court, 1632-1642:	9	-	9 (8% of 115)
Number of ministers temporarily suspended by any court:	26	-	26 (26% of 99)

There is no record of any minister being deprived of his living during this period - 1632-42.

Note: Although the figures for the Court of High Commission are slightly misleading because of lack of records, it is still significant that the Chancery Court handled so many cases of ministers. It confirms the role of the latter court as a support for the weak visitation apparatus that at least 36 ministers appeared before the Chancery Court without having been detected in the visitations. (31% of 115). The visitation courts dealt with 64 ministers. The High Commission and archdeaconry courts accounted for the remaining 15 being detected.

Table 3 : Statistics relating to the activities of the Court of High Commission at York based upon Act Books 18 & 19.

Act Books 18 & 19 cover the following periods:	1631-4	1638-41
Total Number of sessions:	67	82
Total Number of months covered:	26	28
Average Number of sessions per month:	2.57	2.92
Total Number of case 'hearings' heard:	934	571
Average Number of cases per session:	13.9	6.9
Total Number of sessions held at York:	61 (91%)	18 (22%)
Total Number of sessions held at Bishopthorpe:	2 (3%)	62 (75%)
Richard Neile's attendance record:	17 (25%)	62 (75%)
William Easdall's attendance record:	46 (68%)	74 (90%)

Note 1: Case 'hearings' means exactly that rather than any attempt to calculate the number of hearings which an individual might have in the course of a 'case'. Many 'cases' may have originated before, or been continued after, the periods covered by the records. Thus any attempt to calculate the number of hearings per case was not thought useful.

Note 2: This court was run almost entirely by high ranking clerics such as George Stanhope, Henry Thurscross, Phineas Hodson, and Henry Wickham. New people added to this commission during the period, such as Timothy Thurscross and John Neile, did not alter this dominance, although clearly, lawyers like Easdall and Mottershed exercised great influence over legal procedure, if not as much over policy.

Note 3: The fact that the volume of business seems to have been lower in the second period above suggests that the high correlation between sessions being held at Bishopthorpe and Neile's attendance was due mainly to convenience in old age (Neile was 76 in 1638).

Table 4: Statistics relating to the campaign for the restoration of churches in the Province of York in the 1630s. (Figures are only available for the dioceses of York and Chester).

Number of churches in the diocese of York (excluding Nottinghamshire) - figures based on the number which took part in the visitations of the 1630s.	667	
Number of churches in the diocese of Chester - figures once again based on the visitations.	444	
Number of churches in the archdeaconry of Notts. (figure based on R. Marchant article q.v.).	198	

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Number of churches cited for repair work in the York visitation of 1633 (excluding Notts.):	204	(32% of 667)
Number of churches cited for repair work in the York visitation of 1636 (excluding Notts.):	181	(28% of 667)
Number of churches cited for repair work which appeared in both York visitations:	70	(38% of 181)
Number of churches from York diocese cited for repair work in the Chancery Court (1631-40):	100	(15% of 667)
Number of those churches which appeared before the Chancery Court, but which did not appear in trouble in either of the visitations:	45	(45% of 100)
Number of those churches which were cited more than once in the Chancery Court (ie. more than one year):	24	

(Note: Of those 24, at least 19 were from known Puritan areas, and 2 others appear on Ronald Marchant's maps as Puritan outposts in Catholic deaneries. 11 of the York city churches were subjected to inspection in more than one year. Other notable places inspected more than once were: Rawmarsh, Rotherham, Sheffield, Wakefield, Hull, and Pontefract.)

Number of churches cited for repair work in the Chester visitation of 1633:	309	(69% of 444)

ANALYSIS OF THE CHURCH RESTORATION CAMPAIGN

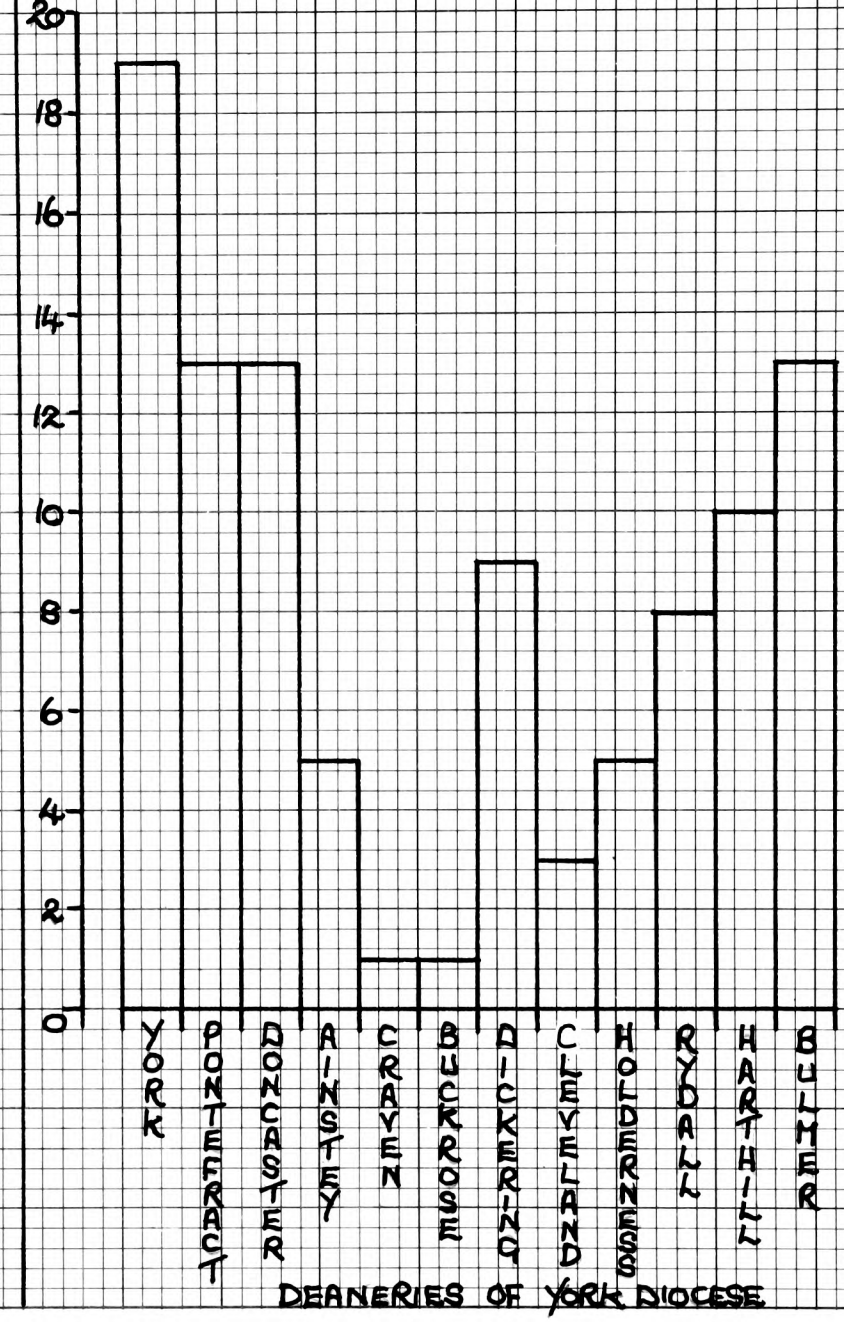
TABLE 5 : FIG. A GIVES NUMBER OF CHURCHES INSTRUCTED TO MAKE REPAIRS BY THE CHANCERY COURT, OR REFERRED TO THAT COURT'S JURISDICTION, BY YEAR (1631-40)

FIG. B. GIVES NUMBER OF CHURCHES FROM YORK DIOCESE ALONE (EXCLUDING NOTTINGHAMSHIRE.) , CITED BEFORE THE CHANCERY COURT : 100 . SPLIT INTO DEANERIES . HALVE = PURITAN AREA; RED = CATHOLIC AREA ; BROKEN = UNCLEAR ; GREEN = NEUTRAL

(A)



(B)



APPENDIX 2: An Examination of Richard Neile's clerical income.

The figures below are based on valuations given in the King's Book [1] for the livings Neile held throughout his career. Where known, figures are included on what Neile actually paid in first fruits and tenths for various livings, chiefly his dioceses.[2]

Living	Dates held	K.B. Value	N. paid
Cheshunt (V)	1590-1605	£ 26.	-
Toddington (R)	1598-1608	£ 29. 2. 11.	-
Eastbourne (R)	1598-1610	£ 6. 6. 8.	-
Treasurer, Chichester	1598-1610	£ 62. 6. 8.	-
Master of Savoy	1603-1608	?	-
Firle Prebend	1604-?1624	10. 0.	-
Dean of Westminster	1605-1610	£232. 10. 0.	-
See of Rochester	1608-1610	£358. 4. 9½.	£322. 7. 2¾. [3]
Southfleet (R)	1608-1612	£ 31. 15. 0.	£ 28. 11. 6. [4]
Canon Residentiary, Chichester	1610-1614	£200.	-
See of Lichfield & Coventry	1610-1614	£559. 17. 3½.	£503. 17. 6. [5]
Clifton Campville (R)	1612-1614	£ 30.	£ 27. [6]
Stoke-upon-Trent (R)	1612-1614	£ 20.	-
See of Lincoln	1614-1617	£828. 4. 9½.	£828. 4. 9½. [7]
See of Durham	1617-1628	£1821. 1. 3.	£1638. 19. 3½. [8]
See of Winchester	1628-1632	£2873. 18. 1¾.	£2873. 18. 1¾. [9]
See of York	1632-1640	£1610.	£1448. 19. 2. [10]

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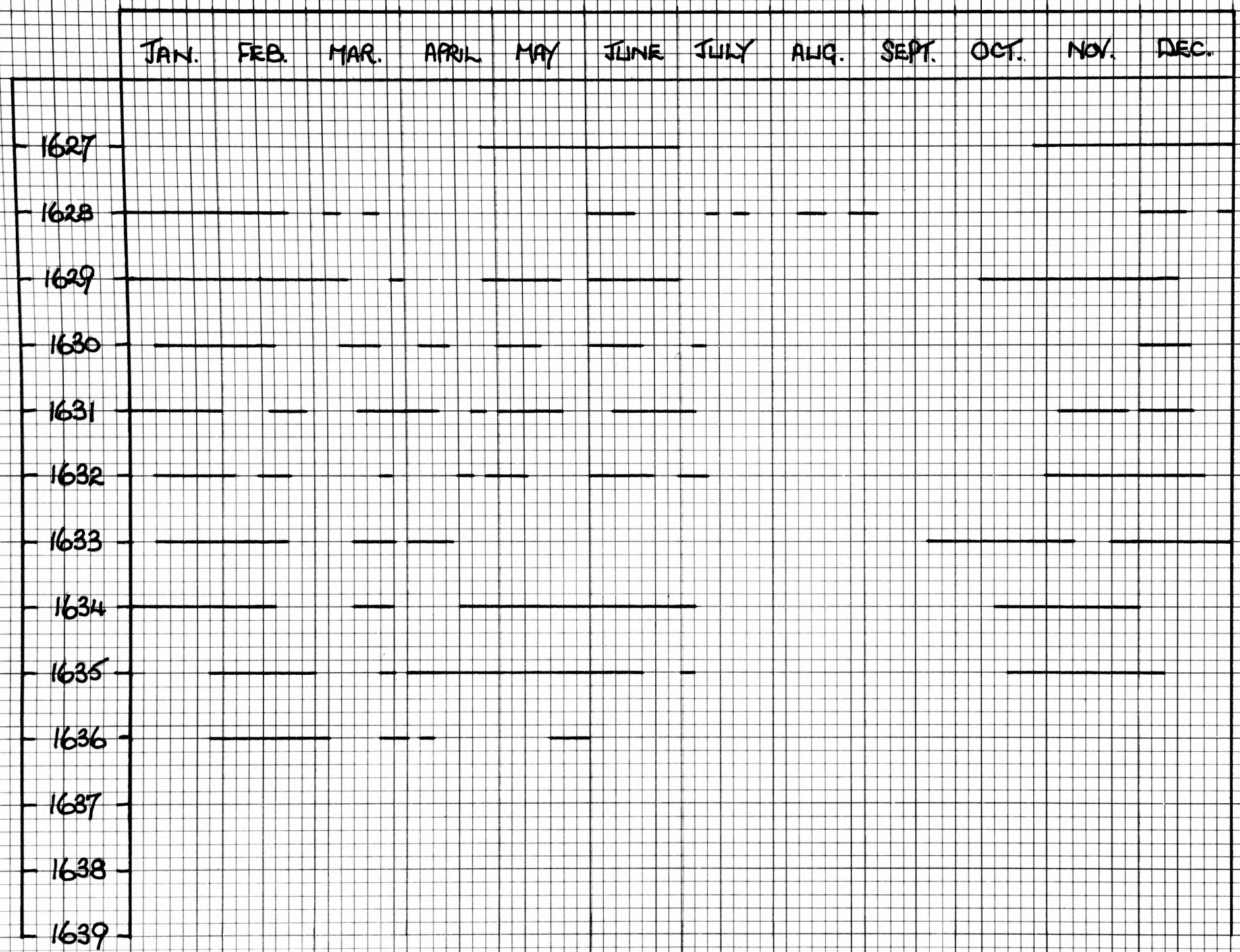
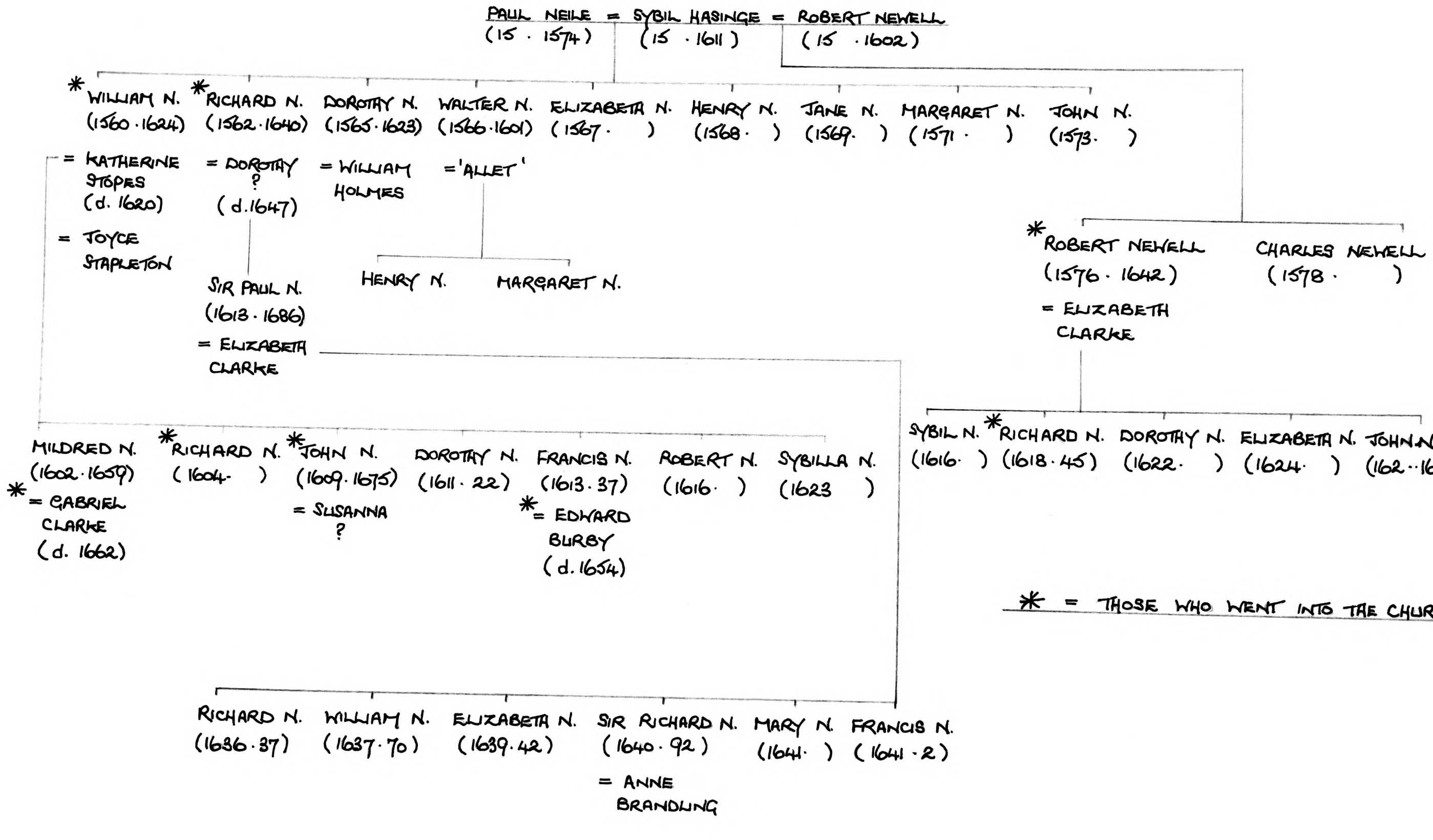
1. J. Bacon, Liber Regis, Lond. 1786 - values given per annum.
2. The source for these figures is usually Signet Office Docquet Books in the P.R.O.
3. P.R.O: SO/3/4/Nov. 1608.
4. Ibid.
5. P.R.O: SO/3/5/March 1610/11.
6. P.R.O: SO/3/6/June 1619 - noted as still payable with money due for Durham.
7. P.R.O: SO/3/6/May 1614.
8. P.R.O: SO/3/6/July 1618.
9. P.R.O: SO/3/9/April 1628.
10. P.R.O: SO/3/10/May 1632.



NEILE'S ATTENDANCE DAYS/%	LAUD'S ATTEND. DAYS/%	NO. OF MEETINGS (DAYS)
V 39/43%	37/41%	91
V 44/34%	48/37.5%	128
41/46%	27/30%	90
31/38%	22/27%	82
V 41/47%	52/60%	87
35/41%	67/82%	82
V 42/39%	V 50/46%	108
48/58.5%	75/90%	82
35/40%	73/86%	85
V 18/20%	78/87%	90
374/40%	529/57%	925

APPENDIX 13 : NEILE'S PRIVY COUNCIL ATTENDANCE RECORD
BASED ON PRIVY COUNCIL REGISTERS · THE FIGURES PROVIDE A ROUGH GUIDE
TO THE PRESENCE OF NEILE AND LAUD · THE DIAGRAM INDICATES NEILE'S
ATTENDANCE ONLY · V= VISITATION YEAR

APPENDIX 4: THE NEILE PEDIGREE



* = THOSE WHO WENT INTO THE CHURCH.

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Burney MSS. - several letters
Additional MSS. - oddments

Lambeth Palace:

Wharton MS. 577 - consecration papers and wills
MS. 943 - 'Laudian Papers'

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City Parish Records - genealogical work

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